

Provides Opportunities to Reinforce Skills and Positive Health Behaviors

Description: An effective curriculum builds on previously learned concepts and skills and provides opportunities to reinforce health-promoting skills across health topics and grade levels. This can be accomplished in multiple ways:

1. By incorporating more than one skill practice application at multiple grade levels (e.g., teaching goal setting at the 2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th grade)
2. By integrating skill application opportunities in multiple health content areas (e.g., practicing decision-making skills in an alcohol- and other drug-use prevention unit and in a violence prevention unit)
3. By reinforcing health skills in other academic areas (e.g., teaching a health lesson on how to access valid and reliable health information, then having the librarian reinforce the lesson)

An effective health education curriculum that addresses age- and developmental-appropriate determinants of behavior across grade levels, and reinforces and builds on learning, is more likely to achieve longer lasting results.¹

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Health Education Curriculum Analysis Tool* (Atlanta, GA: CDC, 2021).



Grades K–2 Examples

Example 1

For this example, the focus is reinforcing students' development of skills to ask for help from a trusted adult in two different lessons at the same grade level. The two lessons that are being taught include asking for help with troublesome feelings and asking for help to prevent or stop bullying. The Healthy Behavior Outcomes (HBOs) for these lessons are *MEH-6: Get help for troublesome thoughts, feelings, or actions for oneself or others* and *V-7: Get help to prevent or stop violence including harassment, abuse, bullying, hazing, fighting, and hate crimes* ([HECAT Appendix 3](#)).

1. The focus for this example is to help students ask for help from a trusted adult. At the beginning of the school year, the students learn how to request help from a trusted adult for troublesome feelings as part of a lesson focused on emotional and mental health.
2. Students are asked to identify trusted adults at home, at school, and in the community who could help them with troublesome feelings.
3. The students then develop skills to ask for help with troublesome feelings by practicing a three-step process (identify the feeling, tell a trusted adult about the feeling, and ask for help with the feeling).
4. Later in the school year, the students learn how to identify bullying, how to avoid bullying, how to prevent being a victim of bullying, and how to ask for help to prevent or stop bullying.
5. The students' skills to ask for help from a trusted adult are reinforced when the students are asked to identify trusted adults at home, at school, and in the community who can help them prevent or stop bullying.
6. The students then practice skills to ask for help by completing a similar three-step process (identify bullying, tell a trusted adult about the bullying, and ask for help to prevent or stop the bullying).



Example 2

For this example, the focus is reinforcing students' development of advocacy skills for playground safety through two lessons at the same grade level. The lessons that are being taught include supporting playground safety and encouraging playground safety. The HBO for these lessons is *S-8: Support others to avoid risky behaviors and be safe* ([HECAT Appendix 3](#)).

1. The focus for this example is on developing and reinforcing advocacy skills to support playground safety through two lessons for kindergarten students. The safety-related advocacy skill expectations for Pre-K–2 students include making requests to others to promote safety and to avoid or reduce injuries and demonstrating how to encourage peers to be safe and to avoid or reduce injuries.
2. The teacher and students create a list of playground safety rules. The teacher and students also discuss why it is important to follow playground safety rules.
3. The teacher introduces the skill of advocacy by telling the students that they can promote playground safety by encouraging their classmates to follow playground safety rules.
4. The students color and post worksheets labeled “Let’s Play Safe,” which depict children safely playing on the playground.

5. After multiple injuries occur on the playground, the principal, teachers, and playground supervisors agree that it is important to reinforce playground safety rules and further develop students' advocacy skills related to playground safety. They create a second lesson for kindergarten students to be led by the playground supervisors.
6. The playground supervisors and students review playground safety rules and discuss why it is important for students to follow playground safety rules and why it is important to encourage others to follow playground safety rules.
7. The playground supervisor also explains to the children that they can ask the playground supervisors for help in promoting playground safety rules if the rules are not being followed.
8. The students then practice asking the playground supervisor to promote playground safety rules.



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Grades 3–5 Examples

Example 1

For this example, the focus is reinforcing students' development of advocacy skills in two different lessons at the same grade level. The lessons that are being taught include advocating for healthy snacking and advocating for daily physical activity. The HBOs for these lessons are *FN-12: Support healthy eating patterns for others* and *PA-7: Support others to be physically active* ([HECAT Appendix 3](#)).

1. The focus for this example is on advocacy skills. At the beginning of the school year, the students learn how to advocate for healthy eating as part of a lesson focused on healthy snacking. Prior to this lesson, the students learned functional health information about healthy snack options and the benefits of choosing a health-enhancing snack.
2. Students develop advocacy skills by applying a three-step process (giving factual information about the behavior, stating personal beliefs about the behavior to improve the health of others, and persuading others to engage in the healthy behavior) to create public service announcements to advocate for healthy snacking.
3. A week later, the students learn about guidelines for physical activity for children and the benefits of physical activity. The students' advocacy skills are reinforced when they apply the same three-step process (giving factual information about the behavior, stating personal beliefs about the behavior to improve the health of others, and persuading others to engage in the healthy behavior) to create skits to advocate for physical activity.



Example 2

For this example, the focus is reinforcing students' development of goal-setting skills in two different lessons at the same grade level by two different teachers. The lesson that is being taught by the classroom teacher is setting goals to drink more water. The HBOs for the lesson are *PA-4: Drink plenty of water before, during, and after physical activity* and *FN-6: Drink lots of water*. The lesson that is being taught by the physical education teacher is setting goals for daily physical activity. The HBO for this lesson is *PA-5: Follow a physical activity plan for healthy growth and development* ([HECAT Appendix 3](#)).

1. The focus of this example is on setting goals related to drinking water and physical activity. Prior to setting goals for drinking water, students learn functional health information related to water consumption, including the fact that they should drink eight cups of water every day as well as the importance of drinking water before, during, and after physical activity.
2. Students are taught the three-step process for goal setting (set a realistic personal health goal, identify resources that can help them achieve the personal health goal, and track progress toward the personal health goal).
3. The students are asked to set a goal related to drinking eight cups of water a day, identify resources that can help them achieve goals, and track their progress for 2 weeks.
4. A few weeks later, the physical education teacher includes a lesson on the functional health knowledge related to the amount and types of physical activity students should have on a weekly basis.
5. The physical education teacher also reviews the three-step process for goal setting with the students. Students are asked to set a physical activity goal, identify resources to help them achieve goals, and track their progress toward their goals for 2 weeks.

Grades 6–8 Examples

Example 1

For this example, the focus is reinforcing students' development of advocacy skills across grade spans. The lessons that are being taught are food and nutrition. In grade 6, the HBO for the lesson is *FN-6: Drink lots of water*. In grade 8, the HBOs are *FN-6: Drink lots of water* and *FN-7: Avoid sugary drinks* ([HECAT Appendix 3](#)).

1. The focus of this example is on the development and reinforcement of advocacy skills to support peers to drink lots of water and to avoid sugary drinks.
2. In grade 6, students learn about the benefits of consuming enough water and how to state a health-enhancing position about these benefits. The students are taught about and develop advocacy skills to encourage students to drink more water by creating a poster with a health-enhancing message supported with accurate information about the benefits of drinking water. These posters are displayed around the school.
3. In grade 8, students review the benefits of consuming enough water, learn how to identify sugary drinks, and identify the benefits of limiting the consumption of added sugar and sodium.
4. In addition, students review and learn how to state a health-enhancing position to improve the health of others, support it with accurate information, and persuade others to adopt this behavior.
5. Once students develop messages, the students work together in groups of two to create a public service announcement that can be shared on various forms of social media (e.g., Twitter, TikTok, morning announcements).



Example 2

For this example, the focus is reinforcing students' development of refusal skills at the same grade level by two different teachers. The lesson that is being taught by the 8th-grade health education teacher is utilizing refusal skills to abstain from having sex. The HBO for the lesson is *SH-5: Be sexually abstinent*. The lesson that is being taught by the science teacher is utilizing refusal skills to avoid the misuse of prescription and over-the-counter medications. The HBO for the lesson is *AOD-1: Use prescription and over-the-counter medications correctly* ([HECAT Appendix 3](#)).

1. The focus of this example is on utilizing refusal skills to remain sexually abstinent. Prior to teaching refusal skills, the health education teacher has taught functional information about sexual health, including the benefits of being sexually abstinent; why sexual abstinence is the safest, most effective risk-avoidance method of protection from sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV, and unintended pregnancy; and the importance of setting personal limits to avoid sexual risk behaviors.
2. Students are taught the use of effective verbal and nonverbal communication skills and peer resistance skills.
3. Utilizing role-play, students demonstrate each of these skills. Students are asked to develop their own role-plays that effectively demonstrates a refusal skill related to sexual health.
4. Later in the semester, the science teacher delivers a lesson on functional health information about avoiding the misuse of prescription and over-the-counter medications, why it is important to use medications as directed, and reasons why people choose to abstain from misusing prescription and over-the-counter medications.
5. The science teacher reviews the use of effective refusal skills.
6. The students are given scenarios and asked to identify whether they are effective or ineffective in refusing to use prescription and over-the-counter medications safely. Students also explain why the scenarios were effective or ineffective, then the students rewrite the scenarios so that they reflect effective refusal skills and present the scenarios to the class.

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Grades 9–12 Examples

Example 1

For this example, the focus is reinforcing students' development of communication skills across two grade levels. The unit that is being taught is Mental and Emotional Health, and the HBO for the lesson at each grade level is *MEH-3: Express feelings in a healthy way* ([HECAT Appendix 3](#)).

1. This school district requires health education at the 9th and 11th grade. The health education scope and sequence includes a focus on mental and emotional health at the 9th and 11th grade.
2. The students in the 9th-grade health class are taught the five-step process of skill development for communicating needs, wants, and feelings in a healthy way, including time to practice these skills with a partner.
3. A similar activity is taught in the 11th-grade health class; however, different scenarios that are more developmentally appropriate for this grade level of students are utilized when practicing how to communicate needs, wants, and feelings in a healthy way.



Example 2

For this example, the focus is reinforcing students' development of goal-setting skills in two different lessons at the same grade level by two different teachers. The units taught are Personal Health and Physical Activity. The HBOs of the lesson are *PHW-6: Practice behaviors that prevent chronic diseases* and *PA-5: Follow a physical activity plan for healthy growth and development* ([HECAT Appendix 3](#)).



1. The focus for this example is on goal setting. In the 9th-grade health class, students have learned the functional knowledge about how to be safe in the sun. Students are then taught the five-step process of goal setting and are asked to set a goal to remain safe in the sun. Students set a goal, make a plan to reach the goal, and track their progress for 3 weeks.
2. Later in the semester, the physical education teacher includes a lesson on the functional information related to the benefits of regular physical activity and refreshes students on the steps of goal setting. Students are asked to set a physical activity goal, make a plan to reach the goal, and track progress for 3 weeks.