

ABC's of Poison Prevention

Stay Away
Be Prepared
Call for Help



Presentation for Pre-School through 3rd Grade
(can be modified for any age group)

Introduction

- Hi, my name is _____, and I'm from _____. How is everyone doing today? Are you ready to learn about poisons?
- Rules – First, let's talk about some rules. I'm going to be asking a lot of questions. I'll call on people who raise their hand and are sitting quietly. Also, if it gets too loud, I'll do this (some kind of quiet sign) and it means to be quiet. Then, I'll continue.

By raising your hand, who can tell me some things that are poisonous?

- Examples – snakes, spiders, cleaners, medicines, gasoline, etc.
- Some might say "pot" or another illicit drug; just say "yes" and continue.
- Some might say "fire"; just say it is a danger we stay away from but not a poison.

Stay Away

By raising your hand, who can tell me what parts of our bodies a poison can hurt?

- Examples – brain, eyes, nose, throat, stomach, heart, lungs, skin. Then emphasize that poison can hurt our entire body.
- Because poisons can hurt our entire body, what do you do if you are around poisons? Take various answers and emphasize – **STAY AWAY**.

Discussion of different poisons

Hold up different poisons and talk about how they can hurt us. Try to involve the class by asking questions about the information below:

- Bleach hurts our throats and looks like water.
- Gasoline is slimy and can slip into our lungs. It is also dangerous to breathe gasoline on purpose; this can hurt our brain.
- It is OK to smell flowers, but not OK to eat them. Everything that smells good is not always good for us.
- Bug spray is often on flowers. If it hurts bugs, it can hurt us.
- Glass cleaner – it is OK to clean our windows, but not OK to spray in someone’s eyes.
- Medicine – This is one of the most important poisons we will talk about today. Is it OK to sometimes take medicine? Who can give you medicine? Mom, dad, grandparent, teacher, physician, nurse, hospital, aunt, uncle, - any trusted adult. If a child answers a babysitter or older sibling, it is OK only if they have the parent’s permission.
- Ask First – If you find a “candy” it may be that a grown up dropped their medication on the table or in the kitchen. Some pills can look like candy. You should always ask first before eating it.
- Paint – Is it poisonous when wet? Yes. How about dry? Yes. If you see a baby eating dry paint, who do you tell? Call the Poison Center.

Not sure if a product is poisonous? Call the Poison Center and ask a question.

Be Prepared

Now we know what poisons are, so if you find a poison – what do you do?

STAY AWAY! The best way to do this is to **BE PREPARED.**

Show the children the Poison Center **Home Check** List brochure.

- Tell them to take it home the brochure and poison proof their houses with the help of an adult.
- Discuss that they will be helping to protect their entire family. You can ask how many people have little brothers or sisters (by raising their hand).
- Tell them it is especially important to help protect them.
- Review: Make sure they know to take the Checklist home. Ask again, “Now what are you going to do with this?”

Call for Help

It is important to know who to call or tell if you think someone has been around a poison.

- Who can you call or tell? The Oklahoma Center for Poison and Drug Information (formerly the Oklahoma Poison Control Center).
- What is a phone number you can call if there is an emergency? 911 (if in a rural area, ask the teacher if they have 911 services and, if not, who they call in an emergency).
- Show them the Poison Help stickers with the emergency 800#. Ask – (by raising your hands), how many of you know where the emergency numbers are at your house? Discuss that everyone should know where emergency numbers are located. For example, some emergency numbers are 911 (police, fire department); Oklahoma Poison and Drug Information, 800-222-1222; parent’s work number, etc. (I often mention this would make a good homework assignment).
- Remind parents to put the Poison Center number into their phones.

This is the main presentation; however, the children may be interested in snakes and spiders. **Children may also want to share their stories throughout the presentation.**

Bites & Stings:

- How many different types of **poisonous snakes** are in Oklahoma? Three - rattlesnake, copperhead and water moccasin (cottonmouth).
- How do you know the difference between the poisonous and non-poisonous snakes in Oklahoma? The poisonous snakes in Oklahoma are pit vipers. Their heads are shaped like a triangle and they have eyes like a cat. Non-poisonous snakes have pupils like ours – they are round. However, do you want to get close enough to a snake to see its eyes? No!
- What do you do if you see a snake? **STAY AWAY!** Never try to catch or kill the snake.
- Where do you go if a snake has bitten you? Hospital.
- Do you take the snake with you to the hospital? No.
- How many different types of **poisonous spiders** in Oklahoma are serious health risks? Two - Fiddleback (Brown Recluse) and Black Widow.
- Should you ever play with spiders? No. **STAY AWAY!**
- Show them a picture of a **tarantula, scorpion and centipede** – these are not usually dangerous in Oklahoma. But, it is important to stay away from them because they can bite or sting, and you could have an allergic reaction to them. If you are bitten or stung and have trouble breathing, call 911. Some people have pet tarantulas, which need to be handled with care. Tarantula hairs can cause rashes and occasionally bad eye inflammations. Keep your face away from spiders, and wash your hands after any contact with their bodies or cage bedding.
- Has anyone ever had **poison ivy**? Show them a picture (can be printed from our website). How did it make you feel?
- How many leaves does poison ivy have? Three – “leaflets three, let it be!”

Review:

- By raising your hands, who can tell me five poisons?
- What do you do if you are around a poison? **STAY AWAY.**
- What are you going to do with this Home Check List brochure?
- Where does the Oklahoma Center for Poison and Drug Information sticker go? (On phone or inside kitchen/bathroom cabinet). Remind parents to put the number into their phone.
- Great job! – Give yourselves a hand!

