

Saying No

Grade 5-6, Lesson #15

This lesson is part of the HIV prevention series in FLASH.

Time needed

60 minutes

Student Learning Objectives

The student will be able to ...

1. Define abstinence.
2. Demonstrate effective peer refusal skills.

Agenda

1. Define abstinence.
2. Teach 4 refusal skills steps.
3. Lead classroom example.
4. Practice refusal skills in 4 different scenarios.
5. Debrief.

This lesson was most recently updated November 2021.

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Materials Needed

Student Materials

- *Scenario A: Chris and Miguel*
- *Scenario B: Gloria and Mohamed*
- *Scenario C: Isaiah and Kayla*
- *Scenario D: James Grace*
- *Family Homework: Saying No*

Classroom Materials

- *Refusal Skills Visual*
- *Refusal Skills Example: Chris and Miguel fully scripted (2 copies for demonstration)*
- The characters' names in the scenarios reflect the WA State population. If needed, please look up pronunciation in advance.

FLASH Key Concepts

Abstinence is choosing to not have oral, anal and vaginal sex.

There are times in everyone's life when abstaining from sex is the healthiest choice.

Activities

1. Introduce the lesson.

Today we are going to learn more about abstinence, and we will have a chance to practice saying no to things we might not want to do. I think we will all have fun while we learn some important skills.

2. Define abstinence.

Let's start by defining the word abstinence. Does anyone know what it means?

Solicit responses and give definition.

Abstinence means not doing something. Another way to say it is "being abstinent" or "to abstain" from doing something. For example, if a person is trying to eat healthier, they might abstain from eating junk food. What other things can you think of that people might want to be abstinent from? Think of all the things that might get in the way of being healthy or getting along with others.

Responses might include smoking, drinking alcohol, using drugs; having sex; eating certain foods; interrupting classmates, fighting, etc. Any responses are fine, as people choose to abstain from many things for different reasons.

Often when people say the word abstinence, they mean choosing not to have sex. (To share proactively, or in response to questions, the following language may be helpful. Abstinence from sex is not having oral, anal, or vaginal sex. Oral sex is with the mouth and genitals; anal sex is with the penis and anus or butt; vaginal sex is with a penis and vagina.)

We are talking about abstinence now, even though kids your age are not having sex, because abstinence will be an important choice when you are older to keep yourself healthy. There are times in everyone's life when abstaining from sex is the healthiest choice.

3. Set abstinence as norm.

Sometimes we see things on TV or online or we hear older kids say things that make it seem like all teens are having sex. But let me ask you, how many teens do you think are having sex? Just a few? Half? Almost all?

Solicit responses.

Would you be surprised if I told you that most middle and high school students are not having sex? Most teens abstain from sex, even though that may not be what we think.

4. Discuss reasons it can be hard for people to say no to their friends.

Let's go back to all the other things people sometimes need to say no to. If someone offers you a snack you don't like, maybe it's not too hard to just say "no thanks." But sometimes it can be hard to say no. Let's imagine a more challenging situation. What if a friend you really like asks you to do something you shouldn't, like steal candy from his sister's room, or

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watching something on the internet you know you are not allowed to see? Why would it be harder to say no in those situations?

Solicit responses, making sure the list includes the following:

- You don't want to hurt your friend's feelings
- You are afraid they won't want to be your friend anymore
- You want to seem cool
- You are afraid other people will think you are dumb or a baby
- You really want to do the think you are not supposed to do

It takes practice to get good at saying no. Today we're going to practice saying no in different types of situations.

5. Discuss strategies for saying no effectively.

Let's start by thinking about how to say no in a really clear and strong way. What are some things you can say or do that lets someone know you really mean it when you say no? If it's helpful, think of a time someone else told you no – maybe a friend, sibling or parent, and you knew they really meant it. How did you know?

Solicit responses, making sure the list includes the following. Praise students for their answers.

- Use a firm voice
- Look someone in the eye
- Stand up tall
- Use a loud voice
- Say "no," not "maybe" or something else
- Say no even if you are asked several times

6. Teach the 4 refusal skills steps.

Show the *Refusal Skills Visual* and give a brief explanation of each step.

1. *Say NO.*
Clearly say that you don't want to do what the other person is asking.
2. *Explain why.*
For example, my mom doesn't allow me too or I don't feel comfortable.
3. *Suggest an alternative.*
Suggest something else that you can do instead. For example, I think that we should make some popcorn or play a video game.
4. *Leave if you need or want to.*
If someone keeps pressuring you or doesn't accept your no, you need to leave the situation or get help from someone else.

Reinforce the point that forcing or pressuring someone is always wrong.

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I want to be very clear that people always have to listen when another person says “no,” no matter how they say it. It is never OK to force or pressure someone to do something they don’t want to do, including any kind of sexual touch. It is always the fault of the person who forced or pressured them, and it is always wrong.

7. Lead classroom example of refusal skill.

Now we are going to use these refusal skills in four different scenarios. But first, let’s hear an example. I’ll read the set up and then I’ll need two volunteers to read the lines.

“Chris, Miguel and Luis are all in 6th grade together. Chris does not like Luis and thinks he is a know-it-all. One afternoon, Chris tries to get Miguel to distract Luis so he can go pants him in the hallway. Miguel does not want to participate in this and thinks that Chris should just leave Luis alone.”

Two volunteer students read the lines from their desks; they do not act them out. After the students are done reading, use the questions below to help students identify the refusal skill steps used in the scenario.

Let’s go through our steps.

Step 1: Was there a clear no in that interaction? (“I’m not going to do it.”)

Step 2: Was there an explanation? What was it? (“I don’t think that’s cool.” In other words, he doesn’t think it’s right to pull down anyone’s clothes.)

Step 3: Did someone suggest an alternative? (“Let’s go to PE early...”)

Step 4: Did Luis decide he needed to leave?

Excellent work!

8. Practice

Pass out and review the *Refusal Skills Visual*, which students will use as a guide in developing refusal lines.

Now we are going to practice using the refusal skills, and you get to write your own lines! Take a few moments and write your own lines in for Scenarios A, B, C, and D. Remember to look at your Refusal Skills while you are writing so you don’t forget to include the 3 first steps for each scenario – a clear no, an explanation, and an alternative. You can add step 4 in any scenario you feel you need to.

Because it is often easy to say yes to something, but hard to say no to something, we are going to practice refusing in each of these scenarios today. Remember also that we are going to practice saying no to a person we like and want to stay friends with. You will be reading these lines out loud.

After students are finished writing:

Now I am going to have you stand up and walk around the room while I play music. When I stop the music, freeze, and partner up with someone near you. You will read the Scenario A script twice, switching roles between the first and second reading, so that everyone has a chance to read the lines they wrote. Listen closely to the other person’s lines to see if they have a clear no, an explanation, and an alternative. If they do, put your initials on their paper

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and compliment them on one of their lines. I will start the music again and we will keep walking and finding new partners until all of the scenarios have been read.

Repeat for Scenarios B, C and D.

9. Debrief

Thank you so much for your work! I would love to hear some of what you wrote.

Step 1: Who wrote or heard a good example of a clear no?

Step 2: What were some good explanations you heard?

Step 3: Who can tell me some good alternatives that were suggested?

Step 4: Did anyone leave? What did you say when you were leaving?

Great job! You were all so clear and said NO really well. Saying NO is such an important skill to learn. It's great to know how to do this every day for all kinds of situations, not just for refusing to have sex. The more you practice the easier it gets.

Homework

Students' options:

- Family homework: Explain the refusal skill steps you learned in class today. You can each take a turn practicing them.
- Individual homework: Write a script using the refusal skills we learned in class today, where one person has to say no to someone else.

Refusal Skills Visual

- 1. Say NO**
- 2. Explain why**
- 3. Suggest an alternative**
- 4. Leave if you need or want to**

Refusal Skills Example

Class Demonstration

Chris, Miguel, and Luis are all in 6th grade together. Chris does not like Luis and thinks he is a know-it-all. One afternoon, Chris tries to get Miguel to distract Luis so he can go pants him in the hallway. Miguel does not want to participate in this and thinks that Chris should just leave Luis alone.

Chris: Hey Miguel. Let's go get Luis while no teachers are around.

Miguel: Dude, I don't think that's cool.

Chris: Oh come on Miguel. Don't be such a wimp.

Miguel: I'm not going to do it. Let's hurry and get to P.E. early so we can get the good basketballs.

Chris: Ok. I'm sorry I called you names. You're right.

Refusal Skills Scenario A

Practice

Chris, Miguel and Luis are all in 6th grade together. Chris does not like Luis and thinks he is a know-it-all. One afternoon, Chris tries to get Miguel to distract Luis so he can go pants him in the hallway. Miguel does not want to participate in this and thinks that Chris should just leave Luis alone.

Chris: Hey Miguel. Let's go get Luis while no teachers are around.

Miguel: _____

Chris: Oh come on Miguel. Don't be such a wimp.

Miguel: _____

Chris: Ok. I'm sorry I called you names. You're right.

Refusal Skills Scenario B

Practice

Mohamed and Gloria are hanging out together at Gloria's house after school. Gloria thinks that Mohamed is really cute. They are out in the backyard playing in the yard while Gloria's aunt is cooking dinner. Gloria goes over to Mohamed and tries to kiss him behind the shed. Mohamed does not want to kiss Gloria. He thinks the idea of kissing a girl is pretty gross and just wants to continue playing their game.

Gloria: Hey Mohamed. You should kiss me while no one can see us.

Mohamed: _____

Gloria: What's wrong with you that you don't want to kiss me? You can be such a baby sometimes.

Mohamed: _____

Gloria: Ok. You're right. That was rude of me.

Refusal Skills Scenario C

Practice

Kayla is a 6th grade girl who is away at overnight camp. One night a group of the campers sneaks out into the woods to hang out while the camp counselors sleep. Isaiah, a 6th grade boy, suggests that they all play spin the bottle. Kayla feels uncomfortable with this and doesn't want to play. She decides to go back to her cabin, but Isaiah tries to get her to stay and play.

Isaiah: Come on guys. Let's play spin the bottle. It'll be fun.

Kayla

Isaiah: Come on Kayla. It'll be fun. Just try it.

Kayla:

Isaiah: Ok. I'm sorry. You're right.

Refusal Skills Scenario D

Practice

Mai and Grace two 6th grade girls, go to school with James, a 6th grade boy. Mai and Grace have a class together and don't get along. James thinks it would be funny for him and Grace to spread a rumor that Mai got her period over the summer. Even though Grace doesn't like Mai she thinks that would be mean and wouldn't like it if that rumor were going around about her. James tries to talk her into it.

James: Let's spread a rumor about Mai. We can tell everybody that she got her period this summer.

Grace: _____

James: Oh Grace, give me a break. It will be funny.

Grace: _____

James: Ok. I'm sorry. You're right.