

 **HEALTH!**
ROCKS!
INSPIRED TO BE SUBSTANCE FREE



Beginner Level



HEALTH![®]
ROCKS!
INSPIRED TO BE SUBSTANCE FREE



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

2019 Revision

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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Helping communities collaborate and support a non-formal tobacco-free education program for youth ages 8-12.

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SECTION 1:

ALL ABOUT ME

CHAPTER 1: BUILDING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

CHAPTER 2: KEEPING HEALTHY

CHAPTER 3: YOU CHOOSE!

CHAPTER 4: DEALING WITH DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

INTRODUCTION

DRUGS

Reference to drugs includes those drugs not permitted by law (illegal) and lawful drugs (prescription or over-the-counter) which are obtained or used illegally unless otherwise specified.

What Is HEALTH ROCKS!

Health Rocks!® is a series of leader's curricula for a healthy living program aimed at 8 to 16 year olds, with the goal of bringing youth, families and communities across the United States together to reduce tobacco, alcohol, and drug use by youth. This beginning-level guide provides information and activities targeted at 8 to 12 year olds.

4-H has worked for decades to help youth develop skills that serve them for life. Some of these skills – such as communicating with others, relating to change and responsible decision-making – help younger youth develop internal strength to resist risky behaviors. A healthy living program built upon the strong foundations of life skill development and decision-making, results in a program that truly reduces tobacco, alcohol, and drug use by younger youth.

Younger youth who have personal social skills and competencies are more resistant to substance abuse. Ultimately, we want them to make knowledgeable decisions about tobacco, alcohol, and drug use and to understand the consequences of their choices. By understanding the facts, younger youth are more likely to make healthy decisions and less likely to be influenced by peer pressure, the media and other emotional factors.

Program Goals:

- Reduce youth smoking and tobacco use.
- Help youth build life skills which lead to healthy lifestyle choices with special emphasis on youth smoking and tobacco use prevention.
- Help youth understand influences and health consequences of tobacco, drug, and alcohol use to make healthy choices.
- Engage youth and adults in partnership to develop and implement community strategies that promote healthy lifestyle choices.
- Build positive, enduring relationships, with youth involved as full partners, through widely varying “communities of interest” to address youth risk behaviors.

Implications For The **HEALTH ROCKS!**[®] Program

Chances are that at least some of the 8 to 12 year olds you will be working with in this program level have tried tobacco, alcohol, or some type of drug. Participants at the younger end of this age range are definitely on the edge of deciding whether to experiment with substances. Many may have family members who use tobacco products, drink alcohol, use illegal drugs, or misuse prescription or over-the-counter drugs.

Understand that younger youth are not only wrestling with issues of substance experimentation and use, they are trying to figure out who they are and how they fit into life in general. Empowering youth to develop the know-how and skills helps protect them and fosters good decision-making. Younger youth are good by nature and need strong support to develop healthy lives.

Younger Youth and Risk

Younger youth often engage in behaviors that threaten their development. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) developed the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS) to monitor priority health risk behaviors that contribute to the leading causes of death, disability and social problems among youth and adults in the United States. These behaviors, often established during childhood and early adolescence, include:

- Tobacco use.
- Unhealthy dietary behaviors.
- Inadequate physical activity.
- Alcohol and other drug use.
- Sexual behaviors that contribute to unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV infection.
- Behaviors that contribute to unintentional injuries and violence.¹

The focus of this curriculum is tobacco, alcohol, and drugs. However, other factors are included. It is important that younger youth realize they have a lot to lose by engaging in risky behaviors. Younger youth who are focused on future goals and supported by life skills and decision-making abilities are less likely to sabotage their health and future.

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2018, March 22). *Youth risk behavior surveillance system (YRBSS)*. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/index.htm>

HOW TO USE THIS CURRICULUM

Teens as Volunteer Leaders

Health Rocks![®] is designed to be taught by teens and adults working as partners. “Teens as Volunteer Leaders” is a proven model for involving teens in delivering curriculum and programs to younger youth. This cross-age approach is highly effective in building leadership and life skills in both teens and younger youth who participate in the program. Younger youth respond well to teen instructors who provide a positive role model. This can be especially beneficial when talking about issues such as tobacco, alcohol, and drug use.²

In fact, in leadership situations, studies show that:

- Teens connect better with younger youth.
- Teens bring fresh ideas to your program.
- Teens provide honest feedback (often better than adult staff).
- As role models, teens provide younger youth something to aspire to, and help maintain their involvement.
- Teens are often proficient in technology skills.
- Teens are often current with trends.
- Teens are often able to recruit additional teens.³

In addition to benefiting program participants, teen leaders benefit from working in partnership with caring adults. This partnership allows teen leaders to explore and try out new roles and new skills in a safe environment.

Leader Training

Appendix D provides a sample **Training Outline** for use with teen and adult partners implementing *Health Rocks!*[®]. By participating in organized training, teen and adult facilitators are able to experience activities and practice skills prior to working with participants. This will also allow for an assessment of teaching strengths along with feedback on areas which may need improvement or better coordination between partners.

2 Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey. (2018, January 3). *Staffing with teenagers and teens as cross-age teachers*. Retrieved from <http://urban4hscience.rutgers.edu/practices/staffing/teens.html>

3 Oregon State University Extension Service. (2016). *YA4H! Youth advocates for health*. Retrieved from <http://oregon.4h.oregonstate.edu/projects/ya4-h/curriculum/recruit>

It is important to establish participation ground rules during training and with youth participants during implementation. Youth participants need to be comfortable expressing themselves in a judgement-free and supportive environment.

Appendix D provides some teaching tips that may enhance the teen and adult partnership and help them build on their teaching strengths.

Target Audience

Health Rocks![®] is designed to be used in a variety of educational settings and in several different ways. Materials can be used in 4-H Clubs, after-school settings, in classrooms, during day or residential camps or with special interest groups. The recommended age is 8 to 12 years old. However, this age range is just a guideline. Some participants may be older, but may function at a younger developmental level. They are ideal participants for *Health Rocks!*[®] activities and learning experiences can be easily adapted to meet the needs of specific groups.

Please refer to the policies and procedures at your university, school or organization regarding informed parental consent before implementing this curriculum.

It is extremely important for teens and adults teaching the program to have an understanding of how younger youth think, feel, and act. In addition to chronological age, younger youth also have a physical, mental, emotional, and social age. These different developmental ages mean that development and ability to perform tasks will vary. While some younger youth may perform ahead of others in some aspects, they may be behind in others.

The following chart describes the Characteristics of Youth Grades 4-6.

Ages & Stages: Characteristics of Youth Grades 4-6⁴

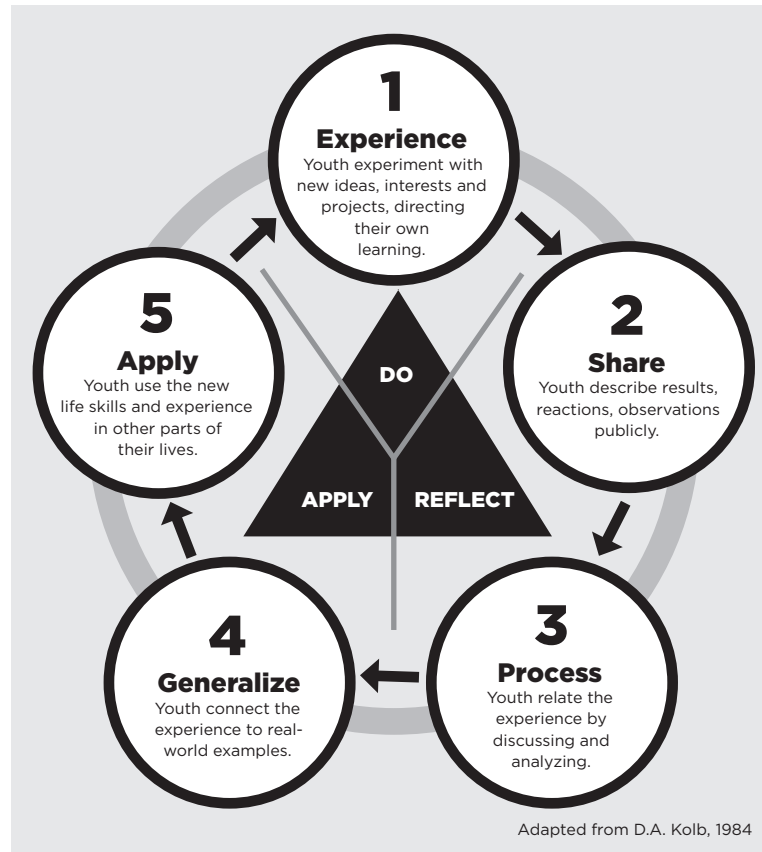
CHARACTERISTICS	IMPLICATIONS FOR PROGRAMMING
<p><i>Physical</i> Growth continues at a steady rate. Small muscles have developed so they can do activities such as hammering, sawing, playing musical instruments, etc. By the end of this period, they may be as coordinated as an adult, although lapses of awkwardness are common.</p>	Provide for lots of physical involvement. Use hands-on activities that allow younger youth to make and do things.
<p><i>Social</i> Peer influence grows. To be accepted by peer group is rewarding. Peer group can become a club, gang, or a secret society. Prejudice can develop during this period. Independence from adults increases. Discusses and evaluates others, develops a concept of “fair” and “unfair” as it relates to others.</p>	Provide activities through clubs and group activities. Use activities that allow the younger youth to make decisions about what they make, do, and use. Group younger youth in same sex groups when possible.
<p><i>Emotional</i> Growing independence. Beginning of disobedience, back-talk, and rebelliousness. Common fears are the unknown, failure, death, family problems, and non-acceptance. Concept of right and wrong continues to develop. Sense of humor develops. Concept of self is enhanced by feelings of competence. Strong attachment to their own sex and shows antagonism toward opposite sex.</p>	Don't compare younger youth to one another. Emphasize progress and achievement.
<p><i>Intellectual</i> Reading becomes an individual experience. Abstract thought is possible and plans can extend over several weeks. Activities can be evaluated with insight. Attention span increases. Ability to understand, “Why?”</p>	Use short, simple instructions. Include real-life objects when teaching and involve their senses when possible.

4 Oregon State University Extension Service. (2016). YA4H! Youth advocates for health. Retrieved from http://oregon.4h.oregonstate.edu/sites/default/files/about/pyd/handout_ages_and_stages_of_youth.pdf

Experiential Learning

Hands-on learning experiences have long been recognized as an effective way to help youth of all ages learn. *Health Rocks!*[®] is designed using experiential learning to actively engage learners, while encouraging them to think for themselves, work hard and ultimately learn more. The Experiential Learning Model is presented below:

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING MODEL⁵



EXPERIENCE – Describe the activity you will have participants do. Encourage them to think about what they might see or what might happen. Then, let participants experience the activity; perform or do it.

SHARE – Ask questions about the activity and the experience after they have completed it. Participants describe the results and their reactions.

PROCESS – Ask questions about something that was important about the experience. Participants analyze the experience and reflect upon the results.

⁵ Kolb, D. (1984). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey.

GENERALIZE – Now apply the results to real-world examples. Ask questions to help participants connect subject matter to life skills and the bigger world.

APPLY – Help participants apply what they have learned to their lives. Give them opportunities to practice these new skills or use new information.

Beginning Guide Organization

Health Rocks![®] is divided into three sections:

- All About Me
- What Influences Me
- Taking it Beyond Me

These sections are designed to help participants build on their knowledge of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs, and how they made decisions related to these substances. The curriculum addresses outside influences on behavior choices, such as peer pressure and the media. Finally, the curriculum moves participants to a larger perspective by focusing on their commitment to long-term healthy life choices and empowering their community to become involved in the movement.

While activities can be used individually, you may find it useful to use them in sequence as the topics build on one another. Each chapter begins with an **Overview** that provides background information. You can supplement with information from resources listed in Appendix B. Throughout this curriculum, national data about tobacco, alcohol, and drug use are given. While current when this curriculum was written, you may want to check current data and statistics. Because local data and statistics are very powerful, you may also want to include references to this information. Sources of information are included in **Resources** (Appendix B) or may be acquired from your state health department. A **Glossary** (Appendix C) contains familiar and unfamiliar words or terms with definitions as they relate to the curriculum.

A **Learn It, Live It!** resource list of expanded learning experiences is located at the end of each chapter. It is important that youth be given more opportunities to expand on what they have learned in the *Health Rocks!*[®] curriculum and meet individual group requirements. This list of innovative, hands-on experiences is offered at the end of each chapter as a follow up to expand the learning experiences of participants either as a group or individually. **Learn It, Live It!** expanded learning experiences may be an option for youth who are absent from class. Research shows that youth learn effectively through hands-on experiences. As a result, try to incorporate as much experiential learning as possible to promote positive development in youth. *When youth complete activities outside of the Health Rocks!*[®] *classroom, encourage them to complete a **Learn It, Live It! Reflection Sheet** and*

return it to the next class. The **Learn It, Live It! Reflection Sheet** is included with the supplemental curriculum materials. Reviewing these activities will strengthen the learning in *Health Rocks!*[®]

A **Summing Up** and *Health Rocks!*[®] **Check-up!** are also located at the end of each chapter. **Summing Up** restates the highlights of the chapter and can be sent home with participants. The *Health Rocks!*[®] **Check-up!** acts as an evaluation to help reinforce what you have been teaching and helps see if participants have gained knowledge.

There is a **Retrospective Impact Evaluation** (Appendix A) at the end of the guide. It is designed to be completed after all sessions. It will measure what the participants learned from the time the program started until the end.

Involving Families and Communities

Younger youth experience risk and protective factors across the domains of individual, family, peer, school and community. In other words, these “worlds” work together to either protect or pressure them as to tobacco, alcohol, drugs and other risks.⁶

Several studies indicate that parents play an important role in prevention. Since younger youth learn the majority of social skills at home, it makes sense that the quality of family relationships influences whether younger youth use tobacco, alcohol, or drugs. For these reasons, it is important to involve families in *Health Rocks!*[®] at every opportunity.

The community also plays a big role in the development of younger youth. It is important that families and communities rally together to provide appropriate support for the development of life skills and decision-making in future citizens and leaders. Within each section of this curriculum there are activities targeted toward family and community involvement. Partnering with other community organizations in the delivery of *Health Rocks!*[®] can provide community-wide resources and support.

6 National Institute on Drug Abuse. (2014, January). Principles of adolescent substance use disorder treatment: A research-based guide. Retrieved from <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/principles-adolescent-substance-use-disorder-treatment-research-based-guide/introduction>

Setting the Stage for Programming with Essential Elements⁷

To create the most positive environment for *Health Rocks!*[®], it is important to set the stage for positive youth development and learning. Here are some important things that should be in place to help younger youth acquire the skills and abilities they need:

Belonging

A Positive Relationship With a Caring Adult. This caring adult can be an instructor, mentor, or other volunteer. Such relationships provide warmth, closeness, caring, support and good communication.

An Emotionally and Physically Safe Environment. The program should protect participants from physical or emotional harm. Such environments have clear and consistent rules, structure, continuity and predictability.

An Inclusive Environment. Your program should be marked by a sense of belonging for all who attend, encouraging and supporting participants with positive and specific feedback. Healthy groups celebrate the success of all and take pride in the collective effort.

Mastery

Opportunities for Mastery. Everyone who participates in *Health Rocks!*[®] should feel good about their abilities and skills. Mastery is the building of social, emotional, physical and intellectual skills, and then having opportunities to demonstrate proficiency. Mastery is developed over time, with repetition.

Opportunities to Experience Engagement in Learning. Your program can help younger youth understand the subject area and develop understanding. An engaged learner has a higher degree of self-motivation and a large capacity to create.

Independence

Opportunities to See Oneself as an Active Participant in the Future. Participants should be able to envision a future and see their role within it. Your program should help younger youth develop a sense of hope and a clear vision about the future.

Opportunities for Self-Determination. Younger youth should become independent, empowered, and develop a sense of self-worth. They need to develop a personal sense of influence over their lives and exercise their potential to become self-directed teens and adults.

⁷ United States Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture. (2016, July 21). *Essential elements of 4-H*. Retrieved from <https://nifa.usda.gov/resource/essential-elements-4-h>

Generosity

Opportunities to Value and Practice Service to Others. *Health Rocks!*[®] can help younger youth provide service to others, which helps them gain exposure to the larger community. Service to others helps them develop positive ethics and values.

Life Skills

Life skills are the abilities that assist us in leading productive and satisfying lives and help us function well in the environments in which we live.

In the *Health Rocks!*[®] curriculum there are a number of life skills that are taught. These are similar to life skills that are addressed in other 4-H programs. They include:

- Information gathering
- Analyzing information
- Critical thinking
- Decision-making
- Goal setting
- Planning/organizing
- Problem solving
- Consequences of actions
- Communication
- Concern for others
- Contributions to group effort
- Healthy life choices
- Managing feelings
- Personal safety
- Responsible citizenship
- Self-responsibility
- Sharing
- Social responsibility
- Social skills
- Stress management
- Teamwork
- Using scientific methods

The activities in *Health Rocks!*[®] help participants develop these life skills. Each activity identifies the major life skills that are being met.

National Health Education Standards⁸

These standards were developed by the Joint Committee on National Health Education Standards sponsored by the American Cancer Society. They provide program goals for all grade levels. Each activity in this curriculum identifies the health education standard being addressed.

STANDARD	OUTCOME
1	Students will comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.
2	Students will analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors in health behaviors.
3	Students will demonstrate the ability to access valid information and products and services to enhance health.
4	Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.
5	Students will demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.
6	Students will demonstrate the ability to use goal-setting skills to enhance health.
7	Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.
8	Students will demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

⁸ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2016, August 18). National health education standards. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/sher/standards/index.htm>



INTRODUCTION

PLANNING GUIDE

Introductory Lesson: Health Rocks!® Is For Me!

- Discover why healthy minds and healthy bodies are necessary for future success.
- Life Skills: healthy lifestyle choices, critical thinking, self-responsibility
- National Health Education Standard 1
- 30 minutes

SECTION 1: ALL ABOUT ME

Chapter 1: Building Healthy Relationships

Activity 1A: Trust Me!

- Younger youth will identify actions of trustworthy individuals and develop trust between *Health Rocks!*® participants and with program facilitators.
- Life Skills: accepting differences, nurturing relationships, social skills
- National Health Education Standard 2
- 45 minutes

Activity 1B: Who Makes a Good Friend?

- Younger youth will discover qualities of a good friend and evaluate the health of current friendships.
- Life Skills: accepting differences, nurturing relationships, social skills
- National Health Education Standard 2
- 45 minutes

Activity 1C: My Helpers

- Younger youth will identify situations where they may need help and adults to go to for help.
- Life Skills: self-responsibility, personal safety, conflict resolution, nurturing relationships
- National Health Education Standard 8
- 45 minutes

Activity 1D: Be A Mentor

- Younger youth will develop mentor/mentee relationships with even younger youth.
- Life Skills: empathy, concern for others, nurturing relationships, accepting differences, communication, social skills, leadership
- National Health Education Standard 8
- 45 minutes

SECTION 1: ALL ABOUT ME***Chapter 2: Keeping Healthy*****Activity 2A: Is That a Fact?**

- Younger youth will learn actual numbers of their peers (youth statistics) who are using any drug illegally and develop confidence in basing decisions on facts versus assumptions and peer pressure.
- Life Skills: healthy life choices, analyzing information
- National Health Education Standard 1
- 30 minutes

Activity 2B: Is It Legal or Is It Illegal?

- Younger youth will distinguish between legal and illegal drugs.
- Life Skills: teamwork, healthy life choices
- National Health Education Standard 3
- 45 minutes

Activity 2C: Take a Deep Breath

- Younger youth will learn about the health and cosmetic effects of using drugs and experience how smoking affects lung capacity.
- Life Skills: healthy life choices, concern for others, using scientific methods
- National Health Education Standard 1
- 45 minutes

Activity 2D: It's Risky Business

- Younger youth will describe specific health risks associated with using tobacco, alcohol, or drugs and identify personal health priorities.
- Life Skills: self-responsibility, personal safety
- National Health Education Standard 7
- 45 minutes

Activity 2E: Running Free!

- Younger youth will understand about addictions and experience how addictions might feel.
- Life Skills: healthy life choices, analyzing information
- National Health Education Standard 1
- 45 minutes

Activity 2F: It's Spreading!

- Younger youth will understand the scope of opioid addiction in the United States and relate opioid addiction to an epidemic.
- Life Skills: healthy life choices, personal safety
- National Health Education Standard 7
- 30 minutes

SECTION 1: ALL ABOUT ME***Chapter 3: You Choose!*****Activity 3A Part 1: Should I or Shouldn't I?**

- Younger youth will practice decision-making steps and identify options when a decision needs to be made.
- Life Skills: problem solving, decision-making
- National Health Education Standard 5
- 30-45 minutes

Activity 3A Part 2: Don't Get Dragged Down

- Younger youth will predict consequences of each option and choose a healthy option when making a decision.
- Life Skills: problem solving, decision-making
- National Health Education Standard 5
- 60 minutes

Activity 3B: Let Your Head Rule

- Younger youth will use decision-making skills and identify how emotions affect decision-making.
- Life Skills: critical thinking, managing feelings, decision-making
- National Health Education Standard 5
- 45 minutes

Activity 3C: Putting It All Together

- Younger youth will use decision-making skills.
- Life Skills: critical thinking, decision-making, problem solving
- National Health Education Standard 5
- 45 minutes

SECTION 1: ALL ABOUT ME

Chapter 4: Dealing With Difficult Situations

Activity 4A: Keeping It All Together

- Younger youth will identify sources of stress in their lives.
- Life Skills: stress management, concern for others, teamwork
- National Health Education Standard 7
- 30 minutes

Activity 4B: Stress Weighing You Down?

- Younger youth will identify sources of stress in their lives, learn ways to manage stress positively, implement options for relieving stress, and help others overcome stress in healthy ways.
- Life Skills: stress management, concern for others
- National Health Education Standard 7
- 45 - 60 minutes

SECTION 2: WHAT INFLUENCES ME?

Chapter 5: Oh, The Pressure!

Activity 5A: Circle of Friends

- Younger youth will increase their awareness of why people use tobacco, alcohol, and drugs.
- Life Skills: social skills, healthy life choices
- National Health Education Standard 2
- 45 minutes

Activity 5B: My Power Players

- Younger youth will identify and describe how family, peers, and others influence choices.
- Life Skills: self-responsibility, critical thinking
- National Health Education Standard 2
- 45 minutes

Activity 5C: How to Say “NO!”

- Younger youth will demonstrate verbal and non-verbal refusal skills to avoid tobacco, alcohol, and drugs.
- Life Skills: communication, social skills
- National Health Education Standard 4
- 45 minutes

Activity 5D: The Choices That Matter

- Younger youth will identify and describe how family, peers, media, and technology influence choices and identify good and bad choices and the consequences associated with those choices.
- Life Skills: consequences of actions, healthy life choices
- National Health Education Standard 2
- 30-45 minutes

Chapter 6: Technology and Media Messages

Activity 6A: Messages in Our Community

- Younger youth will identify and share ways that media influences healthy behaviors.
- Life Skills: responsible citizenship, self-responsibility, healthy lifestyle choices
- National Health Education Standard 2
- 45 minutes

Activity 6B: What are the Messages in My Community?

- Younger youth will identify how media and technology influence thoughts, feelings, and healthy choices.
- Life Skills: communication, critical thinking
- National Health Education Standard 2
- 45 minutes

Activity 6C: Lights! Camera! Action!

- Younger youth will demonstrate and express opposing or anti messages about tobacco, alcohol, and drugs.
- Life Skills: planning/organizing, teamwork
- National Health Education Standard 8
- 60 minutes

SECTION 3: TAKING IT BEYOND ME

Chapter 7: Commitment to Caring

Activity 7A: Sharing it with the Community

- Younger youth will promote healthy choices related to tobacco, alcohol, and drugs and encourage others to adopt healthy behaviors related to tobacco, alcohol, and drugs.
- Life Skills: responsible citizenship, social responsibility, teamwork, concern for others.
- National Health Education Standard 8
- 45 minutes

Activity 7B: The Best I Can Be

- Younger youth will pledge to adopt a personal tobacco and drug-free life.
- Life Skills: self-responsibility, goal setting, planning/organizing
- National Health Education Standard 7
- 45 minutes

Activity 7C: Celebrating Health Rocks!®

- Younger youth will celebrate their commitment to make healthy choices related to tobacco, alcohol, and drugs, and encourage others to adopt healthy behaviors related to tobacco, alcohol, and drugs.
- Life Skills: sharing, contribution to group effort, healthy life choices
- National Health Education Standard 8
- 45-90 minutes

INTRODUCTORY LESSON:

HEALTH ROCKS![®] IS FOR ME!**Objectives:**

Participants will:

- Discover why healthy minds and healthy bodies are necessary for future success.

Life Skills Learned:

- Healthy Lifestyle Choices
- Critical Thinking
- Self-responsibility

National Health Education Standard 1:

Students will comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.

Time Needed:

30 minutes

Materials Needed:

- **4-H PLEDGE** with traditional hand actions & **4-H PLEDGE YOGA POSES Resource Handout**
- **BREATHING AND STRETCHING FOR RELAXATION Handout**
- Clean floor space or optional yoga mats for stretching activity

DRUGS

Reference to drugs includes those drugs not permitted by law (illegal) and lawful drugs (prescription or over-the-counter) which are obtained or used illegally unless otherwise specified.

Connecting to Tobacco, Alcohol, and Drug Use

The goal of this curriculum is to bring youth, families and communities together to reduce tobacco, alcohol, and drug use by youth. Assisting students in developing the tools necessary to say no to drugs and alcohol is critical. One of the key components of avoiding drugs and alcohol is developing and maintaining a healthy mind and body. Youth who suffer either physically or mentally are more likely to turn to drugs and alcohol. This lesson acts as an introduction to the *Health Rocks![®]* curriculum. It provides an opportunity for youth and adults to build a cohesive group promoting belonging. It also emphasizes how good it feels to be healthy physically and mentally and how healthy individuals can avoid the temptations of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs.

EXPERIENCE THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1.

4-H Pledge

Health Rocks![®] is a 4-H healthy living program. 4-H is a program for youth that strives “to make the best better.” We strive to make the best better when we follow the words of the 4-H Pledge. A pledge is a promise that we make to ourselves and to others. As we say the 4-H Pledge, we can accompany it with the traditional hand gestures. Next, guide the participants in the 4-H Pledge Yoga Poses found in the Resource section to remind us of our pledge to healthy living.

Lead the youth in reciting the 4-H Pledge:

*I pledge my head to greater thinking, my heart to greater loyalty,
my hands to larger service and my health to better living for my club,
my community, my country and my world.*

STEP 2.

Introductory name game with *Know My Name Game*

- Form a circle with the youth. (Make two circles if more than 12 youth)
- Ask children to think of an action word that begins with the same sound as their first name and a way to act out that action.
- Be ready to help them think of a word and ask the group to help, too.
- Give examples: “Dancing Darbie” does a dance move, “Silly Steven” waves hands in the air, and “Twirling Tina” turns, and so on.

Begin the *Know My Name Game*:

- Ask the group to think of an action word that begins with the same sound as their name starts with.
- Say your action word and name and then share the action. Demonstrate.
- Now, everyone in the circle repeats your word, name, and action.
- Next, the person on your right says their word, name, and action, then everyone repeats that person’s name and action and then repeats your word, name, and action!
- This process continues around the circle repeating everyone’s word, name, and action as each new person is introduced.
- Keep going until everyone in the circle has a turn.

EASE OF TEACHING TIP:

Refer to the 4-H Pledge resource sheet which includes actions that support the words of this guiding pledge. These include the traditional 4-H hand gestures and 4-H Pledge Yoga Poses to support healthy living.

EASE OF TEACHING TIP:

Create a rhythm to keep the game fast-paced and fun! Ask children to choose actions they can do in place or at their desk.

STEP 3.

SHARE:

- How do you feel physically after acting out the names?
- What is your heart and breathing doing?
- How does this activity help you remember someone's name?
- Describe your attitude right now. Are you happy? Sad? Excited? Tired? Feeling Blue?
- Can you think of a time you may want to have more energy?
- What facial expressions did you see when you were acting out a name? Did you see smiles or frowns?

STEP 4.

BREATHING AND STRETCHING FOR RELAXATION ACTIVITY

Sometimes we face something that might make us feel stressed out! Yoga, deep breathing and stretching are ways to slow down our body and mind. When the body and mind slow down it actually can make the stress less. Let's try a breathing and stretching exercise for relaxation. Ask participants to lie down on a mat or clean floor space. Move through the **BREATHING AND STRETCHING FOR RELAXATION Handout** with youth. Walk around the room as you give stretching and breathing directions to ensure participation by youth. Once completed, calmly ask youth to return to their seats.

SHARE:

- How do you feel physically after completing the breathing and stretching exercises?
- What is your heart and breathing doing?
- Describe your attitude right now. Are you happy? Sad? Excited? Tired? Depressed?
- Can you think of a time you may want to relax?
- When are some times you could use this breathing and stretching exercise?

STEP 5.

PROCESS:

- Why is it important to have a healthy mind and body?
- How easy is it to make good decisions when you do not feel well? Why or why not?
- Why would using tobacco, drugs, or alcohol, be a bad decision?
- What feelings do you have about participating in a program where you can learn about healthy decisions?

GENERALIZE AND APPLY:

- How will what you learned in this activity be helpful to you when you are faced with a difficult decision?
- When you are upset, sad, or angry, what can you do to help you feel better?
- Is it a good idea to use tobacco, alcohol, or drugs to make you feel better? Why or why not?

EASE OF TEACHING TIP:

Demonstrate breathing and stretching techniques prior to having youth begin the Breathing and Stretching for Relaxation Activity.

STEP 6.

REFLECTION:

- Having a healthy mind and body is important when making good, safe decisions. What does it feel like to have a healthy mind and body?

STEP 7.

Discuss the “Family Corner” and “Community Corner” with participants. Encourage them to do one or both. If they choose to work as a group, help them follow through.

- **Family Corner:** Lead family members through the **4-H Pledge and Breathing and Stretching for Relaxation Handout.**
- **Community Corner:** Organize a relaxation time during recess or after school with friends. Lead friends through the **4-H Pledge and Breathing and Stretching for Relaxation Handout.**



SECTION 1:

ALL ABOUT ME

1

CHAPTER 1:

BUILDING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

OVERVIEW:

TOBACCO, ALCOHOL, AND DRUG USE STATISTICS

ACTIVITY 1A: TRUST ME!

45 minutes - Younger youth will identify actions of trustworthy individuals and develop trust between *Health Rocks!*[®] participants and with program facilitators.

ACTIVITY 1B: WHO MAKES A GOOD FRIEND?

45 minutes - Younger youth will discover qualities of a good friend and evaluate the health of current friendships.

ACTIVITY 1C: MY HELPERS

45 minutes - Younger youth will identify situations where youth may need help and identify adults to go to for help.

ACTIVITY 1D: BE A MENTOR

45 minutes - Younger youth will develop mentor/mentee relationships with other youth.

OVERVIEW CHAPTER 1:

BUILDING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Trust Me!

Building healthy relationships with trustworthy individuals is key in aiding youth to make healthy decisions. In fact, peer influence is one of the key indicators to predicting behavior in youth¹. Thus, it is very important that youth learn the important characteristics necessary to build healthy relationships and the best places and methods to make long-lasting, trustworthy friends.

Meeting New Friends

Making friends seems like an innate process. Frequently, youth simply hang out with individuals who are available. The park, school, playground, and faith based organization all seem like natural places to meet new friends. However, today the online environment is the most common place for youth to meet friends, with Facebook and Instagram being the most popular online locale to meet new people². In fact, 57% of youth have met a new friend online³. With this advent of budding online friendships, it is important that youth know how to identify trustworthy individuals for friendship and guidance.

Peer Influences and Decision-Making

Current research shows that adolescents are likely to spend more time with their peers than with their parents⁴. As a result, it is very important that today's youth are hanging out with the right crowd and making meaningful connections. In addition to making meaningful connections with others, positive mentoring relationships can help youth reverse negative decision-making and reduce misbehavior.⁵ After developing trust in good people, identifying characteristics of good friends, and finding adults to turn to in times of need, youth will be better prepared to handle the challenges of drug and alcohol pressures.

1 Hoorn, J., Dijk, E., Meuwese, R., Rieffe, C., & Crone, E. A. (2016). Peer influence on prosocial behavior in adolescence. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 26(1), 90-100.

2 Lenhart, A. (2016, August 6). Teens, technology, and friendships. Pew Research Center. Retrieved from <http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/08/06/teens-technology-and-friendships/>

3 Smith, A. R., Rosenbaum, G. M., Botdorf, M. A., Steinberg, L., & Chein, J. M. (2018). Peers influence adolescent reward processing, but not response inhibition. *Cognitive, Affective, & Behavioral Neuroscience*, 18(2), 284-295.

4 Bowers, E. P., Geldhof, G. J., Johnson, S. K., Hilliard, L. J., Hershberg, R. M., Lerner, J. V., & Lerner, R. M. (Eds.). (2015). *Promoting positive youth development: Lessons from the 4-H study*. Springer.

5 Karcher, M. J., & Berger, J. R. (2017). *One-to-one cross-age peer mentoring*. Retrieved from <https://nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org/>

Where Do I Belong?

The need for positive peer influences is just one of the essential components of positive youth development. Additionally, youth need to feel like they are part of something, like a member of a community⁶. *Health Rocks!*[®] programming provides avenues to build healthy relationships with youth while supplying resources to make healthy decisions.

6 Bowers, E. P., Geldhof, G. J., Johnson, S. K., Hilliard, L. J., Hershberg, R. M., Lerner, J. V., & Lerner, R. M. (Eds.). (2015). *Promoting positive youth development: Lessons from the 4-H study*. Springer.

ACTIVITY 1A: TRUST ME!

Objectives:

Participants will:

- Identify actions of trustworthy individuals.
- Develop trust between *Health Rocks!*[®] participants and with program facilitators.

Life Skills Learned:

- Accepting Differences
- Nurturing Relationships
- Social Skills

National Health Education Standard 2:

Students will analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors.

Time Needed:

45 minutes

Materials Needed:

- Ball of string/yarn
- Dry erase board or flipchart and markers
- **GREEN LIGHT/RED LIGHT Posters**
- **GREEN LIGHT/RED LIGHT SITUATIONS Resource**
- **TRUSTWORTHY OR NOT Reference**

Connecting to Tobacco, Alcohol, and Drug Use

Trustworthy, positive relationships are key when encouraging or reinforcing healthy behaviors, including the avoidance of drugs and alcohol.⁷ Additionally, in order for students to listen to, understand, and adopt positive behaviors presented in *Health Rocks!*[®], trust needs to be formed among facilitators and youth. If trust is formed, youth are more likely to adopt and practice the lessons taught in *Health Rocks!*[®].

DRUGS

Reference to drugs includes those drugs not permitted by law (illegal) and lawful drugs (prescription or over-the-counter) which are obtained or used illegally unless otherwise specified.

7 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2018, February 7). Healthy friendships in adolescence. Retrieved from <https://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/adolescent-development/healthy-relationships/healthy-friendships/index.html>

EXPERIENCE THE ACTIVITY

Step 1.

Have students stand in a circle. Start by holding the ball of string and saying your name. Then list one positive trait you possess. Examples might include good with math, good listener, helpful at home, picked up trash in the hallway, helped a friend at lunch, held the door open, smiled at my teacher, able to be trusted, etc. While holding onto the end, toss the ball of string to another person. Have them make an introduction, state one positive trait, and, while holding onto the string, toss the ball to another person. A web of trust will build as each group member participates. When everyone has finished, keep building the web of trust by tossing the ball of string around the circle again.

SHARE:

- What did you make with the ball of string?
- What would happen to the web if one person in the group drops their string?

PROCESS:

- How did you feel when you shared a positive trait with the group?
- How is the web like trust?

Step 2.

Ask students, “What is TRUST?” Solicit responses from the group. Tell students that trust is the solid belief in the reliability, honesty, ability, or strength of someone or something. Ask for examples of trustworthy individuals in their lives. Record responses on flip chart paper or dry erase board.

Step 3.

Next, hang up the **GREEN LIGHT/RED LIGHT Posters** found with your curricula materials, on opposite sides of the room. Explain to participants that you are going to read situations where youth are behaving in a certain way. After you have read the situation, instruct students to move to the green light if the situation demonstrates trust or the red light if the situation does not demonstrate trust. If students are unsure, have them stand in the middle of the room. Situations to read aloud are located on the **GREEN LIGHT/RED LIGHT SITUATIONS Resource** found with your curricula materials.

Step 4.

After each situation is read out loud and students have moved, ask students why the people in each situation acted in a trustworthy or untrustworthy manner. Ask for any points of clarification.

**EASE OF
TEACHING TIP:**

Record the responses to this last question on flipchart paper. These responses may be used as group norms and expectations for future *Health Rocks!*[®] classes. Display and review the responses prior to each class as a reminder of the importance of trust between group members.

Step 5.

SHARE:

- Based on the situations, were any difficult to label as trustworthy or untrustworthy? Why?
- Why is it important to be trustworthy?
- Think about someone you trust. What have they done to earn your trust?
- Why is it important to surround yourself with trustworthy friends?
- In a program like *Health Rocks!*[®] where you will learn about making healthy choices about tobacco, alcohol, and drugs, how do trustworthy friends help you make good choices? How can you help your friends make good, trustworthy choices?

Step 6.

PROCESS:

- What is a consequence of not being truthful?
- What is a consequence of being friends with someone who is untrustworthy?
- How do you feel when a friend does something that is trustworthy or untrustworthy?
- How do you feel when you do something trustworthy?

GENERALIZE AND APPLY:

- How can you surround yourself with trustworthy people?
- How does surrounding yourself with trustworthy people help you in avoiding unhealthy choices?
- What types of actions should we follow when in our *Health Rocks!*[®] group to demonstrate trust? (List on dry erase board or flipchart.)

Step 7.

REFLECTION:

- After the activity today, how would you describe trust to someone else?
- What are two characteristics of a trustworthy person?

Step 8.

Discuss the “Family Corner” and “Community Corner” with participants. Encourage them to do one or both. If they choose to do something as a group, help them follow through.

- **Family Corner:** Taking turns going around the room, have each family member list one situation in which they have been trustworthy. What actions or qualities made them act in a trustworthy manner?
- **Community Corner:** Have youth create a social media post displaying and describing trustworthy actions. Have your school/organization post it to Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter.

ACTIVITY 1B:

WHO MAKES A GOOD FRIEND?

Objectives:

Participants will:

- Discover qualities of a good friend.
- Evaluate the health of current friendships.

Life Skills Learned:

- Accepting Differences
- Nurturing Relationships
- Social Skills

National Health Education Standard 2:

Students will analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors.

Time Needed:

45 minutes

Materials Needed:

- Dry erase board or flipchart and markers
- **QUALITIES OF A GOOD FRIEND-FRIENDSHIPS LINKS** Handout
- Paper cut into 6"X 2" strips
- Tape or glue
- Pencils/pens

DRUGS

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Connecting to Tobacco, Alcohol, and Drug Use

Younger youth are heavily influenced by their circles of friends. In many situations, youth look to peers for guidance when choosing to participate in an activity. These peer influences may lead youth down a good path of maturity and responsibility, leading youth to become active in positive experiences such as community service or after-school clubs. On the other hand, negative peer influences may lead youth down a destructive path of drug and alcohol abuse. Continuing to build trust between peer participants and facilitators in the *Health Rocks!*[®] program is important to the adoption and practice of the lessons taught in the curriculum.

EXPERIENCE THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1.

Have students introduce themselves to each other by taking turns shaking each others' hands, saying their names, and identifying one good quality they possess. For example, "My name is Kara and I'm a good listener."

STEP 2.

Write the word "Friend" on the board. Ask students to brainstorm the definition of "Friend" by using one-word adjectives (Kind, Funny, etc.).

STEP 3.

When finished brainstorming, pass out the handout titled, "**QUALITIES OF A GOOD FRIEND.**" Visit with students about the importance of integrity, congeniality, and a caring attitude when being a good friend and making new friends. Also, talk with students about what qualities are associated with integrity, congeniality, and a caring attitude. For example, to be a person of integrity, one must be trustworthy and honest. Talk through the handout with students. Ask for clarification on any of the qualities. Have students select the top two qualities (e.g., loyalty, listening skills, humor, etc.) they feel are necessary to be a good friend.

EASE OF TEACHING TIP:

Consider increasing the number of strips of paper provided to each student in smaller groups.

EASE OF TEACHING TIP:

Groups are encouraged to display their friendship chain in the classroom or group setting throughout the program.

STEP 4.

Pass out two strips of paper to each student. Have students write down one of their selected qualities of a good friend on each strip of paper; one quality per piece of paper.

STEP 5.

As students say their top two qualities to the group, have students link the strips together with tape or glue forming a long friendship chain. Link the two ends of the chain together, forming a circle.

STEP 6.

SHARE:

- What is a friend?
- What are characteristics of good friends?
- What are characteristics that do not make good friends?
- What does it mean to be a good friend?

PROCESS:

- How does it feel when you are around someone who is a good friend?
- How does it feel being around someone who is not a good friend?
- How is a friendship similar to a linked circular chain?
- When thinking about the friendship chain, what happens when someone acts in a way that is not trustworthy, kind, or responsible?
- What kind of a friend do you want to be? Why?

GENERALIZE AND APPLY:

- What have you done that demonstrates you are a good friend?
- What might you do to be a good friend to someone in your *Health Rocks!*[®] class?
- What could you do or say when someone is not being a good friend?
- How do you decide if someone needs to have a second chance at being a good friend?
- How does a good friend help you make the right decisions in life?
- How does a good friend help you avoid risky behaviors such as use of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs?

STEP 7.

REFLECTION:

- What is a synonym for a friend?
- Why is being a good friend important?

STEP 8.

Discuss the “Family Corner” and “Community Corner” with participants. Encourage them to do one or both. If they choose to do something as a group, help them follow through.

- **Family Corner:** Have family members complete the chain activity. Do your chains look the same? Are some of the qualities of a good friend your family thought of the same as what you thought of in your small group? Talk about the qualities of being a good friend as being similar to qualities of being a good family member. Hang up your new chain at your home to remind your family the qualities of a good friend.
- **Community Corner:** Take pictures of your friends holding the friendship chain and write an article about being a good friend. Post this story to a social media site, with adult permission.

ACTIVITY 1C: MY HELPERS

Objectives:

Participants will:

- Identify situations where youth may need help.
- Identify adults to go to for help.

Life Skills Learned:

- Self-responsibility
- Personal Safety
- Conflict Resolution
- Nurturing Relationships

National Health Education Standard 8:

Students will demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

Time Needed:

45 minutes

EASE OF TEACHING TIP:

If materials are available, utilize the YA 4-H! Youth Advocates for Health curriculum for more information and additional resources in building healthy relationships.⁹

Materials Needed:

- **BASKETBALL Handouts**
- **MY TEAM Handouts**
- Pens/pencils
- Scissors
- Tape or glue sticks
- Poster (11 x 22 or larger)
- Small ball to toss

DRUGS

Reference to drugs includes those drugs not permitted by law (illegal) and lawful drugs (prescription or over-the-counter) which are obtained or used illegally unless otherwise specified.

Connecting to Tobacco, Alcohol, and Drug Use

Youth need to develop the self-awareness necessary to identify when they need help and who to turn to when in need. Developing a support system made up of trustworthy individuals is key in developing this self-responsibility.⁸ Then, when faced with drug and alcohol pressures, youth can more easily say no and develop a healthy lifestyle.

8 Griffith, A. N., Melton, T. N., & Deutsch, N. L. (2019). How group experiences influence mentor-mentee relational development in a combined group and one-on-one mentoring program for early adolescent girls. *Applied Developmental Science*, 1-18.

9 Arnold, M. E. & Gifford, L. N. (Eds.). (2014). *YA4-H! Youth Advocates for Health -- Building Successful Youth-Adult Partnerships*. Oregon State University Public Health Extension: Corvallis OR.

**EASE OF
TEACHING TIP:**

If your group has access to an outside basketball hoop and basketball, have youth form a semi-circle around a basketball hoop. Each student will attempt to shoot a basket as they share a time when they received adult assistance in a positive way. Youth securing the rebound will be the next to share.

**EASE OF
TEACHING TIP:**

The ball toss method is helpful to engage each participant in the discussion. When the youth has the ball tossed to them, it is their turn to share. When the youth has completed his/her share and discussion has ceased, the youth will toss the ball to another participant who has not yet shared. The process continues until all have shared or time is called.

EXPERIENCE THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1.

Explain to students that everyone needs help from time to time. These problems might be small or large. Give students examples of situations where one might need adult assistance (riding a bike, starting a garden, solving a math equation, fixing a broken arm, mediating an argument, avoiding drugs, etc.). Students will form a circle and toss a ball from person to person across the circle. As the student catches the ball, they will share a time when they received adult assistance in a positive way.

STEP 2.

Ask students to think of four situations where they might need help from an adult. Have them write each example on a basketball from the **Basketball Handout**. Then, have each youth color and cut out their basketballs. Provide each student with a poster board or other paper, 11 inches x 22 or larger. Examples could include flip chart paper, butcher paper, poster paper or similar. Ask students to glue the finished basketballs vertically down the left side of the paper in a line.

STEP 3.

Next, explain the concept of selecting the best players for your support team, like in basketball. Say, “Who would you like to have on your basketball team? Many of us would want the players who are the fastest, make the most shots, play the best defense and have great teamwork. In real life, you need the best team of adults to share your stories with and help you with your problems!”

STEP 4.

Pass out the **My Team Handout**. Have each youth write down a different name of an adult who can help them in a time of need. Next, ask each youth to color and cut out each team player.

STEP 5.

Youth will glue each “My Team” member on the opposite side of the paper in a vertical line, in random order. You will then instruct youth to draw a line between the basketballs on the left side of the paper with an adult on the right side of the paper who might be most helpful in each situation. Lines may be drawn straight across the paper, in a diagonal line or crossing others. In addition, multiple basketballs may be connected to multiple “My Team” members.

STEP 6.

Using the ball toss method, youth will share and discuss why they matched certain adults with certain problems.

**EASE OF
TEACHING TIP:**

For a variety of reasons, youth may be unable to turn to a parent or guardian for help with a difficult matter. As a *Health Rocks!*® Facilitator, assist the youth in obtaining the appropriate resources for help. Visit the Department of Health and Human Services webpage at <https://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/resources-and-training/find-services/index.html> for helpful resources on different health topics.

STEP 7.

SHARE:

- What are some of the problems you might face?
- Who did you select to be on your team?
- In your life, when have you asked for help in the past? Who did you ask?

PROCESS:

- Why did you select these helpful adults to be a part of your team?
- What qualities do these adults have that make them a helpful member of your support system?
- How have these adults earned your trust?
- How will your problems be clearer and easier to solve with the help from a trusted adult?

GENERALIZE AND APPLY:

- How can you help your friends to develop a supportive team?
- Why might it be difficult asking someone for help?
- Where can you find a helpful adult?
- What might you do if the adults in your home cannot help with a problem?
- What might you say to a trusted adult if you know your friends are engaging in risky behavior (experimenting with drugs or alcohol, etc.)?

STEP 8.

REFLECTION:

- What are two characteristics of an adult on your support team?
- Who will you ask for help in solving a problem?

STEP 9.

Discuss the “Family Corner” and “Community Corner” with participants. Encourage them to do one or both. If they choose to do something as a group, help them follow through.

- **Family Corner:** With your family, go to the park or local gym. Play “Around the World” with a basketball. At each court location, before you shoot the basketball, state one person who is on your support team.
- **Community Corner:** Create “Who’s On My Team?” posters to advocate for adult/youth problem solving relationships. With the help of a trusted adult, hang the posters in local businesses, a community center, or your school.

ACTIVITY 1D:

BE A MENTOR

Objectives:

Participants will:

- Develop mentor/mentee relationships with younger youth.

Life Skills Learned:

- Empathy
- Concern for Others
- Nurturing Relationships
- Accepting Differences
- Communication
- Social Skills
- Leadership

National Health Education Standard 8:

Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.

Time Needed:

45 minutes

Materials Needed:

- Newspapers, unused tissues, or other lightweight paper
- String or yarn
- Tape
- Lightweight washers or other items to be used as weights
- Blindfolds; bandanas, strips of cloth, etc.
- Items to be used for an obstacle course based on your space. Examples include tables, chairs, trash can, ball, hula hoop, etc.

Connecting to Tobacco, Alcohol, and Drug Use

One important component of building a better future is developing mentorship relationships between youth of different ages. Older youth can serve as role models for younger youth, where younger youth can develop in the areas of self-esteem, connectedness, personal identity, and academic attitudes as a result of the mentoring experience.¹⁰ Additionally, mentoring relationships can help youth make positive tobacco, alcohol, and drug-free decisions.

DRUGS

Reference to drugs includes those drugs not permitted by law (illegal) and lawful drugs (prescription or over-the-counter) which are obtained or used illegally unless otherwise specified.

¹⁰ Karcher, M. J. (2005). The effects of developmental mentoring and high school mentors' attendance on their younger mentees' self-esteem, social skills, and connectedness. *Psychology in the Schools*, 42(1), 65-77.

EXPERIENCE THE ACTIVITY

EASE OF TEACHING TIP:

During mentoring activities, make sure all youth are supervised by adults to ensure safe behavior. Mentoring activities should be scheduled, coordinated, and supervised by adult program coordinators to ensure safety and appropriateness of activities.¹¹

EASE OF TEACHING TIP:

If students are struggling, show a YouTube video on how to create a parachute.

EASE OF TEACHING TIP:

A *mentor* is a trusted counselor or guide. A *mentee* is one who is being mentored.¹²

EASE OF TEACHING TIP:

Make sure that your students are well supervised during the trust walk and that you have plenty of open, safe spaces to walk. The activity can be adapted for the space and other items available for the activity, groups of three can be used as well, with the third person acting as a guide to keep the blindfolded person safe.

STEP 1.

Review lesson highlights from the last session to reinforce what participants have learned.

STEP 2.

If technology is available, show students a YouTube video of someone skydiving. If not, have a discussion of a skydiver and under what situations might a person skydive. Emphasize the deployment of the parachute. Ask students about the purpose of a parachute.

STEP 3.

Next, in groups of two to three, instruct students to design their own mini-parachute using newspaper, tissues, string, tape and weights.

STEP 4.

From a higher, safe surface, deploy the parachutes! If the parachute does not deploy or arrive safely to the ground, youth are encouraged to revisit their design and try again.

STEP 5.

Discuss how parachutes help someone stay safe. Emphasize the life-saving qualities of a parachute.

STEP 6.

SHARE:

- What is the purpose of a parachute?
- What happens if someone skydives without a parachute?
- How do life jackets keep swimmers and boaters safe?

STEP 7.

Next, explain to the group they are going to experience what it is like to have a mentor in their lives. In this activity, they will experience what it is like to have a mentor right by them, however, not all mentors are physically by their mentee at all times. Instead, having their support and guidance can be felt much like what they will experience during the activity. Pair the students up so that everyone has a partner.

11 Karcher, M. J. (2005). The effects of developmental mentoring and high school mentors' attendance on their younger mentees' self-esteem, social skills, and connectedness. *Psychology in the Schools, 42*(1), 65-77.

12 Merriam-Webster. (2018). *Online dictionary*. Retrieved from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/>

**EASE OF
TEACHING TIP:**

The instructions for guiding partners through the course safely will require some preparation before this lesson is taught. Using the materials available in your teaching space, come up with instructions that include the mentor guiding their mentee as such: walking around a table, stepping over a ball, getting both feet into a hula hoop, down to the end of the hall and back, around a trash can two times, etc. Depending on space, a time limit may need to be set for the groups. Safety is key!

**EASE OF
TEACHING TIP:**

If working in groups of three students, switch again to allow each group member to experience each role.

STEP 8.

Distribute blindfolds to the groups. While one student is putting on the blindfold, make an obstacle course with the materials you have available in your teaching space. Consider using chairs, hula hoop, trash can, ball, tables, etc.

STEP 9.

After the blindfolds are on and the obstacle course is set up, provide students instructions for how to safely complete the course.

STEP 10.

Explain to the partner groups that one person will be the mentor and will safely guide their partner, the mentee, through the obstacle course. Using the teaching tip for guidance, describe the steps to the partners.

STEP 11.

Allow the partners one trip through the course. After successfully completing the course, allow the groups to switch the roles of mentor and mentee.

STEP 12

After successfully completing the obstacle course again, wrap up the activity by calling the group back to one large group.

PROCESS:

- What is a mentor? Mentee?
- Compare a parachute to a mentor. How are the two similar?
- Compare a life jacket to a mentor. How are the two similar?
- What qualities would a mentor possess?
- How would you feel to have a mentor?
- Why would a mentor be important in helping a person make healthy choices?
- Explain how you might be a mentor and a mentee.

GENERALIZE AND APPLY:

- How can you help to protect younger youth?
- Why would older youth be excellent mentors to younger youth?
- How are you able to help younger youth make healthy choices?
- How are you as a mentor able to help prevent drug use and abuse in younger youth?
- How can you identify a positive mentor for your life?

**EASE OF
TEACHING TIP:**

To help form feelings of connectedness among youth, cross-age peer mentoring matches should be made where there is a 2-3 year age difference between mentors and mentees.¹³

**EASE OF
TEACHING TIP:**

If you are interested in starting a mentoring program with your group, start activities in a large group setting to build trust and familiarity and lessen awkwardness between mentors and mentees.¹⁴

STEP 13.

REFLECTION:

- What is a mentor?
- Who are individuals who look up to you?

STEP 14.

Discuss the “Family Corner” and “Community Corner” with participants. Encourage them to do one or both. If they choose to do something as a group, help them follow through.

- **Family Corner:** With your family, talk about positive mentor/mentee relationships. Ask your parents if they have a mentor. Share who your mentors are.
- **Community Corner:** Create a mentor/mentee program with younger and older youth. Contact local 4-H clubs, boys and girls clubs, faith based youth groups, and schools for ideas.

13 Karcher, M. J., & Berger, J. R. (2017). *One-to-one cross-age peer mentoring*. Retrieved from <https://nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org/>

14 Griffith, A. N., Melton, T. N., & Deutsch, N. L. (2019). How group experiences influence mentor-mentee relational development in a combined group and one-on-one mentoring program for early adolescent girls. *Applied Developmental Science*, 1-18.

LEARN IT, LIVE IT!

It is important that youth are given more opportunities to expand on what they have learned in the *Health Rocks!*[®] curriculum and meet individual group requirements. Utilize this list to develop extended learning opportunities or absentee work for youth. Research shows that youth learn effectively through hands-on experiences. As a result, try to incorporate as much experiential learning as possible to promote positive development in youth. *If youth complete activities outside of the Health Rocks!*[®] classroom, have them complete a **Learn It, Live It! Reflection Sheet**.

1. POSITIVITY POSTER: Using social media, look up ten different role models from your friends list. Based on their posts, create a poster collage of good role models. Write down characteristics that make them good role models.
2. YOUTUBE SENSATION: Create a YouTube video series for youth on the importance of being an honest, truthful friend.
3. PAYING IT FORWARD: Be a mentor for a younger youth, similar to a Big Brother/Big Sister.
4. MODEL MENTORS: Recognize one trustworthy, honest, and caring adult as an Outstanding Mentor of the Month! Write an article about them and post their picture in the local newspaper or on social media.
5. HELPER HOTLINE: Interview an adult who works as a drug abuse hotline counselor. Summarize their responses and share with your *Health Rocks!*[®] group.
6. LINKING IT TOGETHER: Create friendship chains with a group of younger youth. Have them identify characteristics of a good friend and link those characteristics to form a chain.
7. CARING FOR OTHERS: Create a babysitting kit with *Health Rocks!*[®] activities you can complete while caring for children. These activities should focus on building friendships and identifying trusting adults.
8. LIGHTS! CAMERA! ACTION!: Develop a skit with friends focusing on being a positive/negative friend. Present the skit at the next *Health Rocks!*[®] meeting.
9. TIE DYED WITH TRUST: Tie dye matching t-shirts for members of your trust team! Wear the matching shirts on a special occasion.
10. FRIENDSHIP TIES: Make friendship bracelets--if you don't know how, check out a YouTube video. Hand out bracelets to friends and tell each why they are a good friend to you.

ACTIVITY:
SUMMING UP

- Trustworthy, positive relationships are key when encouraging or reinforcing healthy behaviors, including the avoidance of drugs and alcohol.
- Trust is the solid belief in the reliability, honesty, ability, or strength of someone or something.
- Integrity, congeniality, and a caring attitude are essential when being a good friend and making new friends.
- Youth need a support system made up of individuals they can go to in times of need.
- A *mentor* is a trusted counselor or guide.
- A *mentee* is one who is being mentored.

HEALTH ROCKS![®] CHECK-UP

(Instructor Copy)

Directions:

Use these questions to see if participants understood what was being taught. Print copy without answers for participants to fill out.

1. A mentor is someone to turn to in times of need. True/False

Answer: True

Youth can talk to a mentor when they are struggling with friends or just need good advice.

2. Youth cannot serve as mentors to other youth because they are too young.

Answer: False

Age doesn't matter! Anyone who makes positive life choices and has good character can serve as a mentor.

3. Name three individuals who could serve as a mentor.

Answer: (Any three of the following)

Parents/Youth Group Leaders/Coaches/Older Siblings

Anyone who makes positive life choices and decisions can serve as a mentor!

4. In today's day and age the _____ is the most common place for youth to meet friends.

- a. playground
- b. online environment
- c. mall

Answer: online environment

In fact, 57% of youth found a new friend online, with Instagram and Facebook being the most popular sites.

4. Adolescents start spending more time with their peers than with their parents.

Answer: True

This is a very crucial time for youth to surround themselves with positive role models and healthy peers.

5. Only those youth with problems need mentors.

Answer: False

Anyone, regardless of age or life struggles, can benefit from a mentor!

6. What would you like to share about what you have learned?

7. How might you use what you have learned?

