



HEALTHY CHOICES, HOPEFUL FUTURES

A PARENTS GUIDE TO AWARE

7th Grade

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Introduction

Parents, Grandparents, and Caregivers,

Thank you for allowing us to step into the lives of your children and educate them on the subject that is oftentimes easier to avoid than to discuss.

We're thrilled to have the opportunity to educate, equip, and encourage your child to think and plan for a healthy future. We look around today and see that our youth are suffering not just from the physical consequences of sex (although those are very real), but also from the mental and emotional scars inflicted by a culture that defines one's identity by their sexual activity.

Through the AWARE program, we aim to empower your child with the knowledge and skills they need to make healthy choices for a hopeful future. At the same time, we know that your involvement is key to their success.

Because of that, we made this guide as an overview of what your child is learning in AWARE, and to provide you with tools to continue the conversation at home. Your role is crucial!

Sincerely,

Connie Peacock
AWARE Program Coordinator
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DAY ONE

GOALS & ACHIEVEMENT STRATEGIES

7TH GRADE AWARE PRESENTATION

Day 1: Goals and Achievement Strategies

Students start off the time playing a fun game to try to guess the famous person's name on their back. Through this activity, we talk about how each of us has clues about who we are and if we can find out who we are, we know what goals to set for our life.

Students are encouraged to think about how their future goals will affect their health in six areas: physical, intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual and financial. Then students fill in their goals that they'd like to achieve before they graduate high school, in each of the areas of health (physical, intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual and financial).

Finally, students play a game where they have to stretch as far as they can and put tape on the wall, then they repeat it to see if they can do it higher without going on their tippy toes. This illustrates to the students that they can do more than they think they are capable of.

QUESTIONS TO TALK ABOUT:

- What clues do you know about yourself that could help you know your purpose in life?
 - What personal goals do you have? How can you reach those goals?
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DAY TWO

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

7TH GRADE AWARE PRESENTATION

Day 2: Healthy Relationships

This day we investigate the different types of toxic friends and role play the different types of things they say. As a group, we come up with the ideal responses we should give to each type of toxic friend to set healthy boundaries, and then practice those responses. Students are given the opportunity to think about what type of friend they are.

We discuss personal space and how we can talk to other people about our boundaries.

Then, we talk about what the qualities of a good friend are. We define what a healthy relationship looks like and discuss what skills need to be developed in order to achieve a healthy relationship. The importance of character in long-term relationships is emphasized.

QUESTIONS TO TALK ABOUT:

- Do you have any toxic friends that might be holding you back from achieving your goals?
 - How can you be a better friend?
 - What characteristics of healthy relationships do you think are the most important?
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DAY THREE

DECISION MAKING AND BOUNDARIES

7th GRADE AWARE PRESENTATION

Day 3: Decision Making and Boundaries

Students get to hold cards with different parts of a train as an analogy that the engine is like the brain, the emotions are the train cars, and the behavior is the caboose. We move the emotions, or train cars to the front of the train and talk about how that could affect the train and the behavior.

We talk about choices and how each small decision adds up to affect us in bigger ways. Students are given a task of analyzing different decisions they could make for multiple scenarios and how each choice has a consequence, whether good or bad.

We discuss how being intentional in life protects goals. Again, boundaries are emphasized as a strategy in decision making and relationships. Students will bring a “Where Are Your Boundaries” worksheet to discuss with parents at home.

QUESTIONS TO TALK ABOUT

- What emotions in the train car can be most problematic for you? Have you experienced a time where your train crashed because you didn't let your brain drive your behavior?
 - What small choices do you sometimes forget are really important? What are the bigger consequences that could result from these choices?
 - What boundary do you think you should put in place more often?
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DAY FOUR

RISK AVOIDANCE & STD'S

7TH GRADE AWARE PRESENTATION

Day 4: Risk Avoidance and STD's

This day we talk about risk avoidance (abstinence) and sexual abstinence in terms of the whole health of the person – physical, intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual, and financial.

In discussing physical consequences we talk about HIV/AIDS and infertility (caused by untreated STDs), as well as pregnancy.

We talk about the physical progression in relationships and where students should set their boundaries if they are going to make the choice to be sexually abstinent.

We talk about abstaining from sexting and the consequences students could face if they get involved in it.

We encourage students that it's never too late to decide to abstain from things even if they haven't before, and that they can start choosing the best today.

QUESTIONS TO TALK ABOUT:

- What are some ways sexual abstinence could protect you that you hadn't thought about before?
 - Where do you want to set physical boundaries in relationships?
 - What should you do if someone send you an inappropriate picture (sexting)?
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HEALTHY CHOICES, HOPEFUL FUTURES

The conversation doesn't stop here! You are the person that inspires your child to make healthy choices, and you play a crucial role in their future.

Nearly 9 in 10 (87%) young people say it would be much easier for them to delay sexual activity if they have open, honest conversations about this topic with their parents. Statistically, parents have more influence on teens' sexual choices than peers, media, or teachers.

Be encouraged! YOU can be the change!

www.AwareOptions.org