



HEALTHY CHOICES, HOPEFUL FUTURES

A PARENTS GUIDE TO AWARE

8th Grade

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8TH GRADE AWARE PRESENTATION

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
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DAY ONE

WHOLE HEALTH, INTIMACY, & RISK AVOIDANCE

8TH GRADE AWARE PRESENTATION

Day 1: Whole Health, Intimacy, & Risk Avoidance

The first day we start out by letting students know about the 6 types of health (physical, intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual and financial).

We play a fun game where there are 6 buckets for each of the types of health. We explain that there are multiple ways to grow intimacy in each of these categories, not just the physical.

Students write ideas for each of the types of intimacy on small pieces of paper that they then throw into the buckets. Then, we read the different ideas they come up with while they record these on their worksheet.

We then talk about what common roadblocks and obstacles they will face in becoming successful and students brainstorm ideas and skills that can help them overcome life's obstacles. As students identify strategies that will help them be successful, we encourage them in those.

QUESTIONS TO TALK ABOUT:

- What were some of the ideas about how to be intimate that you came up with in class? Had you ever thought about those?
 - What were some obstacles to success that you identified for yourself?
 - What are some strategies you can use to make sure you achieve your goals?
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DAY TWO

GOALS, BOUNDARIES, & REFUSAL SKILLS

8TH GRADE AWARE PRESENTATION

Day 2: Goals, Boundaries, & Refusal Skills

The students play a goal card game where they are given a list of goals to put in chronological order for the most successful life. Once the students agree on the order, the word SEX is introduced and they are again instructed to put it in order for the most successful life. The students are shown that wherever SEX is introduced, CHILDREN may have to also switch timing as well, possibly affecting our goals.

We talk about success sequencing and how setting boundaries includes removing obstacles that will get in the way of achieving goals.

Then students are taught refusal skills, and get into groups to role play different scenarios where they will have to practice these skills.

QUESTIONS TO TALK ABOUT:

- What are some goals you have for your future? How could being sexually active make things more complicated?
 - What scenarios did you have to practice refusal skills for? Was it easy or hard to refuse? Have you had real life experiences where you needed these skills?
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DAY THREE

HEALTHY VS. UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

8th GRADE AWARE PRESENTATION

Day 3: Healthy vs. Unhealthy Relationships

Students are asked to think of people in their life that they admire and identify what traits make them admirable.

After students brainstorm these traits, we define character as how a person acts, behaves or thinks when no one is watching and how this helps to build trust and dependability in relationships.

We then talk about unhealthy relationship red flags to look for and the students rate their relationships using the inventory provided. We provide a Breakup Skills and Strategies Handout to give them ideas on how to end relationships that might be harmful.

We then talk about the risks involved in “sexting” and ask them to think before they post.

QUESTIONS TO TALK ABOUT

- What were the traits you most valued in the people you look up to?
 - Were there any red flags that surprised you that you should be looking for in relationships?
 - Have you seen or heard about a lot of sexting going on in your school? What can you do to educate your peers about it?
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DAY FOUR

SEXUAL RISK
AVOIDANCE,
HEALTHY
RELATIONSHIPS

8TH GRADE AWARE PRESENTATION

Day 4: Sexual Risk Avoidance and Healthy Relationships

The final day we play a game where students break up into 6 groups and the groups write down the risks associated with each of the 6 areas of health (physical, intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual and financial) and at risk sexual behavior. Answers are discussed together.

An example is given of how boundaries provide freedom, safety, and comfort.

Then, the same 6 groups brainstorm the freedoms that can be enjoyed in each of the 6 areas of health by saying “yes” to healthy relationships and “no” to high risk behaviors.

Students are encouraged that even if they have made risky choices in the past, they can still start over and choose the best now.

QUESTIONS TO TALK ABOUT:

- What were some of the risks you talked about in class that you had never thought about before?
 - What are some of the freedoms you experience when you have healthy relationships?
 - Who have we seen go through risky sexual behaviors and struggle? Who do we know who has had a very healthy relationship and how have they had success?
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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