

WISE programming is consistent with federal and state health education standards and based on research and best practices for promoting safety. Lessons are delivered in two parts each school year to build on content and skills learned in previous years of programming with WISE. The strategies of WISE's Prevention and Education Program reflect the Center for Disease Control's Social-Ecological Model, connecting individual, relational, community, and societal factors that influence real and lasting change.

Content includes developmentally appropriate activities and messages that enhance children's self-knowledge, respect for self and others, and fosters rewarding relationships. Themes intentionally repeat to reinforce important concepts around safety, empathy, and asking for help from trusted adults. These build upon each other each year and provide the foundation for later Middle and High school lessons.

Elementary School Lessons

Kindergarten

Kindergartners think about the many ways we take care of our bodies, discuss how adults can help children stay safe and healthy, and practice caring for babies.

Babies: This lesson uses anatomically detailed baby dolls to help kids identify the many ways we care for our bodies. Students learn the difference between public and private body parts and the accurate terminology for private body parts: bottom, vulva, and penis. Educators model the safe and respectful way that adults help infants take care of their bodies by changing their diaper.

Asking for Help: Students are encouraged to ask adults for help when they need it, especially when they have questions about their bodies or feel unsafe or uncomfortable. Each student identifies adults who they can ask for help both at school and at home.

1st Grade

First graders expand upon last year as they are learning to do more things for themselves!

Lessons reinforce asking for help from trusted adults and create expectations for safe and respectful care.

Bodies: With the help of anatomically detailed dolls, students review the difference between public and private body parts and the terms bottom, vulva, and penis. We remember from kindergarten that adults must be safe and respectful when helping kids take care of their bodies. Little kids might need help from trusted adults, but adults and older kids do not need help from younger kids to care for their bodies.

Feelings: Taking care of our bodies includes taking care of our feelings. We make connections to the physical reactions our bodies have to our emotions. Sometimes we feel confused, mixed up, or may have a hard time managing our feelings. Students identify adults who they can ask for help with their feelings.

2nd Grade

Second graders think about respecting other people's bodies, every person's right to say yes or no to being touched, and the amazing things each person's body can do.

Bodies II: Students remember the difference between public and private body parts. Knowing accurate names of body parts decreases the silliness or secrecy that might prevent children from asking for help. Our activity encourages students to celebrate the amazing and unique qualities that each of our bodies have and recognize the different things that our bodies can do.

Asking for Permission: Students learn that each person is the boss of their own body. People should respect our bodies by asking for permission before touching, and we should always ask permission before we touch others, even for things like hugs! Finally, students identify adults who they can ask for help if they ever feel unsafe about a touch or if they are asked to keep a touch a secret.

3rd Grade

Third graders spend more time focused on their feelings – how to identify them and how to take care of their feelings in safe and respectful ways.

Feelings Fortune Tellers: Students remember that the most important relationship is the one we have with ourselves. Paying attention to our feelings is an important part of staying healthy. Students learn that both feelings and coping strategies are unique for each person. Students leave class with a Fortune Teller listing their personal coping strategies.

Trusted Adults: There are some feelings we can work through on our own and some feelings we may want to talk through with a trusted adult. Students brainstorm the qualities that make someone a trusted adult and identify specific adults in their lives who they can ask for help.

4th Grade

Fourth graders start to apply what they've learned to relationships outside of themselves. They think about how to navigate conflict in friendships and how to help classmates in need.

Friendships: As students move into their final years of elementary school, peer groups and friendships gain more importance in their lives. This activity asks students to consider what makes a good friendship and how they can respond to conflict in safe and respectful ways.

Asking for Help/Jake's Story: There are some situations that students may feel aren't safe to navigate on their own. Students read a scenario about Jake, a 4th grade boy who is struggling with his emotions. Together, we think through strategies for coping, asking for help, and demonstrating support for friends who might be in situation's like Jake's.

Elementary School Prevention Program - Content Rationale

INDIVIDUAL

- Emotional health and connectedness is a protective factor against perpetration (CDC, 2017).
- Empathy and concern for how one's actions affect others is protective against perpetration (Yarnell, L., et al., 2014 & CDC, 2017).
- Teaching kids to recognize healthy, unhealthy, and abusive behaviors provides a framework for identifying harmful behaviors in themselves and others (Bolen, R.M, 2003).
- Knowing the correct terms for genitalia decreases victimization (Boyle & Lutzker, 2005).

RELATIONAL

- Peers are one of the most significant social risk factors in health behavior (Yarnell, et al., 2014).
- Inadequate social skills, poor peer relationships, and social isolation are risk factors for perpetration (Ryan, G., 2000).

SOCIAL

- Parents, caregivers, teachers, neighbors, and the community taking action to ensure children's health and safety fosters an external asset for healthy development (Search Institute, 2009).

National Health Education Standards

HES 4: Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health.

HES 5: Students will demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.

HES 7: Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and reduce health risks.

HES 8: Students will demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

We would like to acknowledge and thank Prevent Child Abuse Vermont and their Healthy Relationships Project which inspired some of the activities in our Elementary program.