

## **Middle School Health Curriculum (Grades 5-8)**

by Stephanie Elkowitz

**Goal: Develop students into young adults who prioritize safety, mitigate risks, treat all people with respect and make confident, healthy decisions.**

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### **Unit 1: Pathogens and infectious Disease**

#### Essential Questions

- What are pathogens?
- How do diseases spread?
- How do we study the spread of diseases?
- How does studying the biology of COVID-19 assist our understanding of infectious disease and the development of vaccines?
- What behaviors help prevent foodborne and waterborne illnesses?
- Why is providing clean water important to stopping the spread of disease?

#### Objectives

- Identify four major types of pathogens.
- Discuss modes of transmission and how infectious diseases spread.
- Discuss methods that help prevent the spread of infectious diseases.
- Identify behaviors that prevent the spread of foodborne and waterborne illnesses.
- Analyze data to study the spread of infectious diseases through unsafe water sources.
- Conduct an investigation to simulate the spread of an infectious disease.
- Utilize computer animations to study the biology of COVID-19 and how the virus can change over time due to mutations.

#### Resources

- CK-12
- CDC
- HHMI
- Our World in Data (IIIME)
- FDA
- John Hopkins Medicine
- Nemours Children's Health

#### National Health Behavior Outcomes

- PHW-5, PHW-8

## Unit 2: Nutrition and Healthy Eating

### Essential Questions

- What nutrients are important to the body?
- Why are vitamins and minerals essential to your diet?
- Why is balanced eating important?
- How do you read a nutrition label?
- What are healthy eating decisions you can make?
- Why is it important to recognize overweight and obesity trends?
- How can I make healthy decisions and set goals to keep a healthy weight?
- What is body image and how can it influence emotions and eating habits?

### Objectives

- Compare and contrast the function of carbohydrates, lipids and proteins.
- Identify the role of vitamins and minerals in keeping the human body functioning properly.
- Discuss the importance of balanced eating.
- Evaluate nutrition facts labels to make informed decisions about foods you eat.
- Evaluate primary source data on rates of adult and childhood obesity.
- Set goals and make decisions that help keep a healthy weight.
- Discuss body image, negative feelings associated with weight and eating disorders.

### Resources

- |                                |                           |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| • CK-12                        | • CDC                     |
| • US Department of Agriculture | • WHO                     |
| • Nemours Children's Health    | • Our World in Data, IHME |
| • Osmosis, Elsevier            | • TedEd                   |

### National Health Behavior Outcomes

- FN-1, FN-2, FN-3, FN-4, FN-5, FN-6, FN-7, FN-8, FN-9, FN-10, FN-11, FN-12. PHW-6, PHW-12

## Unit 3: Personal Health and Fitness

### Essential Questions

- What is hygiene?
- How do I practice good hygiene?
- What practices are important to keeping good oral health?
- How can I take care of my vision and hearing?
- How do adolescents utilize healthcare services to prevent or manage disease?
- How do chronic diseases affect kids?
- How do kids manage chronic diseases?
- How much exercise should adolescents get?
- What exercises burn the most calories?
- How does exercise benefit your mind and body?
- How do I keep myself safe while exercising and being active?
- How much sleep do I need?
- How is sleep important to your health?
- How can stress disrupt personal health?
- How can I develop habits to take care of my personal health?

### Objectives

- Evaluate practices that help maintain personal health and good hygiene.
- Identify the importance of preventative healthcare service in maintaining good health.
- Reflect on the impact of chronic diseases in youth.
- Discuss the recommended amount of daily exercise for children, teens and young adults.
- Identify ways to keep yourself safe during exercise and playing sports.
- Discuss the recommended amount of sleep for children, teens and young adults.
- Discuss the importance of sleep in adolescents and young adults.
- Consider the positive and negative effects of stress on the body.

### Resources

- |                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| • BrainPop                    | • Mayo Clinic                              |
| • CDC                         | • Merck Manual                             |
| • Delta Dental                | • Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America |
| • Harvard Health Publishing   | • UNC Children's Healthcare                |
| • NIH                         | • Children's Healthcare of Atlanta         |
| • TedEd                       | • FARE (Food Allergy Research & Education) |
| • Nemours Children's Health   | • Epilepsy Foundation                      |
| • American Dental Association | • National Survey of Children's Health     |
| • Crest                       |  |
| • Boston Children's Hospital  |  |

### National Health Behavior Outcomes

- PHW-1, PHW-2, PHW-3, PHW-5, PHW-6, PHW-7, PHW-9, PHW-10, PHW-11
- PA-1, PA-2, PA-3, PA-4, PA-5, PA-6, PA-7

## Unit 4: Summer Safety, First Aid and Emergency Preparedness

### Essential Questions

- How do you keep safe in the Sun?
- What are the signs and symptoms of heat-related illness?
- Why is water competency important to safety in water environments?
- How do you care for minor injuries and recognize emergency situations?
- How can you prevent and care for bug bites and stings?
- How can I protect myself from poison ivy and other poisonous plants?
- What should you do in case of an emergency?
- When and why do you need an emergency preparedness plan?
- What strategies can you employ to protect yourself from a fire?
- How can you keep safe from carbon monoxide poisoning?

### Objectives

- Discuss the importance of sunscreen and how to use sunscreen.
- Identify safe practices to stay healthy during hot and humid weather.
- Explain how being water competent is important to improving water safety.
- Employ basic first-aid techniques to handle non-emergency situations.
- Utilize preventative strategies to keep safe from flora and fauna outdoors.
- Identify situations that require emergency care and how to contact 911.
- Develop emergency preparedness plans to handle disasters and emergencies.
- Develop practices that help create a fire-safe home and keep you safe in case of a fire.
- Discuss the importance of carbon monoxide detectors in the prevention of carbon monoxide poisoning.

### Resources

- |                             |                                      |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| • Skin Cancer Foundation    | • FDA                                |
| • CDC                       | • AboutKidsHealth                    |
| • Nemours Children's Health | • FEMA                               |
| • American Red Cross        | • US Department of Homeland Security |
| • NOAA                      |                                      |

### National Health Behavior Outcomes

- PHW-4, S-3, S-4, S-5, S-6, S-7, S-8

## Unit 5: Highway and Traffic Safety

### Essential Questions

- What should you do to keep safe as a pedestrian?
- What are important measures to take to maintain bike safety?
- Why are seatbelts important safety devices for motorists and passengers?
- What are negative consequences of distracted driving?
- How does drug and alcohol use by motorists put people in harm's way?
- How does drowsy driving compare to drunk driving?
- How does speeding contribute to unsafe driving scenarios?
- Why is it important to speak up about observing unsafe driving behaviors?

### Objectives

- Examine National Highway Traffic Safety Administration safety standards and practices important to children and teens.
- Review walking safety practices that keep pedestrians safe.
- Review bicycle safety tips to prevent cycling injuries.
- Explain the importance of properly wearing a seatbelt.
- Discuss the consequences of risky driving behaviors, such as distracted driving, drowsy driving and impaired driving due to drugs or alcohol.

### Resources

- |                                   |                             |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • NHTSA                           | • Nemours Children's Health |
| • US Department of Transportation | • NIH                       |
| • IIHS                            | • National Safety Council   |
| • Statista                        | • EndDD.org                 |
| • AAA                             | • Safekids.org              |
| • CDC                             |                             |

### National Health Behavior Outcomes

- AOD-5, AOD-6, S-1, S-2, S-3, S-4, S-8

## Unit 6: Tobacco, Marijuana and Alcohol

### Essential Questions

- What is caffeine and how does it affect my body?
- Is caffeine safe for kids?
- What is tobacco?
- How does smoking affect the body?
- Is vaping safer than smoking cigarettes?
- Is inhaling secondhand smoke just as dangerous as smoking?
- What is marijuana?
- How does marijuana affect the brain and body?
- How can I keep myself safe from marijuana edibles?
- What is alcohol?
- How does alcohol affect the brain?
- How does alcohol negatively impact the health of youth?
- How does misuse and abuse of alcohol negatively affect health?

### Objectives

- Explain how caffeine stimulates the body.
- Compare the detrimental effects of smoking cigarettes and e-cigarettes (vaping).
- Evaluate the dangers associated with marijuana use.
- Identify negative health effects of long term alcohol use and alcohol abuse.
- Compare the short and long term effects of alcohol and marijuana on the developing brain.

### Resources

- TedEd
- Nemour's Children's Health
- FDA
- Columbia University
- NIH National Institute of Drug Abuse
- CDC
- Our World in Data, IHME
- Smokefree.gov
- Ask, Listen, Learn/Responsibility.org
- University of Maryland School of Medicine
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- Federal Trade Commission
- NIH National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
- American Lung Association

### National Health Behavior Outcomes

- AOD-3, AOD-4, AOD-7, AOD-8
- T-1, T-2, T-3, T-4, T-5

## Unit 7: Medicine, Illicit Drugs and Drug Abuse

### Essential Questions

- What are drugs?
- How do you properly use medicine to treat disease?
- How do illegal and commonly abused drugs affect the body?
- How do drugs affect the brain?
- What is prescription drug misuse?
- Why is it so difficult to confront opioid drug abuse and addiction?
- Why is fentanyl so dangerous and concerning?
- Where is illicit drug and drug abuse a concern in the world?
- What are the risks of steroid use?
- What is drug dependency and addiction?

### Objectives

- Discuss the safe use of over-the-counter and prescription drugs.
- Research the dangers of illicit drugs and commonly abused drugs.
- Investigate the cause and effect of prescription drug abuse.
- Study the effects of anabolic steroid abuse.
- Discuss the impact of dependence and addiction to drugs.

### Resources

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| • FuseSchool                         | • NIH National Institute of Drug Abuse |
| • Nemours Children's Health          | • Our World in Data, IHME              |
| • FDA                                | • World Health Organization            |
| • TedEd                              | • National Geographic                  |
| • US Drug Enforcement Administration | • Statista                             |

### National Health Behavior Outcomes

- AOD-1, AOD-2, AOD-4, AOD-7, AOD-8

## Unit 8: Peer Pressure and Digital Safety

### Essential Questions

- What is peer pressure?
- How can you handle peer pressure?
- How can confidence and self-esteem help overcome negative peer pressure?
- What strategies can I employ to deal with rejection?
- How can you be safe and smart while browsing online?
- How can I keep my identity and reputation safe and secure online?
- What is cyberbullying?
- What is sexting and sextortion?
- How can you keep online gaming fun, competitive and exciting?
- What are the pros and cons of social media use?
- How can I navigate and use social media safely?
- Why is it important to disregard social media challenges and trends?
- When are kids allowed to use social media and why is their access restricted?

### Objectives

- Recognize the features and forms of positive and negative peer pressure.
- Develop assertive techniques to respond to negative peer pressure.
- Consider the role confidence and self-esteem play in making healthy decisions.
- Consider strategies to deal with cyberbullying and inappropriate, sexual messages.
- Review guidelines and best practices to keep safe in virtual environments.
- Evaluate the use of social media by children and teenagers.
- Research the physical, emotional and social impact of social media on personal health.

### Resources

- Nemours Children's Health
- SAMHSA
- Amaze.org
- Ask, Listen, Learn
- National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
- SciShow Psych
- TedEd
- St. Louis Children's Hospital
- Federal Trade Commission
- Pew Research Center
- Stopbullying.gov
- US Department of Homeland Security
- Common Sense Media
- The US Surgeon General's Advisory
- Ice Bucket Challenge
- Security.org
- Psych2Go
- American Psychological Association
- CDC
- Statista

### National Health Behavior Outcomes

- MEH-7, MEH-8, MEH-9
- V-1, V-2, V-3, V-4, V-5, V-6, V-7, V-10



## Unit 9: Violence Prevention, Gun Safety and Healthy Communication

### Essential Questions

- What behaviors are considered youth violence and how can we mitigate them?
- What can families, schools and communities do to prevent youth violence?
- What is bullying?
- When is teasing more than just good fun?
- Can bullying be a crime?
- What are important things to remember about teasing, bullying and harassment?
- What should you do if you're being bullied?
- How can you be an upstander to bullying?
- What is hazing?
- What is sexual harassment?
- What should you do if you or someone you care about is sexually abused?
- What should you do if you or someone you care about is physically abused?
- Why is assertiveness important to healthy communication?
- How can you settle conflicts and disagreements peacefully?
- What skills help you be a good communicator and problem-solver?
- What is emotional awareness and why is it important?
- How do firearm injury and gun violence affect adolescents and teens?
- What gun safety practices are important to adolescents and teens?
- What are important things to consider about school violence?

### Objectives

- Recognize the features of teasing, bullying, harassment and hazing.
- Define inappropriate touching, sexual harassment and sexual assault.
- Identify persons and systems that help manage potential, active or past violent scenarios.
- Identify skills that help develop assertiveness and emotional awareness.
- Demonstrate effective communication skills to manage conflict.
- Review strategies that help manage conflict and emotional reactions.
- Review gun safety best practices.
- Explain how to keep yourself and others healthy by employing gun safety strategies.

### Resources

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| • CDC                          | • BrainPop  |
| • WHO                          | • TedEd   |
| • National Library of Medicine | • Twill   |
| • Amaze.org                    | • Office of the US Surgeon General                |
| • Stopbullying.gov             | • Pew Research Center                             |
| • Pacer.org                    | • NSSF  |
| • Nemours Children's Health    | • McGruff the Crime Dog/NCPC                      |
| • Rachel's Challenge           | • US Department of Homeland Security              |
| • Stophazing.org               | • NJ Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness |
| • RAINN.org                    |   |

### National Health Behavior Outcomes

- MEH-1, MEH-2, MEH-3, MEH-4, MEH-5, MEH-6, MEH-7, MEH-8, MEH-9
- V-1, V-2, V-3, V-4, V-5, V-6, V-7, V-8, V-9, V-10

## Unit 10: Adolescent Development and Mental Health

### Essential Questions

- What controls puberty?
- What structures of the male and female body undergo changes during puberty?
- When does puberty begin?
- How do Tanner stages help predict anatomical changes that occur during puberty?
- What happens to girls during puberty?
- What are questions and concerns girls have about puberty?
- What happens to boys during puberty?
- What are questions and concerns boys have about puberty?
- Why is it important to adjust how you take care of your body during puberty?
- How should adolescents take care of their emotions and feelings?
- When should adolescents reach out for help about their feelings and emotions?
- When is anxiety normal and abnormal?
- What are the signs and symptoms of depression?
- How can you take action to help someone who is thinking about suicide?
- How can a growth mindset help navigate adolescent emotions and experiences?

### Objectives

- Identify the role of hormones in triggering the physical and emotional changes in males and females during adolescence.
- Describe physical changes that occur to male and female bodies during puberty.
- Discuss common concerns and stresses associated with puberty.
- Employ healthy habits and new hygiene routines that manage the changes associated with puberty.
- Discuss anxiety, depression and warning signs of suicide.
- Identify persons to reach out to who can support individuals suffering from anxiety and depression.

### Resources

- |                             |                                       |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| • CK-12                     | • CDC                                 |
| • Nemours Children's Health | • Texas Children's Hospital           |
| • SciShow                   | • American Academy of Pediatrics      |
| • Cleveland Clinic          | • National Institute of Mental Health |
| • Amaze.org                 | • John Spencer (YouTube)              |
| • TedEd                     |                                       |

### National Health Behavior Outcomes

- SH-1, PHW-1
- MEH-1, MEH-2, MEH-4, MEH-5, MEH-6, MEH-9

## Unit 11: HIV/AIDS

### Essential Questions

- What is HIV?
- By what means does HIV spread?
- How can I protect myself from HIV?
- How does HIV cause disease?
- What are the stages of HIV?
- How is HIV treated?
- How does HIV/AIDS affect populations around the world?
- How does HIV affect children and adolescents?
- How has research contributed to the evolution of HIV treatment and prevention?

### Objectives

- Identify the methods by which HIV can be transmitted.
- Describe the stages of the HIV reproductive (life) cycle.
- Describe the three stages of HIV infection: acute infection, clinical latency and AIDS.
- Conduct short research to understand the history of HIV and AIDS research.
- Analyze data on the global HIV prevalence and distribution of deaths from HIV/AIDS.
- Evaluate the treatment for HIV and AIDS.

### Resources

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| • CK-12   | • Healthline                            |
| • National Geographic                                 | • Journal of Infectious Disease         |
| • HIV.gov, US Department of Health and Human Services | • Our World in Data, IHME               |
| • HIVinfo.NIH.gov, NIH Office of AIDS Research        | • WHO                                   |
| • TedEd   | • Nature.com                            |
| • Sumanas Animation                                   | • Oxford Academics                      |
| • CDC   | • New England Journal of Medicine Group |

### National Health Behavior Outcomes

- SH-3, SH5, SH-6, SH-8
- AOD-4

## Unit 12: Sexual Health

### Essential Questions

- How do we define sexual activity and sexual health?
- Why do humans have sexual desires and attraction?
- What is risky sexual behavior?
- Are teens engaged in risky sexual behaviors?
- What is masturbation and is it safe?
- What are sexually transmitted diseases and how do they spread?
- How do sexually transmitted diseases negatively affect health?
- What are concerning trends and statistics about STDs?
- How can you protect yourself from STDs?
- What is birth control (contraception)?
- What is abstinence and how does it protect your health?
- What are the consequences of unintended pregnancy?
- Why is it important to not be influenced by peer pressure to be sexually active?
- Why is it important to overcome stigma associated with STDs?
- Why is the doctor-patient relationship important to teens and young adults?
- How can you start conversations about sexual health with your parent/guardian?
- What is sexual orientation?
- What are concerning statistics about LGBTQ teens?
- Why is bullying based on sexual orientation especially concerning?
- What are the features of healthy and unhealthy relationships?
- What is consent?
- How do you get help if you or someone you care about has been raped?

### Objectives

- Define the different forms of sexual content.
- Identify the different infections/diseases that spread through sexual contact.
- Discuss the short and long term impact of STIs on a person's health.
- Compare and contrast abstinence and safe sex practices.
- Discuss the consequences of unintended pregnancy.
- Recognize the benefits of being sexually abstinent.
- Examine the role of the doctor-patient relationship in a teenager's life.
- Recognize the wrongness in teasing, bullying or harassing others because of their sexuality.
- Develop skills to improve communication with parents and guardians about difficult topics.
- Compare and contrast healthy and unhealthy relationships.
- Understand consent and how it applies to sexual relationships.
- Identify persons and systems that help manage sexual acts of violence.

### Resources

- |                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| • Amaze.org                  | • CDC  |
| • ActforYouth                | • NIH  |
| • Boston Children's Hospital | • National Library of Medicine                 |
| • CK-12                      | • U.S. Department of Health and Human Services |
| • Columbia Health            | • HHS Office of Population Affairs             |
| • Penn State Health          | • Pew Research                                 |
| • University of Texas        | • Our World in Data                            |
| • MD Anderson                | • GoodRx                                       |
| • UC San Francisco           |  |

- Nemours Children's Health
- Medline Plus
- University of Simpson College
- University of Mary Washington
- TedEd
- USA Today
- New York Times Op Docs
- BBC News
- ABC News

- iTec
- Cut
- LGBT National Help Center
- It Gets Better Project
- The Trevor Project
- StopBullying.gov
- US Presidential Archives
- The National Domestic Hotline
- RAINN

#### National Health Behavior Outcomes

- SH-2, SH-3, SH-4, SH-5, SH-5, SH-6, SH-7, SH-8, SH-9, SH-10
- PHW-11, V-4, V-6, V-8, V-9