

Factors Influencing Vaccination Decisions

Activity

Resource: Vaccination Talks Toolkit

Grade(s): 7 8

Division(s): Intermediate

Curriculum Expectations

Health and Physical Education: A1: A1.1, A1.2, A1.4, A1.5, A1.6, D1, D2, D3

Overview

- Students apply their critical thinking skills to formulate and explore questions about vaccinations as one protective factor to support their physical health.
- Students identify the factors that impact their decision-making about vaccinations.
- Students reflect on the information gathered about vaccinations to determine if they have acquired sufficient health knowledge to make informed decisions about vaccinations.

Materials Needed

- Access to a shared document (chart paper and markers or online interactive tool)
- Access to available evidence-informed information about vaccinations
- **Question Builder Chart**

Learning Goals

- We are learning to formulate and answer questions about vaccinations as one protective factor to support our physical health.
- We are learning to identify the factors that most impact our decision-making about our health.
- We are learning how to assess the information gathered to determine if we have the health knowledge required to participate in making informed decisions about vaccinations.

Sample Success Criteria

- I can investigate questions to learn more about vaccinations as a protective factor for my physical health.
- I can identify the factors that most impact my decision-making about my health.
- I can assess whether I have acquired enough knowledge about vaccinations and the factors that influence me to make informed decisions about my health.

Opportunities for Assessment

- During the Minds On, use the group sharing to assess students' understanding of ways they take care of their physical and mental health.
- During the Action, use the completed Graffiti Boards to assess students' understanding of the value of vaccinations as one protective factor supporting their physical health.
- At the end of the Consolidation, use the Exit Cards to assess student understanding of the factors that impact decision-making about vaccinations and the health knowledge needed to participate in making informed decisions related to vaccinations.

Minds On

Divide students into groups of four and provide access to a shared document. Use a [Graffiti Board](#) strategy and the following prompt to have students generate and record their ideas about ways they take care of their physical and mental health. (Student examples might include: making healthier food choices regularly, being physically active, getting enough sleep, spending time with friends or activities to support their mental health, talking to someone about emotions or relationship concerns, maintaining good hygiene habits to protect against illness, strategies to stay safe while online, avoiding harmful substances or spending too much time on social media). Invite students to share their ideas with the class.

Teacher prompt: We make choices regularly that help us maintain our physical and mental health. These choices might include selecting healthier foods regularly as part of a healthy eating pattern or monitoring how much time we spend on social media. List some choices you make regularly that help you take care of your physical and mental health.

Using [Direct Instruction](#), explain to students that as they mature and take more responsibility for decisions that affect their health, it is important to acquire the health knowledge and skills needed to make informed decisions. These decisions include understanding how infections are transmitted and taking precautions to avoid contracting contagious diseases. Many factors need to be considered when making decisions about their physical health, including the protective value of vaccinations.

Action

Share the Learning Goals with students and co-construct the Success Criteria.

Have students continue to work in their group on their Graffiti Board to identify and record what they know about vaccinations and how they can help protect a person's physical health.

Provide groups with a Question Builder Chart to create and record questions about vaccinations that they would like to investigate to help them make informed decisions about vaccinations. Provide groups access to available resources to gather information and answer their questions, such as [Government of Canada: Teens, Meet Vaccines](#) or [OMA: Vaccine Facts](#).

Student questions might include:

- What is a vaccine?
- How are vaccines made?
- Who can give vaccinations?
- How do I know if vaccines are safe?
- How might vaccines impact my body and health?
- How might an individual's choice about vaccines impact them in relation to others?
- How might others' choices related to vaccines impact them?
- Why is it important to respect people's choices when they may not align with others?
- Who can influence my decisions about vaccines?

Provide groups with sufficient time to gather and record information about vaccinations on their Graffiti Board, then share some or all of the information gathered with the class. Share the group Graffiti Boards for students to access during the consolidation.

Consolidation

- Use a **Think/Pair/Share** strategy for students to generate and share a list of five factors that influence decision-making related to vaccinations (e.g., family, peers, personal values, beliefs, not having sufficient information, concerns about long-term effects, etc.). Record student responses.
 - Provide each student with an **Exit Card**. Have students remain in their pairs to discuss the following questions and then individually record their answers on their Exit Card.
1. Which factors are most influential when making decisions about your health? Why are they the most influential?
 2. Review the information recorded on your group Graffiti Board. Have you acquired enough knowledge from the information gathered to make an informed decision about vaccinations? What else might you want to know?
 3. Record two pieces of information that are most influential in your decision-making?
 4. Who would you ask to help you make an informed decision?

Ideas for Extension

- Have students identify three pieces of information that have expanded their knowledge about vaccinations and helped them make informed decisions. Have students identify one thing they have learned that they would like to share about vaccines and vaccinations and connections to health across their life course with someone their age.
- Have students create an infographic to share the information they have gathered about vaccinations that might be used by other individuals to make an informed decision about vaccinations.

Notes to Teachers

- This lesson is not intended to convince students that vaccination is the necessary route to optimum health. Decisions related to vaccines remain the responsibility of the parents/caregivers in the context of their family values and beliefs. Instead, it provides students with knowledge about vaccines as one way to help prevent the transmission of diseases and the skills needed to participate in informed decisions about their health.
- It is important to provide opportunities for students to listen, learn and understand diverse views and how these may differ from their own.
- Before teaching students about healthy living topics such as vaccinations, educators should reflect on their own assumptions, prejudices, stereotypes, and biases, as part of creating a safe and inclusive learning environment. Educators should carefully consider the ways their perspectives are articulated to their students and the ways they respond to the ideas of others. An effective way for educators to identify personal bias is through personal reflection. Consider reflecting on these questions to examine personal beliefs and identify potential bias and possible reactions towards the topic of vaccinations.
 - What personal biases and beliefs shape my emotional reaction to the content?
 - What steps will I take to support my students so that my personal biases and beliefs will not interfere with my ability to respond professionally to their questions about vaccination?
 - How will I address the curriculum expectations if aspects of it challenge my personal beliefs?

- In what ways do I demonstrate that I consider and respect the diverse values, experiences, backgrounds, and identities of my students?
- Is the diversity of my students reflected in the scenarios, activities, and resources used in my classroom?
- Be mindful: When engaging students in learning about vaccinations, be mindful of discussions about COVID-19 in a medical context. Inequities and discrimination in the health care system in Canada have been a cause of trauma for Indigenous and Black people and communities across Canada and a deep mistrust of the health care system^{1,2}. Additionally, students may have experienced direct or indirect loss or trauma as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Visit the Adopting a Trauma-Informed Approach webpage for tips when engaging students in healthy living topics such as vaccinations.

Additional Resources

- [Ophea's Vaccination Talks Resource Database](#)
- [Ophea's Vaccination Talks Discussion Guides](#)
- [Ophea's Inquiry Based Learning in Health and Physical Education Resource](#)

¹Gunn, B. Ignored to Death: systemic Racism in the Canadian Healthcare System. Retrieved from:

<https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/IPeoples/EMRIP/Health/UniversityManitoba.pdf>

²Government of Canada. (2022). Social determinants and inequities in health for Black Canadians: A

Snapshot. Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/health-promotion/population-health/what-determines-health/social-determinants-inequities-black-canadians-snapshot.html>