

Vaccinations, Media and Personal Health

Activity

Resource: Vaccination Talks Toolkit

Grade(s): 4 5 6

Division(s): Junior

Curriculum Expectations

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

Language: A2, C1, C2, C3, D1, D2, D3

Overview

- Students apply their critical thinking skills to formulate and explore questions about vaccinations as one factor that contributes to healthy development and their personal health.
- Students analyze and interpret media texts and consider the potential influence messages have on peoples' health decisions related to vaccination.
- Students create a media product to educate their peers about vaccinations to make informed decisions about their personal health while respecting the choices of others.

Materials Needed

- Access to a shared document (chart paper and markers or online interactive tool)
- Access to available evidence-informed information about vaccinations and how they contribute to a person's health

Learning Goals

- We are learning about vaccinations as one factor that contributes to healthy development and personal health.
- We are learning to formulate questions and gather information to answer our questions.
- We are learning how to analyze and interpret media texts and the potential influence messages have on people's health decisions related to vaccination and create a media text to inform our peers.

Sample Success Criteria

- I can formulate questions and gather information to answer my questions about vaccinations and contributions to personal health.
- I can explain how vaccinations contribute to personal health and why people choose or may not choose to be vaccinated.
- I can identify the purpose, audience, conventions and techniques used to convey messages in a media text and produce a media text to inform others about how vaccinations are one factor that contributes to personal health.

Opportunities for Assessment

- During the Minds-On, use the Popcorn strategy to assess students' understanding of regular choices to take care of their personal health.
- During the Action, use the Mind Map activity and sharing to assess students' understanding of vaccinations as a factor contributing to personal health and individual choices about vaccinations. Use the large group discussion to assess student understanding of conventions and persuasive techniques in media texts to influence a person's choices and decisions.
- At the end of the Consolidation, use the group Mind Maps and ideas generated for an Infographic to assess student application of health knowledge to make reasoned decisions about vaccinations that relate to their own and others' health and well-being while respecting choices, beliefs, and practices of others.

Minds-On

Use an [Elbow Partner](#) and [Popcorn](#) strategy and the following prompt to have students generate and record ideas of choices they regularly make to benefit their physical health.

Teacher prompt: As you grow and become more independent, you take more responsibility for your physical and mental health. What are some daily or regular choices you make to take care of your personal health?

Student responses might include:

- Showering regularly
- Looking after my teeth and gums
- Being responsible for folding and putting my clothes away
- Doing homework and chores
- Getting outside for time with friends and physical activity
- Making sure I get enough sleep
- Eating a variety of foods that nourish me

Using [Direct Instruction](#), remind students that it is important to practice good hygiene habits to avoid getting sick. These include regularly washing their hands, using a hand sanitizer, or avoiding sharing their water bottles. Remembering not to touch other people's things when they feel sick also helps protect others from viruses that quickly spread and cause illness. Another choice some people make is to get vaccinated against viruses that spread to avoid infection or from getting really sick from a virus. It is important to know how vaccines contribute to a person's health to make informed personal decisions when that time comes.

Action

Share the Learning Goals with students and co-construct the Success Criteria. Divide students into groups of 4 or 5 and provide access to a shared document. Use a [Mind Map](#) strategy to have groups generate and record questions they have about vaccinations and how they contribute to a person's health. Provide groups access to available resources to answer their questions, such as [CAMH Vaccine Information Guide](#) or [Elmer the Safety Elephant Junior Teacher Guide: Glossary of Terms](#).

Student questions might include:

- What are vaccines?
- What are vaccinations?
- What are some types of vaccinations that people might choose to get?
- How might vaccinations impact one's physical health?
- Do vaccinations affect all people in the same way?
- Why would someone choose to get a vaccination?
- Why would someone choose not to get a vaccination?
- What influences a person's decision about vaccinations?
- What do I want to know more about vaccinations?
- Where can I find out more information to help make an informed choice?

Invite groups to share some of the information they gathered with the class, encouraging other groups to add new information to their Mind Map. Have students remain in their groups and share a sample of an Infographic from available resources such as [Vaccines Work](#) or [Elmer's Advice for Fighting Germs and Viruses like COVID-19](#). Lead a large group discussion using the following prompts to have students analyze a media text to identify the purpose, audience, conventions, and techniques used to appeal to the intended audience and convey overt and implied messages.

Question prompts:

- What do you like about this Infographic?
- What features of this Infographic would draw someone's attention?
- Who do you think created this Infographic, and why did they make it?
- What information does this Infographic give you?
- What information is missing that you would like to know?
- What are some of the messages communicated about vaccinations in this Infographic?
- How might some of these messages affect a person's decision about vaccinations?

What would you add to this Infographic to provide more information for someone your age to help them make an informed decision about vaccinations?

Consolidation

- Inform groups that they have been asked to create an Infographic to share what they have learned about vaccinations with their peers to help them understand more about them and the reasons why people may or may not choose to get a vaccination.
- Have groups collaborate to identify which information they would use from the information gathered on their Mind Map to create an Infographic to share their knowledge with others. Encourage groups to circle or underline ideas, connect the ideas with lines and arrows, and ideas for images they might include. Remind groups that their Infographic should also communicate the importance of respecting others' choices of practices even when they differ from their own.
- Invite groups to share their Infographic ideas with the class.

Ideas for Extension

- Have students create and share their Infographic with an audience of their choice.
- Invite a local public health official (e.g., a nurse practitioner, clinic manager) to answer student questions.

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 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 and learn about diverse views and understand 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](#)

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>