

Starting Healthy[®]

A Comprehensive Preschool Health Education Curriculum

Providing a HEALTHY foundation for children ages 3-5 and their parents

National Center for Health Education
Supported by: MetLife Foundation

74 Preschool Health Education Lessons

Researchers have found that the preschool years represent the most receptive era in children's development and expansion of critical thinking skills, motor skills, vocabulary, second language acquisition, math and logical thinking, and music appreciation. Brain maturation in young children, where the neural circuitry is especially sensitive to growth, provides special "windows of opportunity" for intellectual development, concluding that the earlier and more profound the educational intervention, the greater potential for effectiveness. Starting Healthy[®] prepares children with a base for competency in health promoting skills and a sense of self-efficacy that can be reaffirmed and further developed by continued experience with a planned, sequential, comprehensive health education curriculum. These findings support the National Center for Health Education's comprehensive approach to instilling and maintaining lifelong health promoting behaviors.

Starting Healthy[®] is modeled after NCHE'S nationally recognized and evaluated K-6 Growing Healthy[®] curriculum and addresses the components of comprehensive health education through active, engaging, age, and developmentally appropriate lessons and activities.

Nine Content Areas of Starting Healthy[®] A Comprehensive Health Education Curriculum

- Growth and Development
- Mental and Emotional Health
- Personal Health
- Family Life and Health
- Nutrition
- Disease Prevention and Control
- Safety and First Aid
- Substance Use and Abuse
- Community and Environmental Health Management

Features of Starting Healthy®

- Provides concrete objectives for each of the 74 health lessons
- Addresses the physical, emotional, and cognitive requirements of children
- Integrates a variety of instructional strategies introduced through circle time and learning center activities
- Stresses language development and communication skills
- Encourages intellectual development by introducing children to a variety of cognitive learning clues such as knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation
- Offers opportunities to incorporate and practice life skills
- Utilizes numerous manipulative objects, books, models, posters, puppets, toys, supplies, and materials typically found in preschool classrooms
- Acknowledges a variety of learning styles in each of the lessons
- Promotes independent work as well as group collaboration
- Commences the development of primary literacy and reading readiness skills through health related read aloud books, storytelling, poems, movement, and activities
- Integrates a variety of topics and skills demonstrating to children the interrelationships among different subjects
- Creates associations between classroom activities and children's lives outside the classroom and school
- Honors and respects cultures and languages represented in the classroom and throughout the world
- Assesses individual student progress through ongoing teacher observations
- Incorporates ample health information for teachers, yielding them the competence to teach the subject
- Communicates classroom learning activities (for each of the 100+ lessons) to family, through parent letters (English and Spanish)
- Provides parent training program agendas focused on maximizing family involvement with Pre-K children

For more information, contact:



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