

Grade level:  
preschool, pre-K, or  
kindergarten

Subject:  
health, physical  
education

Class time:  
20 minutes  
or more

## Lesson plan



It's a big, beautiful world out there, and we want our children to feel safe exploring it. Street Smarts is a **fun and empowering** way to teach children about personal safety, manners and life skills. By playing The Game Plan Game, students will increase their vocabulary and decision-making skills to handle uncomfortable or unsafe situations. The goal of The Game Plan Game is to start conversations about personal safety and normalize these conversations. We can empower our children to speak of and make decisions about their bodies, helping to keep them safe.

### Executive functions:

Flexible thinking  
Problem solving  
Paying attention  
Task initiation  
Working memory

### Other skills

Communication  
Cooperative play  
Gross and fine  
motor skills

### During this lesson, students will:

- Increase their vocabulary around their feelings, including feelings associated with safety, discomfort, confusion, or danger.
- Practice expressing their feelings in a supportive space.
- Learn new skills identifying what it means to be safe and feel safe.
- Strengthen their communication and decision-making skills for uncomfortable situations.
- Learn more about the world around them, including their neighborhoods and communities.



## Set up

In this lesson plan you'll find learning objectives for the game, instructions how to play in the classroom and ideas for extending the lesson at home. We include a guide for parents at the end of the lesson which you may want to send home with your students so that they can continue the conversations with their parents or guardians. We encourage you to play The Game Plan Game with your students multiple times which will give them a chance to practice additional skills as they learn more.

Students should know some safety information before they play the game. In the day(s) leading up to the game, help students to review essential safety information including:

- How to say their first and last names
- The first and last names of their parents and caregivers.
- The telephone numbers of their parents and caregivers.
- Their home address.

## Materials

- Download a copy of The Game Plan Game board and materials from [www.gameplangame.com](http://www.gameplangame.com). Add dice, scrap paper, binder clips for character stands and some coins or candies that can be used as tokens (we suggest 20 for 4 players.)
- Copies of the handout "Smart Conversations" one for each student to take home to their parents.

## Instructor prep

- Tape the game board together. Cut out the question cards and character cards if the students are too young to use scissors themselves. Find coins or candy to use as tokens and put them in a box or bag. The characters can be folded to stand or binder clips can be used.
- Review the rules for the game and the “Game Leader Information Guide.”
- Read over a few of the question cards.
- Find a safe and open space for children to play the game. Children are encouraged to move as part of the game and to sometimes yell loudly.

## Procedure

### *Opening*

- Begin by asking students if they know what the word “safe” means. Ask the students if they have ever heard their parents say, “Stay safe!” or “That’s not safe!”
- Explain to the students that today they will learn about safety. They will learn what safety feels like and they will learn some ways to stay safe. To learn about safety, they will play a game called “The Game Plan Game.”, because, everyone needs a game plan.
- Mention that there are some silly parts and some serious parts of the game and that the students should ask lots of questions. Remind students that if they don’t know the answers to questions, that’s okay. Everyone will help each other out during the game.



## Procedure, continued

### *Body of the lesson*

- Ask the students to pick a character. There are eight characters students can choose from, four animals or four kids. If there are more students than characters, you can assign students to teams and they can take turns moving the characters. Many of the question cards have more than one right answer, so multiple students on a team can take turns answering the question.
- Explain the rules of the game to the students. At the start of each turn, the player (or teacher) will roll the dice. The student(s) should help the teacher count out the number of spaces shown on the dice. When the student(s) land on a space, there will be a color on the space and the teacher will draw a question card that matches that color. The teacher will read the question, and the student(s) will try to answer the question. Students can ask for help if they don't know the answer. When they get the question right, they get to move the number of "bonus" spaces shown on the card and draw a token.
- Keep playing until all the students have crossed the finish line or until you run out of class time. If you'd like, you can determine a winner for the game. There are several ways to determine a winner for The Game Plan Game; see the instructions for ideas that might work for your classroom.
- If there is time, play the game again. There are many different questions cards, and students will see new information if they play the game more than once. Plus, playing the game repeatedly will help students practice their safety skills.

### *Closing*

- After the game is over, ask the students what they remember from the game or what questions they have. Practice some new skills with them, such as spelling their names or reciting their phone number.
- Give each student a copy of the handout "Smart Conversations" which they can give to their parents after school.

## Coloring the black-and-white game board

The Game Plan Game board comes in two versions. This lesson plan was written for the color version, which just needs to be assembled and then it's ready for play. If you want to give your students more time to prepare for the game and get excited about playing it, you can print out the black-and-white version of the game board and encourage the students to color in the figures on the board. Many of the figures on the board show safe and unsafe behaviors; you can use them as prompts to start discussing safety issues before the game begins.

## Extending the lesson

After the game is over, you can continue conversations about personal safety by:

- Involving parents through the “Smart Conversations” handout.
- Printing out images of street signs and having students color the images and share them with the class.
- Practicing writing or saying telephone numbers, names, and street addresses.
- Practicing the buddy system.
- Making practice calls to 911 using old phones or toy phones.
- Taking children past the local police station or firehouse.
- Having children dress up in safety roles like doctors, nurses, firefighters, and police persons.
- Walking around the school or playground, pointing out nearby safety equipment like exit signs and fire alarms.
- Teaching children how to “stop, drop, and roll.”
- Encouraging children to wear helmets and protect themselves with sunscreen.



## Curriculum alignment

### *Common Core State Standards Initiative*

The Game Plan Game complements ongoing lessons in literacy and communication. During the game, children are asked open-ended questions about personal health and safety, and children practice giving answers to these questions. In the process, children gain experience communicating their ideas to peers and adults, and they learn a new vocabulary centered around personal safety, their bodies and feelings, and their communities.

The Common Core standards outline several guidelines for literacy among kindergarten students. The Game Plan Game can help educators meet some of these guidelines, including:

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.K.1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.** The Game Plan Game helps students learn and use common nouns and verbs, form plural nouns orally from singular nouns (i.e., “dog, dogs”), understand and use question words like “who,” “what,” and “where,” and use common prepositions like “to,” “from,” “in,” “out,” “by,” and “with.”

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.K.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on kindergarten reading and content.** The Game Plan Game helps children build a vocabulary around their feelings and common, real-world situations such as crossing the street. Most of the new words and phrases in this game are encountered in contextual situations, with adults on hand to explain more about unfamiliar words or phrases. The nature of the gameplay encourages children to immediately practice their new words and phrases. Many of the new words, such as “helpful,” “unsafe,” or “careless” contain prefixes and suffixes that help guide children to the meanings of these words and help them develop pattern-recognition skills for future unknown words.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.K.6: Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts.** The Game Plan Game is designed to initiate conversations about safety, providing children the opportunity to both learn and immediately practice newly acquired words and phrases. A guide included with the game, “Smart Conversations,” encourages parents and children to keep these conversations going after the game is over.

## Curriculum alignment, continued

### *National Health Education Standards*

The National Health Education Standards, produced by the American Cancer Society, covers a wide-range of healthy behaviors, including behaviors relating to personal safety and reducing risk. The Game Plan Game can help educators meet many of the standards outlined by the National Health Education Standards, including:

**NPH-H.K-4.1: Comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention.** The Game Plan Game encourages children to explore the relationships between their choices and healthy outcomes. For instance, as part of the game, children might explore how choosing to wear a helmet might protect them while they are bicycling. The Game Plan Game also helps children develop a vocabulary around health concepts, including their feelings. By learning more words for feelings, children can explore non-physical dimensions of their health including their mental and emotional standards. Social health, especially the influence of families and community on personal health, also features prominently in the game.

**NPH-H.K-4.2: Identify characteristics of valid health information and health-promoting products and services.** The Game Plan Game helps meet this standard by introducing children to health professions like nurse, firefighter, police officer, and emergency responder. Children learn to locate and identify these professionals within their school and community. Through this experience, children also gain understanding of some of the equipment, information, resources, and assistance these personnel may be able provide.

**NPH-H.K-4.3: Demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and reduce health risks.** The Game Plan Game helps children identify responsible and safe behaviors, as well as behaviors that may be unsafe, risky, or harmful. In many situations proposed in the game, students are not asked to memorize a single answer or assess one answer as “right” or “wrong.” Rather, the game asks students to develop personal strategies for staying safe and healthy and consider what behaviors might be employed to avoid or reduce the riskiness of a particular situation.

## Curriculum alignment, continued

### *National Health Education Standards*

**NPH-H.K-4.5: Demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health.** While playing The Game Plan Game, children learn the characteristics of someone who is safe, respectful, and trustworthy. They develop new skills for communicating about their feelings, respecting themselves and their bodies, and respecting the boundaries of others. Children also practice valuable refusal skills by learning that “NO” means “NO” when it comes to their bodies.

