

Grade level:
elementary grades:
1-6

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. The Game Plan Game is a **fun and empowering** way to teach children about personal safety. By playing The Game Plan Game, students will increase their vocabulary and decision-making skills year by year for uncomfortable or unsafe situations. The goal of The Game Plan Game is to start conversations about personal safety and normalize these conversations as children mature. We can empower our children to speak about and make decisions for their bodies, helping to keep them safe.

Executive functions:

Flexible thinking
Problem solving
Paying attention
Decision making
Working memory

Other skills

Interpersonal
Communication
Analyzing influences
Health Promotion

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

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:

- Their emergency numbers
- 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. Add dice, scrap paper, and some coins or candies that can be used as tokens (20 tokens 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. Have students cut out the question cards and character cards. The character cards can be folded to stand or a binder clip can be used. Find coins or candy to use as tokens and put them in a box or bag.
- 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 some safety rules are that everyone should follow. Ask them if their family has their own safety rules.
- Explain to the students that today, they will learn more about safety and life skills. They will learn why it is important and they will learn some new 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, four children and four animals students can choose from. 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 will roll the dice and move the spaces. When the student(s) land on a space, there will be a color on the space and the student will draw a question card that matches that color. They will read the question, and 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 question 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.
- After the game is over, ask the students what they remember from the game or what questions they have for you. Practice some new skills with them.
- 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 emergency numbers and procedures.
- Practicing the buddy system.
- Making practice calls to 911 using toy phones.
- Taking students past the local police station or firehouse.
- Having students 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 when riding a bike, seatbelts when riding in a car and sunscreen when in the sun.

Curriculum alignment

Common Core State Standards Initiative

The Game Plan Game complements ongoing lessons in literacy and communication and meets CCSS alignment. *Standard 3: Accessing Valid Health Information All students will demonstrate the ability to access and analyze health and safety information. Rationale: Students are exposed to numerous sources of information, products, and services. The ability to access and analyze health information and practices provides a foundation for practicing health enhancing behaviors.* The Common Core standards outline several guidelines for literacy among elementary grade students. The Game Plan Game can help educators meet some of these guidelines, including:

Injury Prevention and Safety Standard 1: Essential Concepts

- 1.1.S: Identify safety rules for the home, the school, and the community.
- 1.2.S Identify emergency situations.
- 1.3.S Explain ways to stay safe when riding in a bus or other vehicle.
- 1.4.S Distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate touching.
- 1.5.S Explain that everyone has the right to tell others not to touch his or her body.
- 1.6.S Describe school rules about getting along with others.
- 1.7.S Recognize the characteristics of bullying.
- 1.8.S Identify ways to stay safe when crossing streets, riding a bicycle, or playing.
- 1.9.S Recognize that anything may be poisonous or cause harm if used unsafely.
- 1.10.S Identify people who are strangers and how to avoid contact with strangers.
- 1.11.S Demonstrate how to ask trusted adults for help.

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 frequently 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 to 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.

