

Understanding Prenatal Drug Exposure

Curriculum Overview

Designed for:

- Middle school or high school students
- Community education (parenting classes, fathers or male partners groups, foster care providers, social workers)
- Public health organizations (public service, child abuse prevention, and other public health agencies)
- Clinical education (prenatal and postnatal classes)

Length:

The activities described in this curriculum require between 50 and 65 minutes to complete. With supplemental materials, this curriculum can be adapted to a longer block of time (e.g., 80 to 90 minutes).

Goal:

To help increase awareness of the harm done by maternal drug use during pregnancy, and to help reduce the incidence of prenatal drug exposure by educating people about it.

Synopsis:

This curriculum introduces the Realityworks Drug-Affected Baby, presents documented information about prenatal drug exposure, and provides a group of activities and discussions to educate students and communities about the impact of maternal drug use on the developing fetus. The Realityworks Drug-Affected Baby is an instructional tool created to help increase awareness of the harm done by maternal drug use during pregnancy, and to help reduce the incidence of prenatal drug exposure by educating people about it.

Designed and developed by health education and curriculum specialists, this curriculum includes pre- and post-summative assessments. The lesson and activities include objectives, materials required and approximate class time. Supplemental activities are also suggested. U.S. National Health Education Standards and Family and Consumer Sciences supported are listed.

Issues Addressed:

- The effects of maternal drug use on a fetus and newborn baby
- The impact of those effects on individuals in their infancy, school years, and adulthood
- The financial, family, and social costs of prenatal drug exposure
- The importance of not using any type of drug in any amount during pregnancy unless under the supervision of a physician

Curriculum Components:

- Teacher's guide – complete lesson, including detailed steps of activities, time and materials needed, student worksheets, and instructor information for each lesson
- Student materials
- Survey and assessment tools – to track student knowledge and attitudes prior to and after the learning experience, including summative assessments with answer keys
- Microsoft PowerPoint® presentation slides
- Hyperlinks to web sites with additional information on the topic being discussed, and resource lists of web sites and other materials for additional information

Learning Objectives:

Lesson 1 – The Impact of Prenatal Drug Exposure

- Gain awareness of the facts and concepts surrounding prenatal drug exposure
- Document their initial knowledge about prenatal drug exposure before the start of the lesson
- Define the categories of drugs that can affect an unborn baby's health

- Describe how nutrients, oxygen, and other substances (e.g., drugs) reach a developing fetus
- List the effects of prenatal drug exposure
- Explain what happens developmentally to the fetus when a pregnant woman uses drugs
- Identify the long-term consequences of prenatal drug exposure for individuals, families, and society
- Identify guidelines for prenatal drug exposure prevention
- Identify resources for additional information about prenatal drug exposure and its consequences
- Determine strategies to help a family or mother when prenatal drug exposure is a possibility, or when a disability or disorder related to prenatal drug exposure has been diagnosed by a medical professional
- Summarize important information from the lesson

Lesson 2 – The Impact of Prenatal Methamphetamine Exposure

- Assess prior knowledge before the start of the lesson
- Define terms associated with methamphetamines
- Gain awareness of facts and concepts surrounding meth use and prenatal exposure
- Explain short and long term effects of meth use and abuse in the body
- Identify the risks associated with methamphetamine use for the mother
- Identify short term effects of MA use during pregnancy on the unborn and newborn child
- Identify long term potential physical risks of MA use during pregnancy on children ages 1 to 3 years of age, up to 15 years of age
- Compare and contrast MA and cocaine use
- Analyze the dangers of MA production and the dangers to the user and children in the vicinity
- Identify other health, social, economic, educational, emotional, and judicial costs incurred with MA use and addiction for the individual, family and community
- Determine early intervention strategies to help a family or mother when prenatal meth exposure is a possibility, or when a disability or disorder has been diagnosed by a medical professional
- Identify resources for additional information about prenatal meth exposure and its consequences
- Summarize important information from the lesson.
- Assess knowledge gained from lesson