

LESSON 8

MY EMPOWERED SELF!

Empowerment is the key to making healthy choices. This lesson will help students create a clear picture of their self-identity, and in turn develop a sense of personal empowerment.

OBJECTIVES:

PARTICIPANTS WILL:

- Review personal strengths.
- Define empowerment.
- Connect empowerment with making positive life choices.

LIFE SKILLS LEARNED:

- Healthy Lifestyle Choices
- Self-Discipline
- Goal Setting

NATIONAL HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARD 8:

Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.

TIME NEEDED: 1 hour

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Blank paper (one paper for each youth)
- Markers/colored pencils
- **My Empowered Self Handout** (one copy for each youth)
- White board or flipchart and markers

DRUGS – References to drugs includes those drugs not permitted by law (illegal) and lawful drugs (prescription or over-the-counter) which are obtained or used illegally unless otherwise specified.

CONNECTING TO TOBACCO, ALCOHOL & DRUG USE

According to Merriam-Webster, empowerment is the power, right, or authority to perform various acts or duties.[1] After completing these lessons on vaping prevention and cessation, youth are more empowered to create a successful future for themselves that does not involve vaping, smoking, or drug use![2] Part of this empowerment is the ability to visualize a successful future in life!

1. Merriam-Webster. (2018). Online dictionary. Retrieved from https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/empowerment
2. The Truth. (2020). Take action. Retrieved from https://www.thetruth.com/take-action

EXPERIENCE THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1

Ask youth to recall previous concepts learned relating to vaping and vaping prevention. Record topics on a whiteboard or flipchart. Emphasize the journey they took as they created a healthier future.

TEACHING TIP – Youth may not be forthcoming in remembering content learned. Be prepared to ask leading questions so that youth can review important concepts learned throughout Health Rocks!.

STEP 2

To remind youth of their strengths and good personal qualities, youth will create an acrostic poem. An acrostic poem involves writing your name vertically on a piece of paper and then selecting a personal quality or strength that begins with each letter of your first name. An example of this as follows:

Smart
Artistic
Really funny
Adaptable
Honest

"My name is Sarah. I'm smart, artistic, really funny, adaptable, and honest. I have the power to create my future!"

Hand each youth a piece of paper. Give them time to create and share their acrostic poems. Hang up acrostic poems in a common space.

TEACHING TIP – If youth struggle to recall/think of their strengths or good qualities, partner youth up with others and have them brainstorm strengths/good qualities.

TEACHING TIP – Have youth read through their acrostic poem. End each presentation with a power clap ("On the count of three, we will clap one time in unison. One...two.... three....clap!")

STEP 3

Give each youth a copy of the **My Empowered Self Handout**. The handout will assist youth in taking the initiative to visualize their positive futures. Lead youth in completing the handout, section by section. After youth complete the handout, share their responses.

STEP 4

Write the word "empowerment" on a whiteboard or flipchart. Ask youth what it means to feel empowered. Answers may include 'powerful,' 'able,' 'in control,' and 'confident.' Have a conversation with youth about feeling empowered in choosing one's own future.

STEP 5

Share:

- What are strengths?
- How can you use your strengths in making good life choices? How about avoiding poor choices?
- Do you have the same strengths as your friends? Why or why not?

Process:

- How does it feel to be empowered?
- How can visualizing your future help you make good choices?
- How can vaping/smoking/doing drugs affect your future?

Generalize and Apply:

- In addition to choosing the right path, how can empowerment lead you to help others?
- What are the qualities of an empowered person?
- Can someone go from making poor choices to selecting positive choices? Why or why not?
- Who is a positively empowered person in your life?

STEP 6

Reflection:

- What is empowerment?
- What is something that you're excited about in your future?

STEP 7

Discuss the "Family Corner" and "Community Corner" with participants. Encourage them to do one or both. If they choose to work as a group, help them follow through.

- **Family Corner:** Create acrostic poems with your family members. Share each others' strengths and display poems in your home.
- **Community Corner:** Invite career speakers to your next **Health Rocks!** meeting. Ask them about their strengths and what empowers them in making positive choices.