

SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT OTC MEDICINE SAFETY!

Students learn how to create a public service announcement (PSA) to communicate important medicine safety information to a targeted audience, while practicing skills that support writing and speaking and listening.

TIME: 30 minutes, plus time to create PSAs

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Identify a central idea and supporting details regarding safe medicine use
- Develop a persuasive text to teach others why medicine safety is important

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Copies of the [Inspire Others to Stay Medicine-Safe!](#) reproducible activity sheet for each student in your class
- Optional: computer with internet access and whiteboard or projector
- Sample PSAs to share with students, such as poster and video examples from the [Ad Council](#) on emergency preparedness and texting and driving; audio examples from the [CDC on flu vaccines](#)



HOW TO USE THIS LESSON

- Ask students to imagine they have an urgent message to communicate to their community. What tools could they use to help them reach the most people?
- Explain to students that a public service announcement (PSA) is a message to raise awareness about an important issue.
- Emphasize that the purpose of a PSA is to educate people about an issue and encourage them to take action to change a certain behavior.
- Inform students that PSAs are usually created in the form of commercials on television or streaming services, social media campaigns, radio, billboard, or print ads, or text messages. If possible, show a few examples of PSA campaigns that are suitable for your group and will resonate with them (see sample links under Materials Needed). Have students brainstorm other PSA campaigns they know.
- Distribute the activity sheet. Explain to students that they will be creating a PSA focused on OTC medicine safety. Emphasize that their target audience is anyone unfamiliar with the topic, for example younger students, their peers, family members, or people within their community who may not know about how to use medicines safely and may not realize that OTC medicines can cause harm if not used properly.
- Guide students through the planning and drafting process. Encourage them to use the sidebar on the activity sheet to select key points that will best support their message and to include a call to action.
- Review all PSAs for appropriateness and safe, correct messaging. Then assist students in distributing, displaying, or presenting their PSAs in the school or community (class website, gallery walk, school assembly, etc.).
- At the conclusion of the lesson, remind students that they should *never* take medicine without the approval and supervision of a parent or trusted adult. Ask them whether they think their PSAs communicated this message to others.



OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICINE SAFETY



Johnson & Johnson CONSUMER HEALTH

Inspire Others to Stay Medicine-Safe!

Use what you've learned about OTC medicine safety to create a public service announcement (PSA).

Directions: Use the prompts below to organize your thinking. Keep your message short and to the point and select content that specifically targets your intended audience. Write your thoughts on separate paper and answer the questions below to help you.

Topic
OTC Medicine Safety

Target audience (choose one)
Younger students, peers, family members, or community members

Plan Your PSA

- Pick one central idea and condense it into a clear and simple call-to-action (what you want people to do).

PSA idea: _____

Call-to-action: _____

- Conduct research to identify supporting facts. Note your sources:

- Consider your target audience – *What do they need to know? What matters to them?*

- Select a presentation format: a poster, video, radio spot, or another medium. PSA format:

- Consider which visual elements will best support and enhance your message, and capture the attention of your audience. Describe the visuals you have in mind here:

Start Drafting

- Create a brief script that supports your call-to-action. As you plan:
 - Highlight major and minor points that you want to make
 - Double-check that the research and data you include are accurate
 - Make sure to include a memorable call-to-action!
- For print format: Write and illustrate your final draft
- For video format: Film and edit your PSA (aim for a 30-second clip)

Share Your PSA

Work with your teacher to share your PSA with your class and to determine the best way to share it with your target audience.

Key Points to Support Your PSA

- Young people should only use medicine with the approval and supervision of a parent or trusted adult.
- Like prescription medicines, OTC medicines can cause serious harm if not used properly.
- Read the Drug Facts label and follow the **Directions** every single time.
- Only use the dosing device packaged with the medicine.
- Post the **Poison Help Line** in your home: **1-800-222-1222**. Call if you have questions or concerns.
- Remember to store medicines up, away, and out of sight of small children.

