

4-H Grab and Go: *Is it Worth the Risk?*

Concept:

Options and consequences of decisions are associated with some risky behaviors.

Age/Grade Level:

Middle School: Ages 12-15

Education Standard:

National Health Education Standard 5: Demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health

Life Skill:

Communications, Social Skills

Success Indicator:

Youth will demonstrate how to brainstorm multiple options and consider consequences of those options when making decisions.

National 4-H Curriculum:

**Health
Rocks!**

4-H ■ HEALTHY LIFE SERIES

PREPARATION

Time: 30 – 45 minutes

Space:

Large open classroom

Materials:

- Chalkboard/chalk or Flip-chart/markers
- Pencils/pens
- Paper

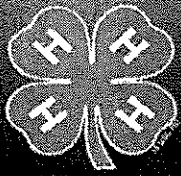
Background Information:

Teens have reached a stage in their life where they feel independent and are making very critical decisions that can affect them for a lifetime. Being able to weigh various options using their own judgment with input from others, and coming to an independent conclusion based on input, alternatives, and consequences are all part of healthy development.

Decision-making abilities during the teen years are developing. Teens are beginning to see multiple options and compare them based on not only short-term but long-term consequences. They are beginning to make more sound decisions about engaging in risky situations where tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs are involved. However, because this process is still in development, it is important to help teens further develop those skills in forward thinking and weighing consequences versus rewards.

Instructions:

1. With the group, select one risky situation that they or someone else has been in or had to face. As the situation is shared, write a brief outline on the chalkboard/flipchart so all of the details are included. Ask the group to identify several reasons why they consider this to be a risky situation. What are some ways to identify when a situation is risky?
2. Ask the participants to look at the situation and brainstorm their options. What are some choices or alternatives they have? Use brainstorming as a way to identify as many options as they can (See **Learn More**). Record all the options on the chalkboard/flipchart.
3. Define and discuss consequences. How does knowing the consequences affect the decisions you make?
4. Divide participants into pairs. Have each pair select three options brainstormed in Step 2 and write them on a sheet of paper. Have each group answer the following questions for each option:



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Youth Development Tips:

If you think of some options they have left out, you might help by sharing a few ideas.

Be prepared to share a risky situation if the youth don't think of one.

Open Ended Questions:

- How do consequences affect your decisions?
- Why do you think that practicing these skills is important?
- Why would you even consider some of the other options?
- Is it hard to always say no? Why?
- How can you use brainstorming to help your peers when they are in a risky situation?

- Why would I consider this option?
 - What do I know that would help me make a choice?
 - How am I going to defend my decision?
5. When finished, talk about the options, consequences, and their answers to the questions.
 6. Review the **Open Ended Questions**.

Additional Notes/Extension/Glossary

Options - choices, ideas, or alternatives.

Consequences - what might happen because a certain action is taken.

Short-term consequences - occur within a few weeks.

Long-term consequences - occur within a couple of years or even longer into the future.

Learn More

RULES TO BRAINSTORMING

During brainstorming, no idea is too ridiculous or unworkable. Follow these simple rules:

1. Wild, crazy ideas are okay.
2. No criticizing, evaluating, judging, or defending an idea during the brainstorming session. Only give ideas.
3. The more ideas the better. This is one time when quality is not as important as quantity.
4. Everyone in a group must contribute.
5. Every idea has the same worth. No idea is better or worse than another.
6. Use the ideas of others to build on or come up with more ideas.
7. Record all ideas. The person recording should write ideas down exactly as said—no editing. When ideas are coming very fast in a group, it may be helpful to have two recorders.