NOTE TO TEACHERS: Below is a sample administrator/principal notification letter that you may adapt to inform your administrator or principal of your desire to teach the *OTC Medicine Safety* program.

CUT OR FOLD HERE BEFORE REPRODUCING

Dear Administrator or Principal:

I wanted to make you aware of my interest in incorporating *OTC Medicine Safety,* a unit of study about over-the-counter (OTC) medicine safety, into my classroom health curriculum. Designed specifically for 5th- and 6th-grade students, *OTC Medicine Safety* offers important age-appropriate lessons with direct connections to Common Core State Standards. *See attached chart for reference.*

OTC Medicine Safety offers valuable information my students will be able to apply to their daily lives in immediate, tangible ways. I'd be happy to meet with you and discuss any questions or concerns you may have surrounding incorporation of *OTC Medicine Safety* into our classroom studies.

Sincerely, _____

Why is this topic important for our students?

Research shows students begin to self-medicate around 11 years old; unfortunately, when not equipped with the knowledge and information to make safe choices, adolescents may end up doing more harm than good.[1] Medicine errors and misuse of OTC medications result in approximately 10,000 ER visits for kids under 18 each year.[2] As educators, we have the opportunity to reach students during this critical period as they begin to develop their self-care skills. This new program will emphasize to students the importance of using medication only under the supervision of an adult.

Educator and Student Tested

OTC Medicine Safety was developed with input from 5th- and 6th-grade educators, and it was tested among students in the target age groups, too. Students completing the program showed a measurable increase in their knowledge and awareness of responsible use of OTC medicines. This leads to more positive health outcomes not only for the students we have reached, but for the family and friends they inform, as well.

scholastic.com/OTCmedsafety

Summary of Learning Outcomes

The following learning outcomes help prepare students for real-world situations with OTC medicines. In addition to building skills in critical thinking, ELA, science, and health, students will:

1. Identify the differences between prescription (Rx) and OTC medicines.
2. Understand the importance of the *Drug Facts* label and be able to identify its different sections.
3. Effectively use information from the *Drug Facts* label under the supervision of a parent or trusted adult.
4. Distinguish between safe and unsafe storage locations for OTC medicines, and safe disposal.
5. Understand that using OTC medicines inappropriately can cause harm.
6. Recognize unsafe situations involving OTC medicines and use problem-solving skills to brainstorm solutions.
7. Identify the Poison Help number (1-800-222-1222) and understand that this free resource is available to support safe medicine use.

1. Cheryl Abel, Kerri Johnson, Dustin Waller, Maha Abdalla, and Carroll-Ann W. Goldsmith. Nonprescription medication use and literacy among New Hampshire eighth graders. *Journal of the American Pharmacists Association*. 2012; 777–787.
2. Schillie, Sarah F. et al. Medication Overdoses Leading to Emergency Department Visitis Among Children. 2009: American Journal of Preventive Medicine. Volume 37, Issue 3, 181-187.

Below are the Common Core State Standards that the *OTC Medicine Safety* program supports.

EDUCATION STANDARDS

GRADE 5

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS:
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND LITERACY IN HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES, SCIENCE, AND TECHNICAL SUBJECTS

SPEAKING AND LISTENING:

- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on grade 5 topics and texts. **(Lessons 1, 2, 3, and 4)**
- Summarize a written text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats. **(Lessons 2, 3, and 4)**
- Report on a topic or text or present an opinion, sequencing ideas logically and using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details. **(Lesson 3)**

READING:

- Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text. **(Lesson 2)**
- Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly. **(Lessons 2 and 3)**

WRITING:

- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas. **(Lessons 2 and 4)**
- Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation. **(Lesson 2)**

NEXT GENERATION SCIENCE STANDARDS

- **Understanding About the Nature of Science:** Science is a human endeavor **(Lessons 1, 2, and 3)**

GRADE 6

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS:
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND LITERACY IN HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES, SCIENCE, AND TECHNICAL SUBJECTS

SPEAKING AND LISTENING:

- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues. **(Lessons 1, 2, 3, and 4)**
- Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats and explain how it contributes to a topic. **(Lessons 2 and 3)**
- Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details. **(Lesson 3)**

READING:

- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text. **(Lesson 2)**
- Integrate information presented in different media or formats as well as in words. **(Lessons 2 and 3)**

READING IN SCIENCE AND TECHNICAL SUBJECTS:

- Follow precisely a multistep procedure when carrying out experiments. **(Lesson 3)**
- Determine the meaning of symbols, key terms, and other domain-specific words and phrases. **(Lessons 1 and 2)**
- Integrate quantitative or technical information expressed in words in a text. **(Lesson 2)**
- Compare and contrast the information gained from experiments, simulations, video, or multimedia sources with text on the same topic. **(Lesson 3)**

WRITING:

- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information. **(Lessons 2 and 4)**
- Conduct short research projects to answer a question. **(Lesson 2)**
- Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes. **(Lesson 2)**
- Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. **(Lesson 4)**

NEXT GENERATION SCIENCE STANDARDS

- **Understanding About the Nature of Science:** Science is a human endeavor **(Lessons 1, 2, and 3)**

SOURCES: English Language Arts/Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects: National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), corestandards.org/read-the-standards. Science: Next Generation Science Standards, nextgenscience.org.