

Won't this put ideas into their heads? Is this a how-to?

Keep your language positive. Let them know we do want to put ideas into their heads....healthy ones! The earlier, the better!

"They get so many unhealthy ideas & messages from media, peers, and irresponsible adults at an early age that we have to provide honest, accurate information in a safe space with caring and supportive adults sooner, rather than later. Our goal with this program is to support what you are teaching at home to help young people learn how to make good, responsible decisions."

My child is too young for this, why do they need it now?

Have your facts ready. At what age is this issue impacting your youth? Express empathy and remind them of the powerful influence that peers have.

"I felt that the same way when I first heard about the program, but then I read through it and realized that it is age appropriate, respectful, and really about life skills like good decision making. We know that this is the age some of our kids start to face these issues and when we think about it, there's only two time points to receive information...before you need it, or after you need it. We are trying to equip them with life skills before they get into risky situations."

"It's important to remember even if your kids aren't thinking about these things or experiencing risky situations, some of their peers are and they can be a good source of support for their friends."

Can you skip this lesson?

First listen, and offer to go over lesson to ease their concerns. If that doesn't work, be sure about organization and/or funding guidelines before you offer any alternatives.

Can I sit in on the class?

Thank them for interest and engagement. Be sure about organization rules but in many cases, this is up to the facilitator. However, if this is a sensitive topic, it is preferable to kindly say 'no'. If you have to let them sit in due to organizational rules, let the class know beforehand.

"It's great that you are so engaged! Actually, one of the core components of the program is group discussion and it's important that the kids in the group feel safe and comfortable sharing. If another adult is present, that may impact participation so we ask that parents don't sit in on the lessons with discussion."

Can you let me know what my child says in discussion?

Be sure of your obligation and protocol for reporting harmful behaviors, provide a list of topics & dates, and encourage them to ask their child what they discussed in class.

"Of course if there is any cause for concern for any harmful behaviors/situations I will follow our protocol for reporting that, but aside from that, we have so much discussion, I don't keep track of what individual students say. But I'm glad you asked because I have a list here of the topics we'll discuss on each day, so you can ask them what they took away from today's lesson. I'm happy to help you come up with other questions for you to ask them around each topic."

