

# Getting Savvy about STI Testing

A Lesson Plan from *Rights, Respect, Responsibility: A K-12 Curriculum*

Fostering responsibility by respecting young people's rights to honest sexuality education.

## NSES ALIGNMENT:

Students will be able to:

**SH.12.SM.1** – Analyze individual responsibility about testing for and informing partners about STDs and HIV status.

**SH.12.ADV.1** – Advocate for sexually active youth to get STD/HIV testing and treatment.

**TARGET GRADE:** High School  
– Lesson 5

**TIME:** 50 Minutes

## MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Projector and screen
- Computer with Internet access and audio equipment
- White board and markers
- “*Getting Savvy about STI and HIV Testing*” worksheet (one per each group of 3-4 students)

## ADVANCE PREPARATION FOR LESSON:

- Log into YouTube using your district ID and password.
- Access the following websites and preview them prior to instruction:
  - *STD Zombie* public service ad: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=89Cqx18fFb8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=89Cqx18fFb8)
  - *CDC GetTested* website: <https://gettested.cdc.gov>
  - *Let's Talk About Sexual Health* video: <https://vimeo.com/43631114>

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. List at least two reasons why a person might choose to get tested for STIs and HIV, and at least two reasons why they might choose not to. [Knowledge]
2. Identify at least two resources for STI testing and one resource for HIV testing in their own community. [Knowledge]
3. Describe the rights young people have regarding STI and HIV testing including confidentiality and the quality of care they should receive from the provider. [Knowledge]

## A NOTE ABOUT LANGUAGE:

Language is important and we've intentionally been very careful about our language throughout this curriculum. You may notice language throughout the curriculum that seems less familiar—using the pronoun “they” instead of “her” or “him,” using gender neutral names in scenarios and role-plays and referring to “someone with a vulva” vs. a girl or woman. This is intended to make the curriculum inclusive of all genders and gender identities. You will need to determine for yourself how much and how often you can do this in your own school and classroom and should make adjustments accordingly.

## PROCEDURE:

**STEP 1:** Tell your students that thinking about having sex is a perfectly normal and natural part of growing up. You just want to make sure that they understand some ways to stay healthy if and when they start to explore their sexuality with others. Tell the students that today

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you will be talking about STIs and HIV, and specifically the importance of getting tested when people become sexually active.

Play the *STD Zombie* video at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=89Cqx18fFb8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=89Cqx18fFb8). When the video is over, ask students: **“So this is intended to be funny, but it also brings up an important point. The zombie really wanted to eat the person, but it didn’t because they hadn’t been tested. What did you think of that?”** (5 minutes)

**STEP 2:** Say, **“Making the decision to get tested for STIs can be complicated. There are reasons why people choose to get tested, and reasons why people choose not to.”** As you are speaking, write on the board, “Why people get tested” and to the right of that “Why people DON’T get tested,” with a decent space between the two. Underline both.

Ask, **“What are some of the reasons why someone might choose to get tested?”** Write these on the board beneath the first heading, probing for:

- Because they had unprotected sex with someone and are now thinking they should get tested.
- Because they thought they and their partner were in a monogamous relationship (only having sex with each other) and found out later that their partner was having sex with other people.
- Because they started to experience some symptoms and didn’t know if that meant they had an STI.
- Because they were sexually assaulted and need to know whether it resulted in an STI of some kind.
- Because they’re excited about starting a new relationship and want to show their partner that they care about them.

Ask, **“If there are all these reasons why people would want to get tested, why do you think anyone would choose *not* to?”** Record these answers in the next column, probing for:

- Because they don’t want to know (discuss why people might not want to know).
  - Because they are worried about the actual test itself being painful or uncomfortable.
  - Because they’re scared of doctors’/clinicians’ offices or needles.
  - Because they’re worried that if they have an STI they’ll never be able to have sex again.
  - Because they’re nervous their parents will find out.
  - Because they don’t have transportation to get to the clinic.
  - Because they don’t have insurance or think they can’t afford to get tested.
- (10 minutes)

**STEP 3:** Tell students to get into small groups of 3-4 people they are seated near. Give each small group a copy of the *“Getting Savvy about STI and HIV Testing”* worksheet and have each person in the group write their name at the top. Explain by saying, **“Each group will be assigned one of the reasons people may have for not wanting to get tested for STIs that we wrote on the board. Your task is two-fold. First your group is to come up with at least two things someone could say in response to encourage them to get tested. You should write these responses down on your group’s worksheet. Then, you**

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will go to the following website and find two possible locations nearby where a teen could get tested for STIs and one possible nearby location where a teen could get tested for HIV. Write the name and location of the these testing sites on your group's worksheet."

*Note to the Teacher: Write the website URL on the board while you are talking (<https://gettested.cdc.gov>) and instruct students to use classroom computers, tablets, or their phones to conduct the search.*

Review each of the reasons that was generated on the board for why people might *not* want to get tested and assign a different reason to each of the small groups.

*Note to the Teacher: The number of small groups and number of reasons will differ for each class. It's okay if more than one group is working on the same reason as this will just generate a wider variety of responses.*

Give students 10 minutes to complete their three-part task. (5 minutes)

**STEP 4:** After ten minutes has passed, gather students' attention and have them stop working. Have each small group share the reason they were assigned, one of their responses, and one of the community resources they found for STI or HIV testing. Continue until you have heard from each small group. Process the activity by asking the following questions:

- **What was it like to do that?**
- **What was [insert responses] about it?**
- **What did you notice about the groups' responses? Did anything surprise you?**
- **What does this tell you about how you might support a friend or romantic partner who is nervous or hesitant to get tested for STIs?** (20 minutes)

**STEP 5:** Say, "Knowing you should get tested for STIs and HIV and actually going to *see* a health care provider can be two different things. People have real concerns about what will happen during the test, how they will be treated by the staff, and if their visit will be kept confidential. This next video will address some of those concerns." Play the *Let's Talk about Sexual Health* video (<https://vimeo.com/43631114>). Once the video is over, process by asking students the following questions:

- What do you think of what you saw in the video?
- Did anything surprise you?
- Did you learn any new information from the video? If so, what was it?

Close the lesson by reminding students that the only way for someone to know whether they have an STI is to get tested, and that there are places in the community—such as the clinics that they found in class today—where teens can be tested confidentially and usually for no cost or low cost. Remind students that, like in the video, they need to be honest with their health provider about any sexual contact that they may have had, because there are different tests and different types of treatment for the different STIs.

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Tell students, “**In California, anyone 12 years old and older can consent to their own STI and HIV testing and treatment without notifying parents or guardians if they do not wish to. In addition, students may be released from school by a staff member in order to attend this appointment during the school day. Please ask your School Nurse, Counselor, or other designated staff member to assist you with being released for a confidential appointment. We will be exploring your rights to confidential sexual health services more during the next lesson.**” (10 minutes)

### **RECOMMENDED ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OBJECTIVES AT CONCLUSION OF LESSON:**

Learning Objectives 1 and 2 will be accomplished during the group brainstorm and resulting small group activity. Learning Objective 3 will be accomplished during the final video and subsequent discussion.

# Getting Savvy about STI and HIV Testing

Names of Group Members:

1) \_\_\_\_\_ 2) \_\_\_\_\_  
3) \_\_\_\_\_ 4) \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:**

- Write the reason someone might not want to get tested for STIs/HIV that your group was assigned.
- Create two responses that will address their concern about being tested.
- Go to the assigned website and find two STI and one HIV testing locations that are nearby.

**A ) Reason we were assigned why someone might not want to get tested for STIs/HIV:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Response 1**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Response 2**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**B ) Three local STI testing sites found here: <https://gettested.cdc.gov>**

1) \_\_\_\_\_  
2) \_\_\_\_\_  
3) \_\_\_\_\_

**C ) Three local HIV testing sites found here: <https://gettested.cdc.gov>**

1) \_\_\_\_\_  
2) \_\_\_\_\_  
3) \_\_\_\_\_