

Middle school

Objective

Learn how clean, decent homes affect people's health.

PREPARE

- Go to http://www.habitat.org/env/safe_healthy_housing.aspx and scroll down to the “Keeping your home healthy” guide. Print out a copy.
- Print copies of the “Top 10 tips” worksheet that appears at the end of this lesson.
- Gather the following materials:
 - Pens or pencils, markers or crayons.
 - Spray bottle.
 - Water.
 - Water pitcher.
 - Baking soda.
 - Measuring cups.
 - Small spoon.
 - Funnel.
 - 3x5 index card.
 - Masking tape.

LEARN

- Explain that there are two important steps to making a home healthy. The first step is to build a clean, decent home like the ones Habitat for Humanity builds. Talk about what it means to build decent homes, such as using proper materials that will last long and not attract mold. It means insulating the house well to keep out cold air. It also means building according to code, or making sure such things as the electric and plumbing are installed properly and will not cause damage to the home. Explain that the second step is to keep the home clean and healthy. Take turns commenting on what everyone already knows about keeping a home clean.
- Take out the “Keeping your home healthy” guide. Together, discuss the many ways unsanitary conditions and poor housing can affect people's health. Highlight a few points from the guide, including asthma triggers, pesticides and chemicals, and healthy cleaning methods.



- Create your own natural cleaning solution. This solution is an all-purpose cleaner that can be used in the kitchen and bathroom. Gather the spray bottle, water and water pitcher, measuring cups, small spoon, baking soda and funnel. Have children measure the ingredients: $\frac{1}{2}$ gallon water and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup baking soda. Hold the funnel on top of the bottle. Ask children to pour in the ingredients. They can use the small spoon to scoop the baking soda into the funnel. Have them mix the solution.
- Create a label for the cleaning solution by decorating the index card and taping it onto the plastic bottle.
- Test out the cleaning solution. Spray in a small area to see how well it cleans. Compare the homemade cleaning solution to a manufactured brand. Which one is better for your health and your house?

REFLECT

- Take out the “Top 10 tips” worksheet and a pen or pencil.
- Together, create a list of 10 ways to keep a home healthy. The last entry on the list should be what everyone feels is most important. Take turns listing the entries. Post the list in your home.
- Make another copy of the list. This list can be a simple gift given to new Habitat for Humanity homeowners. Ask children to add color and design to the lists to make them unique. Donate the lists to a local Habitat for Humanity affiliate.

Top 10 tips

10. _____

9. _____

8. _____

7. _____

6. _____

5. _____

4. _____

3. _____

2. _____

and, most important:

1. _____
