

Medicines in My Home

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Medicines in My Home (MIMH) is a new educational program about the safe and effective use of OTC medicines developed by the FDA to provide practical teaching tools and information to enable adolescents and adults to make careful and correct medicine use decisions. The lesson and materials are written at a 6th to 7th grade reading level and focus on teaching patients to use the "Drug Facts" label. All program materials can be accessed through the Internet and downloaded for local presentation. Pharmacists and other health care professionals can refer patients to the Web site, where they can either use the program materials on-line or download them. The MIMH program can also be useful to pharmacists when speaking to students or adult community groups about medicine-related issues.

Published studies suggest that some children start to self-medicate at 11 or 12 years of age, and that use of OTC medicine among adolescents is com-

mon. Focus groups and studies examining adult understanding of medicine labels and OTC medicine use suggest that adult patients may also benefit from simple, comprehensible information about safe medicine use.

With input from Maryland's Montgomery County Public Schools health


educators, the FDA originally developed MIMH as an in-classroom lesson for 6th to 8th graders. It was piloted in 25 6th grade classes during the 2005–2006 school year. The lesson has been successfully taught by FDA physicians, nurses, and educators and by health education teachers. Currently, most MIMH materials are directed toward teachers and students.

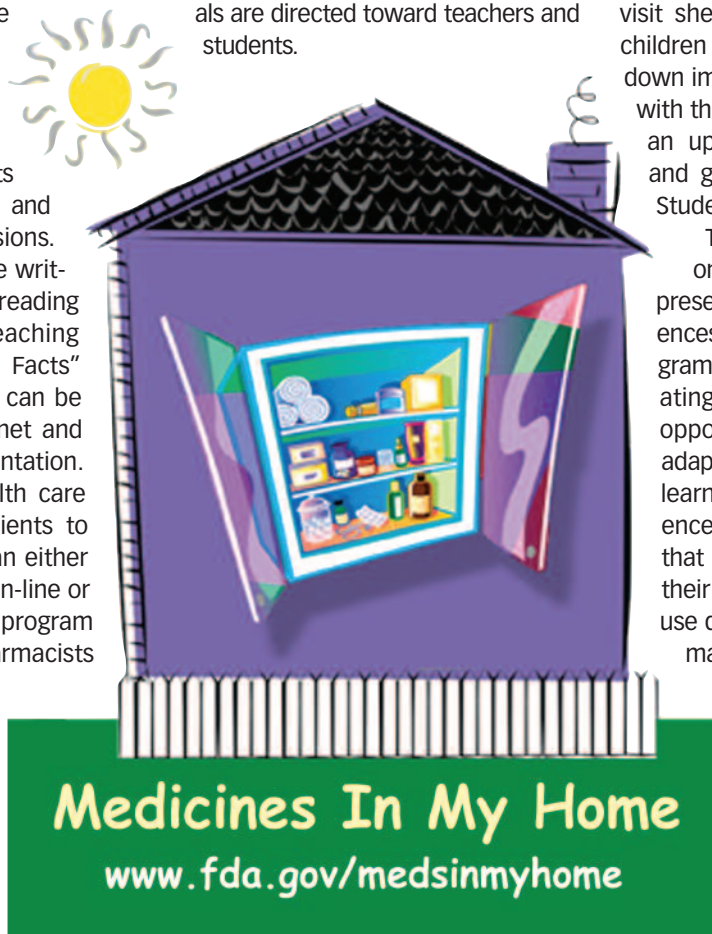
with slide notes, a mock Drug Facts label, a take-home booklet and learning activity, and student assessment materials (pretest, posttest, and in-class worksheet). It also provides links to additional on-line resources that offer related information on the use of medicines. The Students' Room provides a doctor's visit sheet called "All About Me" that children (and adults) may use to write down important information to discuss with their health care professionals at an upcoming visit. On-line puzzles and games are also located in the Students' Room.

The current materials available on-line can be easily adapted for presentation to a variety of audiences. During the coming year, program development will focus on creating more interactive learning opportunities on the Web site, adapting current presentation and learning materials to adult audiences, and developing resources that support parents in teaching their children about wise medicine-use decisions. Future developments may include an OTC medicines

Jeopardy-like game and interactive activities that familiarize Web site visitors with correct use of the Drug Facts label and provide practice with medicine-use decisions through scenarios. Before the end of 2006, an on-line animated slide presentation and MIMH

booklet geared toward adult audiences will be posted.

The MIMH program seeks to equip patients with the knowledge and tools they need to establish healthy and informed decision-making habits from the time they start making self-medication decisions. 



The MIMH Web site is located at www.fda.gov/medsinmyhome and is organized into "rooms." The Teachers' Room provides a brief introduction to the program, key concepts, and learning objectives. The Teacher's Kit contains a linked list to all lesson teaching materials including an animated slide presentation