

Session 3: *Communication Skills*

Students will:

- ✓ Learn elements of passive, aggressive, and assertive communication
- ✓ Explore why assertive communication is necessary for healthy relationships
- ✓ Practice using assertiveness skills through written reflection and role play
- ✓ Explore what conflict resolution skills are and how they are used

Materials

Community Standards

Workbook: p. 9, 10, 11 & 12

Flipchart paper

Markers

Drawings 1 and 2 on flipchart paper

Color coded scenarios

Blindfold

Key Points:

- We are responsible for how we express our feelings.
- Assertive communication is the most respectful way to do this.
- Conflict resolution skills can be learned

Check-In (5 min)

- Check-in will be done using non verbal language to express how students are feeling that day. Students can choose to use hand signals to express mood (thumb up = good, thumb down = bad, hand horizontal = ok) or to use facial and body expressions to express mood (ex. Smile on face and standing up straight = happy, frown and slouch = sad, scrunched eyebrows and tight lips = angry, etc...).
- * *Do a quick debrief about how non verbal language expresses just as much as verbal language and that sometimes our non verbal language “give away” our real emotions/feelings/mood.*

Introduction (5 min)

- What are feelings?
- How do we share or show our feelings?
- Is it possible to feel one way but show another? Why might we do this?
- Can you provide examples for the following types of *communication: verbal, body language, technological, active listening?*

Feelings are internal messages about how we are affected by what is going on around us. Feelings can change from one moment to the next. We do not choose our feelings.

We have the ability to choose our response in any given situation, and the response we choose can impact the situation in a positive or negative way.

Activity 3.1

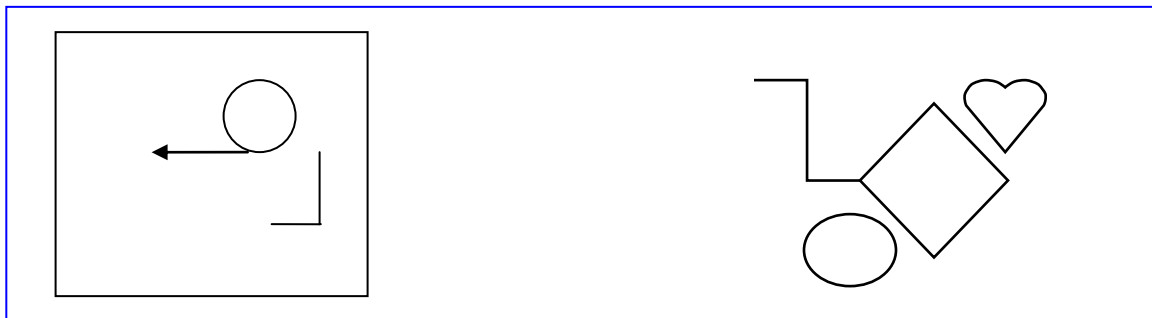
Communication Warm-up (10 min)

Goal of Activity: To practice verbal communication and to build teamwork.

Activity:

1. Use the rectangle on p.9 of the workbook (or on another scrap of paper). Students get into pairs. Student should sit or stand face to face so that one student faces the board/flip and the other sits with their back to it. The student with their back to the board will draw a picture following the other student's instructions. The student giving the instructions cannot look at the other student's drawing.

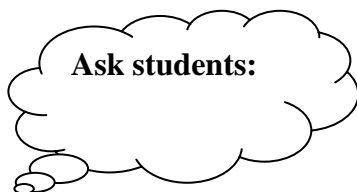
1. When the students are ready and facing the correct direction, the facilitator draws Drawing #1 on the board. The student facing the board has 2 minutes to tell the other student what to draw.



Drawing # 1

Drawing # 2

2. If time allows, students can switch roles and try Drawing #2.



- **Ask, what worked for listening, and what worked for speaking? How was it**

Activity 3.2**Communication Styles (15 min)**

Goal of Activity: To enable students to recognize healthy and unhealthy communication styles.

Activity: Students will still be in pairs from the previous activity. Each pair will be given a color coded scenario. Red= Aggressive, Blue=Assertive, and Yellow= Passive. Students will then group according to the color of their scenario (* This would work well to group in the four corners of the room). Once in groups, students will read their scenario and decide on a way to role play it for the class. Students will read/act out their scenario in the manner depicted by their color (Assertive, Aggressive, or Passive) but may choose the way it is read and how it is read. Not all students have to act out the scenario, but all should be involved in some way to help enhance the presentation. Students will have a few minutes to prepare and then present to the rest of the class. Students may read the types of communication styles on **pg. 9-10 in the workbook** for help.

<p>Person 1: “ That is my seat”</p> <p>Person 2: “It was empty when I got here”</p> <p>Person 1: “Well I was sitting there, look there is my bag.”</p> <p>Person 2: “Sorry”</p> <p><i>*Remember to think about this in relation to your specific communication style</i></p>	<p>Person 1: “ That is my seat”</p> <p>Person 2: “It was empty when I got here”</p> <p>Person 1: “Well I was sitting there, look there is my bag.”</p> <p>Person 2: “Sorry”</p> <p><i>*Remember to think about this in relation to your specific communication style</i></p>
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❖ *Communication experts tell us over 75 percent of communication is expressed through body language. The tone of voice and the actual words make up the remaining 25 percent. This means we are sending out signals and messages often without knowing it. Once we become aware of the messages our bodies are sending we are more able to control the messages we send and communicate clearly.*

Reflection:

1. What are some positives and negatives of each communication style?

Aggressive- People know what you want and why, you might be unfair, lose respect, get what you want

Assertive –People know what you want and why, you are fair and listen to others, you maintain respect, you give respect, you might learn more

Passive- People are not sure where you stand, or what you want, you don't share your ideas and often do not get a fair deal, you maintain respect, you lose respect, it is hard to get what you want

Did this work to show the difference between communication styles? What did it help show? What did it not show?

Communication styles (from Workbook p. 9-10)

Passive: The passive response permits us to ignore our own rights and allows others to make decisions and take control of our lives. By behaving passively, we fail to express our thoughts and feelings and we allow other people to violate our rights. The objective of the passive response is to avoid conflict.

An advantage of this style is the person is rarely rejected directly.

A disadvantage of this style is the person has feelings of powerlessness and helplessness that can lead to feelings of resentment, anger, and rage.

Aggressive: The aggressive response permits us to stand up for our rights, but in so doing, violate the rights of others. The basic intent of this behaviour is to dominate and demean others. The aggressive person is interested in establishing his or her own power while forcing another person to lose theirs. There is no interest in two-way communication, no importance given to timing, and little consideration given to long-term effects.

An advantage of this style is you get what you want.

A disadvantage of this style is in achieving your own goals you hurt others who then do not want to be around you.

Assertive: The assertive response takes other people's rights and feelings into account. You show respect for other person's view and your objective is two way communication. Generally, assertive communication allows you to act in your own best interests, to express personal feelings comfortably, and to exercise your rights without denying the rights of others.

Source: It's Up to Me: Building Healthy Relationships. 2nd ed. 2000

Activity 3.3

Conflict Resolution P.L.A.N Carousel (25 min)

Goal of Activity: To learn how to solve conflicts without turning to violence.

Activity: Students should remain in the groups they had for the previous activity. Students should be directed to **pg. 11** in their workbooks for information for this activity. Each group will be given a sheet of flip chart paper, a marker, and assigned one of the following:

- **P**ick a good time to talk – How do you know when a good time to talk is?
- **L**isten – How do you listen? Show you are listening? What is Active Listening?
- **A**ssertive communication – What is assertive communication? How do you express it?
- **N**egotiation – What is negotiation? How do you negotiate?

[Adapted from Playing With Fire: Creative Conflict Resolution for Young Adults by Fiona MacBeth & Nic Fine.1995]

Students should write their assigned topic and question on the top of their flip chart paper. Each group will be allowed 1 minute to discuss and write down their responses before moving on to the next topic and questions. (Flip chart papers and markers do not move, students do). Facilitators can begin this activity by demonstrating with the first topic (Pick a good time to talk) and then have students do the remaining three topics. After students have had a chance to visit all of the topics and write down their ideas they should end at the topic they began with. Once here they should take a minute to reflect on what has been added to their original response. Each group will then summarize and share their topic with the group. Some whole group discussion questions that follow might be:

Ask students:

- **Is a conflict different than a fight?**
- **How can this help us in day to day situations?**
- **Why is it sometimes difficult to follow this plan?**

Reflection Section: (5 mins)

On page 12 of the workbook there is a section for final reflections. In this space answer **ONE** of the following questions through writing, sketching, coloring, etc...

1. What are some different ways to express emotion?
2. What does assertive communication look like?
3. How does conflict resolution work?

Extra time to fill?? Try one of these!

Blindfold Walk (15 mins)

1. Divide the class into 3 groups.
2. Have students in each group pick a partner in their group.
3. Pairs will pick an object around the room that they can pick up and hold (Book, pen, eraser, apple, shoe, etc...) This object will be placed around the room and one student will have to lead the other to find it using verbal or non verbal communication.

- 4. Group 1: Verbal Guiding**
 - a. Pairs will start at the front of the room.
 - b. One partner will be blindfolded or have their eyes closed and remain at the front of the room. The other will place their chosen object around the room and return to the front.
 - c. When all objects are placed around the room the facilitator will say “go”.
 - d. The student who is NOT blindfolded will verbally direct their blindfolded partner to their object. This should be done safely and with as much caution as possible.
 - e. The partner who is NOT blindfolded and who is giving directions must remain at the front of the room and cannot touch or guide their partner in any other way besides giving verbal instructions.

- 5. Group 2: Non-Verbal Guiding**
 - a. Pairs will start at the front of the room.
 - b. One partner will be blindfolded or have their eyes closed and remain at the front of the room. The other will place their chosen object around the room and return to the front.
 - c. When all objects are placed around the room the facilitator will say “go”.
 - d. The student who is NOT blindfolded will stand behind their blindfolded partner and place their hands on the shoulders of their partner in front of them. The partner who is NOT blindfolded cannot speak, but may direct their partner by tapping on their shoulders to give directions. ***Tap on the Right shoulder to go Right, Tap on the Left shoulder to go Left, Tap in the middle of the shoulders to go straight.*** This should be done safely and with as much caution as possible.
 - e. The partner who is NOT blindfolded and who is giving directions must remain behind their partner until they reach the object and cannot at anytime speak, push, shove or physically turn them in the direction of their object.

- 6. Group 3: Verbal and Non-Verbal Guiding**
 - a. Pairs will start at the front of the room.
 - b. One partner will be blindfolded or have their eyes closed and remain at the front of the room. The other will place their chosen object around the room and return to the front.

- c. When all objects are placed around the room the facilitator will say “go”.
- d. The student who is NOT blindfolded will walk behind their partner and verbally direct their blindfolded partner to their object while at the same time keeping their hands on their shoulders and tapping them in the direction they need to go. This should be done safely and with as much caution as possible.
- e. The partner who is NOT blindfolded and who is giving directions must remain behind their partner and can speak with them and help steer them in the right direction until their object is found.

Reflection Questions:

- 1. What was the best and most efficient way to reach your object?**
- 2. What made it challenging to use only verbal or only non-verbal communication?**
- 3. How might this relate to things we do in our daily lives?**
- 4. Do you think you always communicate verbally and non-verbally?**
- 5. What happens when our verbal and non-verbal communication don't say the same thing?**
- 6. How can we use this activity to better our communication abilities?**