

Communication Practice Cards for Younger Youth

Recommended Age: 12-13

Goals

- To practice assertive communication.
- To reiterate that communication is a practiced skill.

Have Ready

- Discussion cards.

Instructions

- Define three types of communication. **Passive:** Doesn't state their needs or feelings. Gives into others' wants. **Aggressive:** Talks over others. Does not listen or respect the needs of others. Can be intimidating or threatening. **Assertive:** Expresses their own needs, but also listens to the needs of others. Seeks compromises.
- Hand out cards and ask youth to come up with an assertive response to the situation. Explain their thoughts/feelings using 'I' statements and respect responses. Invite youth to act out their card if they'd like, but make this optional.
- After a few minutes, bring the classroom back together. Ask each group to read their card and share their thoughts. Ask the rest of the classroom if they agree or have anything to add.
- Key talking points are below. Build your debrief around what youth share.

Debrief

Your friends keep messaging you about a girl at your school who made out with someone at a party. You know this is just gossip and could hurt the person's feelings. Tell them you don't like what they're saying.

- Whose business is it if someone chooses to make out/have sex? Their own.
- How can we stop rumours? Don't re-post them or share them; delete posts, tweets, comments, etc. that spread rumours; message the person who is spreading them and tell them it isn't

cool; block the person spreading them from commenting; report them to the site itself; tell an adult you trust if the problem continues.

A friend has texted to say that they are interested in you. You don't share the same feelings. Text them back an answer and explain how you feel.

- There are barriers to having conversations through text. What do they include?
- Is it possible to share how you feel without treating another person badly using the assertive style of communication discussed today?

You want to stay out later than usual, but you are normally not allowed. Talk to your parents/caregivers about this. Remember to think about what worries your caregiver may have.

- How could you negotiate possible problems they may have with your idea? Have a plan and information to present to your parent/guardian.
- Make sure the time feels good for both of you. Perhaps in private, when there is more time and when you are not hungry or tired. Practice telling your parent with a friend, mirror, etc.

You really like your crush, but they want to make out more than you do. Explain to them how you feel.

- Having a conversation about boundaries (what is okay and isn't okay) is really important within a relationship.
- It can be difficult to talk about abstinence when there is a lot of pressure to be sexually active.
- It is important to decide what is right for you and know that your choice deserves to be respected.

Your best friend and you are in a fight because you both like the same person. You do not want this to end your friendship. Talk about it.

- Ultimately, it's up to the person you both like if they like either of you back.

- You and your friend both must decide if it's something you are going to let cause problems in your friendship and how to deal with your feelings respectfully.

You have been wanting to hang out with your crush after school. Today is the day you are going to ask them.

- We don't always see this respectfully modeled in media, etc., so it can be tough to figure out how to say this.
- If we tell someone our feelings and listen to their answer, we might not get the answer we want, but we know that we tried, and the other person can feel respected.

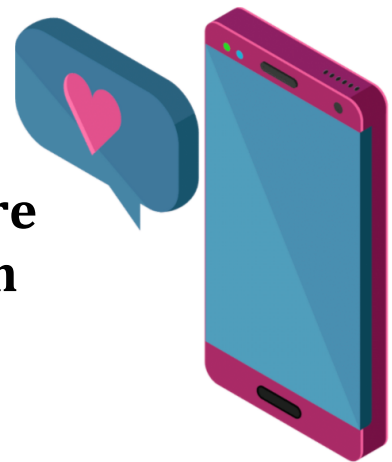
You have a big assignment due Monday, but you also have a big hockey tournament to play. If you go to the tournament, you won't be able to finish your assignment. Your coach and team are counting on you to be there, but you must focus on school. Talk to your coach.

- It might be a difficult thing to bring up, since you don't want to miss your tournament or let your team down, but you also don't want to miss your assignment.
- Bringing up your conflict with your coach might mean you can troubleshoot with your coach to figure out a way to do both (e.g., they could talk to your teacher for an extension on your assignment).

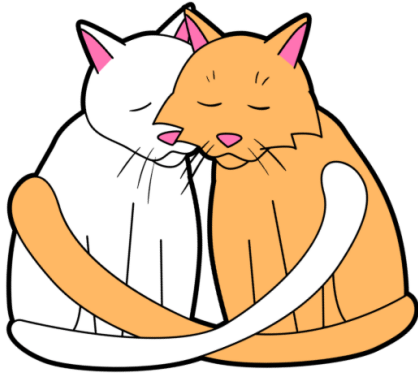


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