



SPEAK UP ABOUT SPEAKING UP!

Elementary School Activity Guide for Educators

Lessons and strategies for teaching elementary students to advocate for themselves and others.

Overview

Students don't always know how to ask for what they need, even when they really need help. Many youth think that involving an adult will lead to making the bullying situation worse, risking retaliation from their peers for tattling or snitching, or won't lead to anything positive happening at all. Often students don't think ahead about which adult they'd reach out to and how to conduct a productive conversation. Teaching youth to speak up for themselves effectively and respectfully gives them essential communication skills that they will use throughout their lives.

When adults promote a child's ability to influence problems of all kinds, including bullying, children receive the message that they have power and do not need to be stuck in a harmful situation.

When adults and children work together to solve problems in this way, a child's sense of safety and security is heightened because they know they have allies in the community who will listen and help when they speak up. Children who actively participate in providing input into their problems are better prepared to resolve those problems themselves and understand when a problem requires adult help.

Remember that positive social skills are acquired not only through teaching, but mainly through watching others model these skills. Showing students how to speak up and find success when they do is important for the mastery of self-advocacy skills.

In this guide:

Be a self-advocate

- When to speak up for yourself
- How to speak up effectively
- Which situations need you to speak up to a trusted adult

SELF-ADVOCACY

COMMUNICATING
WHAT YOU NEED

ADVOCACY

HELPING OTHERS GET
WHAT THEY NEED

Be an advocate for others

- When to speak up for others
- How to speak up effectively
- Which situations need you to speak up to a trusted adult

Additional Activities and Resources for Speaking Up

Tattling or Snitching



Telling



PACER's
National Bullying Prevention Center.
pacer.org/bullying

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Lesson one: becoming a self-advocate

Approx 15-20 minutes, no materials needed; lesson can be broken into shorter parts to accommodate your students' needs.

Objectives

The goal of this lesson is for students to identify when they need to ask for help, speak about what they need to have changed, and who they would talk to if they needed something.

Share this example of a situation where a student needs to talk about something with a trusted adult:

Ben's baseball cards were so special that each one was in a special plastic holder so that nothing could hurt them. No one was allowed to touch them except Ben and he was very careful with them. One day, Ben's mom saw that his most valuable card was gone from his desk, so she asked him right away what happened to it. Ben didn't know what to say, so he just said it was at school, but the truth was that another kid at school had taken it and wouldn't give it back. **What should Ben do?**



Discussion

Ask the class or group to come up with ideas for what Ben should do about his problem. Write out what they share so that all students can see the ideas generate. Ask the following questions to get students thinking about which adult they should ask to help them, when is a good time to ask that adult, and how they should start the conversation. For some students, it may also be time to introduce the "Student Action

Who should Ben talk to about what happened to his baseball card? Say why you think he should speak to that person and how they could help him.

- his mom
- teacher
- counselor
- friend
- other?

When do you think is a good time to have that conversation? Say why each place would be easy or hard to have a conversation.

- At home
- At recess
- Somewhere you can talk privately

What should he say? Explain whether or not it would be easy or hard for you to say, too.

- "Can you help me?"
- "Someone took my favorite baseball card and I don't know how to get it back."
- "I don't know what to do and I'm really upset."
- "I need help figuring out how to do something."
- Other?

Optional

Show the Student Action Plan document, page 3, up on the projector or in a large format so that the whole class can see. Use the ideas generated during the discussion to demonstrate the process of filling it out.



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Lesson two: How to speak up for others

Approx 15-20 minutes, Student Action Plan; lesson can be broken into shorter parts to accommodate your students' needs.

Objectives

The goal of this lesson is for students to identify when they should step in and support a peer who is being bullied. This lesson also emphasizes when they should ask for help from an adult, speak about what's happening, and who they would seek help from.

Peer support makes a difference!

Have you ever thought, "It's none of my business—I should just ignore it and walk away"? Put yourself in the other person's place. If you were being pushed around, laughed at, gossiped about, made fun of, or ignored on purpose, wouldn't you want someone to be there for you? Know that when someone is hurting, especially emotionally, your support as a peer is incredibly meaningful!

In this lesson, we use Example Plan #1 to illustrate an ongoing bullying issue that a fictitious student is having. Have students read the example out to the class and then break into small groups or pairs to discuss how they would have handled each step. Then bring the class back together and gather responses from each small group to have a larger discussion while you practice filling out the blank sections on a whiteboard or document projector.

Example Plan #1

Kyla is a 10-year-old girl with Down syndrome. A classmate is making fun of her speech.

Step 1: Describe your experience	Step 2: Reflect on your ideas	Step 3: Develop potential solutions
Think about the bullying you have experienced, seen, or even done yourself. Describe the situation, including where it happened, who was involved, what happened, and how it made you feel.	Then consider how that situation could be different. Include what you would like to see happen, what things could change, and what would help you feel more in control of the situation.	Next, think about the steps needed to make those changes happen. Consider what role you need to take, who would need to be involved, and what they would need to do.



PACER's

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pacer.org/bullying



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Additional activities/resources

TIPS using the Student Action Plan

- **When working with one student:** Most elementary school students will need to be guided through the completion of this form through thoughtful conversation. Many younger students will be more comfortable discussing the questions and letting the parent or educator record their responses. Keep in mind that the answers may not come all at once. Adults may have to revisit the Plan with the child to get a complete picture of the situation.
- **When working with a group:** Use either the fictitious examples found in the Student Action Plan or create fictitious examples of your own for the class to steer clear of any privacy issues with current bullying situations. Encourage students to keep private stories to themselves and not to use anyone's names or identities while speaking in the group. Ask them to see you privately if they want to tell you about something happening to them or to anyone known to the group.
- **More details on using the Student Action Plan can be found here:** [Parent and Educator Guide to Using the Student Action Plan](#)

VIDEOS and WORKSHEETS:


 [Carmen's Corner Video: Advocacy, Pt. 1](#)

 [Carmen's Corner Video: Advocacy, Pt. 2](#)

 [Carmen's Corner Worksheet A](#)

 [Carmen's Corner Worksheet B](#)

 [How to Tell An Adult Poster](#)

 [If you see bullying...](#)

 [Why Is It Important to Teach Self-Advocacy?](#)

 [Elementary School Curriculum](#)

 [KidsAgainstBullying website](#)

 [Elementary Activities](#)



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