

Chapter 3

Interpersonal Skills

Lesson 3.1


Communicating Effectively

Lesson 3.2

Resolving Conflicts

Lesson 3.3

Resisting Pressure

Look for the skills icon  throughout this chapter for opportunities to practice your health skills.



Check Your Health and Wellness Skills

In this chapter, you will learn interpersonal skills for communicating, resolving conflicts, and resisting pressure. To understand the skills you currently use, take the following inventory of your behaviors. Indicate how well you think you use each skill. Use a scale of 1–5, 1 meaning you do not use the skill and 5 meaning you feel completely comfortable using it.

Skill	How Well Do You Use Each Skill?
When I'm listening to someone, I make eye contact.	Write your score.
I repeat back what I think I've heard someone say.	Write your score.
I clearly express my needs instead of expecting someone else to know them.	Write your score.
I pay attention to my posture and facial expressions and try to make them match what I'm saying.	Write your score.
When I disagree with someone online, I follow up in-person instead of settling the conflict publicly.	Write your score.
I actively resolve conflict instead of avoiding it.	Write your score.
If I'm too mad to have a conversation, I walk away to cool down.	Write your score.
During an argument, I really pay attention to what the other person thinks and why.	Write your score.
I take time to reflect on how I really feel about situations.	Write your score.
Once I've said I won't do something, I stick with my decision.	Write your score.
If I see someone being pressured, I step in and tell the person applying the pressure to stop.	Write your score.
Total	Write your total.

Add up your responses to each statement. The higher your score, the more comfortable you feel practicing health skills related to communication, conflict resolution, and peer pressure. Which skill do you think is most important for you? Which skill is the most challenging for you? Which skill would you most like to improve? In this chapter, you will learn how to perform these skills better and more often.

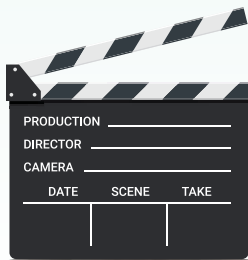


Before reading this chapter, skim the headings and write each heading in a different color or font on a separate piece of paper or electronically. As you silently read the chapter and then listen to your teacher, take notes in the color or font you chose for each heading. After you finish taking notes for each section, draw or copy and paste a small illustration or visual next to the section that will help you remember what you learned.

Lesson 3.1: Communicating Effectively
Types of Communication
Verbal Communication
Nonverbal Communication
Skills for Effective Communication



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Setting the Scene

Handling Poor Communication

As the fall begins, you are very excited to be starting school. Some of your friends from last year are also going to your school, and you know you want to keep some of your old friendships. You are also very interested in making new friends.

In your first few weeks, you have met some new friends in your math class who always sit together at lunch. They want to spend more time with you, but you are not exactly sure what to do. Whenever they have disagreements, they stop talking to each other and spread embarrassing rumors. When you are talking, some of them do not seem to listen. Sometimes they seem bored even when they say they want to know more. You worry that spending more time with this group will make you adopt some of the same habits. You wonder if it is worth saying how you feel.

Thinking Critically

1. What behaviors would make you hesitant to join this group? Explain.
2. Think about how you could confront this issue. What could you say to tell your new friends how you feel? What boundaries could you set to protect yourself from gossip and rumors?

Lesson 3.1

Communicating Effectively

Essential Question ?

What skills do you need to communicate effectively with others?

Learning Outcomes

After studying this lesson, you will be able to

- differentiate between verbal and nonverbal communication;
- analyze how active listening improves communication;
- explain the importance of clearly expressing needs and being assertive;
- give examples of effective I-statements;
- explain the importance of matching verbal and nonverbal communication; and
- identify strategies for communicating effectively online.

Key Terms

active listening
aggressive
assertive
communication
communication process
feedback
I-statements
nonverbal
communication
passive
passive-aggressive
verbal communication

Warm-Up Activity

Verbal and Nonverbal Communication

Comprehend Concepts Communication between people can be verbal or nonverbal. For example, writing is a form of verbal communication. Facial expressions, posture, and eye contact are forms of nonverbal communication. Based on what you already know, list other examples of verbal and nonverbal communication. Search for images online that illustrate each example you listed. Share the images with your class and describe the type of communication shown in each image.



Qvasimodo art/Shutterstock.com

How many times do you talk with your teachers each day? How long do you spend chatting with your friends? Your closest friends are probably some of the people you talk with most often. You probably talk with your teachers to ask or answer questions almost every day. This is because you form and maintain relationships and send and receive information through **communication**, or the exchange of messages between people. Communication not only includes what you say to others. It also includes your tone of voice and the words and images you use and share online.

communication

exchange of spoken or unspoken messages between people

Types of Communication

Effective communication is perhaps the most important part of a healthy relationship. It is also an essential health skill for finding and sharing information and defending your decisions and goals. You use communication when you explain a decision to a family member. You also use communication when you share information about resources to promote community health.

The **communication process** involves sending a *message*, which consists of thoughts, ideas, feelings, or information. The *sender* of the message delivers the message to a *receiver*, such as a family member or online friend. Effective communication happens when the receiver understands the message and gives **feedback**, or a constructive response, to communicate that the message was received and understood (**Figure 3.1**). The communication process continues with the further exchange of messages. People send messages using two types of communication: verbal communication and nonverbal communication.

communication process
series of actions people use to exchange ideas, thoughts, feelings, and information

feedback constructive response to a message

Verbal Communication

Verbal communication is the use of words to send an oral (spoken) or written message. You use verbal communication all the time in your everyday conversations, through text messages, in-person conversations, phone calls, emails, social media posts, letters, and notes. Telling a family member you will be home at a certain time is a form of verbal communication. So is talking with your friends online.

verbal communication
use of words, spoken or written, to send a message

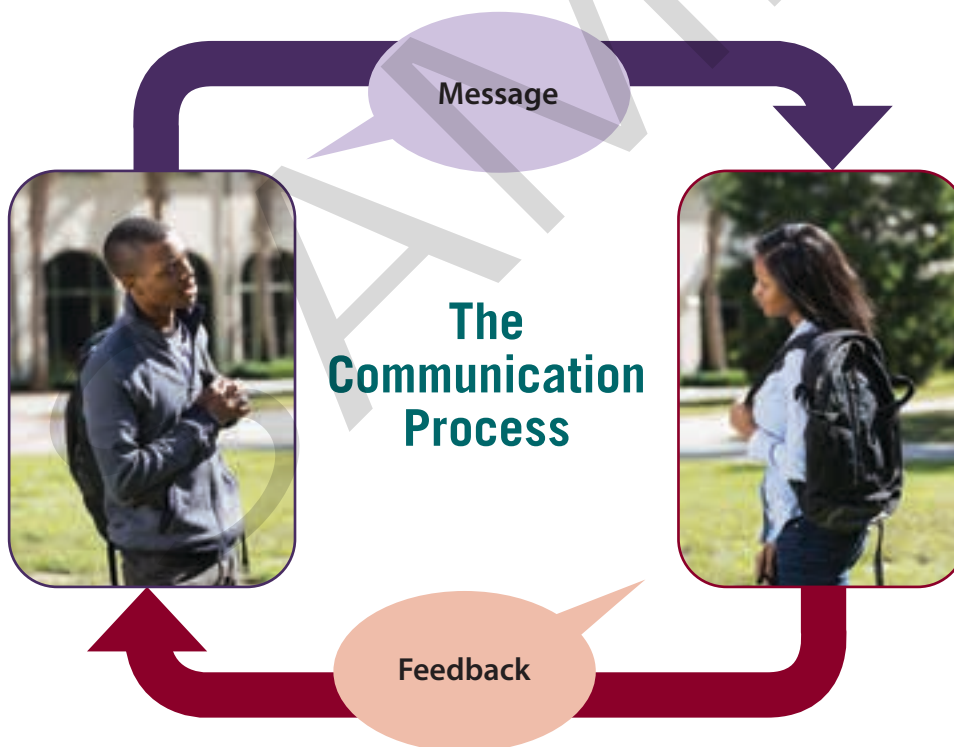


Figure 3.1
The communication process involves the exchange of messages and feedback between two or more people. *What is feedback in the communication process?*

kali9/iStock/Getty Images Plus via Getty Images

Nonverbal Communication

nonverbal communication

use of body language, tone and volume of voice, and other wordless signals to send a message

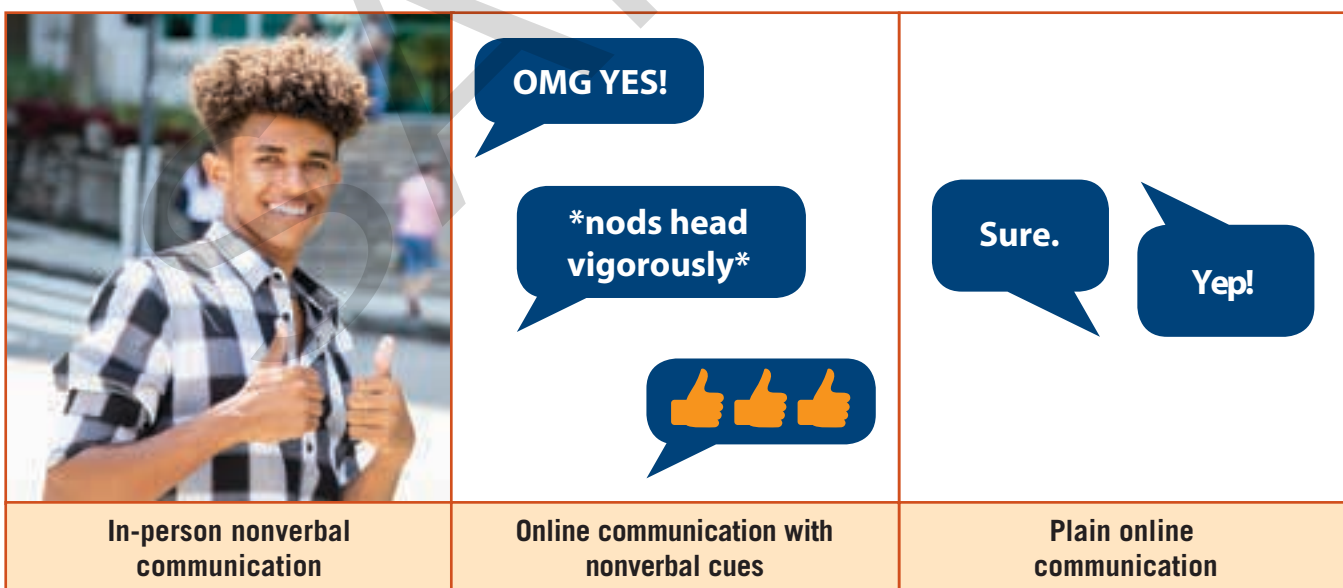
Communication involves more than just words. You can also communicate with your face and body. **Nonverbal communication** involves communicating through facial expressions, body language, gestures, tone and volume of voice, and other signals that do not involve words. Your nonverbal communication shows people whether you are paying attention and are interested in a conversation. These signals are an important part of showing respect for the person communicating with you.

Some examples of nonverbal communication include the following:

- eye contact or lack of eye contact
- facial expressions, such as smiling, frowning, or eye rolling
- gestures, such as nodding, shaking the head, or moving the hands
- posture, such as leaning forward, facing away, or slumping in a chair
- tone of voice, which can communicate friendliness, doubt, or sarcasm
- volume of voice, such as loud or soft
- *intonation* (pitch) of voice, such as high-pitched or low-pitched

Nonverbal communication is only possible if you can see or hear the other person. For example, if you are talking with someone at school or video-calling a friend, you can see the other person's facial expressions and hear the person's voice. If you are talking over the phone, you can hear the other person's tone of voice.

Forms of communication where you cannot see or hear the other person (for example, writing letters or emails or sending online messages) can present challenges. The likelihood of miscommunication and conflict increases. Online communication has evolved to incorporate some types of nonverbal communication, such as emoticons, audio messages, pictures, and fonts (for example, capitalizing or italicizing words). These cues help express tone and intent in the absence of body language and voice (**Figure 3.2**).



Person: DMEPhotography/iStock via Getty Images; Emoji: Treter/Shutterstock.com

Figure 3.2 Nonverbal elements influence the tone and meaning of a message, whether the communication happens online or in person. *Are emoticons an example of verbal or nonverbal communication?*

Skills for Effective Communication

In effective communication, people communicate their thoughts, information, values, and emotions. Many communication techniques encourage effective, open communication. You can use these techniques to communicate with care, consideration, and respect for yourself and others.

Use Active Listening

Effective communication requires excellent listening skills. When you listen and focus on what another person is saying, you can better understand the person's point of view and show respect. **Active listening** involves two key steps:

1. **Focus your full attention on the person talking:** Make eye contact and face the person talking. Use good posture and do not interrupt. Do not think about your response or something else while the person is speaking.
2. **Acknowledge and repeat what you heard in your own words:** Give feedback by saying, "Oh, wow" or "Yeah, I know." Ask questions about the message and indicate you understand the message. If you paraphrase the message to show your understanding, you allow the speaker to clarify any misunderstandings about the message. Reflect the person's feelings back by relating to and acknowledging the person's emotions (**Figure 3.3**).

active listening act of concentrating on the person talking and acknowledging what one has heard

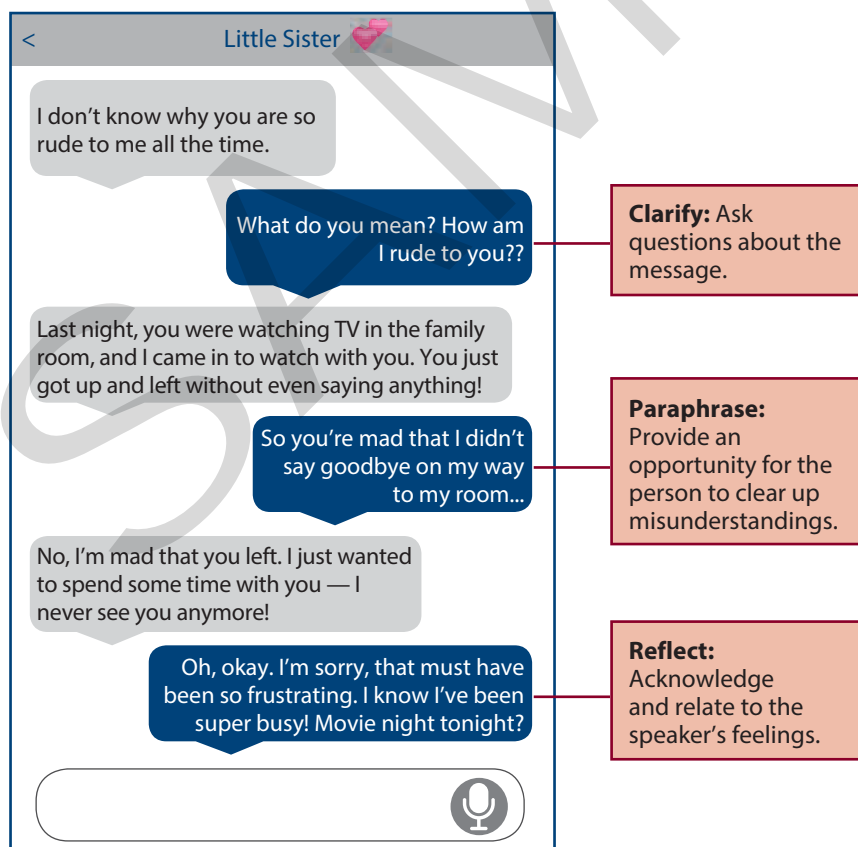


Figure 3.3 Let the speaker know you are listening by clarifying or paraphrasing the message and reflecting and acknowledging the speaker's feelings. *What process involves giving people your attention and letting them know you understand their message?*

Hearts: Denis Gorelkin/Shutterstock.com; Microphone: Blan-k/Shutterstock.com

Active listening is a great way to avoid misunderstandings. If you carefully listen to what others say, others will be more likely to do the same for you.

Clearly Express Your Needs and Preferences

To communicate effectively, people need to clearly state their wants, needs, opinions, and feelings. Some people assume others should be able to pick up on their subtle hints and know how they are feeling. This is a poor communication strategy. Expecting the other person to be a mind reader is a sign of poor communication. Instead, explain what you want the other person to understand.

Local and Global Health



Culture Affects Communication



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Individual differences and perspectives influence communication. One factor that influences communication is the culture in which people grow up. Culture shapes a person's verbal and nonverbal communication.

The simplest example of how culture impacts communication is the different languages people speak. Culture also affects how people use and interpret nonverbal communication. For example, in some cultures, making a lot of eye contact with someone when you talk shows respect and attention. In other cultures, direct eye contact is seen as aggressive and insulting. Different cultures also use and interpret facial expressions in different ways. For example, in the United States, smiling is a sign of friendliness. In Japan, smiling at someone you do not know can be seen as inappropriate, especially for females.

Cultures also differ considerably in expectations about touch. In some cultures, people tend to stand close together when they talk and may touch each other. In other cultures, people stand farther apart and rarely touch someone they do not know well. These differences sometimes make communication between people from different cultures challenging. To navigate these challenges, you can show consideration and respect.

Practice Your Skills

Access Information

In a small group, choose one culture that means something to you. Then, using reliable resources, research the communication strategies people from this culture most commonly use. Make sure to get information about people's verbal communication

and body language, including eye contact, facial expressions, and physical touch. What behaviors are considered positive communication in this culture? What behaviors are considered poor communication? What communication barriers might people from this culture face living in your community? In your group, demonstrate effective communication skills that show consideration and respect.

Be Assertive

As you communicate with others, you may notice that people use different *communication styles*, or forms of communication (**Figure 3.4**). Following are four common communication styles:

1. **Passive:** **Passive** communication does not clearly state needs, wants, and feelings. Someone with a passive communication style may seem to say *yes* to everything, speak very quietly, and let hurt feelings build up. An example of passive communication is agreeing to an activity you do not want to do and thinking that no one cares about your feelings. Another example is not speaking up when someone hurts you.
2. **Aggressive:** **Aggressive** communication makes demands of another person and insults others. A person with this communication style expresses needs and feelings disrespectfully. Examples of aggressive communication are interrupting or speaking over others, blaming or attacking others, getting frustrated easily, and speaking loudly.
3. **Passive-aggressive:** **Passive-aggressive** communication uses techniques that do not clearly state needs, wants, and feelings to make demands of or insult others. Examples of passive-aggressive communication are smiling when you are angry, muttering to yourself, spreading rumors, using sarcasm, denying your feelings, and using sabotage.
4. **Assertive:** **Assertive** communication clearly expresses feelings, needs, and goals in a way that shows respect to the other person. This type of communication values both people and seeks clarity. Examples of assertive communication are calmly and truthfully saying, “It hurts when you say stuff like that,” “I really miss you and wish we could hang out more often,” or “Sure, let’s do it.”

passive hiding or not clearly stating needs, wants, and feelings

aggressive making demands of and insulting others

passive-aggressive using techniques that do not clearly state needs, wants, and feelings to make demands of and insult others

assertive clearly stating needs, wants, and feelings

Factors Affecting Communication

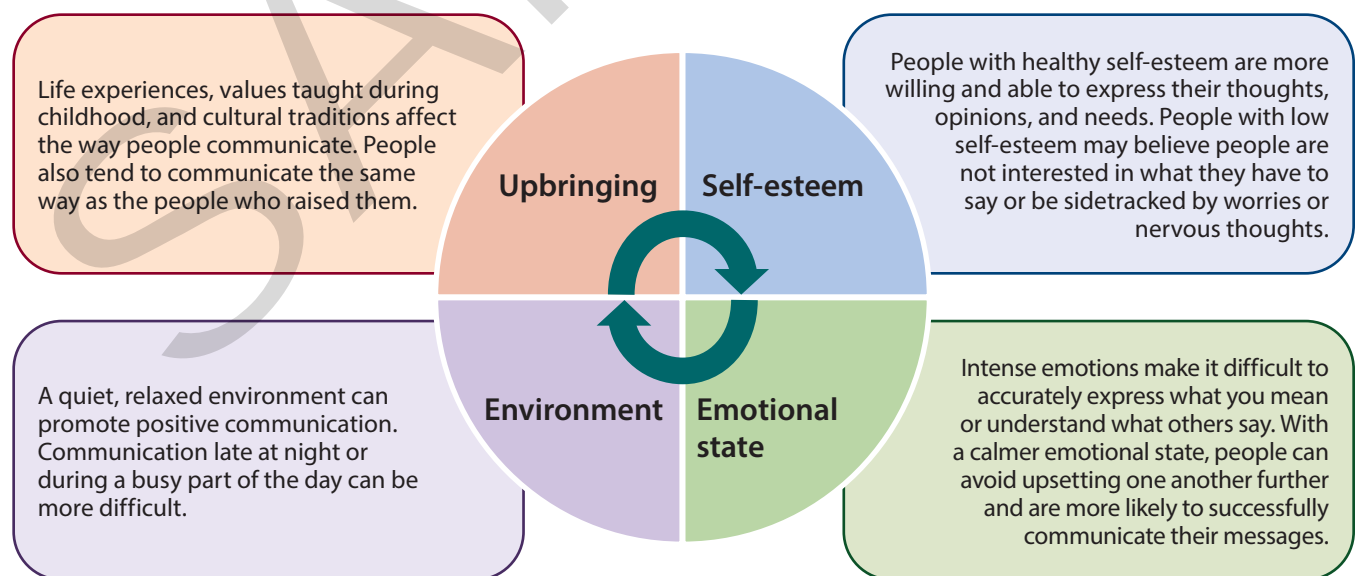


Figure 3.4 Communication styles are influenced by multiple factors in a person’s life, including the person’s culture, family, past experiences, self-esteem, emotional state, and environment. *Which communication technique insults others and does not clearly state a person’s needs or feelings?*



Quiz What Kind of Communicator Are You?

People use different communication styles to express their thoughts, feelings, and desires. The best, clearest style of communication is being assertive. To find out what type of communicator you are, take this quiz. Read the following scenarios. Select the option that best fits how you would react in each situation.

- You are about to leave home to meet your cousin at the mall. On your way out the door, your parent or guardian asks for your help with some household chores. What do you do?
 - Message your cousin that you will be late and need to go help with chores.
 - Say, "What do I look like, your personal servant?" and walk out the door.
 - Ask, "Why don't you ask your *favorite* child to help?"
 - Say, "I already had plans to go out. Can I come straight home afterward to help?"
- In history class, you are working on a group project with three other classmates. You are all debating about which project topic to select. What do you do?
 - Stay mostly quiet and allow your classmates to make all the decisions.
 - Take charge and make the final decision without listening to your classmates' opinions.
 - Persuade your classmates to choose your ideas.
 - Give your input, listen to your classmates, and work together to come to an agreement.
- You send a message asking your friend to come hang out at your place. Your friend agrees to come by, but never arrives. What do you do?
 - Ignore it. Maybe something happened at home, and your friend just forgot to message you.
 - Send a message saying your friend is awful for ignoring you and is a terrible friend.
 - Message your friend saying not to worry about it. Ignore your friend the next day at school.
 - Reach out to your friend to find out what happened.
- You are meeting your dating partner for dinner at a restaurant your partner chose. The food is *awful*. Your partner asks what you thought about dinner. What do you do?
 - Say it was okay even though you hated it. You do not want to hurt your partner's feelings.
 - Say, "It was terrible. How could you make such a horrible choice?"
 - Say, "It was not the best. We should have gone somewhere else."
 - Say, "I didn't like the food, but thanks for dinner. We'll try somewhere else next time."
- Two of your close friends are talking about you behind your back. You catch them talking about you one day after school. How do you react?
 - Laugh it off with your friends. They were probably just kidding around.
 - Confront them by yelling insults at them.
 - Sarcastically say, "Oh, wow, you are really great friends."
 - Tell your friends you wish they would talk to you because talking behind your back hurts.

Now, add up the number of times you selected each letter. Which letters did you select most often?

If you answered **mostly A**, you use a passive communication style. You have trouble clearly stating your needs, wants, and feelings. Try challenging yourself to state what you *really* think, even if it seems scary.

If you answered **mostly B**, you use an aggressive communication style. You tend to communicate thoughts and feelings by making demands of others. Next time someone makes you angry, try imagining yourself in that person's shoes and modify your communication to be more respectful.

If you answered **mostly C**, you use a passive-aggressive communication style. You use passive techniques that actually make demands of others. Try to say what you really think in a situation and consider the other person's feelings.

If you answered **mostly D**, you use an assertive communication style. This style is the most effective for clear, respectful communication. Keep sharing your thoughts, feelings, and desires in honest, considerate ways.

Practice Your Skills

Practice Health-Enhancing Behaviors

With a partner, discuss your results from the quiz. Do you agree with the results? Together with your partner, analyze each scenario you answered. Brainstorm assertive ways of responding to each scenario that you

would feel comfortable using. Write a few phrases or responses you think would assertively communicate your thoughts and feelings, while still being respectful. Afterward, discuss with your partner what you learned from the process. How did both of you have to modify your natural form of communication to be more assertive? What skills helped you in being assertive?

The best style for effective communication is being assertive. Assertive communication allows you to express how you feel and make yourself known. If you do not express your feelings and goals, you are not letting other people truly know you. Assertive communication also helps you express yourself respectfully in a way that is understanding of others. Communicating in a way that disrespects others can be hurtful. Communicating assertively can help you build honest relationships, set healthy boundaries, and defend your decisions and goals.

Use I-Statements

Effective communication uses I-statements to express thoughts, feelings, and desires. **I-statements** explain how the speaker thinks or feels without passing judgment on the receiver. An example of an I-statement is “I feel ignored, which makes me worried. Is something wrong?” This is more constructive than a you-statement, which makes assumptions about and blames the other person (for example, “You don’t like me anymore”). Using I-statements can help others understand your point of view without making them feel attacked (Figure 3.5).

I-statements words that explain how the speaker feels without judging the receiver

Watch Your Nonverbal Communication

When communicating, be aware of the nonverbal messages you send. What messages do your facial expressions and body language communicate to others? For example, suppose you are having a conversation with your sister.



Figure 3.5 I-statements do not blame the other person or escalate emotions. Healthy communication offers your perspective, expresses your emotions, explains your needs, and provides a potential outcome.

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As she speaks, you look down at your phone and periodically roll your eyes. These signals do not communicate active listening or respect for your sister. Making eye contact, nodding your head, and leaning forward would communicate you value what she is saying.

Communicate Carefully Online

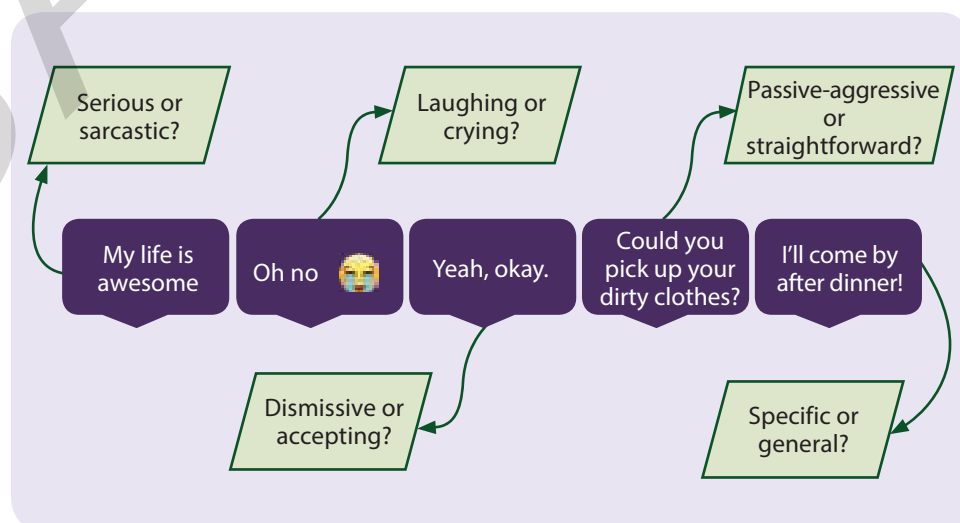
Most teens regularly communicate online. Online communication occurs on social media and websites and through any digital device, like a phone, computer, laptop, tablet, or gaming system. This type of communication has many advantages, including instant feedback, long-distance communication, and time to think of the best response. Online communication also has some disadvantages.

Miscommunications occur easily online because nonverbal cues, such as gestures and facial expressions, are not always available. Even some features that try to make up for the lack of nonverbal communication do not always succeed. One person may use an emoticon to express one emotion, but another person may associate an entirely different meaning to that same symbol. People can easily misjudge the tone or meaning of online communication (**Figure 3.6**).

Fortunately, there are some strategies you can use to avoid misunderstandings and communicate online safely and effectively. Some of these strategies include the following:

- **Be kind and respectful:** Treat people the way you would like to be treated or the way you would want someone to treat your best friend. If someone is rude or aggressive, you can ignore the message or tell the person to stop. If aggressive behavior continues, block the person or ask an adult or trusted friend for advice about what to do next.
- **Solve conflicts offline:** If you have a disagreement with someone, approach the person face-to-face. If you cannot talk in person, reach out to the person privately online. Share your feelings and try to work through the conflict together. Do not share this disagreement on social media or in a public way. This will just make the conflict worse.

Figure 3.6 It may be difficult to interpret the tone or meaning people intend in online messages. To avoid miscommunication, clarify if you do not know what someone is saying or how someone means something. *Why is online communication easy to misinterpret?*



josep.perianes.jorba/Shutterstock.com

- **Think before you share:** Content you share online—even in private emails or messages—can easily become public and spread. Think carefully before you share anything you would not want other people to see. Even if you are sharing private content only with a friend or dating partner, think about what might happen later on, if you have conflict or if the relationship ends. Assume everyone will be able to see anything you post online, even if you try to remove what you posted.
- **Keep passwords private:** Create a password that you can remember, but that others cannot guess. Do not share this password with anyone, even with friends, and change your password every few months. Sharing a password with a friend can cause issues if that friend pretends to be you, even if it seems like no big deal.

Lesson 3.1 Review

Know and Understand

1. Using Figure 3.1, draw your own diagram to help explain the communication process.
2. Are online messages an example of verbal or nonverbal communication? Explain.
3. Have a conversation with a partner and list all of the types of nonverbal communication your partner uses. What do these cues communicate?
4. What are the steps in active listening?
5. Imagine that, after your friend cancels on you, you message your friend saying, *You like your other friends more than me.* How could you rephrase this feeling into an I-statement?

Think Critically

6. Think of a time you had a misunderstanding with a friend online. What led to the misunderstanding? How did the lack of nonverbal communication affect the misunderstanding?
7. What advantage does assertive communication have over the other three communication styles? Analyze why this advantage is essential for effective communication.
8. Why is it best to communicate about disagreements privately and offline? What qualities of online communication make handling conflict difficult? Explain.

REAL WORLD Health Skills

Practice Health-Enhancing Behaviors One effective strategy for communicating emotions in relationships is to use I-statements instead of you-statements. For example, you could say, “I feel hurt that everyone knows what I told you,” instead of “You told Corby what I said. You violated my trust.” To practice this skill, convert the following you-statements into I-statements. Compare and contrast the effective versus ineffective communication.

You never ask if you can borrow my clothes, and you know that is my favorite shirt!

You didn't tell me you were going to Charlie's party. You knew I wanted to go.

You always remind me to do my homework. Why can't you just let me try to do it on my own?

Lesson 3.2

Resolving Conflicts

Essential Question?

How can you resolve conflicts in a way that strengthens a relationship?

Learning Outcomes

After studying this lesson, you will be able to

- describe factors that cause conflict;
- analyze the importance of addressing and resolving conflicts;
- explain the steps in effectively resolving a conflict; and
- assess how mediation aids in conflict resolution.

Key Terms

compromise
conflict
conflict-resolution skills
mediation
mediator
misunderstandings
negotiation
peer mediation

Warm-Up Activity

Conflict Comic Strip

Communicate with Others

What is the most recent conflict you had with someone? Illustrate this conflict in a short, six-panel comic strip. Describe what was said and try to show any nonverbal elements of communication such as body language and movement. Then write a paragraph explaining whether this conflict was handled in a healthy or unhealthy way. You will consider your answer again in the *Real World Health Skills* activity at the end of this lesson.



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conflict disagreement or argument that occurs due to misunderstandings or differing priorities, values, goals, or needs

The disagreements that occur in relationships are known as **conflict**. Conflict is a normal part of everyday life, even for healthy relationships, and is not always negative. Engaging in conflict can have positive outcomes for yourself and your relationships. Understanding conflict—including what causes conflict and how to best resolve conflict—is important.

What Causes Conflict?

Many different factors can lead to *interpersonal conflicts*, which are conflicts between people or groups of people. Conflicts occur when different people have the following:

- **Different priorities:** People may prioritize events, situations, and preferences differently. For example, maybe it is important to you that you see your friend every week, but it is equally important to your friend to attend soccer practice.

- **Different values:** Your *values* are what is important to you. Family, culture, personal views and opinions, and experiences influence your values. For example, maybe your teacher values hard work and is strict with a fellow classmate, but you value your classmate’s feelings and disagree with your teacher’s approach.
- **Different goals:** People’s individual goals can sometimes cause conflict. For example, a goal of your family is to keep you safe, which might clash with your goal to be more independent.
- **Different needs:** People have different needs at different times. For example, maybe you need some time to wind down after school, but your dating partner needs to vent about a fight with a sibling.
- **Misunderstandings:** **Misunderstandings** are failures in communication that lead to conflict. For example, maybe when you complain about your weekend, your friend thinks you are complaining about your time together. If your friend does not clarify your message, this could lead to hurt feelings and conflict.

misunderstandings
failures in communication
that lead to conflict

What separates healthy conflict from unhealthy conflict is how conflict is resolved. In disagreements of little importance, it may be best to simply accept differences and agree to respectfully disagree. There is no point arguing with a friend who does not like your favorite TV show, for example (Figure 3.7). Other conflicts, such as you and your sibling disagreeing about which movie to see, are easy to settle with no hurt feelings. Many conflicts, however, are more complicated and too serious to ignore.

Conflicts that are not resolved can lead to serious and lasting consequences. Conflicts that go unresolved for a long time often *escalate*, or become major issues. Unresolved conflicts can have negative effects on a person’s psychological and emotional well-being. Interpersonal conflict can even impact a person’s physical health. Conflict is a type of stress, and people who experience long-term stressors in the form of conflict can develop serious health conditions.

Many people worry that trying to resolve a conflict will destroy a relationship or make the conflict worse. In reality, working through a conflict can actually strengthen a relationship. When people decide to work together to resolve a conflict, they show their commitment to the relationship.



Figure 3.7 You do not need, or even want, everyone in your life to be identical copies of you. Talking with people who have different interests, experiences, and views of the world can be exciting.

Left to right: SDI Productions/E+via Getty Images; seb_ra/iStock/Getty Images Plus via Getty Images; Lopolo/Shutterstock.com

conflict-resolution skills

strategies for working through a disagreement or argument in positive, productive ways

negotiation

process of working together to resolve conflict and find acceptable solutions; involves identifying the cause, asking for solutions from both parties, agreeing on and carrying out a solution, and evaluating the solution and renegotiating, if necessary

Resolving Conflicts

Your interpersonal interactions may be pleasant most of the time, but conflicts are sure to arise. Learning **conflict-resolution skills**, or strategies for resolving conflict in productive and positive ways, is important because conflict is an inevitable part of life. Settling a conflict requires communication skills, such as assertive communication and active listening. It also requires **negotiation**, a process in which people work together (to think and talk) through a solution to a conflict (**Figure 3.8**).

Identify the Cause of the Conflict

The first step in resolving a conflict is identifying what is causing the conflict. This step can start on an individual level, but should eventually involve communication between both people in the conflict. Conflicts continue or grow worse if you do not share your feelings. Instead of trying to pretend you are not upset, plan to talk about the conflict with the other person.

Before setting a time to talk, identify what you think is causing the conflict. Pay attention to your feelings and thoughts to get a clear picture of why the conflict is occurring. Sometimes you may not feel ready to talk directly to the other person in a conflict. In that case, talk to someone else first. Explaining the situation to an adult or friend can help you work out how you feel and what you want. It can also give you a new perspective.

Before starting a discussion with the other person in the conflict, agree with the person on a time and place to discuss the situation. Meet when you both have enough time to focus on the issue. Choose a neutral meeting place away from other people and distractions (**Figure 3.9**).

Remember that when two people are in conflict, they often identify the cause differently. Apply effective verbal and nonverbal communication strategies during this stage. Both people must honestly and clearly state the conflict from their perspectives. Sometimes feelings get heated when people are in the middle of a conflict. Intense feelings, such as disappointment and frustration, can make a conflict worse. To avoid this, learn to manage and control your anger. Use assertive communication. Use I-statements instead of you-statements and avoid making accusations or name-calling.

Some types of conflict are easier to resolve after time has passed. If you feel too angry or upset to have a productive conversation about a conflict, let the person know you need some time. Walk away and give yourself and the other person a chance to calm down.

Ask for Solutions from Both Parties

After discussing the cause of the conflict, brainstorm ways to solve the conflict. Find out what each person wants or needs as a desired outcome to the situation. Keep an open mind about everyone's ideas and do not rule out any suggestions. Be creative. People from both parties should state their ideas firmly, but not demand that the other person agree.

People must also listen carefully to what others have to say and recognize and accept the other person's opinions. Sometimes people are so focused on seeing a conflict from their own perspective they have difficulty imagining any other perspective. This makes conflicts harder to resolve. Instead, listen carefully to the other person's proposed solutions and try to understand the person's perspective.

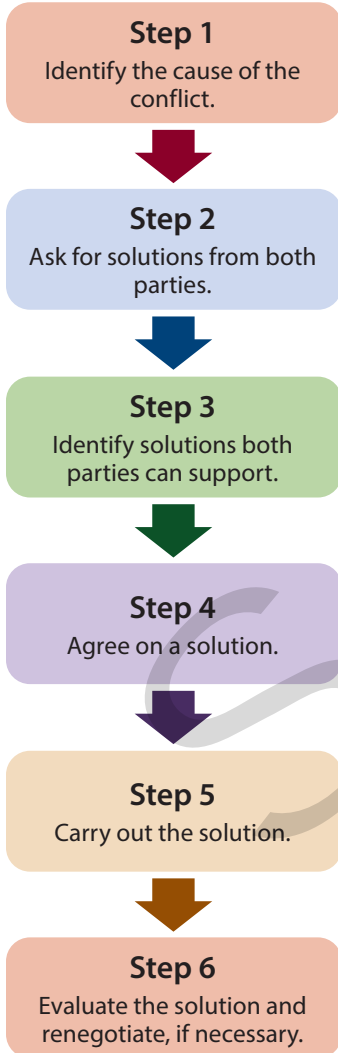


Figure 3.8 Negotiation is an important process for resolving conflicts.



Tips for Identifying the Cause of a Conflict

- State what you think is causing the conflict.
- Speak honestly about your feelings, needs, and goals.
- Have the other person share this information too.
- Do not behave passively or aggressively.
- Listen carefully to what the other person says and try to understand that person's perspective.
- Consider what good points the person is making rather than thinking about your response.
- Pay attention to the person's body language and tone of voice.

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Figure 3.9 When you meet with the other person in the conflict, use positive conflict-resolution skills, including active listening, to discuss the issue at hand.



Research in Action

The Magic Relationship Ratio

How often do you have conflict with your sibling, best friend, or dating partner? Did you know that some conflict is actually a *good* thing? What matters most is how often people interact positively or negatively when resolving conflict.

Research by Dr. John Gottman at the University of Washington examined how couples resolve conflict and how their interactions impact happiness. In one study, researchers examined videos of married couples trying to solve a conflict in their relationship. They counted how many different positive and negative interactions the couple had during this 15-minute interaction. Positive interactions included behaviors like laughing, teasing, and showing affection.

Negative interactions included criticism, anger, and defensiveness. Researchers then contacted these same couples nine years later to see if they were still together.

Researchers found that couples who stayed together had at least five positive interactions for every one negative interaction when they resolved conflict. This led to a so-called “magic ratio” of 5 to 1.

What is the key, take-home point here? Healthy relationships involve conflict, but they also involve lots of positive interactions. Even when people are working through a conflict, people in a healthy relationship show positive behaviors toward each other. Conflict is inevitable in a relationship and is even a sign of a healthy relationship, as long as it is balanced with affection, laughter, and love.



Practice Your Skills

Practice Health-Enhancing Behaviors

Think about the different interactions you have had recently with a friend, dating partner, or family member. What positive interactions have you had? What negative interactions have you had? For one relationship, calculate the ratio of positive to negative

interactions in the past two weeks. If your ratio does not include enough positive interactions, think about what you could do differently. What strategies can you use to increase positive interactions with this person? How can you reduce negative interactions? In collaboration with a partner, develop a plan to balance your negative interactions with more positive ones and build a stronger, healthier relationship.

Identify Solutions Both Parties Can Support

After discussing all possible solutions, recommend a solution or combination of solutions. Calmly discuss the issue and possible solutions to reach an agreement both people can support. Both parties should be open to suggestions and focus on finding a solution together, not just on meeting their own needs.

Agree on a Solution

During this step, both people agree on a solution. Rarely is there a solution that makes everyone happy. Often, both sides agree to give in a little, or **compromise**. Through compromise, each side can reach a solution that is acceptable for all people involved (**Figure 3.10**). Sometimes a compromise is not possible, and the solution involves the two sides simply agreeing to disagree.

compromise agreement in which two sides come together and each side gives in a little

Carry Out the Solution

Take action to apply the solution. Ensure that all parties know their designated roles in the solution. Make sure everyone follows through on the agreed-upon solution and consider how each person should overcome any likely obstacles. People are more likely to resolve a conflict with a specific plan outlined.

Examples of Compromises for Common Conflicts

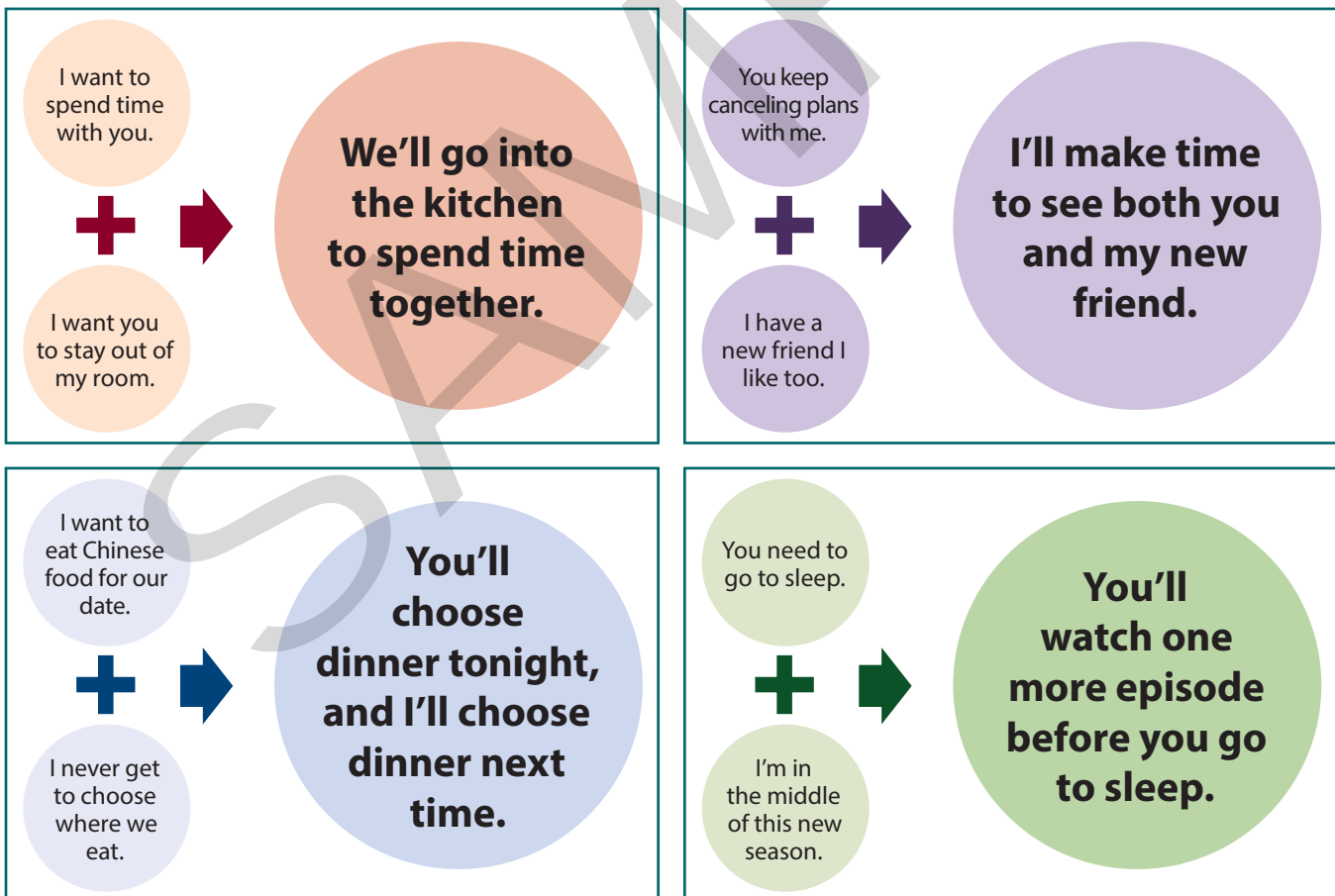


Figure 3.10 Effective compromise is only possible if both people are willing to be flexible. *Who has to give in a little in a compromise?*

Evaluate the Solution and Renegotiate, If Necessary

Review the outcome of the solution. If for some reason the solution is not working, find out why and renegotiate. Identify which step in the conflict-resolution process failed, go back to that step, and try again.

Using Mediation

In some cases, a conflict is too serious or difficult for the people directly involved to manage by themselves. In this situation, an outside individual with a neutral perspective can help the people or groups find an effective solution.



Skills for Health and Wellness

Solve a Conflict with a Friend

Even in strong, healthy friendships, conflicts occur. When you have conflict with a friend, you have to make a decision about how to respond. Sometimes you may not feel comfortable telling your friend

how you are feeling when you are upset. Not saying anything will harm the friendship, however. Working on solving the conflict can help strengthen your friendship.



Practice Your Skills

Communicate with Others

Partner with a classmate to role-play managing a conflict with a friend. Choose a conflict one of you recently had. If you cannot think of one, reference Figure 3.10. Then follow these steps to try to work through the conflict in a constructive way:

1. **Set up a time to discuss the conflict** and resolve it. When resolving a conflict, you might want to start by saying something positive about your friendship. For example, express how much you enjoy hanging out with your friend: "I really appreciate our friendship and I enjoy spending time with you."
2. Together with your friend, **identify the cause of the conflict**. State how you feel using an I-statement: "I felt hurt and sad when our plans for Saturday night fell through at the last minute." Acknowledge your own role in the conflict: "I'm sorry I didn't respond when you apologized. I'm sorry I complained about you to some other friends." Ask your friend to also state what your friend thinks is causing the conflict. Listen carefully and acknowledge your friend's feelings and ideas.

3. **Seek solutions** to the conflict from both parties. Suggest a solution: "Next time, I would really appreciate it if you didn't cancel plans, or at least let me know earlier if something wasn't going to work out for you. I will respond to you quickly instead of ignoring you, and make a point of talking to you directly instead of reaching out to complain to other friends." Listen to your friend's ideas as well.
4. Together, **discuss which solutions are best** for both of you. Trade suggestions and try to identify solutions that solve the conflict and address both people's feelings.
5. **Agree on a solution**. Sometimes, this will involve reaching a compromise. If you cannot reach a compromise, agree to disagree.
6. In your role-play, jump forward in time and role-play a situation in which you and your friend carry out the solution. Afterward, **evaluate whether the solution worked** and renegotiate, if necessary.

After role-playing once, switch roles with your partner. Then discuss which statements and strategies felt the best to both of you and best resolved the conflict.

mediation strategy for resolving difficult conflicts through a neutral third party

mediator neutral third party who attempts to help people involved in a conflict reach an agreement

peer mediation process in which specially trained students work with other students to resolve conflicts

Mediation is a strategy for resolving difficult conflicts through the involvement of a neutral third party, or **mediator** (Figure 3.11). During mediation, both parties in the conflict separately share their perspectives of the conflict with the mediator. The mediator then brings the two parties together to share their views and tries to help them reach an agreement.

Conflict-resolution programs in many high schools provide **peer mediation**, in which specially trained students work with other students to resolve conflicts. Peer mediators learn about conflicts and methods for resolving them. They work under the guidance of faculty advisors. When a conflict arises, the faculty member assigns a mediator to handle the situation. The mediator talks to the people involved in the conflict and helps them work through a solution. If you do not have a peer mediation program at your school, you can talk with a school counselor or teacher about starting one.

Figure 3.11 Mediators act as neutral third parties to help people resolve conflict.



Lesson 3.2 Review

Know and Understand

1. Why is it important not to let conflicts go unresolved?
2. With a partner, choose a common conflict and explain how you would resolve it using each step in negotiation.
3. Explain what happens in a compromise.

Think Critically

4. How much conflict do you think is normal in a relationship?

5. Think about a conflict in your life and identify whether it was caused by different priorities, values, goals, needs, misunderstandings, or a combination of these factors.
6. Why do you think the two people in a conflict often identify the cause differently?
7. Why do you think involving a mediator often helps people resolve conflicts?

REAL WORLD Health Skills

Communicate with Others Now that you have learned some strategies for resolving conflict, analyze the comic strip you created for the Warm-Up Activity at the beginning of this lesson. What strategies or forms of communication did you use to resolve that conflict? How healthy were those strategies? What strategies could you have used instead? Choose one or two strategies you think would have resolved the conflict in a better way and then draw a new comic showing how that conflict may have ended differently.

Resisting Pressure

Essential Question?

What skills can you use to resist negative peer pressure?

Lesson 3.3

Learning Outcomes

After studying this lesson, you will be able to

- define *pressure*;
- explain the difference between positive and negative peer pressure;
- identify effective strategies for resisting negative peer pressure; and
- use refusal skills to protect your health and stand up to pressure.

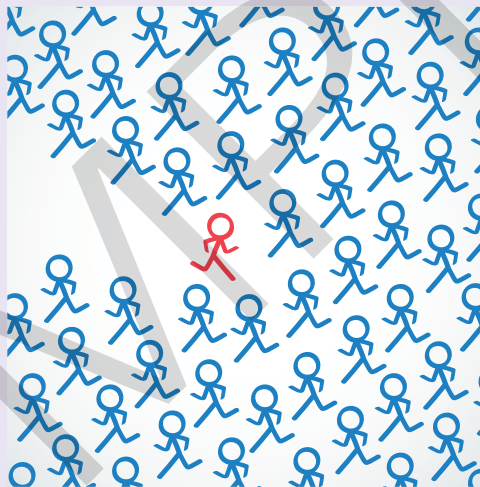
Key Terms

negative peer pressure
peer pressure
positive peer pressure
pressure
refusal skills

Warm-Up Activity

Peer Pressure

Analyze Influences Think about some personal experiences with friends and identify three examples of positive peer pressure and three examples of negative peer pressure. How did you feel when you experienced positive peer pressure? negative peer pressure? In the moment, did you recognize whether the pressure was positive or negative? How did you react? Create an audio journal or video blog entry reflecting on your experiences.



Rudie Strummer/Shutterstock.com

Relationships are a source of support for all people, and the relationships you keep are certain to influence your preferences, activities, and ideas. For example, have you ever noticed that you tend to dress like your closest friends? or that you took up a new activity once a new person entered your life? This is because people naturally try to fit in with their peers and the people in their social groups. This is especially true during the adolescent years, when peer approval is important to teens. The influence your relationships have on your behavior can be positive or negative.

What Is Peer Pressure?

pressure motivation to do an activity or take on certain qualities; can be internal or external

Pressure refers to the motivation to do an activity or take on certain qualities. Pressure can be internal or external. *Internal pressure* is your motivation to complete a task. For example, if you feel pressure to do well in science, this might motivate you to attend a study group or spend more time on homework. *External pressure* refers to outside actions, words, and rewards that influence your behavior. For example, if you hear that most of your classmates are vaping, this might influence you to try vaping despite its harmful effects on health.

peer pressure social pressure among people of the same age or status; can make people feel like they need to do and like the same things to be liked or respected

Pressure exists in all types of relationships. Pressure among *peers*, or people of the same age or status, is called **peer pressure**. Peer pressure is a common element present in friendships, romantic relationships, and casual relationships among acquaintances. Two different types of peer pressure exist—positive and negative.

Positive Peer Pressure

Although people often associate peer pressure with negative activities, peer pressure can have a positive effect on your health. For example, you might feel pressure to participate in community service projects with a



Health in the Media



The Power of Virtual Peer Pressure

Most teens have heard about the effects of peer pressure, but virtual peer pressure can be just as impactful. *Virtual peer pressure* describes the pressure people feel to spend time on social media to fit in with friends—for example, by constantly posting pictures and commenting on or liking other people's pictures and posts. Teens may also feel pressure to post certain types of pictures to feel accepted and valued by friends on social media.

What is so powerful about virtual peer pressure? To test this question, researchers at Temple University in Philadelphia studied teens' brain activity looking at different pictures on social media. Each picture displayed how many likes it supposedly received from other teens in the study. (In reality, researchers

assigned the number of likes.) Researchers then measured which photos teens liked and the activity in teens' brains.

Can you predict what researchers found? First, teens were more likely to like a photo if it had been liked by others. Teens were highly influenced by what they believed other teens liked. Second, when teens saw pictures that had many likes, this activated the brain region that processes rewarding experiences—the same region activated by eating chocolate or winning money. In other words, knowing that others like a picture you also like literally feels good in the brain. This shows the power of virtual peer pressure to influence responses on social media.



Practice Your Skills

Set Goals

With a partner, discuss why teens are so strongly influenced by what they believe other teens like. Do you think people at other ages would show the same pattern of responses?

Why or why not? With your partner, brainstorm strategies teens can use to manage the influence of virtual peer pressure on their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Set five SMART goals to put these strategies into action. Act on two of these goals and then evaluate with your partner how successful they were.

school group or athletic team. A friend may encourage you to study harder and improve your grade in a class. In these cases, pressure from peers can help you broaden your perspective, contribute to your community, and succeed. **Positive peer pressure** involves activities that contribute to good health and can benefit you.

Positive peer pressure is also respectful. It values your opinions, preferences, and individuality. For example, a friend might say, “You’re so smart. I think it would be great to study together.” The same friend should accept your answer, even if you decline. Peer pressure becomes negative if it makes you feel guilty or harms your self-esteem. Even though encouraging someone to do well in school is positive, if your friend makes you feel bad about yourself or does not accept your answer, this is negative peer pressure.

positive peer pressure
social pressure among people of the same age or status that contributes to good health and can be beneficial

Negative Peer Pressure

Negative peer pressure refers to peer pressure that encourages unhealthy behaviors or is not respectful (**Figure 3.12**). In some relationships, one person pressures another to do something uncomfortable. A teen may feel pressured to drink alcohol because peers on social media are drinking or skip class because friends encourage it. If the culture at a school is accepting of teasing and bullying, a teen may feel pressured to pick on classmates to fit in.

negative peer pressure
social pressure among people of the same age or status that encourages unhealthy behaviors or is not respectful

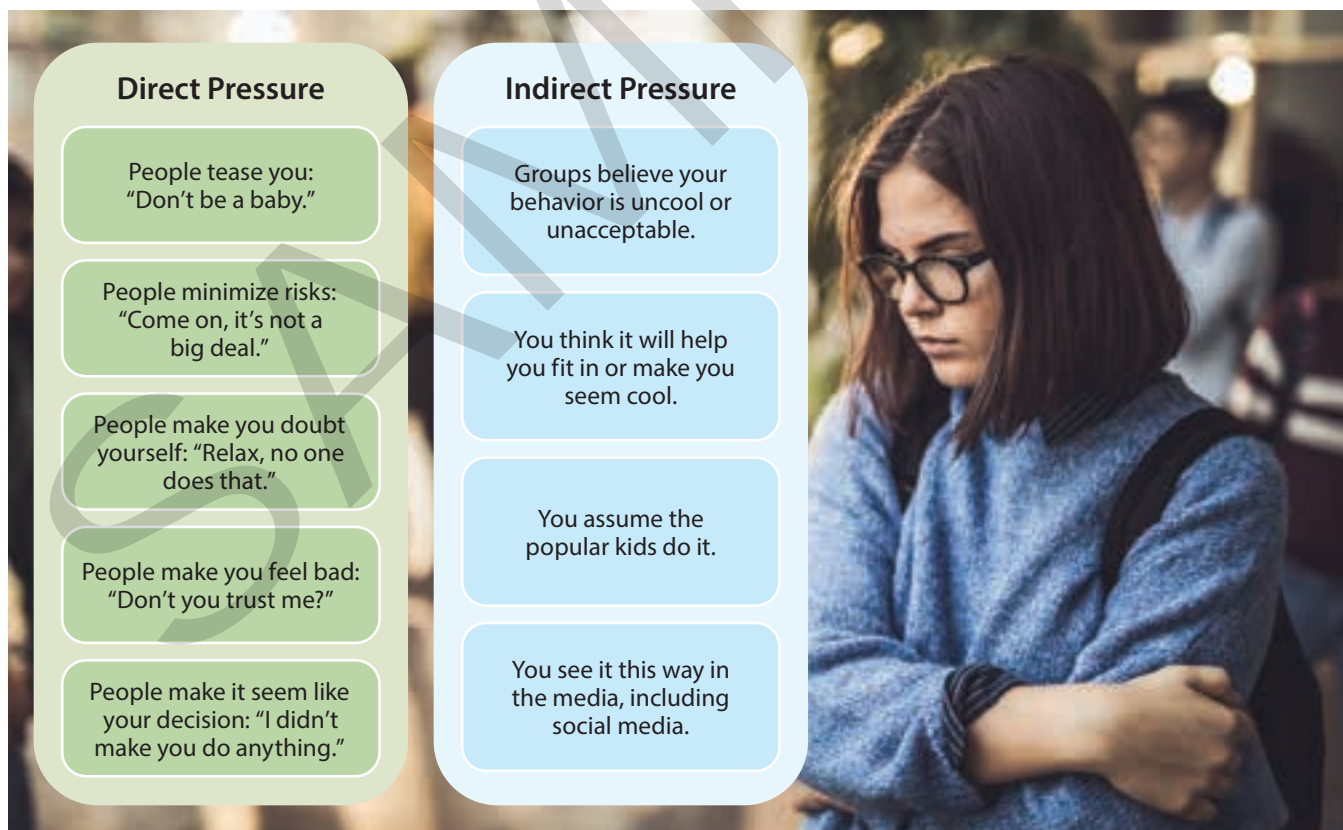


Figure 3.12 Trust your instincts. If you feel uncomfortable, even if your friends or classmates seem to be fine, it means something about the situation is wrong for you. *What type of pressure comes from the words and actions of other people, rather than self-motivation?*

Most people want to be liked and fit in with a group. They may decide to go along with certain behaviors even if they are uncomfortable. They may also give up certain activities they enjoy. They may worry about being ridiculed if they do not join the group activity, go along with culture, or meet expectations in the media. Sometimes teens worry that standing up for their interests or beliefs could cause them to lose a relationship or feel awkward or left out.



Case Study

Peer Pressure in Action



imtmphoto/iStock/Getty Images Plus via Getty Images

Kim is a sophomore and dedicated to her studies. She always does her homework and gets to class on time. Kim's friends do not share these same values, however. Some of her friends wait until the last minute to complete an assignment. Some do

not even complete it at all. Lately, Kim's friends have been asking her to skip class with them. Kim thinks it could be kind of fun, but she does not want to get in trouble. Kim's friends reassure her they do this all the time and have never gotten in trouble.

When he was a freshman, Connor used to skip class with his friends all the time. At first, he told them *no*, but he watched how much fun they had on social media. Once he started skipping class, his schoolwork really suffered. He was even suspended from playing basketball until he got his grades up. He wanted to play basketball more than he wanted to skip class, so he told his friends he would not do it anymore. He was surprised when his friend Hassan told him he did not want to skip class either.

As a senior, Hassan really values his friendship with Connor. Hassan appreciates that Connor respects his choices and likes him for who he is, rather than how far he is willing to push boundaries. Hassan thinks that he and Connor drive each other to be better, stronger versions of themselves. Without Connor, Hassan does not know if he would have worked so hard to make the varsity basketball team. He definitely would not have gotten into his dream college if he had not studied with Connor for the SATs and started going back to class.

Practice Your Skills

Make Decisions

Recall a time you experienced a situation similar to Kim or Connor or encountered negative peer pressure. What decisions did you make in the situation? What were the outcomes of your

decisions? Were you happy with these outcomes? Thinking back on the situation, use the decision-making process to outline other, healthier decisions you could have made. What could you have done to resist negative peer pressure and stick with your decisions? Create a journal entry of your answers and reflections.

True friends and dating partners respect each other's choices and encourage healthy behaviors. They also appreciate differences between people, including unique interests, opinions, and lifestyles. If you are experiencing negative peer pressure, you have the right to stand up for yourself and to walk away from situations that make you uncomfortable. If a friend or dating partner ends a relationship with you over this choice, that person does not respect you. Standing up to peer pressure is especially important when people are acting in ways that could hurt you or someone else.

Strategies for Handling Peer Pressure

What can you do to stand up to negative peer pressure and build an environment in which peer pressure is positive? How you respond to peer pressure will depend on the kind of pressure, the peers around you, and what skills you are most comfortable using. Strategies you can use to handle peer pressure include the following.

Focus on Yourself

Peer pressure can make you feel like you need to act or think a certain way to fit in. In reality, every person is unique and has different values and goals. To resist negative peer pressure, focus on your own thoughts, feelings, and values and make sure your actions reflect your beliefs and goals. If you feel out of touch with yourself, try journaling or taking time to reflect on how you *really* feel about a situation. Knowing and being confident in yourself and your judgment will give you the strength to walk away from a situation or from people who make you uncomfortable.

Build Respectful Relationships

In healthy, respectful relationships, people recognize each other's boundaries and accept if a person says *no* or is uncomfortable. To resist negative peer pressure, focus on building relationships with people who value you for who you are and do not try to change you. These healthy relationships should be free from negative peer pressure, and sometimes these friends can even help you resist pressure from others.

To reduce negative peer pressure and surround yourself with positive peer pressure, you can also choose friends who have values similar to yours. This will make you less likely to experience pressure to engage in unhealthy behaviors. People who share your values, goals, and beliefs will probably support your decisions.

Use Refusal Skills

Part of resisting negative peer pressure is communicating your decisions, boundaries, and affirmative consent or refusal clearly to other people. Communicating your boundaries can help others know what makes you comfortable or uncomfortable. It can also prepare you to walk away from unhealthy behaviors or dangerous situations.

refusal skills set of skills designed to help someone avoid participating in unhealthy behaviors

Sometimes, you will encounter influences or behaviors that get in the way of your decisions and goals. You might have a friend who wants you to stay up all night messaging back and forth or a dating partner who pressures you to vape. **Refusal skills** help you respond to these influences and behaviors without compromising your own goals, values, and health (**Figure 3.13**). With these skills, you can make independent, informed decisions despite the messages you receive from peers and society.

Examples of Refusal Skills

One day, you visit an older friend, and your friend takes you to a party with alcohol. At the end of the night, your friend is drunk, but intends to drive you home. You know it is not safe for your friend to drive. What do you do?



Figure 3.13 These are just a few of the refusal skills you can use. Practicing these skills will help you find the skills you are most comfortable using.

Support Others

Through your actions, you can create a culture of positive peer pressure and support people who are resisting negative peer pressure. The more people who are willing to stand up and say *no* to an unhealthy behavior, the more comfortable others will feel doing the same thing. Sometimes having just one other person say, “I agree, this is a bad idea,” is all it takes to change a group’s behavior.

If you see another person being pressured to do an activity the person does not want to do, take action. Tell the person who is applying the pressure to stop or offer to do another activity with the person who is being pressured. It may feel hard initially to stand up to negative peer pressure, but you will feel good about yourself for having the courage to do what is right for you.

Ask for Help

Sometimes peer pressure can feel like a lot to handle. Especially if the negative pressure lasts for a long time, you might feel like it is easier to give in. In these cases, do not be afraid to ask for help. Try getting advice from a trusted adult who has some experience handling peer pressure. If negative peer pressure continues over time, talk to someone you trust—a parent or guardian, school nurse, teacher, or school counselor—about the situation. You could also reach out to community resources, such as help lines or organizations, in your area.

Lesson 3.3 Review

Know and Understand

1. Explain the difference between positive and negative peer pressure.
2. How can focusing on yourself help you resist peer pressure?
3. Choose one strategy to refuse unhealthy behaviors and stick to your decision. Practice this strategy with a partner and ask for feedback.
4. Give one example of how you could support others in resisting peer pressure.

Analyze and Apply

5. When you are building a relationship, how do you know if a person values you for who you are or wants to change you?
6. In a small group, discuss what, if any, kinds of peer pressure are appropriate in a healthy relationship.
7. How can refusal skills help you avoid unsafe situations?

REAL WORLD Health Skills

Practice Health-Enhancing Behaviors Review the refusal skills introduced in this lesson. When faced with peer pressure, which refusal skill would you be most comfortable using? Describe how you would put this strategy into action. Which strategy would be the hardest or least comfortable for you? What would have to change for you to feel more comfortable using this strategy? Describe how you might put this strategy into action.

Chapter Summary

Communication is the exchange of messages between people. In the communication process, a sender sends a message. The receiver receives the message and gives feedback to communicate the message was understood. Communication can be verbal or nonverbal. Verbal communication uses words—in person, written, or digital. Nonverbal communication includes all other forms of communication, including facial expressions, body language, and tone and volume of voice.

Effective communication requires positive communication skills. One important skill is active listening, which involves paying attention to the sender's message and giving feedback. A good communicator clearly expresses wants and needs and is assertive, rather than passive, passive-aggressive, or aggressive. Effective communication also uses I-statements, which focus on the speaker's thoughts and feelings without making accusations. Matching nonverbal communication to verbal communication and communicating carefully online, where nonverbal elements may not be present, are also important skills.

Conflict is a normal part of any relationship and results from misunderstandings and different priorities, values, goals, and needs. Conflict-resolution skills include communication skills and negotiation. In negotiation, people identify the cause of the conflict, ask for solutions from both parties, identify solutions they can support, agree on a solution, carry it out, and evaluate the solution. Remaining calm and respectful during this process is important. Mediation, which involves a neutral third party, can be helpful for difficult conflicts.

Peer pressure is the motivation to do certain activities or take on certain qualities to fit in with a group of peers. Positive peer pressure encourages healthy behaviors and is respectful. Negative peer pressure is not respectful and encourages unhealthy behaviors. To resist this type of peer pressure, you can focus on your own qualities and build respectful relationships. You can also use refusal skills—by stating your refusal, using humor, or changing the subject, for example. Supporting others and asking for help can also assist with resisting negative peer pressure.

Vocabulary Activity

Write the definition for each of the terms shown using everyday language and new expressions you have heard during class. Use words that other students will understand and that you will be able to easily remember. Double-check your definitions by using the text glossary.

<i>active listening</i>	<i>feedback</i>	<i>passive</i>
<i>aggressive</i>	<i>I-statements</i>	<i>passive-aggressive</i>
<i>assertive</i>	<i>mediation</i>	<i>peer mediation</i>
<i>communication</i>	<i>mediator</i>	<i>peer pressure</i>
<i>communication process</i>	<i>misunderstandings</i>	<i>positive peer pressure</i>
<i>compromise</i>	<i>negative peer pressure</i>	<i>pressure</i>
<i>conflict</i>	<i>negotiation</i>	<i>refusal skills</i>
<i>conflict-resolution skills</i>	<i>nonverbal communication</i>	<i>verbal communication</i>

Review and Recall

Review the information in this chapter by answering the following questions.

1. What is the purpose of giving feedback during communication?
2. Which of the following is an example of nonverbal communication?
 - A. spoken words
 - B. tone of voice
 - C. written letter
 - D. social media post
3. Which of the following is *not* part of active listening?
 - A. reflecting the person's feelings
 - B. making eye contact
 - C. paraphrasing the message
 - D. thinking about what you will say next
4. What could happen if you share sensitive content, like nude pictures or personal information, online?
5. Explain the difference between healthy and unhealthy conflict.
6. Why should you take some time and walk away from resolving a conflict if you feel very angry and upset?
7. Give an example of a compromise you made recently. What did you "give in" to make the compromise? What did the other person "give in"?
8. What happens in peer mediation?
9. If a friend makes fun of you for not working out after school, is this positive or negative peer pressure? Explain.
10. Which of the following is an effective nonverbal refusal skill?
 - A. avoiding eye contact
 - B. talking quietly
 - C. saying *no*
 - D. standing up straight
11. If people do not respect your refusal and keep pressuring you, what should you do?
12. Whom would you talk to if negative peer pressure continued over time to the point of being overwhelming?

Standardized Test Prep

Math Practice

The following results are from a study of US teens' feelings about social media. Review the results and answer the following questions.

81% of teens feel more connected to their friends because of social media.

69% of teens think social media helps them interact with more diverse people.

68% of teens feel friends on social media give them support through hard times.

45% of teens feel overwhelmed by the drama on social media.

43% of teens feel pressure to only post content that makes them look good.

37% of teens feel pressure to get likes and comments.

13. Find out the number of students at your school. If these statistics were to hold true for your student population, how many more students feel connected on social media than feel overwhelmed by drama?
14. What percentage of teens did *not* feel social media gave them support through hard times?

Source: "Teens' Social Media Habits and Experiences," Pew Research Center

Chapter 3 Skills Assessment



Critical Thinking Skills

Answer the following questions to assess your knowledge of what you learned in this chapter.

1. Online communication has evolved to include some elements of nonverbal communication. With a partner, list as many of these elements as you can and assess how effective each element is.
2. Think of conflicts in which you used or experienced the four different communication styles (passive, aggressive, passive-aggressive, and assertive). How did these styles make the people in these situations feel? What were the outcomes of these situations? Analyze how the outcomes might have been different if a different style were used.
3. Ask a trusted friend whether your nonverbal communication usually matches what you are saying. What did your friend say? Do you agree or disagree with your friend's assessment? Explain.
4. With a partner, make a list of guidelines for effective online communication. How do these guidelines differ from guidelines for in-person communication? Why?
5. What are your attitudes toward conflict? Does conflict frighten you? Do you enjoy conflict? What models in your life do you think influenced these attitudes, and how healthy are they?
6. Why do you think ignoring a conflict causes it to escalate?
7. In a conflict, it can be hard to see a situation from the other person's perspective. Why do you think this is? What skills can help people see both sides in a conflict?
8. If you cannot resolve a conflict, even after mediation, what next steps could you take? What resources in your family, school, or community could you use to handle the situation?
9. How does peer pressure compare to pressure in other relationships, such as family relationships?
10. How much do you think teens at your school experience peer pressure? Do most teens experience peer pressure to the same degree? Explain. What types of peer pressure are most common at your school?
11. Which refusal skills do you think are most effective for teens? least effective? Explain.
12. Explain why one person speaking up can change an entire group's behavior.
13. What resources in your school or community are available to help people experiencing negative peer pressure? What elements of peer pressure do these resources target?



Health and Wellness Skills

Complete the following activities to assess your skills related to health and wellness.

14. **Analyze Influences.** Online communication is an extremely popular way of staying in touch with family members and friends and meeting new people. How has online communication influenced you, your family, and teens in general? How has it influenced your communication, conflict-resolution, and refusal skills? Name five positive influences and five negative influences. Give strategies that could turn the negatives into positives.
15. **Access Information.** Sometimes people need outside help to resolve difficult conflicts or emotional situations. Using reliable sources, find out what resources are available in your area. Are there any resources specifically for teens? Research programs that might be available at your school or in your community to help with relationships. Examples might be peer mediation or healthy relationship programs. Make a list of programs and give a short description for each one. Include what services the resource provides and how to access them. Pair and share with a classmate.

16. **Communicate with Others.** Eventually, you will encounter people who disagree with you about certain health topics. When responding to a person you do not agree with, you may find it difficult to effectively communicate your knowledge and opinions while remaining respectful. With a partner, select one controversial health-related topic of your choice. Hold a discussion in which each of you argues different sides of an issue. Practice using strategies for overcoming communication barriers and disagreements.
17. **Make Decisions.** Relationships can affect health in a positive or a negative way. Extreme peer pressure and unsafe situations can cause a lot of harm, and it is important to make decisions and have some exit strategies to get yourself to safety. Make a list of eight to 10 decisions you could use in these situations to protect your own safety and well-being. Some examples might be telling a friend when you are going on a date or having a secret code word with your parent or guardian if you need help. What barriers might get in the way of you using these decisions? How would making these decisions protect your health?
18. **Set Goals.** Part of communicating effectively and building a healthy relationship is having positive interactions in addition to conflict. Think about a relationship you have. Set five SMART goals that involve positive interactions with this person. After you set your goals, reflect on the following question: Once you meet or fulfill your goals, do you think your relationship will change? Will it improve or become more positive? Explain.
19. **Advocate for Health.** Effective communication includes using audio and visual methods to present a message. Work together in small groups to create a public service announcement (PSA) that discusses the value of effective and respectful communication. Target teens with your PSA and include visual messages, such as pictures, graphics, or videos, as well as audio. Adapt your message to your audience and be sure to discuss effective online communication.



Hands-On Skills Activity

Interpersonal Skills Tool Kit

Sometimes, it can be hard to remember to practice the skills of effective communication and conflict resolution. In the moment, you might feel distracted or angry or have a hard time listening. The more you use effective interpersonal skills, however, the easier it will be. You may want a tool kit to help you when effective communication becomes difficult. This activity will allow you to create that kit with items that symbolize what has been discussed in this chapter. For this activity, you will need a brown paper bag, colored markers or pencils, pictures, and other items that symbolize the skills for effective communication.

Steps for This Activity

1. **Comprehend Concepts.** Review the skills involved in effective communication and conflict resolution. These can include skills for listening, communicating clearly, resolving conflict, and refusing unhealthy behaviors. Then, collect three to five items that remind you of the characteristics of effective communication. These items can be related to any type of communication and can remind you of skills like active listening, I-statements, negotiation, and refusal skills.
2. Decorate the outside of your paper bag with drawings or pictures that reflect the skills you most value and most need to practice. Illustrate how these skills impact health and support healthy relationships.
3. Place your collected items into your bag.
4. **Advocate for Health.** Bring your kit to class. Give a short presentation sharing the meanings behind the items or pictures you included. Use evidence you learned in this chapter to explain why you chose these items and pictures for your Interpersonal Skills Tool Kit.