

Communication 5: Defending Your Rights

Grades 7 and 8, Lessons #20

Student Learning Objectives:

If his or her basic rights are violated, to be able to...

1. Formulate an assertive defense.
2. Protect him/herself as aggressively as necessary.
3. Not over-react with hostility when it isn't necessary.

Agenda:

1. Use the *Defending Your Rights Reference Sheet* to introduce the assertive defense model.
2. Summarize the steps with *Communication Transparency 3: Defending Your Rights*.
3. Read and discuss the *Defending Your Rights Scenarios* as examples.
4. Have students complete *Communication Worksheet 6* individually (in writing) or in pairs (by discussing).
5. Optional: Have teams role play their worksheets or have individuals read their worksheet aloud.
6. Assign homework.

Materials Needed:

Classroom Materials, equipment: (1 per class)

- Overhead Projector
- *Communication Transparency 3*

Student Materials: (1 per student)

- *Defending You Rights Reference Sheet*
- *Defending Your Rights Scenarios*
- *Communication Worksheet 6*
- *Family Homework Exercise: Communication 5*
- *Our Family's Contract*

Activities

1. **Hand out the *Defending Your Rights Reference Sheet*.** Have volunteers read Part A aloud, stopping after each group of rights, so you can ask if anyone can think of any to add. Have students write in any additions.

Continue having volunteers read the rest of the reference sheet aloud, or have everyone read it silently. Discuss the point of not over-reacting. Analogy: You don't need a machine gun to kill a flea. And if the violation is unintended, it's more like a fly than a flea ... it's not even aggressive.

2. **Summarize the steps with *Communication Transparency 3: Defending Your Rights*.**

3. **Hand out *Defending Your Rights Scenarios*.** Have a volunteer read script 1. Stop and ask students which part of the script...

- stated a fact or a feeling

and which part

- described what you expected from the person.

then go on to script 2. And so on. As you'll notice, each script adds a step in the model.

4. **Hand out *Communication Worksheet 6* and give students 10 minutes to fill it in individually or in pairs (to develop a scenario for a role play).**
5. **Have some teams enact their scenarios.** There won't be time for every team to role play. Having them role play (instead of just writing it) will be more effective in actually imparting the skill. But if your class is too rambunctious, or if you don't have time, writing the scripts is a step in the right direction.

Homework

Students' options ...

- ***Family Homework Exercise: Communication 5*** (Students will also need to take home a copy of ***Our Family's Contract*** to complete this assignment. The *Contracts*, however, do not get returned to you; only the *Family Homework Confirmation Slip*, as always.)
- Write a rap, a short story, a children's book, a song, or a poem about defending your rights.

Defending Your Rights Reference Sheet

Name _____

A. The first step is to know your rights

1. Your touching rights...

- Never to be touched in a sexual or affectionate way without your permission.
- Never to be touched in a violent way except by choice (like if you choose to play football).
- Never to be touched in an exploitive way.
- To change your mind about touching.
- To want some kinds of touch and not others.
- To want to touch some people and not others.
- To like touch in some times or places and not others.
- To be warned if the other person knows they have an infection.
- To protect yourself from infections.
- To decide whether, when and with whom you'll become a parent.
- To protect yourself from unintended parenthood.
- To choose to abstain from intercourse or any other sexual touching.
- Not to even be touched in a nurturing way without your permission.

2. Your other rights...

- To not have to look at other peoples' private parts when you don't want to.
- To not have other people, even the doctor, look at your private parts without your permission.
- Not to share private thoughts, or feelings, unless you choose to.

3. Your rights in a clinic or doctor's office...

- Never to be touched on private parts, even by the doctor, without your permission.
- To understand exactly what the nurse/doctor is checking for, what he or she finds, what he or she recommends and why.
- To decide not to get a test or a treatment.
- To have information about you treated confidentially.
- To have a support person (friend/parent) present when you see the doctor/nurse if you choose.
- To have your touching and privacy rights respected.

Defending Your Rights Reference Sheet, continued ...

4. Your rights in a relationship...

- Not to be lied to.
- Not to be called names or put down.
- To say what you feel.
- To ask straight for what you want.
- To have your personal thoughts and feelings kept confidential (not to have your secrets spread around).
- To be listened to.
- To have your feelings considered.
- To have your touch and privacy rights respected.

B. Then... If someone violates your rights *accidentally*, you probably want to **assertively** defend your rights. If someone violates them on *purpose*, you may need to **aggressively** defend yourself.

C. Here's how:**1. An assertive defense...**

a. State a fact or a feeling.

<i>I have a right to _____</i>	<i>I don't appreciate your _____</i>
<i>I have a right not to _____</i>	<i>I like _____</i>
<i>I don't like it when you _____</i>	<i>I feel _____</i>

b. Describe what you expect from the person.

<i>I would like you to _____</i>	<i>Please _____</i>
<i>I want you to _____</i>	<i>Would you please _____</i>
<i>Please don't _____</i>	<i>Cut it out.</i>
<i>Please stop _____</i>	<i>Knock it off.</i>

2. A more aggressive defense...

c. Get their attention.

<i>Hey!</i>	<i>Hold it.</i>
<i>Listen to me.</i>	<i>Wait a minute.</i>
<i>Whoa!</i>	<i>Or say their name.</i>

d. Call them on their aggression or manipulation.

<i>That's not true.</i>	<i>That's illegal.</i>
<i>That sounds like a threat.</i>	<i>That's not fair.</i>
<i>That sounds like a put down.</i>	<i>That's not right.</i>
<i>That's not what I said.</i>	

Defending Your Rights Reference Sheet, continued ...

e. Repeat what you expect.

I mean it.

I said, "No."

I said, "Cut it out."

I asked you to ____

I asked you not to ____

I want you to ____

I really would like you to ____

3. If that doesn't work, leave the situation.

4. If they try to prevent you from leaving, get help or get violent. To get help ... ask somebody ... or make a scene (yell, break something). If you have to get violent ... defend yourself and hurt the person enough to get away. Remember, the goal is to get OUT of the situation.

If you ever do get assaulted, sexually or in any other way ...

- Get to a safe place.
- Don't put yourself down. (It is not your fault!)
- Tell someone, preferably your parents or another adult you trust. (They can help you feel less scared and alone.)
- Call the police or Child Protective Services. (They can often protect you - and other people -- from the person who hurt you.)
- Talk to a counselor. (They can help you feel less scared, and gradually, more powerful and trusting.)*
- Be patient and loving with yourself. (Don't expect to feel just fine. It takes most people a long time to recover. It doesn't mean anything is wrong with you. It means you're human.)

* **In the Seattle area**, call the Harborview Center for Sexual Assault & Traumatic Stress (206-744-1600; TDD: 206-744-1616).

* **In Western Washington**, call King County Sexual Assault Resource Center (1-888-99-VOICE)

* **Anywhere in the U.S.**, call the Rape Abuse and Incest National Network (1-800-656-HOPE.)

Communication Transparency 3: Defending Your Rights

- A. State a fact or a feeling.
- B. Describe what you expect.
- C. Get their attention.
- D. Call them on their aggression or manipulation.
- E. Repeat what you expect.

LEAVE!

If *necessary*:
Get help.
Get violent.

Defending Your Rights: Scenarios

Name _____

1. The doctor says, "OK, you can get dressed," but he or she doesn't get up to leave.

You: Doc, I feel uncomfortable. Would you please leave the room while I get dressed?

Doc: Oh, sure.

He or she leaves.

2. Your friend starts talking about something you said in private. A whole bunch of kids are around.

You: I don't appreciate your sharing that. Please stop discussing things I tell you secretly.

Friend: Oh, what's the big deal? You're such a prude.

You: Hey! That sounds like a put down. I said, "Cut it out."

Friend: OK, OK, I'll stop.

3. Your uncle comes in your room while you're getting dressed. You feel embarrassed.

You: I like changing in private. Would you please come back in a few minutes?

Uncle: Don't be silly. I'm not looking at your body!

You: Wait a minute. That's not fair. I really would like you to leave.

Uncle: I'm not going anywhere. This is my house.

So you wrap a towel around yourself, and go change in the bathroom.

4. A friend socks you hard on the arm, in the school cafeteria.

You: I don't appreciate you punching me. Knock it off.

Friend: Hm, so you don't like me anymore, huh?

You: Listen to me. That's not what I said. I asked you not to hit me.

Your "friend" laughs and hits you again. You get up to leave the room and your "friend", blocks your path.

You, turning to other friends: C'mon you guys. Let's get out of here. Give me a hand.

You all leave together.

Communication Worksheet 6

Name _____ Due date: _____

What right are you going to defend? (Pick any right from Part A of the ***Defending Your Rights Reference Sheet.***)

The right to or not to _____

Make up a situation where you would have to defend that right: _____

A. YOU STATE A FACT OR A FEELING: “ _____

B. AND DESCRIBE WHAT YOU EXPECT FROM THE PERSON: “ _____

Their response: _____

Have they respected your rights, yet? If not, keep going.

Communication Worksheet 6, continued ...

C. YOU GET THEIR ATTENTION: “ _____

D. CALL THEM ON THEIR AGGRESSION OR MANIPULATION: “ _____

E. REPEAT WHAT YOU EXPECT: “ _____

Their response: _____

Have they respected your rights, yet? If not, keep going.

WHAT DO YOU DO NEXT? _____

AND IF THAT DOESN'T WORK? _____

A Family Homework Exercise: Communication 5

ALL FAMILY HOMEWORK EXERCISES ARE OPTIONAL.

Today, we studied how to defend your rights. Parents or guardians can help teens defend their rights in relationships (and avoid sexual assault) in a couple of ways.

Stage One Bailouts (to help teens avoid getting into dangerous situations)

Sometimes teens know that a situation feels uncomfortable or risky before they even get into it but they may have a hard time saying “no.” It helps if they can rely on their parents’ authority, when they are first learning to stand up for themselves. Some families develop a code word or phrase a teen can use to let a parent know the teen wants to be bailed out (not be “allowed” to go to a particular party or on a particular trip). Then the parent can set the limits and the teen saves face. Suppose your family decided to use the code phrase “super mad.”

Here’s how it would work: If a friend said, “My parents will be gone this weekend. Why don’t you come over?” ... and you knew that felt too risky ... you could turn to one of your parents and ask, “Would you be super-mad if I went to so-and-so’s house on Saturday?” Your parents would know you wanted them to say, “I don’t want you to go.” ... so they would. Afterwards, in private, you could discuss ways to handle the situation independently in the future.

Talk about a Stage-One Bailout plan for your family. Be specific. Can you think of a situation in which you might need this? What code could you agree on?

No-Questions-Asked Bailouts (to help teens who discover that they are already in dangerous situations)

Sexual assaults often happen in situations where the victim feels stuck: no way out; no way home; no place to run; or no one to help. To counter the powerlessness, parents can offer their teens the “No-Questions-Asked Bailout.” (A similar bailout is sometimes used when teens get into alcohol related trouble.)

A parent might say, “If you are with a guy, at his house let’s say, and he refuses to drive you home until you go to bed with him and you’re not supposed to be seeing this guy in

the first place and you know I'm going to hit the roof, try to get to a phone to call me anyway. I will come get you, no questions asked. I promise not to embarrass you in front of him. If you promise to call, I promise not to say a word for a day, and then we will sit down and talk about it. It is more important that you have a way to protect yourself in those kinds of situations that it is to worry about having broken a rule."

Or

"Call Aunt Paula and Uncle Jack. We have an agreement that their kids can call me for help in an emergency and you can call them. They'll take you to their house. Then you can call me to let me know where you are and that you are all right. The next day, when we've both had time to think, you can come home and we'll talk."

Or

"Your sister Chris is three years older and she drives. Call her if you need help. She'll pick you up and won't tell us till you are ready to talk about it."

(Even if) teens have broken a family rule, disobeyed, or been in the wrong place at the wrong time, (it) does not mean they deserve to be raped, although that is often the way they feel. It helps to distinguish between the consequences for breaking the rule.

"You are responsible for the decision to let your friends into this house when you've been told it's not okay."

and the responsibility for the sexual assault.

"I know you never expected something like this to happen, and I know you didn't ask for it to happen. It was his choice to trick you and assault you. He is responsible for that."

Talk about a No-Questions-Asked Bailout plan for your family. Be specific. Can you imagine when this kind of bailout might be useful? Fill out the contract on the next page.

NOTE: Remember to turn in a *Family Homework Confirmation Slip* by _____ if you want credit.

Our Family's Contract

Adults' part of the bargain:

I/We, _____
adult(s) name(s)

love you. I wish I could always protect you. I know you have to learn to protect yourself. But, if you ever feel you're in a situation where you're at risk of being sexually exploited, or if you ever do get sexually exploited, you can call me. Or you can call _____
Phone #

It doesn't matter whether you've made some mistakes that put you in danger. I don't care. I will want to help no matter what. I promise to come get you. I won't embarrass you in front of your friends. I won't say a thing for a whole day. Then we can sit down and talk about it.

Adult's Signature

Second Adult's Signature, if more than one in the family

Teen's part of the bargain:

I, _____, love you too and I'm glad I've got your support. I promise to call you to come get me if I think I'm at risk of sexual exploitation or to call _____. If I ever do get exploited, I promise to tell you.

Teen's Signature

NOTE: Remember to turn in a *Family Homework Confirmation Slip* by _____ if you want credit.