Stage 2: Advocacy for Others

The Steps:

Step 1: Define the Issue

Step Overview: Part of advocacy, especially within a community, is learning how to speak up for something that is important to you. Advocacy can happen for an individual or a group of people. Advocating within a community requires deep understanding of an issue or problem before acting on the beliefs formed about that issue. Students should focus on an issue within their community that feels relevant or interesting. The word *predict* is used throughout this step in order for students to begin understanding the issue by using their own background knowledge before researching the issue more indepth. Throughout this step, teachers should prompt students to keep in mind that our predictions may not be accurate once we start researching. Continuing through the step, be sure that students have selected an issue they are interested in learning more about as this can be the issue they focus on for the duration of the health skill.

Sub Skill(s):

- Identify the challenges/obstacles
- Predict root causes
- Predict who is affected

Step 2: Investigate the Issue

Step Overview: Part of advocating for others is doing research on the issue. This research allows an individual to better understand the needs of a community and the issue affecting that community before forming an opinion. By spending time researching an issue, a person can be responsive and make sure they are not advocating for something unwanted or could cause harm. It is possible to spend more time in Step 2 than in other steps or to come back to this step throughout the process of advocating for others to better understand the issue. Tell students that good advocates are constantly researching the issue and adjusting their understanding as needed. The intentional research, through interviewing and gathering information, is critical and supports the ability to develop a strong stance. Use the health skill *Access Valid & Reliable Resources* as a guide throughout this step, particularly in research and interview question development.

Sub Skill(s):

- Research the topic
- Interview individuals affected
- Summarize information

Step 3: Develop a Powerful Stance

Step Overview: With the compilation of accurate information, students develop a powerful stance that supports their selected community issue. A stance can be described as a belief supported by facts. Explain to students that their stance should be created with the facts from their research in mind. These facts will support the stance they take and provide important background and supporting evidence when .

Sub Skill(s):

- Decide on an opinion
- Explain your reasons

Step 4: Act On & Communicate Stance

Step Overview: Students now act on their researched stance by sharing their information with others and promoting healthy behaviors. An individual can advocate for an issue in a variety of ways, including through presenting a speech, writing an article, creating a poster, recording a commercial or podcast, etc. In all of these different modes, it is important to create a plan for how this message will be created as well as use persuasive techniques to ensure the message is effectively reaching its audience. Students should spend time making a plan for how they will advocate and make change as well as decide the best ways to persuade others to join their cause.

Sub Skill(s):

- Make a plan to address the challenge/obstacle
- Use appropriate persuasive techniques to communicate stance
    - Emotions
    - Logic
    - Facts & Figures

Step 5: Reflect

Step Overview: Learning to reflect takes practice and intention. After someone has advocated for an issue, it is important to learn from the outcomes, both productive and unproductive. This step allows students to take time to connect this moment of advocacy to future actions. Developing metacognition in advocacy is especially important because as individuals learn more about an issue, they must be willing to change and adapt their opinions in response to new information and research. Reflection in *Stage 2: Advocacy for Others* also allows individuals to learn how to help others in a way that is responsive to the needs of those affected and not just how they believe they should help.

Reflection Question(s):

- What community challenge did I advocate for? Why?
- How did research help inform my advocacy?
- How did hearing from those affected inform my advocacy?
- How did I form my opinion?
- How did I use supporting evidence to form my opinion?
- What actions did I take to address this community challenge? Were they informed by those affected?
- How have my views changed about the challenge through my advocacy?
- What would I do the same next time?
- What would I do differently next time?

Teaching Tips

- Provide students with examples of community advocacy that are relevant to your students that are led my youth. See the *Resource Bank* below for examples.
- Prompt students to be critical of their advocacy for others to ensure they are helping in a way that is helpful and responsive to those impacted.
- Incorporate extensive research time for students to deeply understand a community health challenge in order to become better advocates and create change for those impacted.
- Instruct students on a variety of persuasive techniques (e.g. emotion, facts & figures, experts) in order for them to incorporate these persuasive techniques into their communication about a community health challenge.
- Allow students to implement some of their ideas in their community. Use resources aligned to Social Action Projects for additional guidance and support for how to facilitate students directly impacting their communities through advocacy. See the *Resource Bank* below for more information on Social Action Projects.
- Pair *Stage 2: Advocacy for Others* with *Access Valid & Reliable Resources* to reinforce accessing valid and reliable resources.
- Pair *Stage 2: Advocacy for Others* with *Stage 1: Communication Techniques* of *Interpersonal Communication* to reinforce speaking strategies one needs when advocating for a cause.

See *Teaching Progression* for suggested learning activities.