



## Teaching Progression:



### Step 1: Process the Situation

#### SUB SKILL(S):

- Identify the obstacle/challenge
- Determine solution(s) and/or need(s)
- Decide if the situation requires self-advocacy

#### GUIDING QUESTIONS:

How do I determine if I need to advocate for myself to solve a problem? What situations can I handle on my own? What is it appropriate to advocate for?

#### NHES PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

(8.12.3) Work cooperatively as an advocate for improving personal, family, and community health. (8.12.4) Adapt health messages and communication techniques to a specific target audience.

#### VALUABLE VOCABULARY:

*challenges,  
obstacles,  
determine,  
advocate,  
solution*

### Step 1: Process The Situation

#### Sub Skill: Identify The Obstacle/Challenge



#### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 1:

Share with students that people often face situations that can hinder their health and success. Explain that when they encounter a challenge or obstacle that could harm their health or success, they should advocate for their needs. Define *self-advocacy* for students. *Self-advocacy* is *the ability to speak up for one's health and needs and ask for what is needed.*

Tell students a story about a young person demonstrating self-advocacy. Ask students to share in small groups what they noticed about the story and how they know that self-advocacy was the right move for the given situation.

#### Language of Health Literacy:

*This challenge required advocacy because \_\_\_\_\_.*

*An obstacle I am experiencing is \_\_\_\_\_.*

*A challenge I am facing is \_\_\_\_\_.*

*My strength in this situation is \_\_\_\_\_.*

*I sometimes struggle with \_\_\_\_\_.*

#### TEACHING NOTES:

- Use other definitions as necessary to meet the needs of your students.
- Be sure your story includes enough details to make it clear why self-advocacy was important in the situation. For example, tell the story of a person who went to a doctor and did not receive the care they needed because the doctor wouldn't listen. For example, according to research, doctors are less likely to listen to women, people of color, trans people, people in fat bodies, etc. See the *Resource Bank* below for sample story.



## Teaching Progression: Step 1 | Process the Situation (Cont.)



### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 2:

Explain to students that in order to start advocating for themselves, they need to have a better understanding of the obstacles they face in their own life. Share with students a personal list of daily or life stressors that you encounter. Ask students to discuss which stressors they connect with and why.

Next, have students write a list of daily and/or life stressors they encounter. Using the *Language of Health Literacy* as a guide, have students identify the obstacles currently present in their life. Have students share a current obstacle they face.

### TEACHING NOTES:

- Have examples of daily/life stressors ready to share with students to support their brainstorming and writing as necessary. Some examples may include: commuting to and from school, schoolwork/homework, caring for siblings or family members, arguments between friends, trouble accessing translation services.
- Model and provide *Language of Health Literacy* to support student responses and discussion.



### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 3:

Explain to students that they will often have to advocate for their personal needs when it comes to their health. Provide students with a comprehensive list of health-related topics appropriate for grades 9-12. Have students circle any health topics that connect with challenges/obstacles they face or have experienced.

Once students review the list and identify health-related topics, facilitate a student discussion by asking the following questions:

- What health topics do you connect with the most?
- How did you experience a challenge related to that health topic?
- What strengths did you have in the situation?
- What did you find difficult about the situation?

### TEACHING NOTES:

- Model and provide students with the *Language of Health Literacy* to support their small group discussions.
- Use a variety of discussion protocols and strategies to ensure all students are able to share their ideas.
- Keep in mind that some students may be triggered by this task or ask not to complete it in written form because their needs can't be met. Offer personal conversations or drawing options as deemed appropriate for your classroom and the students in need of additional supports.
- Define health broadly. For example, health can be related to physical health, mental health, social, health, etc.



## Teaching Progression: Step 1 | Process the Situation (Cont.)

### Step 1: Process The Situation | Sub Skill: Determine Solution(s) And/Or Need(s)



#### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 1:

Share with students that in order to advocate, we must identify solutions and needs for the obstacle.

Understanding the solutions and needs allows us to not just go to someone with a problem but with ideas for how to overcome the obstacle.

Provide students with an obstacle or challenge scenario. Ask students to determine possible solutions for the obstacles. Then, prompt students to identify what is needed to implement the solution.

#### Language of Health Literacy:

*The possible outcomes in this situation are \_\_\_\_\_.*

*If I \_\_\_\_\_, then I will need \_\_\_\_\_.*

*I am strong at \_\_\_\_\_, which will lead to \_\_\_\_\_.*

*I struggle with \_\_\_\_\_, so I may need to advocate for \_\_\_\_\_.*

#### TEACHING NOTES:

- Example Obstacle/Challenge Scenarios:
  - Alex was sick last week and missed three days of school. They have an essay due in two days for history and do not think they will finish it in time.
  - Jo is feeling frustrated with their lab partner. Their partner doesn't come prepared to class and expects Jo to do all of the work.
  - Charlie is struggling to get enough sleep at night because their parents work late and they have to take care of their younger siblings.
- Model and provide the *Language of Health Literacy* to support students in determining solutions/needs for each scenario.
- Use these scenarios and work for the next Sub Skill: Determine if the situation requires self-advocacy.



#### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 2:

Explain to students that before they can advocate for their needs, they must identify possible solutions/needs for an obstacle they are facing. Provide students with a list of possible health-related challenges they could face. In pairs or small groups, have students brainstorm ways that they could solve each health challenge. Then, have students identify resources or assistance they may need to implement each solution.

#### TEACHING NOTES:

- Prepare obstacles/challenges that students are able to utilize to form a variety of solutions for. Consider obstacles/challenges that seem to require self-advocacy as well as those that may not.
- Example health obstacles: feeling lonely/depressed, abusive relationships, poor sleep habits.
- Possible solution examples for poor sleep habits: set an alarm to go to sleep, take time to rest when you are tired, do not make plans that go beyond a certain time, do not use cellphone before sleeping.



Teaching Progression: Step 1 | Process the Situation (Cont.)

Step 1: Process The Situation |

Sub Skill: Determine If The Situation Requires Self-Advocacy



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 1:

Explain to students that many of the stressors, issues, and challenges that we face daily can be dealt with independently. However, it is important to consider how self-advocacy could improve the situation. Remind students of the definition of self-advocacy explored in earlier lessons. *Self-advocacy is the ability to speak up for one's health and needs and ask for what is needed.* Tell students that they will examine how different scenarios can be solved independently or with self-advocacy.

Give students the following questions to ask themselves when they face a situation that may require self-advocacy:

- What strengths do I have that could help me solve this obstacle?
- What needs can I provide myself?
- Do I have areas of growth that make it difficult for me to tackle this obstacle on my own?
- Would I be able to better solve this obstacle if I asked for support?
- What needs can others provide?

Present students with a list of scenarios that highlights an obstacle/challenge. Tell students that they are going to answer the question, "What can you do next in this scenario?" Place students in pairs. Tell students that one person in the pair is responsible for creating independent solutions for the scenario, and the other person is responsible for creating a solution that involves self-advocacy. After each scenario, have students share their independent and self-advocacy solutions and/or needs. Tell students to determine which solutions and needs would best solve the challenge/obstacle and explain why.

Language of Health Literacy:

*I would handle this situation \_\_\_\_\_ (independently/ with the help of someone) because \_\_\_\_.*

*To overcome \_\_\_\_\_, I must advocate for \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.*

*I need to advocate for \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.*

*I will be able to handle \_\_\_\_\_ on my own, but I will need support with \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.*

*I know I am advocating for the right thing because \_\_\_\_.*

TEACHING NOTES:

- Scenarios used in previous lessons can be revisited, or students could create a list of personal scenarios to explore with their partners.



## Teaching Progression: Step 1 | Process the Situation (Cont.)



### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 2:

Explain to students that when a person faces a challenge in their life, they need to examine the possible solutions for that challenge. Tell students that they will be given various scenarios and determine if they would handle a situation independently or seek support to overcome the challenge.

To facilitate a movement-based discussion, label one side of the room "Independent" and the opposite side of the room "Advocate." Read a scenario of a person facing a health challenge. Give students a minute to consider how they would handle the situation. Then, have students move to "Independent" or "Advocate". Once students are on their chosen side, have them turn to someone close by to discuss why they chose their position and any possible solution to the situation.

### TEACHING NOTES:

- Example of scenarios:
  - Jeff is late to their bus stop and misses their bus. They will now be late to first period, and they know Ms. White won't let them take the quiz if they are late.
  - Lila is at a party with friends when they see their designated driver take a shot.
  - Tyler needs a recommendation letter for a college application turned in by tomorrow, but the teacher still hasn't submitted the letter even after Tyler reminded the teacher yesterday.
- Model and provide the *Language of Health Literacy* to support students in determining needs for each scenario.



See *Access Valid & Reliable Resources* for guidance on supporting students to determine when help and information is needed in a situation.



### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 3:

Revisit the list of daily and life stressors created previously. Model for students with your own list which challenges you can handle independently and which challenges you need support to overcome. Have students create a two columned chart. Label one column "What I can do on my own" and the other "What I need support with." Have students sort their own daily and life challenges into the two columns.

Once students complete the sort, have students reflect on the activity using the following questions:

- What strengths allow you to face certain challenges independently?
- What common factors are associated with challenges that you need to ask for support?
- Are there certain issues in life that you will always need to ask for support?

### TEACHING NOTES:

- It may be helpful to provide students with a list of common issues high school students face to help them engage more in the activity.
- Giving students situations that require in-the-moment advocacy can give students real life examples, helping students think on their feet. For example, you aren't feeling well during class, and the teacher tells you to go to the nurse. You want to call home for someone to pick you up, so you can rest.



## Teaching Progression: Step 1 | Process the Situation (Cont.)



### SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 4:

Explain to students that when they advocate for their needs, they need to critically evaluate what they need and why. Tell students that it can often be difficult to realize in the moment when we are advocating appropriately for ourselves or exercising privilege to get our way in a situation. Define *privilege* for students.

*Privilege is the special rights of certain people over others that free individuals from certain obligations that are not necessary earned or fair to others.* Explain to students that it is important for them to realize when they actually need to advocate for themselves and when they are simply wanting a privilege or advantage.

Give students the following questions to ask themselves to assess if the situation and needs truly require advocacy. Tell students that if they answer *yes* to all of these questions, they can proceed with advocating for themselves. If they answer *no* to any of the questions, they should stop and think about how this situation could be just a challenging obstacle that takes resilience and additional problem-solving on their part rather than change. Provide students with the following questions:

- Is my need a universal right? (For example, personal safety)
- Is this something that will allow me to have a more fair advantage in this situation?
- Am I wanting something that should be given to all people in this situation?
- If my need is not met, will I be at a disadvantage compared to others?

Provide students with examples of individuals advocating and people wielding their privilege. Have students sort the examples into two columns: advocacy, act of privilege.

When students complete the sort, have students debrief in small groups using the following questions:

- What are the main differences between advocacy and privilege?
- How can privilege lead to unfair advantages for certain people?
- Why is it important to critically evaluate our requests during self-advocacy?

### TEACHING NOTES:

- Possible example scenarios:
  - Edwin has a B in chemistry. They completed every assignment on time and went to tutoring each week. They feel like they deserve an A and are contemplating talking with their teacher.
  - Lou tried out for the volleyball team. When they were in the locker room after tryouts, they heard the coaches talking with a parent promising their child a spot on the team if they signed up to run the annual fundraiser for the team. Lou knows their parents can't support the annual fundraiser, and Lou is worried that they won't get a spot on the team because of this.
  - Mindy ran for student council. When the votes were counted they lost the race by 50 votes. The day the elections were held, it snowed heavily causing many students to miss school. Mindy feels that the elections were unfair and wants to call for a revote.
- Privilege is often tied to personal identities, such as race, gender, sexuality, etc. Therefore, some students may answer these questions differently. Allow these differences in opinion to be an opportunity for students to explore and debate ideas, rather than encouraging students to have all of the same answers.