



Stage 2: Advocacy for Others

The Steps:



Step 1: Define the Issue

Step Overview: 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. The sub skills within this step prompt students to internally process their own background knowledge about an issue prior to researching the issue more in depth. Exploring our own background knowledge of an issue is important, however, it is important for students to understand after exploring their own understanding they should spend extensive time researching the topic, which they will do in Step 2. Students should focus on an issue within their community that feels relevant or interesting. Be sure they understand the definition for advocacy prior to beginning Step 1. Students should use their knowledge from *Advocacy for Self* as a guide and foundation.

Sub Skill(s):

- Identify community health challenge
- Predict root causes
- Determine the consequence



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 and solutions. By spending time researching an issue, a person can be responsive and make sure they are not advocating for something unwanted or for something that could cause more harm. It is possible to spend more time in Step 2 than in other steps or to come back to this step to better understand the issue throughout advocacy work. 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. This step also requires students to collaborate with important stakeholders in order to better understand the issue. 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
- Create a problem statement
- Brainstorm possible solutions



Step 3: Develop a Powerful Stance

Step Overview: With the compilation of accurate information, students develop a powerful stance that supports their selected community challenge as well as its solutions. 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 as well as the solutions they are proposing. These facts will support the stance they take and provide important background and supportive information for when they progress to Step 4.

Sub Skill(s):

- Decide on and defend a solution
- Determine the best methods of communication for audience
- Create a powerful, persuasive health message
 - Emotions
 - Logic
 - Facts & Figures



Step 4: Take Action

Step Overview: Part of advocating for others is not simply having powerful words, but having powerful actions. In this step, students should plan for how they will implement their solutions to have a lasting impact within the community that is most affected. Students should explore how they can create an action plan for their solutions, which allows them to work cooperatively with others because it acts as an accountability tool. In addition to creating a detailed plan, students should also practice getting commitments from others, so they know who they can rely on during their efforts. Finally, students should explore the importance of following through on their advocacy efforts. This is important as students become active citizens because it allows them to stay committed to a cause they are passionate about.

Sub Skill(s):

- Create an action plan
- Get commitment from others
- Follow through



Step 5: Reflect

Step Overview: Learning to reflect takes practice and intention. After an individual advocates, they then must reflect on how they feel after the situation, if additional follow up is necessary, and what they want to remember next time they are advocating for others. Building time for students to reflect is crucial in developing metacognition, which supports other health skills, such as *Decision-Making, Goal-Setting, and Self-Management*.

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 decide on the best solution for the health issue?
- 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 by 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.