

Health Skill:

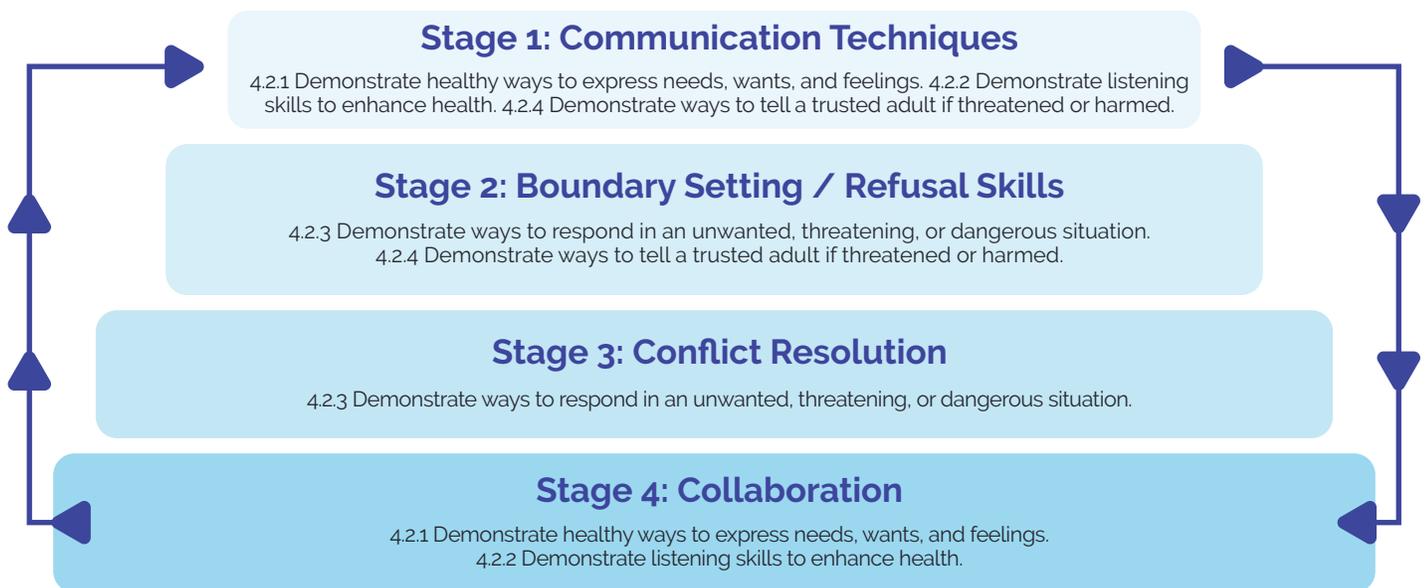
Interpersonal Communication



Background Information

The health skill, *Interpersonal Communication*, guides students to better understand, practice, and reflect on their interactions with others. By providing students with a safe space to practice strategies for healthy communication in school, students are more prepared to handle social situations throughout their life. The *Interpersonal Communication* health skill begins with practicing appropriate communication techniques, then explores healthy boundaries with strategies to uphold those boundaries, moving to examining the importance of productive conflict and conflict resolution, and ends with strategies to ensure effective collaboration. Each stage of *Interpersonal Communication* supports students to better understand themselves and their community, while working toward having more authentic, intentional communication with others.

The four stages of *Interpersonal Communication* are designed to support the growth of each student toward more complex levels of communication, beginning with the individual and ending with effective team work. The *Teaching Progression* for the four stages were developed in sequential order to ensure strategies build upon one another, leading to more inclusive, authentic, and collaborative teamwork. However, teachers can rearrange the stages as appropriate for their classroom.



NATIONAL HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARD (NHES) 4:

Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.

National Health Education Standard Rationale: Effective communication enhances personal, family, and community health. This standard focuses on how responsible individuals use verbal and non-verbal skills to develop and maintain healthy personal relationships. The ability to organize and to convey information and feelings is the basis for strengthening interpersonal interactions and reducing or avoiding conflict.



Grades PreK-2 Framework

In grades PreK-2, students learn a variety of strategies to effectively communicate in a variety of modes. The graphic below outlines the strategies learned in each stage, beginning with *Stage 1: Communication Techniques* and ending with *Stage 4: Collaboration*. Teachers should use the strategies listed as a starting point and add strategies to meet the needs of their students.



Notes on Grade Level Progression

Activities, vocabulary, and language throughout the models are vertically aligned and build upon one another. If students require scaffolding refer to previous grade levels for additional ideas for activities and instruction that address gaps in student skills. For enrichment activities, look at higher grade levels in order to provide additional practice opportunities or for ideas on how to deepen understanding.



Stage 4: Collaboration

People are often put into collaborative groups and need to be taught specific skills to have the most successful, effective teams. Effective collaboration skills can lead to more creative outcomes, increased content retention, higher self-esteem, and increased empathy. Also, students with effective collaboration skills are better prepared for future social situations and career opportunities. In *Stage 4: Collaboration*, students explore their personal contribution to teams, the impact of their actions, and specific skills to promote inclusion. Students also learn valuable strategies to hold teams accountable for quality work that accomplishes team goals. Throughout collaboration, students may get into conflict. Encourage students to use the conflict resolution strategies established in *Stage 2: Conflict Resolution* to address these conflicts and move forward to achieve team goals.

The Steps:



Step 1
Help My Team



Step 2
Include Others

Grades PreK-2 Framework

In grades PreK-2, students focus on being an active member of a team and including others. This stage allows for students to play together to work on appropriate, healthy collaborative strategies. *Stage 4: Collaboration* at the PreK-2 level focuses on sharing and inclusion. Practicing these skills through play will help students form appropriate relationships with their peers and build a stronger classroom community. Teachers should also incorporate strategies from other stages in order to help students collaborate. Many of the activities in the *Teaching Progression* are written for students who have not started reading and writing. If students are reading and writing, adapt or add to activities to reinforce literacy skills. For some activities, guidance is provided for how literacy may be included.

Mastery of *Stage 4: Collaboration for grades PreK-2* means students are able to positively impact their team and include all members of their team when working toward a common goal.



Stage 4: Collaboration

The Steps:



Step 1: Help My Team

Step Overview: When collaborating on a team, an individual must first examine the role and responsibility they have. Students begin this health skill by naming characteristics of good teammates and practice being a member of a good team by participating on a team with a specific role. This step guides students to manage their behavior to remain kind and helpful during collaborative work. Because sharing is a major developmental skill for PreK-2, students should learn that sharing is an essential responsibility of each student to make a good team. By completing a specific role to help the team be successful, students examine the impact of an individual on a team.

Sub Skill(s):

- Share
- Be a good teammate
- Do my job



Step 2: Include Others

Step Overview: When collaborating, it is important that all members of a team are included. Step 2 of Collaboration begins with students analyzing how individuals feel when they are included in a group and practice empathetic strategies for those who are excluded from a group. In order to make sure all students are intentionally included in group or team work, students should use specific inclusion strategies and complete a task demonstrating the use of these strategies in a team.

Sub Skill(s):

- Understand why including others is important
- Ask people to join the team



Teaching Tips

- Use team building games (see *Resource Bank* below for suggested activities) to provide practice opportunities for students to work on teams.
- Provide checklists of effective team behaviors for students to use during group work or to reflect after group work.
- Share the strategies from *Stage 4: Collaboration* with other school staff in order to reinforce language and promote collaborative work outside of the health education classroom.
- Implicitly teach Stage 4: Collaboration by designing learning activities around group work through the year.
- Review strategies from *Stage 1: Communication Techniques*, *Stage 2: Refusal Skills & Boundary Setting*, and *Stage 3: Conflict Resolution* to support students in collaboration.

See *Teaching Progression* for suggested learning activities.



Teaching Progression:



Step 1: Help My Team

SUB SKILL(S):

- Share
- Be a good teammate
- Do my job

VALUABLE VOCABULARY:

team, job, share

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

What is my job in a team? How do I support my team?

NHES PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

(4.2.1) Demonstrate healthy ways to express needs, wants, and feelings.

Step 1: Help My Team | Sub Skill: Share



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 1:

Tell students that they will get to practice being a good teammate by sharing. Explain to students that sharing is one of the most important responsibilities of a good team member. Choose an activity where students work in small groups to complete a task. Students should work together to complete a task that requires them to share resources to complete the task.

Language of Health Literacy:

Can I please use _____ after you are finished?

Would you like to use _____? I don't need it anymore.

_____ (student name), you have had that for a long time, can you please share it?

TEACHING NOTES:

- See the *Resource Bank* below for suggested activities.
- Model and provide the *Language of Health Literacy* to support students with sharing.
- Monitor groups throughout the activity and encourage students to use the *Language of Health Literacy* to ask to share.



See *Stage 2: Refusal Skills & Boundary Setting* to support students saying *no* respectfully if they do not wish to share something with their team.



Teaching Progression: Step 1 | Help My Team (Cont.)

Step 1: Help My Team | Sub Skill: Be A Good Teammate



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 1:

Show students a video or read a story about a group showing good teamwork. Have students point out what makes the team successful. Create a chart documenting the student's responses and create a list for a good team.

Language of Health Literacy:

A good teammate is _____.

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 2:

Have students create a picture of a good team, including details that show good teamwork discussed earlier. As students draw, ask the following questions:

- What does a good team look like?
- How do people treat each other?
- How do people talk to each other?

Step 1: Help My Team | Sub Skill: Do My Job



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 1:

Explain to students that when we work together, people take on different jobs to make the team stronger. Tell students that these jobs help us know what we should do for the team and what others should be doing for the team.

Ask students to think about their families. Model by giving an example of a family and how each member of the family takes on different jobs. Ask students to share about their homes and different jobs people have in their homes. Then, have students draw a picture of their family showing the job of each member. Using the *Language of Health Literacy*, have students explain their image to you or to a classmate.

Language of Health Literacy:

_____ *does* _____.

My job is to _____.

TEACHING NOTES:

- Make sure your example of family roles and responsibilities is responsive to the students in your class and does not narrowly define family or gender roles.



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 2:

Explain to students that they will be working on teams to create a large, beautiful piece of art. Tell students that they will each have a specific job on their drawing team. Place students in small groups (3-4). Spread a large piece of butcher paper across the floor and give students drawing materials. Assign each student a different role (e.g. marker keeper, drawer, colorer, time keeper).

Tell students that they need to create a mural for the classroom. Give students a theme to create their drawing. Encourage students to participate, talk to each other, and share. Give students a time limit to create their art.

Once students finish, ask students the following questions:

- Was your team successful?
- Are you proud of your work?
- What was your job on the team?
- How do you know that you were a good team member?



Teaching Progression:



Step 2: Include Others

SUB SKILL(S):

- Understand why including others is important
- Ask people to join the team

VALUABLE VOCABULARY:

include

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

How can I make people feel included?

NHES PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

(4.2.1) Demonstrate healthy ways to express needs, wants, and feelings.

Step 2: Include Others | Sub Skill: Understand Why Including Others Is Important



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 1:

Remind students that one of the most important jobs for everyone on a team is to include others. Read students a story about a character not being included. Ask students the following questions:

- How do you think this character feels?
- What could be done to make this character feel better?
- Why is it important to include others?

Step 2: Include Others | Sub Skill: Ask People To Join The Group



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 1:

Explain to students that when people are not participating in a group, we need to ask others to join our teams. Tell students that they will practice asking people to join a game. Share with students that you will be listening to see how they ask others to join the game to make sure everyone is included.

See Next Page For Teaching Notes.

Language of Health Literacy:

_____, *will you join our group?*

We need your help to _____ *. Will you help?*

I see you aren't _____ *.*

Would you _____ *to help the team?*

We are _____ *(activity).*

Do you want to _____ *?*



Teaching Progression: Step 2 | Include Others (Cont.)

TEACHING NOTES:

- See the *Resource Bank* below for team building activities.
- Model and provide the *Language of Health Literacy* to support students to include everyone while playing the game.



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 2:

Place all students into small groups (3-4). Have students play a game where they form groups of different numbers. Say out loud, "Make a group of _____." When you say this, students must run around to make different groups.

At the end of the game, ask students the following questions:

- How did it feel to be asked to join a group?
- Did you ever get left out? How did that feel?
- When do we see people left out of groups?
- How can we make sure people are included?

TEACHING NOTES:

- Play this game for several rounds. Then, debrief the activity with the class.
- Model and provide the *Language of Health Literacy* to support students in creating groups.



Assessing Stage 4: Collaboration

Students in grades PreK-2 will have mastered *Stage 4: Collaboration* by demonstrating their ability to showcase the performance indicators identified in Standard 4. Use the student friendly language below to support rubric creation and feedback to students.

Standard 4: Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.

4.2.1 Demonstrate healthy ways to express needs, wants, and feelings.

- I can explain my job in a group.
- I can work with others to complete a task.
- I can include all members of my group.

ASSESSMENT TOOL #1 (4.2.1)

Have students demonstrate sharing when in a group. Give groups a task to complete where they need to share resources. Have students use specific sentence stems to ask for others to share and to offer their resources to others.

ASSESSMENT TOOL #2 (4.2.1)

Place students into small groups (3-4). Give each group a box and art materials. Tell students that they need to create something special for the class out of the materials they were given. Have students review what makes a good team. While students are working, walk around the classroom and observe behaviors. Ask students if everyone is included. Encourage students to participate equally. If students have a conflict, refer to strategies from *Stage 3: Conflict Resolution*. Once students are finished, ask students to present their art to the class. Have students complete a self reflection on their experience on the team. This could be a survey with questions or orally answer reflection questions about their team experience.

Reflection questions:

- Did I work with my team?
- Did I help others?
- Did I include everyone?
- Did I listen to my team?
- Did I share my ideas?



Content Area Connections

Build content understanding through connections with other courses. Share suggestions with teachers to develop plans for content overlap and student language connections.

The use of effective collaboration skills helps to create a safe and welcoming classroom. When planning for partner or group work, use the strategies learned in *Stage 4: Collaboration* to reinforce healthy ways of communicating. Explicitly teaching students collaboration strategies will ensure that students are set up for success and using common language.

Utilize content structures and topics in classrooms to reinforce student understanding and to support ongoing student development. *Stage 4: Collaboration* can be used across content areas when students are working in groups or partners. Remind students to consider how they can use the strategies learned to contribute to more effective teams.

Reinforce the understanding that effective collaboration can help in all areas of life by exploring the following questions with students across contents. Add specific content information in place of the italicized words as necessary. These questions are meant to be used when students are collaborating with others, during partner or group work, or when reflecting on how working with others has gone. These questions are a guide for independent reflection when students are challenged to understand how best to collaborate when making decisions or completing work as a team.

- How were you a good teammate in *this situation*?
- What was your job in *this situation*?
- What materials needed to be shared to complete *this task*?
- How could you include everyone during *this activity*?

VOCABULARY REINFORCEMENT:

Utilize the vocabulary words below to reinforce student understanding and to showcase the ability to use words across content areas. For example, an entire grade-level team can decide to teach these words within the specific contexts of their classes to deepen understanding of vocabulary and language use.

team, teamwork, collaborate, include, share, job, complete, task



Resource Bank

RMC Health

- [Health Education Skills Model](#)

National Health Education Standards

- [Standards & Performance Indicators](#)

Team Building Activities

- <https://www.care.com/c/stories/3793/15-team-building-activities-for-kids/>