

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 9-12 Framework

In grades 9-12, 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 2: Refusal Skills & Boundary Setting

The *Interpersonal Communication* health skill model continues with *Stage 2: Refusal Skills & Boundary Setting* to teach students to advocate for themselves and set appropriate, healthy boundaries in relationships. The strategies used in *Stage 2: Refusal Skills & Boundary Setting* are designed to help students practice using a strong voice and safe strategies when they face pressure to do things that feel unsafe or unhealthy for them. By the end of *Stage 2: Refusal Skills & Boundary Setting*, students in all grade-levels will have foundational strategies for saying *no* in high pressure social situations and maintain healthy boundaries. Students who master these techniques will be better equipped to follow through on healthy decisions in relationships and set appropriate boundaries to feel safe and comfortable with others.

The Steps:



Step 1
Identify Your
Boundaries



Step 2
Analyze the
Situation



Step 3
Use an Appropriate
Refusal/Boundary
Setting Strategy



Step 4
Reflect

Grades 9-12 Framework

Students in Grades 9-12 are entering a time in their life when they start to gain more independence and autonomy from their family, teachers, and other adults. During this transition, it is important for students to learn specific skills and strategies to maintain their personal boundaries with others. Similar to students in Grades 6-8, students in Grades 9-12 encounter peer pressure that can lead to unhealthy decision-making. By teaching students skills to set and maintain boundaries, students can continue to live a healthy, safe life, even when facing difficult situations in their relationships. *Stage 2: Refusal Skills & Boundary Setting* provides students with specific strategies to uphold their boundaries even under pressure. These strategies must be explicitly taught, demonstrated, and practiced in the classroom. *Stage 2: Refusal Skills & Boundary Setting* provides students with a foundation for setting boundaries they can continue to practice in after graduation.

Mastery of *Stage 2: Refusal Skills and Boundary Setting* for grades 9-12 means students are able to identify their boundaries, analyze a situation with peer pressure, explain their boundaries to others, and use effective strategies for upholding their boundaries and decisions.



Stage 2: Refusal Skills and Boundary Setting

The Steps:



Step 1: Identify Boundaries

Step Overview: The first step for *Stage 2: Refusal Skills and Boundary Setting* is to spend time identifying personal boundaries. First, students need to understand what a boundary is and the different types of boundaries they can have (e.g. physical, emotional, behavioral). Once students understand the different types of boundaries, they spend time identifying their own boundaries, so that they are more prepared to uphold these boundaries and/or say *no* in higher stakes situations. Use the steps for *Decision-Making* to guide students in deciding on personal boundaries and behaviors in which they do not wish to engage.

Sub Skill(s):

- Define boundaries
- Identify personal boundaries



Step 2: Analyze the Situation

Step Overview: After students identify their boundaries, they move to upholding those boundaries in different situations. This step allows students to be aware in the moment when someone is pressuring them to do something they do not want to do. To prepare for this step, students should explore the power of peer pressure. Then, students should be given questions they can ask themselves to better analyze the situation, which will help them select the appropriate refusal/boundary setting skill in Step 3.

Sub Skill(s):

- Determine your feelings
- Recognize when a boundary has been crossed
- Analyze the importance of the relationship



Step 3: Use an Appropriate Refusal/Boundary Setting Strategy

Step Overview: In Step 3, students learn how to communicate their boundary clearly in a situation when their boundary is crossed. In addition to communicating their boundary, students should learn a variety of refusal/boundary setting skills to uphold the boundary in case they are not listened to or do not feel comfortable directly communicating their boundary.

Sub Skill(s):

- Communicate your boundary
- Use a refusal / boundary setting strategy
 - Say *no* firmly and loudly. Stand tall and be clear
 - Avoid or leave the situation
 - Ask a question
 - Suggest something different to do
 - Explain why it is a bad idea for you
 - Ignore the suggestion and change the subject
 - Make a joke or use humor
 - Politely decline - "Thanks but no thanks"
 - Acknowledge the other person's feelings and explain your decision
 - Seek help from a trusted adult



Step 4: Reflect

Step Overview: Learning to reflect takes practice and intention. After an individual upholds a personal boundary, it is important to reflect on how they feel. It is possible that upon reflection, they will need to seek additional resources or help in case the situation comes up again in the future. Building time for students to reflect is crucial in developing metacognition, which supports health skills, *Self-Management and Advocacy for Self & Others*.

Reflection Question(s):

- Did I uphold my boundary? Why or why not?
- Who was trying to persuade me to do something I wasn't comfortable doing?
- What form of persuasion was hardest for me to resist?
- Which refusal/boundary setting skill(s) did I use?
- Which refusal/boundary setting skill worked the best?
- Did the person respect my boundary? If not, how do I want to follow up?
- Based on how the situation resolved, how do I want the relationship with the person to change/stay the same?
- What do I want to remember next time I am pressured to do something unsafe or unhealthy?
- Do I need to seek help and support? If so, who should I go to?



Teaching Tips

- Provide students with different types of boundaries someone can have (e.g. personal space, physical, language, emotional, information you share with others) and allow them to decide their personal boundaries for each.
- Provide students with a list of refusal and boundary setting strategies they can use when facing peer pressure. Add to the list of strategies provided to meet the needs of your classroom.
- Use role play to give students an opportunity to practice communicating and upholding their boundaries.
- Be sure to include the following situations when learning about seeking help from a trusted adult when boundaries are crossed: sexual assault or harrassment, talk of self harm or suicide, threats toward others, substance abuse, etc.
- Teach *Stage 2: Refusal Skills & Boundary Setting* for different health contents, allowing students to decide on personal boundaries and plan for how they will uphold those boundaries. For example, when learning about sexual health, students can explore their personal boundaries with physical touch. When learning about substances, students can explore the relationship they want to have with those substances and how to communicate those boundaries to peers.
- Pair *Stage 2: Refusal Skills & Boundary Setting* with *Decision-Making* to help students follow through on healthy decisions as well as using the *Decision-Making* process to decide on their personal boundaries.

See *Teaching Progression* for suggested learning activities.



Teaching Progression:



Step 1: Identify Boundaries

SUB SKILL(S):

- Define boundaries
- Identify personal boundaries

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

What is a boundary? What are my boundaries? How do I know when my boundaries are crossed?

NHES PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

(4.12.1) Use skills for communicating effectively with family, peers, and others to enhance health. (4.8.2) Demonstrate refusal and negotiation skills that avoid or reduce health risks.

VALUABLE VOCABULARY:

*boundaries,
physical boundaries,
emotional boundaries*

Step 1: Identify Boundaries | Sub Skill: Define Boundaries



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 1:

Define *boundaries* for students. *Boundaries* are *rules, limits, and guidelines that people set with others and themselves to live healthy,*

happy lives. Ask students to create a drawing that shows their understanding of this definition, which can include examples of rules, limits, and guidelines they have been asked to respect by others.

Then, ask students to discuss why it is important to have boundaries in relationships with others. Chart student responses.

Tell students that each person has a unique set of boundaries, and when we are in relationships with others, regardless of the type (e.g. professional, friendship, familial, romantic) we need to learn how to best communicate our boundaries with one another. Explain to students that this health skill will give them the tools to recognize their boundaries, explain their boundaries to others, and uphold their boundaries in difficult situations.

Language of Health Literacy:

*Boundaries are*_____.

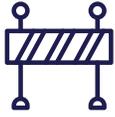
Boundaries are important because _____.

I can set a boundary that _____.

One type of boundary is _____.



Teaching Progression: Step 1 | Identify Boundaries Setting (Cont.)



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 2:

Next, prompt students to share with the class different types of personal boundaries people could encounter. Write out different types of boundaries on the board. Then, ask students to provide different examples of each. Tell students that because every person has different values, they also have different boundaries. Explain to students that they will start to think about their boundaries for different situations to be more prepared and confident to uphold their boundaries in the real world.

TEACHING NOTES:

- Examples of types of boundaries: personal space, physical, language, emotional, information you share with others, spiritual, etc.
- Provide examples as needed to support student understanding.
- Model and provide the *Language of Health Literacy* to support student understanding.

Step 1: Identify Boundaries | Sub Skill: Identify Personal Boundaries



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 1:

Give students 5-10 boundary statements. Tell students that for each statement, they should identify the type of boundary being addressed (e.g. physical, emotional) and choose if they strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree with the statement.

In the classroom, mark areas of the room with signs to correspond with strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree. Read each scenario and have students move to the appropriate area. Allow students to explain their reasoning with those close to them.

When the activity is complete, discuss the following questions:

- What did you notice about our class' boundaries?
- Why do we have different boundaries?
- If we all have different boundaries, how can this affect our relationships?
- What influences our personal boundaries?

See Next Page For Teaching Notes.

Language of Health Literacy:

I would not _____.

I would be ok with _____.

I would allow _____.

I would not allow _____.

I value _____, *which means*
I (won't/will) _____.

Because of _____ (value),
I (won't/will) _____.

In my life, I value _____,
so I set a boundary to _____.



Teaching Progression: Step 1 | Identify Boundaries Setting (Cont.)

TEACHING NOTES:

- Example Boundary Statements:
 - If I'm in a relationship with someone, I want to hold hands, hug, and show physical affection in public.
 - I can give hugs to anyone, even if I just met them.
 - I can't stand it when someone pokes me to get my attention.
 - When my parents ask to see my phone, I always give them access to all messages I send to my friends. I'm not worried about what they will see.
 - If I'm with a group of friends, and they start talking bad about someone else, I feel uncomfortable.
- Make sure boundary statements are relevant to the students in your classroom.
- Allow students to pick from a variety of statements in case students are uncomfortable sharing some boundaries with the class.



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 2:

Tell students that one of the biggest influences on their boundaries are their personal values. Share with students that our personal values influence our relationships and decision-making. Explain to students that they will evaluate their values by completing an activity to narrow down their top 5-10 values. Give students a list of values to rank from most important to least important.

Once students finish the values sort, have students share and reflect their values using the following questions:

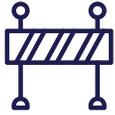
- What value is most important to you?
- What experiences in your life influenced your top values?
- Who has the biggest impact on your values?
- How are your values similar or different from your family or friends?
- Why do you think values are important for setting boundaries?

TEACHING NOTES:

- Example values: love, honesty, personal time, justice, loyalty, etc.
- See the *Resource Bank* below for materials to complete a full values sort.



Teaching Progression: Step 1 | Identify Boundaries Setting (Cont.)



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 3:

Tell students that people set boundaries to maintain and live out their values in everyday life.

Have students practice making connections between their values and a boundary that they currently set in their lives. For each boundary statement, have students connect the value they identified in the previous activity and explain how that value informed whether or not they agreed with the boundary statement.

TEACHING NOTES:

- Example:
 - Scenario: If I'm in a relationship with someone, I want to hold hands, hug and show physical affection in public.
 - Answer: In the scenario, the boundary being addressed is physical. Because I value privacy, I disagree with the scenario. In my own life, I value privacy in my relationships, so I set a boundary with my romantic partners to not show physical affection in public.
- Model and provide students the *Language of Health Literacy* to support their responses.



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 4:

Have students identify other personal boundaries in their life. Instruct students to share their personal boundaries statements with one another.

After students have shared with several peers, lead a student discussion using the following questions:

- How are our personal boundaries and values connected?
- What type of boundaries do people set in their lives?
- How do you let others know your boundaries?



See *Analyze Influences* for guidance on supporting students to analyze other factors that influence their personal boundaries, such as family, media, peers, etc.



Teaching Progression:



Step 2: Analyze the Situation

SUB SKILL(S):

- Recognize when a boundary has been crossed
- Determine your feelings
- Analyze the importance of the relationship

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

How do I feel about the situation? Who is asking me to make a decision?
 What are the consequences?

NHES PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

- (4.12.3) Demonstrate strategies to prevent, manage, or resolve interpersonal conflicts without harming self or others.
- (4.12.4) Demonstrate how to ask for and offer assistance to enhance the health of self and others.

VALUABLE VOCABULARY:

*pressure, boundaries
 emotional reaction,
 consequences*

Step 2: Analyze the Situation | Sub Skill: Recognize When A Boundary Has Been Crossed



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 1:

To allow students to begin to personalize refusal/boundary setting skills, have students start this step with a written reflection. Ask students to reflect on a time that someone pushed them to change a personal boundary. Tell students to write out the situation, their personal feelings, and the way others were trying to influence them.



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 2:

Define *persuasion* for the class. *Persuasion* is the ability to move another person to action

through argument, exploitation, or intrigue. Explain to students that recognizing when someone is crossing our boundaries can be tricky because they are figuring out how they want to engage and how they do not want to engage in relationships. Sometimes a friend, family member, or other adult will ask us to do something we are not comfortable with, but we feel like we have to say *yes* because we value their relationship. We need to get good at recognizing when we do not want to do something, rather than training ourselves to ignore those signals.

Tell a personal or fictional story about a boundary being crossed. Include important feelings and cues that let students know a boundary is being crossed. Then, ask students to identify the ways they knew a boundary was being crossed.

Tell a personal or fictional story about a boundary being crossed. Include important feelings and cues that let students know a boundary is being crossed. Then, ask students to identify the ways they knew a boundary was being crossed.

Language of Health Literacy:

When _____ (happened), I knew my boundary was crossed because _____.

I am feeling _____, so I know my boundary has been crossed.

This is a tough situation for me because _____.

_____ said/did _____, which made me realize they were pressuring me to _____.

See Next Page For Teaching Notes.



Teaching Progression: Step 2 | Analyze the Situation (Cont.)

TEACHING NOTES:

- This scenario should be an appropriate peer pressure situation that is relatable for a student at your school. When sharing this scenario, explain how it can be overwhelming and uncomfortable to deal with these situations.
- Some signals may include: feeling stressed or fearful, sick to their stomach, quickened heart rate, language or actions by the person.



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 3:

Have students turn to a partner to share an example of an important boundary they hold and/or a time another person crossed that boundary. Ask students to write down the language and/or persuasive tactics the person used to change the boundary.

TEACHING NOTES:

- If students do not feel comfortable sharing, provide an example they could analyze with their partner to identify the signals.
- Model and provide the *Language of Health Literacy* to support students explaining how they knew a boundary was being crossed.

Step 2: Analyze the Situation | Sub Skill: Determine Your Feelings



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 1:

Place students in pairs. Give each partner the end of a rope. Ask one student to state or write one of their identified boundaries from Step 1. Then, have the student identify ways someone may persuade them to change their boundary. As they share these strategies, have the other student pull on the rope. Switch roles, so each partner gets an opportunity to share a boundary and experience having their boundary pulled.

After each student has had a turn, have students discuss how they feel being asked to do something unhealthy or that goes against their values. Have students think about the tension between trying to please other people and taking care of themselves. Tell students that this struggle is confusing and difficult, but encourage them to listen to their gut feeling in the situation to make the right decision.

Language of Health Literacy:

This situation is making me feel _____ because _____.

My body feels _____. This means I am _____.

If I say no, _____.

If I say yes, _____.

TEACHING NOTES:

- Make sure to use norms and agreements to ensure all students feel safe sharing their boundaries and identifying ways someone could challenge these boundaries.
- Use a variety of discussion protocols and strategies to ensure all students are able to engage and participate.



Teaching Progression: Step 2 | Analyze the Situation (Cont.)



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 2:

Explain to students that when boundaries are crossed they may feel a range of feelings and emotions. It is important to know what emotion they are feeling because this will inform how they should proceed. For example, when a boundary is crossed, they could feel nervous, scared, embarrassed, etc. Each of these emotions will clue them in on the communication strategies needed.

Ask students to name and identify different emotions one may feel when a boundary is crossed. Define these emotions as needed for students and provide opportunities for them to develop this emotion vocabulary.



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 3:

Give students the following questions:

- What are my emotions telling me now?
- What are the consequences in this situation?
- What do these consequences make me feel?

Explain to students that they want to have answers for these questions, so they can feel more confident when they voice their boundaries. Tell students that their physiological and emotional response should inform how they handle the situation. Encourage students to listen to their emotions when making decisions regarding their boundaries.

Have students practice answering these questions by providing them with 4-6 scenarios. Each scenario should be clear enough for students to reflect on the three previous questions. Before having students practice, model how to appropriately answer the questions with one scenario.

TEACHING NOTES:

- Example Scenario: At lunch, the person you are attracted to asks you to skip 6th period to go to their house.
- Example Response to Scenario: My stomach hurts and I feel a little dizzy, which I think means I am unsure and nervous about this situation. I am definitely uncomfortable. My crush is asking me to spend time with them, and I do want to spend time with them. I don't want to hurt their feelings or make them upset. If I say yes, I know I could get caught for skipping. Also, my parents would be upset with me if they found out I went to their house without parents there. If I say no, my crush could be upset with me or think I'm lame.
- Model and provide the *Language of Health Literacy* to support students in determining their feelings.



Teaching Progression: Step 2 | Analyze the Situation (Cont.)

Step 2: Analyze the Situation

Sub Skill: Analyze The Importance Of The Relationship



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 1:

Share with students that when their close friends and people they trust pressure them, it can be challenging to uphold personal boundaries and make decisions aligned with their personal values. Tell students that if someone is trying to pressure them in a situation, they should reflect on the situation to make the best decision for themselves.

Give students the following questions:

- Who is the person trying to persuade me?
- What relationship do I have with this person?
- What strategies are they using to persuade me?
- What boundary am I trying to uphold and why?

Provide students with a scenario to have them use the processing questions.

After students complete these questions for the scenario, ask students to reflect on a personal time they were pressured to do something that did not feel good. Have students analyze the role the relationship played in upholding their boundary.

Language of Health Literacy:

_____ is asking me to _____, and they are _____.

_____’s opinion matters to me because _____.

_____ is trying to persuade me to _____.

_____ tried to persuade me by _____.

Because of my relationship with _____, it is difficult to uphold this boundary because _____.

TEACHING NOTES:

- Model and provide the *Language of Health Literacy* to support students in analyzing the role a relationship may play when upholding their personal boundaries.



See *Analyze Influences* for guidance on supporting students to analyze how relationships can impact decisions and boundaries.



Teaching Progression:

Step 3: Use an Appropriate Refusal/Boundary Setting Strategy



SUB SKILLS(S):

- Communicate your boundary
- Use a refusal / boundary setting strategy
 - Say *no* firmly and loudly. Stand tall and be clear
 - Avoid or leave the situation
 - Ask a question
 - Suggest something different to do
 - Explain why it is a bad idea for you
 - Ignore the suggestion and change the subject
 - Make a joke or use humor
 - Politely decline - "Thanks but no thanks"
 - Acknowledge the other person's feelings and explain your decision
 - Seek help from a trusted adult

VALUABLE VOCABULARY:

*I-Statements,
refusal strategies,
personal boundaries*

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

What refusal strategies do I feel comfortable using? How do I set healthy boundaries with others?

NHES PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

(4.12.2) Demonstrate refusal, negotiation, and collaboration skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.

Step 3: Use an Appropriate Refusal/Boundary Setting Strategy | Sub Skill: Communicate Your Boundary



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 1:

Explain to students that when they know they want to say *no* or they aren't comfortable doing something, they should first try to communicate the boundary clearly. Tell students this may not be enough for every situation, but by the end of Step 3, they will have multiple strategies to choose from.

Tell students that once they have analyzed the situation, they may need to communicate their decision to the person who is bringing up the risky or unhealthy behavior. Instruct students to practice using the *Language of Health Literacy* to communicate one of the personal boundaries they identified in Step 1.

Language of Health Literacy:

*I feel _____ when you _____ because _____.
I would like you to _____.*

*When you _____ that crosses my
personal boundary. Can you please _____.*

*I feel uncomfortable when you _____. Will you
please _____ in the future?*



Teaching Progression: Step 3 | Use an Appropriate Refusal/Boundary Setting Strategy (Cont.)

Step 3: Use an Appropriate Refusal/Boundary Setting Strategy
Sub Skill: Use A Refusal/Boundary Setting Strategy



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 1:

Explain to students that sometimes they may not feel safe or comfortable directly communicating their boundary, and therefore, they should be ready with 2-3 refusal strategies in addition to stating their personal boundary. Model for students how to use multiple strategies.

Provide students with a handout outlining the refusal strategies and examples on the following page:

| Refusal/Boundary Setting Strategy | Language of Health Literacy: | Example: |
|--|---|---|
| Say <i>no</i> firmly and loudly. Stand tall and be clear. | "No, I do not want to _____." | "No, I do not want to JUUL." |
| Avoid or leave the situation. | "I need to leave. I forgot I have _____ to do." | "I need to leave. I forgot I have a Chemistry test tomorrow. I need to study." |
| Ask a question. | "Why is it important to you that I _____?" | "Why is it important to you that I skip class with you?" |
| Suggest something different to do. | "I was thinking about going to _____. Anyone want to join me?" | "I was thinking about going to 7-11 to get a snack. Anyone want to join me?" |
| Explain why it is a bad idea for you. | "I really can't do that because _____" | "I really can't do that because my coaches would be upset with me if they found out." |
| Ignore the suggestion and change the subject. | "Have you heard about _____?" | "Have you heard about soccer try outs this week? Do you think you'll try out?" |
| Make a joke or use humor. | "You want me to do that?! Don't you know _____?" | "You want me to do that?! Don't you know that stuff stunts your growth and I want to be 6'8" and play for the NBA." |
| Politely decline. | "Thanks, but no thanks." | "Thanks for inviting me to the party, but I don't think I will go." |
| Acknowledge the other person's feelings and explain your decision. | "I know you want to _____ because _____ But when you ask me to do that I feel _____ because _____" | "I know you want to kiss because you like me. But when you pressure me in public I feel guilty and uncomfortable because I feel that kissing should be private, and I want to be able to say no." |

If the person will not accept your no or respect your boundary, seek the help of a trusted adult.



Teaching Progression: Step 3 | Use an Appropriate Refusal/Boundary Setting Strategy (Cont.)



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 2:

Place students in small groups (2-3) to practice using refusal strategies. Provide students with 4-6 scenarios to practice strategies.

TEACHING NOTES:

- While students practice each strategy, walk around and encourage students to engage with each strategy.
- Allow students to have fun and be silly.
- See *Resource Bank* below for more detailed lesson ideas to practice saying no.



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 3:

Explain to students that if they continue to feel pressure or they feel unsafe, they should reach out for support. Remind students of support structures within the school, the community, at home and with their friend groups. Have students create examples in their groups of situations when they would need to reach out to gain additional support. Make a list of important situations that would need outside support on the board. Be sure to include the following situations: sexual assault or harrassment, talk of self-harm or suicide, threats toward others, etc.



Teaching Progression:



Step 4: Reflect

GUIDING QUESTION(S):

- Did I uphold my boundary? Why or why not?
- Who was trying to persuade me to do something I wasn't comfortable doing?
- What form of persuasion was hardest for me to resist?
- Which refusal/boundary setting skill(s) did I use?
- Which refusal/boundary setting skill worked the best?
- Did the person respect my boundary? If not, how do I want to follow up?
- Based on how the situation resolved, how do I want the relationship with the person to change/stay the same?
- What do I want to remember next time I am pressured to do something unsafe or unhealthy?
- Do I need to seek help and support? If so, who should I go to?

VALUABLE VOCABULARY:

reflection

GUIDING QUESTION(S):

- How do I want to use these strategies in my own life?

NHES PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

(4.12.2) Demonstrate refusal, negotiation, and collaboration skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 1:

Ask students questions that will help them understand the importance of looking back on the situation and reflecting on what they learned. For example ask the following questions:

- Did you uphold my boundary? Why or why not?
- Who was trying to persuade you to do something you weren't comfortable doing?
- What form of persuasion was hardest for you to resist?
- Which refusal/boundary setting skill(s) did you use?
- Which refusal/boundary setting skill worked the best?
- Did the person respect your boundary? If not, how do you want to follow up?
- Based on how the situation resolved, how do you want the relationship with the person to change or stay the same?
- What do you want to remember next time you are pressured to do something unsafe or unhealthy?
- Do you need to seek help and support? If so, who should you go to?

TEACHING NOTES:

- Model this reflection process by sharing with students a time when you had to hold a boundary and the impact it had on your health and relationships.
- Provide multiple opportunities for students to answer these questions.
- Allow students to reflect in a variety of modes, including: writing, partner discussion, whole-class discussion, and one-on-one conferencing.



Assessing Stage 2: Refusal Skills & Boundary Setting

Students in grades will have mastered *Stage 2: Refusal Skills & Boundary Setting* 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.

4.12.2 Demonstrate refusal, negotiation, and collaboration skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.

- I can explain why personal boundaries are important for health.
- I can identify personal boundaries that enhance and maintain health.
- I can identify when someone is persuading me to change my boundary.
- I can communicate my boundary directly and assertively.
- I can use a variety of refusal/boundary setting strategies to uphold my personal boundaries.
- I can reflect on my boundaries in order to foster healthy relationships with others.

ASSESSMENT TOOL #1 (4.12.2)

Assign each student a scenario in which they face peer pressure to do something potentially unhealthy.

Example: You are staying the night at your best friend's house. After her parents go to sleep, she tells you to get dressed because Sam is outside and he wants to walk around the neighborhood.

Have students respond to the three questions to analyze the situation.

- Who is asking me to make a decision? How does this person affect me?
- What are the consequences if I say yes or no?
- How do I feel?

ASSESSMENT TOOL #2 (4.12.2)

Ask students to create a script for a skit that shows someone being pressured to change their boundary. The skit must present the boundary and use a variety of refusal/boundary setting strategies to uphold the boundary.

On the script for the skit, ask students to annotate for the following:

- What is the main character's boundary and why is it important?
- Who is trying to cross the main character's boundary and what is the relationship with the main character?
- What persuasive strategies is the person trying to use to cross the main character's boundary?
- What refusal/boundary setting strategies does the main character use and why?
- What happens to the relationship at the end of the scene? Why?



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 refusal and boundary setting skills helps to create a safe and welcoming classroom. When planning for partner or group work, use the *Stage 2: Refusal Skills & Boundary Setting* to reinforce healthy ways of communicating. Explicitly teaching students how to say *no* when appropriate and voice their boundaries empowers students to advocate for themselves and ensures 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 2: Refusal Skills & Boundary Setting* can be used across content areas when students feel uncomfortable with behavior around them. For example, in Science if a peer is pressuring them to get off-task, they have the strategies they need to uphold the decision to do well in school and set this boundary with their friend. Teachers should also model healthy boundary setting with students by communicating their own boundaries and listening when students voice their own (e.g. participating in a learning activity makes them feel unsafe).

Reinforce the understanding that effective refusal skills and boundary setting 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 interacting with others, during partner or group work, or when reflecting on how their personal boundaries can help enhance and maintain their health. These questions are a guide for independent reflection when students are challenged to understand how best to communicate their boundaries and how others may be communicating to them.

- What boundary is being crossed in *this moment*?
- Who is crossing *this boundary*?
- Why is your relationship with *this person* important?
- How could you communicate your boundary about *this* with your friend?
- How does your relationship with *this person* need to adjust to uphold *this boundary*?
- What personal boundary does *this person* have that might be coming up for them?

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.

*boundary, refuse, uphold, communicate, consent,
permission, safe, values, peer pressure*



Resource Bank

RMC Health

- [Health Education Skills Model](#)

National Health Education Standards

- [Standards & Performance Indicators](#)

Values Sort

- <https://www.therapistaid.com/therapy-worksheet/values-clarification/values/none>

Saying No and Sticking To It Lesson ideas

- <https://www.cmich.edu/colleges/se/Geography/Michigan%20Geographic%20Alliance/Environmental%20Education/Documents/GR%206-ATOD%20layout%207.pdf>

Setting Boundaries Worksheet with Scenarios

- <https://www.therapistaid.com/worksheets/setting-boundaries.pdf>

High School Video Scenario

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nMked5EqeXc>