



## LESSON

# 5

# Using Communication Skills



- I will use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health.
- I will use resistance skills when appropriate.
- I will use conflict-resolution skills to settle disagreements.

## What You'll Learn

1. Identify steps to follow to develop interpersonal communication skills. (p. 41)
2. Discuss I-messages, you-messages, mixed messages, and active listening. (p. 42)
3. Outline consequences of and ways to correct wrong actions. (p. 46)
4. Discuss resistance skills. (p. 47)
5. Describe how to be self-confident and assertive. (p. 48)
6. Describe types of conflict, conflict response styles, conflict-resolution skills, and the mediation process. (p. 49)
7. Discuss ways to avoid prejudicial behavior. (p. 54)

## Why It's Important

Communication skills help you converse with others, resist negative peer pressure, and resolve conflicts. These actions protect and promote health.

## Key Terms

- communication skills
- I-message
- you-message
- active listening
- peer pressure
- resistance skills
- assertive behavior
- conflict-resolution skills
- mediation
- prejudice

**H**ow are your communication skills? Do you speak clearly? Do you listen carefully when others speak? When you say “no,” do people take you seriously? This lesson includes life skills that help you communicate effectively.

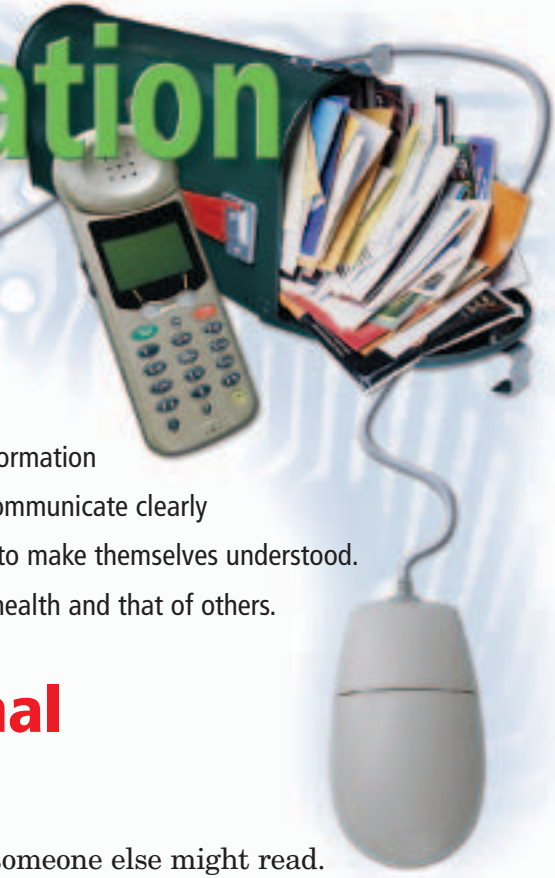


## Write ABOUT IT!

**Writing About Avoiding Prejudicial Behavior** You are speaking with a classmate about a new student at your school. The new student is of a different ethnicity than your classmate. Your classmate makes prejudicial remarks. Read page 54 about ways to avoid prejudicial behavior. Then write an entry in your health journal discussing a conversation you might have with your friend.



# Communication Skills



Skills that help a person share feelings, thoughts, and information with others are **communication skills**. Some people communicate clearly and easily with everyone around them. Others struggle to make themselves understood. You can take steps to develop this skill to the benefit of your health and that of others.

## How to Use Interpersonal Communication Skills

**1. Choose the best way to communicate.** Your choices for how you communicate with others are almost unlimited. When you need to communicate with another person, you can choose to speak to someone in person, speak to someone on the telephone, write a letter, draw a picture, use body language (including facial expressions), use sign language, leave a message on voice mail or on an answering machine, or send an e-mail.

How you communicate may depend on what you are trying to say. There is a difference between communicating directions to a restaurant and communicating your feelings about another person. If you want to give someone directions to a restaurant, you could describe it in words, or you could draw a map.

Suppose you want to share your feelings about something with someone. You might choose a private place to talk. Most likely, you would not talk about your feelings on voice mail that someone else might hear or in an e-

mail that someone else might read.

What if you are in a position where you need to say “no” to someone and want to send a strong message? Then, you might use body language as well as verbal communication, and shake your head “no.” **Nonverbal communication** is the use of actions or body language to express emotions and thoughts. Ignoring someone also is a means of nonverbal communication.



◀ A person’s voice and his or her nonverbal communication both send a message. What emotions can you associate with this student?



▲ No matter how angry someone is, he or she will get better results using I-messages instead of you-messages.

**2. Express your thoughts and feelings clearly.** Take responsibility for expressing your thoughts clearly. Do not expect others to figure out what you mean—you must tell them.

You have two choices when you communicate: I-messages and you-messages. An **I-message** expresses your feelings or thoughts on a subject. It contains a specific behavior or event, the effect of the behavior or event on the person speaking, and the emotions that result. Examples of I-messages are: “I am in a difficult situation because you didn’t return my book to me before class today. Now if the teacher calls on me to read, I won’t be able to, and Mrs. Clark will think I’m not prepared for class.”

When you use an I-message, you express your emotions without blaming or shaming another person, you avoid attacking another person or putting him or her on the defensive, and you give the other person a chance to respond.

On the other hand, a you-message will result in the opposite response. A **you-message** is a statement that blames or shames another person. A you-message puts down another person for what he or she has said or done, even if you don’t have the whole story about what happened. A you-message for the situation above might be, “I can’t believe you forgot my book. You are so stupid! Can’t you do anything right?”

If you use a you-message, you don’t share your emotions in a healthful way, and you don’t give the other person a chance to share his or her emotions. You-messages put people in a defensive position, so they are more likely to respond negatively to your negative you-statement.

You should try to become skilled at using I-messages. Compare the I-message and the you-message in the situation described above. Think about which way you would prefer to be treated if someone were upset with you.

Even in situations where you are angry, using I-messages will be more effective than using you-messages. You will still share your emotions, but you will also maintain healthy relationships with others.

Avoid sending mixed messages. When you express your feelings, you will have the best response if you send one clear message. A **mixed message** is a message that gives two different meanings, such as “I want to do this” and “I don’t really want to do this.”

For example, the words people use and the tone of their voice when they speak can send different meanings. Suppose a friend apologizes for something that he has done to you, but the tone of his voice is sarcastic. Do you believe his apology is sincere?

Sending one message is important. If you send a mixed message, you present yourself as being confused or insincere. Sometimes, you may need to take a moment to decide how you feel about a situation. Take that moment, then voice a single message with consistent words, tone, and body language.



### Make the Connection

**Express Yourself** For more information about expressing emotions, see page 96 in Lesson 10.



### 3. Listen to the other person.

Speaking clearly is an important communication skill. Listening carefully is just as important. When someone is speaking to you, pay attention to what he or she is saying.

Maintain eye contact with the person—this is a nonverbal way to show the speaker that you are interested in what he or she has to say. If you are preoccupied with something else, the speaker isn't sure if you are listening at all, and he or she may give up trying to hold a conversation.

You can use gestures, such as nodding your head, to encourage further conversation, as well. Pay attention to the speaker's body language and tone to see if he or she might be sending a mixed message. If so, you may want to ask more questions to find out what he or she really means. Do your best to remember everything the person is saying.

When you show a speaker respect as he or she speaks, he or she will enjoy communicating with you, and you will have more effective conversations. You are also showing the speaker the way you like to be treated when you speak.

### 4. Make sure you understand each other.

The way you respond in a conversation to show that you hear and understand what the speaker is saying is called **active listening**. An active listener can let a speaker know that he or she is really hearing and understanding what is being said.

By clarifying, restating, summarizing, or affirming what was said, you are proving that you take interest in what the other person had to say. Using these tools also helps you



make sure you understand exactly what it is the speaker intended to communicate.

▲ Listening is just as important a communication skill as speaking is. Good listeners have more effective conversations.

## Techniques for Active Listening

Have you ever misunderstood someone? Maybe you've even gotten into an argument with a friend or family member only to find out later that you both were saying the same thing—you just didn't understand each other. Active listening will help you communicate better and avoid hurt feelings and other problems that stem from misunderstanding each other.

## When You Don't Listen

When you tune out someone who is speaking to you, you risk having that person feel unimportant. You risk harming your relationship with the person.

You may tune out because you:

- were thinking of something or someone else.
- could not hear the speaker.
- were tired and dozing off while the other person was talking.
- were thinking about what you were going to say next.
- heard a distracting noise in the room.
- thought you knew what the speaker was going to say next.



# Activity: Using Life Skills

## Using Communication Skills: Sharpening Your Listening Skills

You can sharpen your listening skills by practicing active listening. When you listen actively, you show that you understand. Being a good listener helps you develop and maintain personal relationships. Here are some ways to listen actively.

**1 Choose the best way to communicate.** Give nonverbal feedback. Make eye contact with the speaker. Nod your head when you agree and use appropriate facial expressions. Give short, but sincere verbal responses such as “yes” or “I see.”

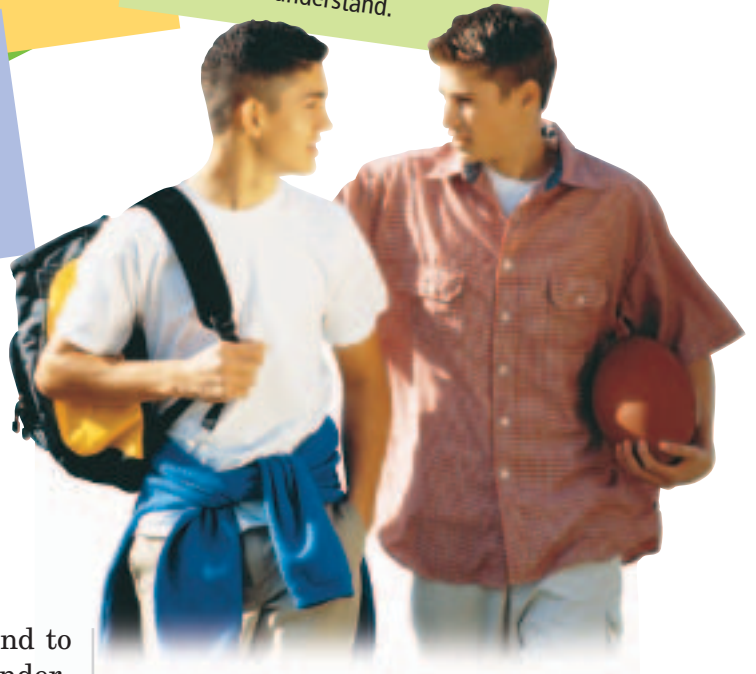
**2 Express your thoughts and feelings clearly.** Ask questions to clarify what the speaker has said. Wait until the person has finished before asking questions.

**3 Listen to the other person.** Restate or summarize what you think the speaker has said. Restating shows that you have processed the speaker’s message and want to understand.

**4 Make sure you understand each other.** Acknowledge the speaker’s feelings. You might say, “I know what you mean.” “That’s terrific!” Responses like this show acceptance.

**5 With a partner, take turns describing your day.** When it’s your turn to listen, practice the active listening techniques described here.

It may take some practice to become an effective communicator, but the results can include effective conversations and better friendships.



Here are some ways to respond to a speaker to make sure you understand what he or she is saying.

**Clarifying a response** Ask the speaker for more information. The more information you have, the more likely you are to understand what that person is trying to say. “What do you mean when you say. . . ?” “Can you give me another example?”

**Restating a response** Repeat what you think the speaker has said. Sometimes, if a person is speaking too quietly, you literally may not be able to hear him or her. And sometimes, you may simply misunderstand the point the speaker is trying to make. “Do I understand you to say that. . . ?” “What I am hearing you say is. . .”

**Summarizing a response** Summarize the main idea the speaker has stated. If the speaker has gone off on conversational tangents, you may have trouble understanding what his or her point is. “You’re saying that the main point, then, is. . .”

**Affirming a response** State your appreciation for what the speaker has said. Showing the person that he or she has helped you understand the conversation will make the person feel good, and good feelings can lead to better conversation. “Thank you for explaining that. . .” “Oh, now I understand what you were saying. . .”



# Peer Pressure

The influence that people of similar age or status place on others to behave in a certain way is called **peer pressure**. Peer pressure can be either positive or negative, and it can be exerted consciously or unconsciously. Sometimes all you need is to see that someone in your class has bought the latest athletic shoes, and you feel driven to own the same kind of shoes.

## How to Recognize Types of Peer Pressure

**Peer pressure can be positive.** It's the night before a proficiency test that affects your graduation status. You cannot graduate with your class if you do not pass this test. You are determined to go into the test well rested to succeed. A friend calls and wants to go to a movie. He also has to pass this test to graduate. You manage to resist his pleading and convince him that it would be better for him to get to bed early to be prepared for the test. After all, the movie will still be there on the weekend.

This situation is an example of positive peer pressure. You have influenced your friend to do something that will benefit him. **Positive peer pressure** is influence from peers to behave in a responsible way.

**Peer pressure can be negative.** Have you ever been stuck in a situation where a classmate pesters you for answers to homework instead of figuring them out for herself? A few times, you actually have given in and let her copy the answers that you worked out. This is an example of negative peer pressure. **Negative peer pressure** is influence from peers to behave in a way that is not responsible. Negative peer pressure involves pressure to

risk your health and safety, break laws, show disrespect for yourself and others, disobey your family, and show lack of character.

**Wanting the best for others** People who are mature, responsible, and caring want the best for others. People who exert negative peer pressure don't have your best interests in mind. They are really thinking only of themselves, even if they aren't aware of it. They want you to support their irresponsible choices, such as drinking alcohol or being sexually active before marriage. Peers who pressure you to make irresponsible decisions want support for their actions. They are not thinking about the negative outcomes you may have to experience.

### Make the Connection

**Pressure to be Sexually Active** For more information on recognizing and resisting pressure to be sexually active, see page 170 in Lesson 16.

### Ten Negative Peer Pressure Statements

The following are some "lines" you may have heard.

- No one will ever know.
- What's the big deal? It won't kill you.
- I do it all the time and have never been caught or hurt!
- We'll go down together if anything happens.
- Everybody else is doing it.
- You'll look older and more mature.
- Try it! You'll really like it.
- You only live once.
- Don't be such a wimp.
- Don't be a chicken.



## Did You Know?

### Drunk Driving

Approximately 17,000 people are killed each year in alcohol-related vehicle crashes.

## Consequences of Giving in to Negative Peer Pressure

Giving in to negative peer pressure may:

**Harm health** The nicotine in tobacco increases heart rate and blood pressure. If you give in and start smoking, you also increase your risk of heart disease.

**Threaten your safety** If you give in to pressure to ride in a motor vehicle driven by someone who has been drinking, you increase your risk of being injured or killed in a traffic accident.

**Cause you to break laws** It is against the law for minors to drink alcoholic beverages. By drinking underage, you risk being in trouble with the police, parents, and guardians.

**Cause you to show disrespect for yourself and others** If you repeat an unflattering story that you heard about someone because you think it will make you look important in someone else's eyes, you risk offending the person you talked about.

**Cause you to disregard the guidelines of your parents and other responsible adults** Curfew is a fixed time a person agrees to be at home. If you break curfew, you risk experiencing your parents' or guardians' loss of trust.

**Cause you to feel disappointed in yourself** What happens when you give in to pressure and do something? You risk long-term regret for not being able to stand up for yourself.

**Cause you to feel resentment toward peers** If you make a wrong decision under pressure that results in physical injury to yourself, you might resent your peers or feel left out as you deal with your injury.

**Harm your self-confidence** If you give in to pressure, you risk damaging your self-confidence. You would know that you were not in control of yourself or of the situation.

**Cause you to feel guilty and ashamed** If you give in to pressure and another person is harmed because of your action, you will feel guilty and ashamed that you were responsible for what happened.

## Repairing the Damage

If you become aware that you have done something irresponsible because you have given in to negative peer pressure, use these strategies to face up to the situation.

- Be honest; do not blame others. Take responsibility for any decisions, actions, or judgments that result from giving in.
- Make things right; is restitution needed? Restitution may involve paying for damages, repairing or replacing something that was damaged or taken. Responsible adults can help you decide how to correct any harm you have done.
- Analyze your excuses for giving in. Think about the situation. Were there specific statements made by peers that influenced you to give in? Did some peers influence you more than others?
- Learn from your mistakes. Be prepared to handle similar situations again. Bolster your confidence by being ready for all kinds of pressure statements.
- Ask a parent, guardian, or other responsible adult for help. Find a responsible adult whom you trust and review the situations in which you have given in.



# Resistance Skills



**S**kills that help a person say “no” to an action or to leave a situation that they feel or know is dangerous or illegal are called **resistance skills**. Resistance skills sometimes are called refusal skills and can be used to resist negative peer pressure. How to Use Resistance Skills below is a list of eight suggestions to use to resist negative peer pressure.

## How to Use Resistance Skills

### 1. Say “no” with self-confidence.

Look directly at the person or people to whom you are speaking. Say “no” clearly.

### 2. Give reasons for saying “no.”

Refer to the six Guidelines for Making Responsible Decisions on page 61 for reasons for saying “no.”

- “No, I want to promote my health.”
- “No, I want to protect my safety.”
- “No, I want to follow laws.”
- “No, I want to show respect for myself and others.”
- “No, I want to follow the guidelines of my parents and other responsible adults.”
- “No, I want to demonstrate good character.”

### 3. Repeat your “no” response several times.

You strengthen your “no” response every time you repeat it. This makes your response more convincing, especially to yourself.

### 4. Use nonverbal behavior to match verbal behavior.

Nonverbal behavior is the use of actions to express

emotions and thoughts. Shaking your head “no” is an example of non-verbal behavior.

### 5. Avoid situations in which there will be pressure to make wrong decisions.

Think ahead. Avoid situations that might be tempting. For example, do not spend time at a peer’s house when his or her parents or guardians are not home.

### 6. Avoid people who make wrong decisions.

Remember that your reputation is the impression others have of you. Choose to be with people who have a reputation for making responsible decisions. Protect your good reputation.

### 7. Resist pressure to engage in illegal behavior.

You have a responsibility to protect yourself and others and to obey the laws in your community.

### 8. Influence others to make responsible decisions.

Physically remove yourself when a situation poses immediate risk or danger. If there is no immediate risk, try to turn a negative situation into a positive situation. Be a positive role model.



### Reading Review

1. What is positive peer pressure?
2. List five actions to take if you give in to negative peer pressure.
3. What are eight ways to resist pressure?





# Self-Confidence and Assertiveness

**H**ow do you feel when you tell others about a decision you have made? Do you feel confident, or do you begin to downplay your ideas? *Self-confidence* is belief in oneself. When you are self-confident, you believe in your ideas, feelings, and decisions.

## How Can You Be Self-Confident and Assertive?

**When your behavior is self-confident and assertive, you show others that you are in control of yourself.** The honest expression of ideas, feelings, and decisions without worrying about what others think or without feeling threatened by the reactions of others is **assertive behavior**. You clearly state your feelings or decisions and do not back down.

**Passive behavior** The holding back of ideas, feelings, and decisions is called **passive behavior**. People with passive behavior do not stand up for them-

selves. They make excuses for their behavior. They might look away or laugh when sharing feelings or making decisions. They lack self-confidence.

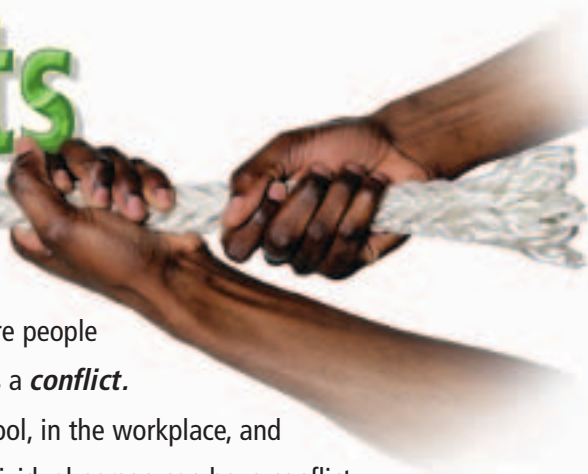
**Aggressive behavior** The use of words or actions that are disrespectful toward others is called **aggressive behavior**. People with aggressive behavior might interrupt others or monopolize a conversation. They might call others cruel names or make loud, sarcastic remarks. They threaten others because they lack self-confidence.

**TABLE 5.1 Steps to Be Self-Confident and Assertive**

Steps	Things to Consider
Step 1: Always use the six questions in the Responsible Decision-Making Model.	Will this decision promote health, protect safety, follow laws, show respect for myself and others, follow parental guidelines, and demonstrate good character? A positive response to each question helps guarantee that you will make a responsible decision and become more assertive and more confident in your decisions.
Step 2: Picture a shield of protection in front of you.	Whenever someone pressures you to make wrong decisions, picture yourself as being protected. If peers make negative pressure statements, visualize the statements as bouncing off the shield.
Step 3: When you doubt yourself, talk with a parent, guardian, or other responsible adult.	Reinforce that you have support you can rely upon. Teens who are self-confident and assertive appreciate and rely on parents or guardians who can give them a morale boost and help them resist negative peer pressure.



# Conflicts



**A** disagreement between two or more people or between two or more choices is a **conflict**.

Conflicts arise in the home, at school, in the workplace, and at sports and entertainment events. An individual person can have conflict within him or herself. In short, the potential for conflict is wherever there are people. The reasons for conflicts are about as many as there are people in the world. People have strong preferences or their emotions can run high on a particular topic. Some conflicts can erupt into violence, which is harmful. Because of this potential, there is great need for ways to resolve conflict. There are four types of conflict and three conflict response styles.

## What to Know About Types of Conflict

**Intrapersonal conflict** Any conflict that occurs within a person is an intrapersonal conflict. For example, you may say to yourself, “I would like to watch television after dinner.” You also may think, “I should study for the test I have tomorrow.” You are involved in intrapersonal conflict.

**Interpersonal conflict** Any conflict that occurs between two or more people is an interpersonal conflict. You and your sister alternate doing the dinner dishes, but she was sick yesterday so you did the dishes two days in a row. You think she should do the dishes for the next two days, but she disagrees. You and your sister are involved in interpersonal conflict.

**Intragroup conflict** An intragroup conflict is a difference between people belonging to the same group. Suppose you and several friends in the Debate Club have had a prank played on you by other members of the club. Suppose a rival group of

teens has made your group of friends look foolish. Some of your friends want to get even by “egging” a car belonging to one of the other teens. You and a friend are against this decision. You and your friend are involved in an intragroup conflict because you disagree with members of your own group.

**Intergroup conflict** An intergroup conflict is a disagreement between two or more groups of people. The conflict may involve different neighborhoods, schools, gangs, racial groups, religious groups, or nations. For example, you may be on an athletic team that is playing another school. A player on your school’s team bumps into a player on the other team. The team members of the other school believe the action was intended to harm their team member. Players from your school and players from the other school are involved in an intergroup conflict.



# What Is Your Conflict Response Style?

## Make the Connection

### Family Relationships

For more on conflict resolution in families, see page 137 in Lesson 13.

Conflict is a natural part of life. Learning conflict-resolution skills will help you settle disagreements in a healthful, responsible manner.

**Conflict response style** What is your reaction at the first sign of a disagreement? Do you feel scared? Defensive? Is your first thought to try to make everyone feel better? Maybe your first reaction is to run for cover. Some reactions are probably more helpful than others. A **conflict response style** is a pattern of behavior a person uses in a conflict situation. The person may use one or a combination of the following conflict response styles.

**Conflict avoidance** In this conflict response style, a person chooses to avoid disagreements. If you use this style, you avoid telling others that you disagree with them. You may be so concerned that others will not like you if you disagree with them that you are unwilling to challenge their behavior, even when you don't like what they are doing. Rather than disagree with someone, you sit back and allow others to solve problems in a manner of their choosing. This is also an example of passive behavior.

**Conflict confrontation** Using conflict confrontation, a person attempts to settle a disagreement in a hostile, defiant, and aggressive way. If you use conflict confrontation, you like to be aggressive and confront others. As a confronter, you want to win or be right. You view conflict as a win-lose proposition. You believe your side of the story is the only one worth considering.

**Conflict resolution** Conflict resolution is a response style in which a person uses conflict-resolution skills to resolve a problem. **Conflict-resolution skills** are steps that can be taken to settle a disagreement in a responsible way. If you use these skills, you remain rational and in control when you have disagreements with others. You listen to the other person's side of the story. You see the potential for a win-win solution in situations and relationships in which there is conflict. Conflict resolution is the healthful way to resolve problems.

Your conflict response style may be different in different situations. When there is a conflict between you and your sister or brother, you may act differently than if you had a conflict with a stranger or a close friend. On the other hand, you may feel like you need to agree with an adult even if you don't because the adult is in an authority position.

If you use conflict-resolution skills and show proper respect, you can work through conflict with people of any age.





# Conflict-Resolution Skills



**A** guiding principle of conflict resolution is the concept of win-win. When all of the people in a conflict feel that they have won, it is a win-win situation. It is important to realize that there does not have to be a loser in every conflict.

## How to Use Conflict-Resolution Skills

Conflict-resolution skills can be used to settle a disagreement in a responsible way. The list below identifies steps that can be used to resolve conflict in a responsible way.

**1. Remain calm.** Try to increase your patience and lower your personal “boiling point.” This way, both parties are calm and not in danger of doing harm to themselves or others.

**2. Set a positive tone.** Avoid placing blame, put-downs, and threats; be sincere; and reserve judgment. Demonstrate that you want to be fair and find a mutually acceptable solution.

**3. Define the conflict.** Each person should describe the conflict in writing. Make it short and to the point. The focus then becomes describing the conflict, not describing the people involved in the conflict.

**4. Take responsibility for personal actions.** Admit what part you have played. Apologize if your actions were

questionable or wrong. This step shows each person takes responsibility for his or her part of the conflict.

**5. Listen to the needs and feelings of others.** Listening allows the other person to share his or her feelings. Do not interrupt. Use I-messages. Listening shows that you want to resolve conflict. It shows respect for the other person.

**6. List and evaluate possible solutions.** Identify as many solutions as possible for the conflict. Discuss positive and negative consequences of each possible solution. This enables the parties to select the solution that is healthful, safe, legal, in accordance with family guidelines and good character, and nonviolent.

**7. Agree on a solution.** Select a solution. State what each party will do. Make a written agreement, if necessary. Restating and summarizing an agreement makes public what each person will do to honor the agreement.



# Just the **FACTS:** **CONFLICTS**

“Do only wimps try to settle disagreements peacefully?”

**the FACTS** Some people have only one way to settle disagreements—with violence or threats of violence. People who are assertive have a range of tools available to them when they become involved in a disagreement. They have enough self-control to talk things out and enough respect to listen to the other person’s point of view. They are mature enough to realize that they will not get their way all the time.

“Do real friends have conflicts?”

**the FACTS** Conflict is a part of most relationships. Two or more people cannot spend time together without having different opinions and ideas from time to time. If there is no conflict in a relationship, one person might be dominating the other, or one person might be playing the role of martyr, constantly giving in to please the other person. Perhaps both people are denying there is any conflict. These are not healthful relationships. Real friends welcome the chance to explore different ideas, learn more about each other and themselves, and find resolutions that help them both feel good about the relationship.

“During a conflict, shouldn’t a real friend know how the other person feels?”

**the FACTS** Reading minds is not a requirement for friendship or for family members. Sometimes during a conflict, we aren’t sure how we ourselves feel, and we know even less about how the other person feels. Resolving a conflict in a peaceful, satisfying way requires everyone involved to express his or her feelings, needs, and expectations. Assuming that others know how we feel or what we want is unrealistic. Only when we take responsibility for telling others what we would like to happen in order to resolve a conflict can we begin to find a resolution.

## What to Do After You Have Reached a Responsible Solution

Even if you have taken great care to resolve a conflict responsibly, it may still take time for people to feel comfortable. Your opinions going into the conflict were very strong, and the other person’s opinions were probably just as strong. Agreeing to settle a conflict responsibly does not mean your personal opinions have disappeared. But, by the time you have reached a solution you should have developed an understanding of the other person’s opinions. How can you make sure that you and the other person will keep the agreement that you have made?

**Be respectful.** Do not talk about the other individual(s) with whom you have been in conflict. Do not blame

and shame others or put them on the defensive. Use I-messages and take responsibility for your feelings.

**Keep your word and follow the agreement that you made.** Share any difficulties you might expect to have in keeping the agreement. Be honest about the ways in which you may need help holding up your portion of the agreement. Always be sincere in your intention to keep your word. State honestly where you will need help and know whom you can trust if you need help keeping your part of the agreement.

**Ask for assistance if the agreement seems to be falling apart.** Admit that sometimes a conflict is hard to resolve and needs outside help to be kept. Be willing to agree on mediation—one or more individuals not involved in the conflict who can help.



# Mediation



In most instances, two people can resolve their differences using the steps on page 51. But there are instances when people have a difficult time solving their differences and mediation has to be used. **Mediation** is a process in which an outside person, or **mediator**, helps people in conflict reach a solution.

## What to Know About Mediation

**Agree upon a mediator.** The purpose of a mediator is to help the people involved find a responsible solution. A mediator will not ask you to compromise your values or the guidelines of your parents or guardians. The mediator should not express an opinion. The only bias the mediator should have is for the solution to be healthful, safe, legal, respectful of all people involved, and nonviolent.

**Set ground rules.** Appropriate ground rules include: tell the truth; commit to resolve the conflict; avoid blaming; put-downs, threats, sneering, or rolling your eyes, pushing, and hitting; reserve judgment; and listen without interruption.

**Define the conflict.** The people involved begin by describing the conflict. They need to agree about what has taken place and about what the conflict is really about.

**Identify solutions to the conflict.** The people involved brainstorm ways to resolve the conflict. The mediator also can make suggestions.

**Evaluate suggested solutions.** Predict the possible outcome of the solutions by using the Guidelines for Making Responsible Decisions. Will the solution result in actions that are healthful, safe, legal, respectful, in accordance with family guidelines and good character, and nonviolent?

**Negotiate a solution.** The mediator helps the people involved negotiate a solution. The mediator may suggest making trade-offs so all people involved feel they are in a win-win situation. Participants can meet with the mediator either together or separately.

**Write and sign an agreement.** The people involved should enter into the agreement in an entirely voluntary manner. After they agree to do so, an agreement should be written. Those involved should read the agreement, ask questions, then sign and date it.

**Schedule a follow-up meeting.** The mediator can arrange a follow-up meeting to renew the agreement.

### Did You Know?

**Judging** A judge in a courtroom is a mediator. He or she can mediate a problem between two people or between the government and a citizen.



### Reading Review

1. What is self-confidence?
2. Name four types of conflict.
3. How can you solve a conflict responsibly?
4. What does a mediator do?



# Prejudicial Behavior



To distinguish between things or people by noticing or emphasizing differences between them is to **discriminate**. An adverse judgment formed without looking at the facts is **prejudice**. Prejudice can be characterized by suspicion, intolerance, or irrational hatred directed at an individual or group of people.

## How to Avoid Prejudicial Behavior

**Show respect for all people.** When you show respect for others, you increase the likelihood that they will be at their best and respect you. Respect increases the likelihood that people will be able to live together, be productive, and behave in nonviolent ways.

**Challenge stereotypes.** A prejudiced attitude that assigns a specific quality or characteristic to all people who belong to a particular group is a **stereotype**. Stereotypes imply that an individual is the same as every other member in a group, which is unfair. People who belong to a specific racial, religious, ethnic, or gender group have their race, religion, ethnicity, or gender in common. However, each person in each of these groups is different from each other in any number of ways.

**Create synergy through diversity.** A positive outcome that occurs when people cooperate is **synergy**. Diversity is the quality of being different or varied. When there is synergy,

people with different backgrounds, talents, and skills produce better and more creative solutions.

**Show empathy for all people.** The ability to share in another person's emotions or feelings is **empathy**. When you have empathy, you understand what a person is feeling and can express that understanding with words or actions.

**Avoid prejudicial comments.** Words can cause emotional wounds that are more difficult to heal than physical wounds. Always think before you speak. Avoid making jokes or snide remarks about other people. Avoid laughing or affirming others when they make jokes or snide remarks about other people.

**Learn about people who are different from you.** Being informed prevents adverse judgments. Learn the talents of others. Study a foreign language, read about other races and cultures, and reach out to those who are different from you.

5  
STUDY  
GUIDE

active listening  
assertive behavior  
communication skills  
conflict-resolution  
skills  
I-message  
mediation  
nonverbal  
communication  
peer pressure  
prejudice  
resistance skills  
stereotype  
you-message



## Key Terms Review

Complete these fill-in-the-blank statements with the lesson Key Terms on the left. Do not write in this book.

- \_\_\_\_\_ is a way of responding to show that a person hears and understands.
- \_\_\_\_\_ are skills that help a person say “no” to an action or leave a situation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ is influence that people place on others to behave in a certain way.
- \_\_\_\_\_ is expressing your ideas and feelings without feeling threatened.
- \_\_\_\_\_ are skills that help a person share thoughts and information with others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ is a message that blames or that shames someone.
- \_\_\_\_\_ contains a specific behavior, the effect it had, and the emotions that resulted.
- \_\_\_\_\_ is an adverse judgment formed without looking at the facts.
- \_\_\_\_\_ are steps that can be taken to settle a disagreement in a responsible way.
- \_\_\_\_\_ is a process in which an outside person helps people reach a solution.

## Recalling the Facts

- What are four ways to demonstrate active listening?
- What steps can you take to resist pressure to do something wrong?
- List nine consequences of giving in to negative peer pressure.
- What can you do if you have given in to negative peer pressure?
- What steps help you settle conflict without fighting?
- Select five statements that peers might use to get you to make a wrong choice and write a statement to counter each one.
- How can teens demonstrate empathy toward other people?
- What are eight steps in mediation?

## Critical Thinking

- How does active listening show respect for the person who is speaking?
- Why is win-win a healthful goal for both individuals in a conflict?
- How can seeing a person leave a risky situation influence others?
- How can assertive behavior, rather than passive or aggressive behavior, help teens make responsible decisions?

## Activities

### Responsible Decision Making

- Write a Response** One of your classmates has just relocated from a different country. He has an accent when he speaks, so some students make fun of him. They want you to make a prank call to his house. What will your response be? Use the Responsible Decision-Making Model on page 61 for help.

### Real-Life Applications

- Write an I-message to express feelings.
- Explain four benefits to using mediation for a conflict between you and a sibling over whose turn it is to do a chore.
- What steps can you take to influence others to avoid prejudicial behavior?
- Why is it important to avoid people who seem to always make wrong decisions?

### Sharpen Your Life Skills

- Use Resistance Skills** Some of your classmates have stolen the master key to your school. They are going to sneak in and “trash” the principal’s office over the weekend. They want you to join them. On a sheet of paper, write resistance skills that you might use to help you resist this peer pressure.