

# RESPECT OTHERS. RESPECT YOURSELF.

## ELA and Life Skills Program on Developing Healthy Communication

### Dear Teacher,

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have joined together with Scholastic to develop this grades 6–12 ELA and life skills poster/teaching guide in support of National Teen Dating Violence Prevention Month.

The purpose of this program is to build students' understanding of how respect—for others and for oneself—is part of the foundation for healthy behaviors and healthy relationships.

Through the lesson, activities, and work sheets, students will build skills around recognizing and practicing healthy communication techniques. These skills will serve them in all relationships, and in particular could help prevent emotional or physical abuse from happening in their relationships. Additionally, having strong communication skills will help students to navigate difficult situations, such as peer pressure or conflicts.

While some of the content involves subject matter that may not be appropriate for all classrooms, the materials are tiered so that they can be easily taught to focus on the core messages of building healthy communication and behavior skills for teens.

As a key influencer in students' lives, you have the opportunity to help them develop respect for others and themselves, and we urge you to use these activities as part of your work in preparing students for success in all areas of their lives.

### Download This Poster/Teaching Guide:

[scholastic.com/headsup/teachers/respect](http://scholastic.com/headsup/teachers/respect)

### Classroom Poster Inside (folds out):



### TOOLBOX

**INSIDE:** Poster • Lesson and Activity • Work Sheets

**TOPICS:** Personal Relationships • Dating Violence • Drug Use

### KEY OBJECTIVES:

- Build understanding of the relationship between healthy communication and respecting **others**.
- Build understanding of the relationship between healthy behaviors and respecting **oneself**.
- Build healthy communication skills.

**Students Can Also:** Develop awareness of how healthy communication can be a protective factor against dating violence and drug use.

### KEY STATISTICS:

- Nine percent of high school students reported being hit, slapped, or physically hurt on purpose by a boyfriend or girlfriend in the prior 12 months.<sup>1</sup>
- Twenty-two percent of females and 15 percent of males who have experienced rape, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner first experienced some form of partner violence between ages 11 and 17.<sup>2</sup>

### RESOURCES:

- Additional Support for Healthy Communication and Violence Prevention: [scholastic.com/headsup/teachers/respect](http://scholastic.com/headsup/teachers/respect)
- CDC Teen Dating Violence Fact Sheet: [go.usa.gov/c2PxH](http://go.usa.gov/c2PxH)
- CDC DATING MATTERS® Educator Training: [vetoviolence.cdc.gov/apps/datingmatters](http://vetoviolence.cdc.gov/apps/datingmatters)
- Loveisrespect: [loveisrespect.org](http://loveisrespect.org) (1-866-331-9474) provides 24/7 support and help for teens in unhealthy or unsafe dating relationships

SUBJECT	NATIONAL HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARDS	COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS FOR ELA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health/Life Skills</li> <li>• English Language Arts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Standard 1:</b> Comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease.</li> <li>• <b>Standard 2:</b> Analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, and other factors on health behaviors.</li> <li>• <b>Standards 4 &amp; 5:</b> Use interpersonal communication skills and decision-making skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.</li> <li>• <b>Standard 8:</b> Advocate for personal, family, and community health.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>SL.1</b> Collaborative discussions</li> <li>• <b>SL.3</b> Evaluate point of view</li> <li>• <b>SL.4</b> Present reasoning</li> <li>• <b>RL.2</b> Determine central idea</li> <li>• <b>W.6</b> Write narratives</li> </ul>

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Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Youth risk behavior surveillance—United States, 2011. *MMWR*, Surveillance Summaries 2012; 61 (no. SS-4).  
Black MC, et al. The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010 Summary Report. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011.



## LESSON & ACTIVITY:

# Respecting Others and Ourselves Through Healthy Communication and Behaviors

**Time Required:** One 40-minute class period (includes one work sheet). More time for additional work sheet activity, plus time for optional reinforcement/wrap-up activities.

**Levels:** This poster/teaching guide is flexibly designed with two student work sheets that cover a wide range of communication issues and scenarios for grades 6–12. The program can be used with one or both work sheets as appropriate for individual classrooms. The **first work sheet** is a basic introduction to peer communication, including in unhealthy situations. The **second work sheet** is more advanced and expands into dating violence and drug use.

**Cautionary Note:** Some scenario topics (drug use and dating violence) may be sensitive, so please read through all content to determine topic appropriateness for your classroom.

**Reminder:** Before hanging the poster, be sure to copy the materials on the poster back.

### PART 1 | Poster Discussions

Hang the poster and use it to engage students in a conversation about what *respect* means and why it is important. Revisit the questions when wrapping up the activity to give students an opportunity to expand on their original answers using what they have learned. Recommended discussion questions include:

1. Which chat boxes on the front of the poster are related to respecting others? What are other ways people show respect for others?
2. How is the way you talk to others related to respect?
3. Which chat boxes on the front of the poster are related to self-respect? What are other ways people respect themselves?
4. How are healthy behaviors, e.g., not using drugs, related to self-respect?
5. How are respecting others and self-respect related to dating?

### PART 2 | Group Activity and Work Sheet

- Display the following definitions of *respect* and *healthy communication*.
  - **Respect:** Treating all people (including yourself as well as people with whom you disagree) in a way that demonstrates that all people are important and that their feelings and thoughts are valuable.
  - **Healthy communication:** When communicating with another person, feeling heard, understood, and respected by the other person, as well as being able to listen, understand, and respect what the other person is saying.
- **Group Activity:** This activity presents students with statements that illustrate disrespectful ways of saying something or behaving so as to provide an opportunity to correct the disrespectful language or behavior. Students are asked to consider how particular language or behavior would make someone feel, and to think of respectful alternatives.
  - **Step 1:** Read or display the statements further below.
  - **Step 2:** After each statement, ask students to offer ideas on how the statement would make the other person feel. Write these feelings on the board.

- **Step 3:** Ask students to offer a respectful alternative to each statement.

- **Idea:** Have students think of alternatives by using the tips on the “Practicing Healthy Communication” work sheet as well as the respectful behaviors listed on the poster.

- **Step 4:** Ask students how the alternative would make the other person feel.

**Statement 1:** “That’s a stupid idea. What’s wrong with you?”

**Statement 2:** “You’re so rude. Who shows up 30 minutes late without even texting?”

**Statement 3:** “I’ve already decided where we are going later, so I don’t need your opinion.”

**Statement 4:** “Why were you talking to that guy/girl between classes? You know we’re together.”

- For additional support: Visit [scholastic.com/headsup/teachers/respect](http://scholastic.com/headsup/teachers/respect) for additional support on teaching communication skills.
- **Work Sheets:** Distribute one of the **two reproducible work sheet options** (details below). Refer to work sheets for directions. Work sheets can be used for individual, small group, or classroom activities, or a combination of all three.
  - **“Practicing Healthy Communication”:** Basic introduction to using peer communication to resolve conflicts or address unhealthy situations
  - **“Using Healthy Communication to Resolve Conflicts”:** More advanced, covering when to get help in dating relationships as well as how to respond to various negative situations, including dating violence and drugs
- Discuss students’ responses to the work sheets. Conclude by highlighting the importance of students identifying a **go-to trusted adult** with whom they can talk if they need to chat or if they have a problem. Provide the names of people at school who could fill that role, such as a guidance counselor.

### Part 3 | Reinforcement/Wrap-Up Activities

Options A and B are recommended for reinforcement the day after the group activity. Alternatively, if time is limited, Option C can be completed at the close of the activity.

**Option A—Acting Out Scenarios:** Direct groups of students to write and act out their own original scenarios to perform for the class to demonstrate how healthy communication can be employed to resolve or avoid an unhealthy situation.

**Option B—PSA Writing Activity:** Instruct students, individually or in groups, to write or design public service announcements (PSAs) that draw the connections between respect for oneself and others to healthy relationships and living drug-free.

**Option C—Strategy Writing:** Instruct students to describe a potentially unhealthy situation they may face and how they would respond using healthy communication strategies.

# PRACTICING HEALTHY COMMUNICATION



**Part 1 Directions:** Read the scenarios below. Take turns acting out how the two characters in each of the scenarios can use healthy communication skills to resolve the issues between them. Refer to the “Five Tips” box on the right.

## SCENARIO A: Words Can Hurt

*After Friend 1 and Friend 2 have a fight, they act without thinking through the consequences.*

**Friend 1 is thinking:** After we had a fight, my friend made up a bunch of stories about me and told some friends. To get even, I sent a text to all our friends saying bad things about him/her.

**Friend 2 is thinking:** My friend really disrespected me when we had a fight, and I needed to vent. I didn’t mean for him/her to hear about it.

## SCENARIO B: Risky Party

*Friend 3 is invited to a party but Friend 4 thinks it’s a bad idea to go.*

**Friend 3 is thinking:** Dan invited me to a party at his house this weekend. I told my friend I couldn’t wait to go, but he/she told me not to bother. I think he/she is jealous that I was personally invited.

**Friend 4 is thinking:** I saw pictures of Dan’s last party online. There was alcohol—some people were passed out, others were doing things they were later embarrassed about, and I heard someone wrecked their parents’ car. I think it would be smart to stay away.

## Five Tips for Healthy Communication

1. Stay in control of your feelings.
2. Make eye contact.
3. Pay attention to your gestures, facial expressions, and tone of voice (as well as other people’s).
4. Listen actively: Take turns talking, ask questions, and don’t jump to conclusions.
5. Use “I” statements to express your feelings.

**Part 2 Directions:** Read the scenario below. On a separate sheet of paper, answer the following questions.

## SCENARIO C: Health Concerns/Drug Use

Jenny and her older cousin Tina have been very close since Jenny can remember. Recently, Tina started hanging out with a new crowd that makes Jenny nervous. Today, Tina was acting differently and admitted to Jenny that she had tried drugs. Jenny told Tina that she should stop immediately or she’ll have to tell her parents. Tina thinks Jenny is creating drama and that if Jenny loves and respects her she won’t tell her what to do, or tell anyone about her business. Jenny feels it’s because she cares that she is telling Tina to stop.

1. How can Jenny use healthy communication strategies and respectful language to express her concerns to Tina?
2. How might Tina’s drug use impact how she perceives this situation? (See sidebar on the right.)
3. Is Tina right, that if Jenny loves and respects her she won’t tell her what to do? Why or why not?
4. What should Jenny do if Tina refuses to stop using drugs?

## Additional Tip: Drug Use and Communication

It can be hard to have a conversation with someone who is using drugs or is in withdrawal from drug use. This is because drugs can impair a person’s judgment, perception of a situation, and ability to read social cues. Drug use can also impact a person’s mood and ability to control his or her emotions and behaviors.

# USING HEALTHY COMMUNICATION TO RESOLVE CONFLICTS



**Directions:** Read the communication scenarios below and answer the questions that follow. Refer to the Traffic Light Rating categories on the right to answer the first question in each scenario.

## SCENARIO A: Nick and Sam

Nick works at an after-school basketball program with Sam and Sam's older brother. But Sam's brother stopped showing up, leaving the program short-staffed. Sam says his brother has started smoking marijuana and has lost interest in his job.

**Nick's Reaction:** "Your brother is putting us in a bad situation. He should get help to stop using marijuana."

1. Where does this behavior/language fall in the spectrum of healthy to unhealthy communication?
2. Sam's brother says that Nick and Sam are making a big deal out of nothing. How might Sam's brother's drug use impact how he perceives this situation? (See "Reality Check" sidebar.)

## SCENARIO B: Jordan and Gabby

Jordan and Gabby used to be on the debate team together. Jordan decided that she didn't want to hang out with Gabby after school anymore. Gabby thought that Jordan was her friend. Gabby calls or texts Jordan every day to try to connect.

**Jordan's Reaction:** Jordan sent a text that said "STOP TEXTING ME!" Now Jordan ignores Gabby's calls and texts and glares at Gabby when they pass in the hall.

1. Where does this behavior/language fall in the spectrum of healthy to unhealthy communication?
2. Gabby decides one day to call Jordan 25 times. How can Jordan respectfully tell Gabby that she is scaring Jordan?

## SCENARIO C: Connor and Lara

Connor wants to protect his girlfriend, Lara, and he's worried that she attracts the wrong kind of attention from guys with the way she dresses.

**Connor's Reaction:** To show her how serious he is, Connor grabs Lara's arm and tells her never to wear certain outfits again.

1. Where does this behavior/language fall in the spectrum of healthy to unhealthy communication?
2. Lara cares about her boyfriend's opinions, but she knows he doesn't have a right to grab her arm like that. What should she do, and how can she respond using healthy communication?
3. If Connor is truly worried about Lara's safety in attracting the wrong kind of attention from guys, rather than just being jealous, how could he have approached this situation more respectfully?

## Traffic Light Rating

Red

**STOP!** Get help! This behavior has crossed the line and could be unsafe.

Yellow

**CAUTION!** This behavior is unhealthy and worrisome. You could try using healthy communication skills or talking to a trusted adult.

Green

**GO** ahead and continue these healthy behaviors.

## Reality Check: Drugs and Dating Violence

Drugs and alcohol can impair a person's judgment, perception of a situation, and ability to read social cues. They can also impact a person's mood and ability to control his or her emotions and behaviors.

In a 2014 study, drugs were involved in approximately **50%** of youth dating violence incidents that resulted in emergency room visits.<sup>1</sup> Drug use can also be a consequence of dating violence. Studies show that people who are victims of dating violence are at a higher risk for later drug use.<sup>2</sup>

**Think About It:** Discuss the different ways that drugs may contribute to dating violence as well as how avoiding alcohol and drugs may help reduce the risk of dating violence.