

Life Skills 101

Five 10-minute video programs and related print
for students in Grades two and three and their teachers

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To The Teacher

Life Skills 101, consisting of five 10-minute student videos and accompanying teacher materials, is designed to enhance the existing curriculum in health education in early elementary school and to complement the curricula in social studies and language arts. The series, featuring Slim Goodbody, emphasizes life skills development. Slim helps children in grades two and three explore health-supporting life skills contained in the National Health Education Standards: decision-making and refusal skills, assessing the health value of products promoted in the media, listening skills, assertiveness skills, and stress management. Each video program contains original music and animation.

Video programming is particularly well suited to health education. It creates a common context in which students with varying backgrounds and experiences can examine issues in a positive setting. In addition, video provides a vehicle for modeling personal and social skills and a base of knowledge upon which students can build. For example, viewers can first watch characters near their own age in realistic situations considering alternatives and using other strategies that have proven useful in learning life skills. Then students can practice using these strategies themselves.

Video offers a springboard for discussion and interaction that promotes learning, change, and growth. As a familiar and comfortable medium, video provides a non-threatening basis for discussion among people who are reluctant to address delicate personal issues.

The project has developed video programming and associated print materials for students in Grades two and three and their teachers that will

- help students acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to develop basic life skills
- provide visual reinforcement to learning
- assist teachers in providing effective instruction to their students

The video programs constitute a series. However, each program is self-contained and may be used independently. Thus, programs can be easily scheduled for flexible use in classrooms.

The materials in this series are designed to help students develop proficiencies established by the Joint Committee on National Health Education Standards. (Copies of *National Health Education Standards: Achieving Health Literacy* can be obtained through the American School Health Association, the Association for the Advancement of Health Education, or the American Cancer Society.)

The program matrix on page 6 lists the title, the skill, and a description of the skill demonstrated in each video in the Life Skills 101 series. A summary of the story line for each program appears in the lesson plan for that program.

This guide includes a suggested lesson plan for each student video program. Each lesson plan includes the following elements.

- **Health Standard.** Identifies the National Health Education Standard and Performance Indicator for Grades K-4, addressed in the lesson.
- **Purpose.** Identifies the overall goal of the lesson and highlights key concepts.
- **Learning Objectives.** Lists lesson objectives to be accomplished through the video program and its accompanying activities.
- **Program Summary.** Provides a synopsis of each student video program.
- **Teaching Suggestions.** Includes suggestions for actively engaging students in learning associated with the video programs. It recommends activities that can be used before and after viewing the programs. Reproducible handouts for student activities will be provided.
- **At Home Activity (optional)**—Encourages family members and students to work together to apply what was learned in school to the home. A special “Try This At Home” worksheet, with instructions to families, is provided for the activity.
- **Literature List.** Provides a list of children’s literature that complements the theme of each program.

Students can gain the most from **Life Skills 101** if the videos are used interactively. We recommend that you pause the video frequently during viewing to engage students in discussion and create a more interactive experience. Natural breaks occur in the video. (The programs all have the same structure: Each program begins with the Life Skills 101 song. This is followed by an introduction to the program topic given by the teacher, Mrs. Peterson. Next Slim Goodbody explores the featured life skill. Then the teacher gives an assignment related to the featured life skill, followed by student work in response to the assignment. The program ends with closing comments from Slim Goodbody.) Pauses may be used to check students’ comprehension, or to ask them to make predictions, or to answer questions asked by the host, or to make connections to local issues.

Lesson plans in the guide suggest video segments that the instructor might wish to replay so that students can, for example, analyze the skill used in the segment. We highly recommend that teachers take advantage of this opportunity.

Program Matrix

Program	Skill	Description of Skill
1. Media Wise	Media literacy	The program helps students learn to “read” a commercial and analyze the persuasion techniques used.
2. Active Listening	Active Listening	The program helps students learn active listening as a skill in becoming a better communicator
3. Problems and Choices	Decision Making	The program helps students learn four basic decision-making steps: Stop, Think, Act, Review.
4. Speaking Your Mind	Assertive Communication	The program helps students learn assertive communication skills that help them express their thought and feelings in an open, direct way.
5. Dealing With Stress	Stress Management	The program helps students develop skills to manage and release stress in ways that keep the mind and body healthy.

Program 1

Media Wise

This lesson addresses National Health Education Standard 4, Performance Indicator 2: explain how media influences thoughts, feelings, and health behaviors.

Purpose

To help students investigate how commercials are designed to influence buying decisions.

Objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, students will be able to

- explain how commercials influence buying decisions.
- demonstrate strategies for analyzing commercials.

Materials

Copies of the local newspaper for each student.

Make a copy of the “Try This At Home: Selling Strategies” worksheet for each student.

A blackline master appears on page 11. (optional)

Poster materials—poster board, markers, crayons

Summary

The program opens with the Life Skills 101 Song. Then in a classroom, the teacher, Mrs. Peterson, greets the children. She indicates that the topic for the day is television commercials. Learning to make choices about what you buy is an important life skill. And that means understanding more about how commercials work.

With this she turns to a video featuring Slim Goodbody He has the students imagine that it is Saturday morning and they are watching TV. Up pops an ad. Slim points out that companies and stores that advertise on television use commercials to convince us to buy. How do they do it? One strategy he illustrates is to get viewers on the band wagon by telling them that everyone has one of their products. Other strategies that he illustrates include: the use of music, colorful packaging with cartoon characters on the box, and famous people. Above all, says Slim, advertisers know how to use the power of language. He illustrates with some made-up examples.

Slim concludes that all of these techniques are used to persuade you to buy what advertisers want you to buy. So it is important to learn to “read” commercials. That way, you can make better decisions about whether or not something is good for you and healthy for your body.

Mrs. Peterson then gives an assignment. She asks students to report on the commercials they see on television, radio, or in a magazine or anywhere else that ads appear. She has them report on how they think commercials make people want to buy products.

The next day students give their presentations. One group shows how music can make an ad more exciting.

The kids conclude that the appeal of commercials is not a good reason to buy something. You need to get information about the product from labels, experts, and from doing research.

Slim Goodbody comes back to remind viewers that just as they have learned to read words in English or symbols in Math, they must learn to read the language of commercials and ads.

Opening the Lesson

Ask students to identify some commercials that they see on television. List these on the chalkboard.

For each commercial listed, have students describe what makes it appealing (for example, the music, the humor, the visuals, the product). List these factors on the chalkboard.

Then ask students what they think is the purpose of these commercials. (*Student responses may vary, but should suggest that the purpose of commercials is to get people to buy the products featured in the commercials.*)

Showing the Program, “Media Wise”

1. Tell students you are going to show a video program about the strategies used in TV commercials to convince us to buy the product featured in the commercial.
2. Have students watch for the strategies used in the commercials to sell products.
3. Show the video program. It is about 10 minutes long. We recommend that you pause the video frequently during viewing to engage students in discussion and create a more interactive experience. Natural breaks occur in the video. Pauses may be used to check students' comprehension, or to ask them to make predictions, to answer questions asked by the host, or to make connections to their own lives.

An alternative is to show the entire video and then go back to look at sections in the video in more detail. Lesson plans in this guide suggest video segments that the instructor might wish to replay so that students can, for example, analyze the skills used in the segment.

After the Program/Follow-Up Activities

After showing the video, give students an opportunity to comment on the program, express opinions, or ask questions about what they saw. "Tell me what you heard and saw" is a good starting point for the discussion. Then continue, using questions and activities like the following. Students may ask you to replay portions of the video.

1. You might want to replay the opening segment of the video in which the teacher introduces the topic for the day and the students respond. Ask students, "Why is understanding how commercials work an important life skill?" (*Student response will vary but should include the idea that people will be buying things all their lives. Learning how to make good choices about what you buy is therefore important. Knowing how commercials work will help you understand how they are used to influence the choices you make. This, in turn, will help you realize that a catchy commercial is not a good enough reason to select a particular product.*)
2. You might want to replay the segment of the video in which Slim Goodbody articulates and illustrates strategies used by commercials to influence people to buy a particular product. Ask students, "What are some of the strategies used in commercials to get people to buy a product?" (*Students should respond: telling people that everyone their age who is cool has one, using music, colorful packaging with cartoon characters, famous people, and the power of language.*) Write the strategies that students identify on the chalkboard. NOTE: This list is used in the next activity. Then ask students for examples of each strategy, taken from the video or from their own experience. (*Student responses will vary.*) Record their responses on the board.
3. Remind students that commercials can appear on television, on the radio and as advertisements in magazines, on billboards, buses and the Internet, and even in newspapers. Divide the class into pairs. Distribute a copy of the local newspaper to each small group. Ask the pairs to find an advertisement (or advertisements) in the newspaper on which to focus. Then have them identify a strategy used in the advertisement to get readers to buy the product, using the list of strategies already listed on the chalkboard as a guide. Indicate that if they see a strategy that is not on list, they can add it to the list. Have them then describe how the strategy identified is used in the ad to sell the product. Ask them to record their answers on a piece of paper. You might want to circulate among pairs to monitor progress. When students are finished their work, ask for volunteers to share their work with the class.
4. **Try This at Home Extension Activity** (optional). Distribute copies of the "Try This At Home: Selling Strategies" worksheet to each student. Ask students to work with family members to review the directions on the worksheet: to select commercials on television for analysis, to use the worksheet to analyze the commercial, and to have students share the results with the class.

5. Replay the segment of the video in which the teacher gives the homework assignment and children respond. Divide the students into groups of two to four members. Distribute the poster materials to each group. Ask each group to create a summary of “Media Wise.” Have them use the question posed in the video, “What have you discovered about commercials and advertisements?” as a guide. Encourage students to create an outline, a mind map or an idea web, a poster, an advertisement, a bumper sticker or any other device that will enable them to communicate the summary to others. When the groups are ready, ask for volunteers to share their summaries with the class.¹

¹ This summary activity, which appears at the end of each lesson is adapted from Mel Silberman, *Active Learning: 101 Strategies to Teach Any Subject*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1996, p.166.

Try This At Home: Selling Strategies

Note to Parents and Families:

The children have been learning that commercials use certain strategies to encourage viewers to buy the product. For example, a commercial might use a famous person—a movie star or athlete—to try and convince the viewer to buy something. Catchy commercials are not a good enough reason to buy something. As a family, select a commercial or commercials on television to analyze—preferably an ad on Saturday morning children’s television or on a cable TV station designed for the youth market. Name the commercial on the worksheet. Use this worksheet as a guide for identifying the strategy used in the commercial. Then describe how the strategy is used in the commercial to influence viewer buying. Record your observations on the worksheet. Encourage your child to take the completed worksheet back to school to share with the class.

Commercial _____

Selling Strategy	Description
Band wagon: All cool people your age have one.	
Music	
Colorful Packaging with Cartoon Characters	
Famous People	
Power of Language	
Other	

Program 2

Active Listening

This lesson addresses National Health Education Standard 5, Performance Indicator 5: demonstrate attentive listening skills to build and maintain healthy relationships.

Purpose

To help students explore active listening strategies.

Objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, students will be able to

- explain the importance of listening in good communication.
- demonstrate how to listen attentively.

Materials

Drawing materials—paper, markers and crayons for each student (Used twice in the lesson)

Make a copy of the “Say What?” worksheet for each student. A blackline master appears on page 16.

Make a copy of the “Try This At Home: Active Listening ” worksheet for each student. A blackline master appears on page 17. (optional)

Summary

The program begins with the Life Skills 101 song. Then the teacher, Mrs. Peterson, tells the students that today they will learn to become better listeners. She points out that listening is one of the most important ways to get information from other people. Information you can use to stay healthy. Without good listening skills, people wouldn't really be able to communicate very well. There would be all kinds of misunderstandings. With this said she turns to a video featuring Slim Goodbody

Next, Slim Goodbody sings. He says that hearing is not the same as listening. He sings about the role that listening plays in communication and how. He suggests that we think of words people speak as messages they are sending—packages filled with information. And when they are received communication occurs.

Slim then goes on to suggest some steps that people can take to become better listeners: pay attention, make eye contact, give signals you're listening, ask questions, and give feedback. These strategies will make you a better listener. And, you'll be able to not only hear the words someone says, but also hear the meaning and feeling behind the words. You will hear what the person is really trying to communicate.

Mrs. Peterson then gives the class an assignment: to learn more about listening skills and how they help.

The next day two students show a movie they made. The movie demonstrates the importance of paying attention, eye contact, giving signals that you are listening, getting clarification, and giving feedback are to good communication.

The program ends with Slim singing a song that summarizes the strategies for effective listening.

Opening the Lesson

Distribute drawing materials to students. Indicate that you are going to ask them to follow some directions for drawing some things. They can ask you to repeat the directions, but not to explain them. Tell them not to look at each other's papers as they are drawing.

When students are ready, begin:

1. Draw a square on the paper.
2. Draw in a big window.
3. Put in a rally tall chimney.
4. Put in some big and small trees.
5. Put on a huge balcony
6. Draw in some squiggles to complete the picture.

NOTE: Add other details, depending on the needs of your students.

When the students are finished post the drawings around the room. Ask them to compare the drawings. How are they similar and different? Ask them to think of reasons for the differences. (*Students might respond that the directions were not clear, so they could be understood differently. It is also possible that some of the drawers were not listening as well as they might.*)

Indicate that people often have misunderstandings because the words they use are unclear to the person with whom they are talking. Point out that sometimes there are misunderstandings because the person they are talking is not listening carefully to what is said.

Showing the Program, "Active Listening"

1. Tell students you are going to show a video program about effective listening, an important part of good communication.
2. Have students watch for effective listening strategies shown in the video.

3. Show the video program. It is about 10 minutes long. We recommend that you pause the video frequently during viewing to engage students in discussion and create a more interactive experience. Natural breaks occur in the video. Pauses may be used to check students' comprehension, or to ask them to make predictions, to answer questions asked by the host, or to make connections to their own lives.

An alternative is to show the entire video and then go back to look at sections in the video in more detail. Lesson plans in the guide suggest video segments that the instructor might wish to replay so that students can, for example, analyze the skills used in the segment.

After the Program/Follow-Up Activities

After showing the video, give students an opportunity to comment on the program, express opinions, or ask questions about what they saw. "Tell me what you heard and saw" is a good starting point for the discussion. Then continue, using questions and activities like the following. Students may ask you to replay portions of the video.

1. You might want to replay the opening segment of the video in which the teacher introduces the topic for the day and the students respond. Ask students, "Why is active listening an important life skill?" (*Student response will vary but should include the idea that listening is one of the most important ways you get information from other people, information you can use to stay healthy. Without good listening skills, there would be all kinds of misunderstandings.*)
2. You might want to replay the segment of the video in which Slim Goodbody articulates and illustrates strategies used in effective listening. Ask students, "What is the difference between hearing and listening?" (*Student responses will vary, but should include the ideas that hearing is something that your ears do naturally when they take in sound. Listening means paying attention to the meaning of the message.*)
3. Then ask, "What are some strategies that Slim Goodbody suggests for becoming a better listener?" (*Students should respond: paying attention, face the person talking and make eye contact, give signs that you are listening, such as, nodding your head or saying "uh huh," ask questions, repeat in your own words what you thought you heard to be sure you understand.*)
4. Remind students that *asking clarifying questions to find out more* is an important skill for effective listening. Tell students that they will have an opportunity to improve their listening by using this skill. Divide the students into pairs. Distribute a copy of the "Say What?" worksheet to each student. Read the instructions to students and discuss the examples given. Have the students complete the worksheets. When they are finished the task, ask for volunteers to share their work with the class. (*Student responses will vary, but should be similar to the following: 3. "Do you have another obligation?" 4. "Do you have something important to do on the computer?" 5. "Should I be working on my defense?" 6. "Do you want me to help with supper?"*.)

5. **Try This at Home Extension Activity** (optional). Distribute copies of the “Try This At Home: Active Listening” worksheet to each student. Ask students to work with family members to review the directions on the worksheet: to examine the active listening skills and to practice using the skills using simple puppets.

6. Replay the segment of the video in which the teacher gives the homework assignment and children respond. Divide the students into groups of two to four members. Distribute the drawing materials to each group. Ask each group to create a summary of “Active Listening.” Have them use the following question as a guide, “What have you learned about listening skills and how they help communication?” Encourage students to create an outline, a mind map or an idea web, a poster, an advertisement, a bumper sticker or any other device that will enable them to communicate the summary to others. When the groups are ready, ask for volunteers to share their summaries with the class.

Blackline Master: Say What?

Say What?

Speaker Says	Clarifying Question By Listener
1. Your sister says, "I don't want to stay home by myself."	Why don't you want to be alone?
2. Your cousin says, "I am worried about my pet snake."	Is there something wrong with your pet?
3. Your best friend says, "I can't come over to your house after school today."	
4. Your brother says, "I really need to use the computer first."	
5. Your coach says, "I need you to work harder in practice."	
6. Your mother says, "I need some help in the kitchen."	

Try This At Home: Active Listening

Note to Parents and Families:

The children have been learning that active listening is an important part of good communication. They have learned that being a good listener involves skills such as:

1. Looking at the person who is talking.
2. Nodding, or saying something to show that you are listening and understanding.
3. Asking clarifying questions to find out more.
4. Repeating what you heard in your own words to be sure you understand.
5. Paying attention.

As a family, review the list of listening skill. Next, make some simple hand puppets using old socks. Then practice using the five skills with your child. Each time you use the puppets, switch roles—you be the good listener sometimes and at other times encourage your child to play the role of the active listener. Notice good listening behavior in your child and acknowledge it.

Program 3

Problems and Choices

This lesson addresses National Health Education Standard 6, Performance Indicator 1: demonstrate the ability to apply decision-making process to health issues and problems and National Health Education Standard 5, Indicator 6: demonstrate refusal skills to enhance health.

Purpose

To help students explore how to make decisions in a systematic manner.

Objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, students will be able to

- explain why decision making is an important life skill.
- demonstrate a four-step decision making process.

Materials

Make a copy of the “Decisions, Decisions” worksheet for each of students. A blackline master appears on page 22.

Make a copy of the “Try This At Home: Making Decisions ” worksheet for each student. A blackline master appears on page 23. (optional)

Poster materials—poster paper, markers, crayons for each student (used twice in the lesson)

Summary

The program begins with the Life Skills 101 song. Then the teacher, Mrs. Peterson, tells the students that today the class will be learning about making decisions—all kinds of decisions, big ones and small ones. As the class kids identify recent decisions that they have made, Mrs. Peterson points out that not everyone gets to make the same kind of decisions. Sometimes decisions are made for you, by parents.

She states that knowing how to make a good decision is an important life skill. With this she turns to a video featuring Slim Goodbody.

Slim begins by pointing out that throughout life people will make 1000’s and 1000’s, maybe millions of decisions. He then uses a song and an example to introduce a four-step **STAR** decision making procedure:

STEP 1: **Stop**: State the problem as clearly as possible.

STEP 2: **Think**: Identify choices and consider the consequences of each possible choice

STEP 3: **Act**: choose the best alternative and act on it.

STEP 4: **Review**. Decide whether the action has helped or hurt. Did you make a good choice?

Back in the class, the teacher gives an assignment, “I would like you to make a report about what it takes to make good decisions.”

At the next class, children present their work. One group focuses on consequences. They present a problem involving a friend who ignores Bradley at school. They then present two possible choices and the consequences of each. But they get stuck on Step 3: Act. They cannot decide what Bradley should do. Mrs. Peterson indicates that making the choice is not always easy. It depends on your goals.

Slim returns to say that your choice depends on your goals—how you want the situation to end up. Knowing your goal is an extremely helpful in good decision-making. Goals give you direction. They help you find your way. Knowing his goal will help Bradley decide.

Slim goes on to say that sometimes choices can be very, very hard to make, especially when you decide that you need to say no to a friend. He gives the example of a buddy who wants you to do something dangerous and unhealthy. He then suggests some strategies for dealing with this kind of a situation.

- Say no, firmly but give a reason that let’s your friend know you still care about him or her.
- Another thing to try is suggesting something else to do instead.
- Or you can use humor
- If none of these things work and your friend still bugs you to do something you don’t want to do, you might need to make a decision to leave. But leave the door open to get back together some other time.

Slim concludes that learning to make good decisions takes practice. And sometimes it may be hard. But it is an important skill that will help you stay healthy your whole life long.

Opening the Lesson

Ask students, “What decisions have you made today?” (*Students responses will vary.*) Record student responses on the chalkboard. Then ask, “What are some decisions that your parents, family, teachers, or other adults make for you?” (*Again, student responses will vary and may be different for different students.*)

Explain to students that there are some decisions that they are able to make at their age. But, as they get older, they will be making more and more decisions for themselves.

Showing the Program, “Problems and Choices”

1. Tell students you are going to show a video program about making decisions.
2. Have students watch for the steps involved in making decisions.
3. Show the video program. It is about 10 minutes long. We recommend that you pause the video frequently during viewing to engage students in discussion and create a more interactive experience. Natural breaks occur in the video. Pauses may be used to check students’ comprehension, or to ask them to make predictions, to answer questions asked by the host, or to make connections to their own lives.

An alternative is to show the entire video and then go back to look at sections in the video in more detail. Lesson plans in the guide suggest video segments that the instructor might wish to replay so that students can, for example, analyze the skills used in the segment.

After the Program/Follow-Up Activities

After showing the video, give students an opportunity to comment on the program, express opinions, or ask questions about what they saw. "Tell me what you heard and saw" is a good starting point for the discussion. Then continue, using questions and activities like the following. Students may ask you to replay portions of the video.

1. You might want to replay the opening segment of the video in which the teacher introduces the topic for the day and the students respond. Ask students, “Why is decision making an important life skill?” (*Student response will vary but should include the idea that throughout life, most people make millions of decisions. So it is a good idea to learn how to make decisions in a systematic way—especially involving good health.*)
2. You might want to replay the segment of the video in which Slim Goodbody articulates and illustrates strategies used in decision-making. Ask students, “What are the decision making steps that Slim Goodbody suggests in the video?” (*Students should respond: STEP 1: **Stop**: State the problem as clearly as possible. STEP 2: **Think**: Identify choices and consider the consequences of each possible choice. STEP 3: **Act**: Choose the best alternative and act on it. STEP 4: **Review**. Decide whether the action has helped or hurt. Did you make a good decision?)* Record the steps identified by the students on the chalkboard. **NOTE**: These steps will be used in the next activity. Highlight the letters S. T. A. R. on the chalkboard for students to use as a guide.
3. Divide the students into groups of two or three. Distribute copies of the “Decisions, Decisions” worksheet to each student. Have them use the decision-making steps listed on the chalkboard to help Caitlin decide what to do. You might want to read Caitlin’s story to the children. An alternative would be to make a transparency of the

worksheet and do the activity as a class. (*Student responses will vary, but should follow the four-step procedure.*)

4. **Try This at Home Extension Activity** (optional). Distribute copies of the “Try This At Home: Making Decisions” worksheet to each student. Ask students to work with family members to review the directions on the worksheet: to examine the decision making steps, to use the steps to make a decision, and to report back to the class on how it went.
5. You might want to relay the final segment of the video when Slim Goodbody makes a return visit to the classroom. Then ask students, “What role does a decision maker’s goal play in helping her or him decide which alternative to choose?” (*Students should respond that your goal gives you direction. It helps you find your way. It gives you some standard for comparing your alternatives.*)
6. Remind students that at the end of the program Slim says that decisions are sometimes very difficult to make, especially if you need to say “no” to a friend who wants you to do something dangerous and unhealthy. Ask students, “What are some of the strategies that Slim Goodbody suggests when you decide that you need to say “no” to a friend?” (*Students should respond: Say no, firmly but give a reason that let’s your friend know you still care about him or her. Another thing to try is suggesting something else to do instead. Or you can use humor. If none of these things work and your friend still bugs you to do something you don’t want to do, you might need to make a decision to leave. But leave the door open to get back together some other time.*) Record the strategies that students suggest on the chalkboard.
NOTE: This list of strategies is used in the next activities.
7. Divide students into pairs. Ask each pair to select one of the strategies for saying “no” to a friend listed on the chalkboard. Give the partners a few minutes to develop a short scenario to illustrate the strategy they chose. When they are ready, ask for volunteers to act out their scenarios for the class. (*Students responses will vary.*)
8. Replay the segment of the video in which the teacher gives the homework assignment and children respond. Divide the students into groups of two to four members. Distribute the drawing materials to each group. Ask each group to create a summary of “Problems and Choices.” Have them use the question used in the video as a guide, “What does it take to make good decisions?” Encourage students to create an outline, a mind map or an idea web, a poster, an advertisement, a bumper sticker or any other device that will enable them to communicate the summary to others. When the groups are ready, ask for volunteers to share their summaries with the class.

Decisions, Decisions

Caitlin is the goalie on the under-10 soccer team at the “Y.” She has practiced hard, played in all the games, and it is championship time! The final game is coming up this Friday, after school, and she is ready. Her coach’s words to her at the end of practice on yesterday were, “Caitlin, the team is counting on you.” She is thinking about his words and the game as her mother calls her to the phone. It is her cousin Kelly! “Caitlin, I’m having an over-night party to celebrate my birthday. My mom just decided to do it and I want you to come. It will be wonderful—pizza, a movie, and all the cake and ice cream we can eat!” Caitlin is really excited. Kelly is her favorite cousin and a lot of fun to be with. An overnight would be great! “When is your party?” Caitlin asks excitedly. “This Friday, starting right after school,” Kelly replies. OH-OH

What should Caitlin do?

Try This At Home: Making Decisions

Note to Parents and Families:

The children have been learning about systematic decision-making. As they get older, they will need to make more and more decisions for themselves. They have learned a four-step procedure for making decisions:

STEP 1: **Stop**: State the problem as clearly as possible.

STEP 2: **Think**: Identify choices and consider the consequences of each possible choice.

STEP 3: **Act**: choose the best alternative and act on it.

STEP 4: **Review**. Decide whether the action has helped or hurt. Did you make a good choice?

As a family, identify an everyday decision or decisions that you need to make: for example, what clothing to wear, what to eat for breakfast, what TV program to watch. Use the four-step procedure that the children are learning to make your decision. Discuss whether the procedure helped you make better decisions. Encourage your child to share with the class your family's experience using the procedure.

Program 4

Speaking Your Mind

This lesson addresses National Health Education Standard 5, Performance Indicator 3: demonstrate healthy ways to express needs, wants, and feelings.

Purpose

To help students explore strategies for speaking assertively.

Objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, students will be able to

- explain why speaking assertively is important to good communication.
- demonstrate how to make effective “I” statements.

Materials

Make a copy of the “Making I-Statements” transparency. A blackline master appears on page 28.

Make a copy of the “Try This At Home: Making I-Statements” worksheet for each student. A blackline master appears on page 29. (optional)

Poster materials—poster paper, markers, crayons for each student

Summary

The program begins with the Life Skills 101 song. Then the teacher, Mrs. Peterson, greets the children, and announces that the topic for today is to consider ways to express your wants, thoughts, and feelings to someone else, in an open and direct way that will get them to listen to what you say. With this she turns to a video featuring Slim Goodbody

Slim begins with a song that points out that sometimes it is easy to say what you want or feel, but there are times when it isn't easy to speak your mind, especially when others don't agree with what you say.

Slim goes on to say that we all face situations when people don't agree with us. And then it may be difficult to clearly express what we want, think, or feel. Usually this happens when we are feeling upset or when we think others might be upset with us.

But holding back and keeping feelings locked inside can cause frustration, tension, and stress—and that isn't healthy for the mind or body. So even though it may not be easy,

it's usually much healthier to communicate what you want, think, or feel so that the other person will listen.

So what can you do? Slim introduces a three-step procedure.

Step #1. Think before you speak. Figure out what you want, or don't want, to happen in a situation.

Step #2. Don't Play the Blame Game. Don't blame someone else for what's wrong. If you do, the other person will usually get angry or defensive and they won't want to listen to you. Take responsibility for your own feelings. Make an "I" statement instead of a "YOU" statement. For example: "I feel upset when friends say they are going to invite me over and don't."

Step# 3. Give a reason. Explain the reason why you feel or think as you do. For example: "I feel upset when friends say they are going to invite me over and don't, because I am left out of the fun."

Slim goes on to say that making an "I" statement allows a person to express himself and makes it more likely that the other person will listen and help resolve the problem. He concludes by summarizing the three steps.

Back in the classroom, Mrs. Peterson gives an assignment. She asks the students to make a report on some of the communication skills they learned today.

The next day, Karla and Peter play the Blame Game in which contestants are given a situation and a possible blame statement that comes out of it. The contestants' job is to come up with an "I" statement instead. The kids play several rounds, illustrating how to make I statements.

The program ends when Slim Goodbody sings a song that reiterates the three-step procedure for assertive communication.

Opening the Lesson

Ask students to raise their hands if they have ever done something they did not want to do (for example, watched a television program their older brother chose), rather than tell others how they really feel. When? Why?

Ask students to raise their hands if they have ever been really angry with someone they cared about (for example, when your so-called best friend made fun of you in front of other children), and immediately criticized and yelled at that person in front of others. When? Why?

Point out that hiding your feelings or expressing feelings inappropriately can be a barrier to good communication.

Showing the Program, “Speaking Your Mind”

1. Tell students you are going to show a video program about speaking up for what you want, think, or feel in ways that improve communication.
2. Have students watch for steps you can use to help get someone else to listen to what you are saying.
3. Show the video program. It is about 10 minutes long. We recommend that you pause the video frequently during viewing to engage students in discussion and create a more interactive experience. Natural breaks occur in the video. Pauses may be used to check students’ comprehension, or to ask them to make predictions, to answer questions asked by the host, or to make connections to their lives.

An alternative is to show the entire video and then go back to look at sections in the video in more detail. Lesson plans in the guide suggest video segments that the instructor might wish to replay so that students can, for example, analyze the skills used in the segment.

After the Program/Follow-Up Activities

After showing the video, give students an opportunity to comment on the program, express opinions, or ask questions about what they saw. "Tell me what you heard and saw" is a good starting point for the discussion. Then continue, using questions and activities like the following. Students may ask you to replay portions of the video.

1. You might want to replay the opening segment of the video in which the teacher introduces the topic for the day and the students respond. Ask students, “Why is speaking up for what you want, feel, and think to someone else in a way that gets them to listen to you an important life skill?” (*Student response will vary but should include the idea that **not** learning ways to express your thoughts and feelings in ways that others will listen to can cause frustration and stress that are not healthy for your mind and body. Even if it is not easy, it is usually healthier to communicate what you want, feel or think.*)
2. You might want to replay the segment of the video in which Slim Goodbody articulates and illustrates strategies for effectively communicating needs, feelings, and thoughts. Ask students, “What are the steps that Slim Goodbody suggests in the video for communicating your feelings, thoughts and wants in a way that will help get someone else to listen to what you are saying?” (*Students should respond: Step #1. Think before you speak. Figure out what you want or don’t want to happen. Step #2. Don’t Play the Blame Game. Step# 3. Give a reason. Explain the reason why you feel or think as you do.*) Record the steps identified by the students on the chalkboard.
NOTE: These steps will be used for reference the next activity.

3. Remind students that Step #2 in effective communication is: Don't Play the Blame Game. The Blame Game involves making YOU statements: for example "You are to blame!" "You don't understand!" "You always need to be in charge!" When you play the Blame Game the person you are talking to usually gets defensive and is not going to listen. The way to stop playing the Blame Game is to make I statements instead of YOU statements.

Project the "Making I-Statements" transparency. Read the instructions to students and discuss the examples given. Have the students work as a class to change the other YOU statements into I statements. An alternative would be to distribute a copy of "Making I-Statements" to students and have them work in pairs to change the YOU statements into I statements. Then have volunteers share their work. (*Student responses will vary but should have the same form as the example in the transparency.*)

4. **Try This at Home Extension Activity (optional).** Distribute copies of the "Try This At Home: Making I Statements" worksheet to each student. Ask students to work with family members to review the directions on the worksheet: to examine the effective speaking steps and to play the Blame Game.
5. Replay the segment of the video in which the teacher gives the homework assignment and children respond. Divide the students into groups of two to four members. Distribute the drawing materials to each group. Ask each group to create a summary of "Speaking Your Mind." Have them use the following question as a guide, "What does it take to make your needs, feelings, and thoughts known to someone else in a way that gets them to listen to you?" Encourage students to create an outline, a mind map or an idea web, a poster, an advertisement, a bumper sticker or any other device that will enable them to communicate the summary to others. When the groups are ready, ask for volunteers to share their summaries with the class.

Transparency Master: Making I-Statements

Making I-Statements

Read the situation. Then translate the YOU-statement into an I-statement to express your feelings to your friend.

A. You made arrangements with your friend to go over to her house after school. She went to the mall with her aunt instead.

YOU-statement: You always think of yourself!

I-statement:

I feel disappointed **when** people say one thing and then do another **because** I can't trust them.

B. Your friend has plenty to say about a movie you both saw. When you say something about the movie, he ignores what you think.

YOU-statement: You really don't care what I think!

I-statement:

I feel _____ when _____

because _____

C. Your friend invites you over to play. She insists on watching television the whole afternoon.

YOU-statement: You're always trying to run my life!

I-statement:

I feel _____ when _____

because _____

D. Your friend comes over to your house. Your mother asks you to not play in the living room. But your friend insists on going in there.

YOU-statement: You shouldn't do that!

I-statement:

I feel _____ when _____

because _____

Blackline Master: Try This at Home: Making I-Statements

Try This At Home: Making I-Statements

Note to Parents and Families:

The children have been learning that making your feelings, needs, and thoughts known to someone else in a way that does not make them defensive but rather gets them to listen to you is an important part of good communication. They have learned a three-step procedure for accomplishing this task:

Step 1. Think before you speak. Figure out what you want, or don't want, to happen in a situation.

Step 2. Don't Play the Blame Game. Don't blame someone else for what's wrong. If you do, the other person will usually get angry or defensive and they won't want to listen to you. Take responsibility for your own feelings. Make an I-statement instead of a YOU-statement. For example: "I feel upset when friends say they are going to invite me over and don't" instead of "You didn't invite me over! You lied!"

Step 3. Give a reason. Explain the reason why you feel or think as you do. For example: "I feel upset when friends say they are going to invite me over and don't, because I am left out of the fun."

As a family, review the steps for good communication. Then play the Blame Game. Ask one family member to act as the "host." Have the host read the following situations and YOU-statements to the "contestants," one at a time. Then the first person who comes up with an appropriate I-statement, like the one above, wins the round.

A. Your friend brings a big bag of snack food on the class field trip. You sit together, but he does not share and finishes it off himself.

YOU-statement: You only think of yourself!

I-statement:

I feel _____ when _____ because _____

B. Your friend borrows your bike. She runs it into the sidewalk, bending the front wheel.

YOU-statement: That's really stupid!

I-statement:

I feel _____ when _____ because _____

C. Your best friend Pat is standing with some boys. You wave and say "hello!" but Pat ignores you.

YOU-statement: You're mean to me!

I-statement:

I feel _____ when _____ because _____

Program 5

Dealing with Stress

This lesson addresses National Health Education Standard 3, Performance Indicator 7: apply skills to manage stress.

Purpose

To help students explore how stress affects the body and how to manage stress.

Objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, students will be able to

- explain why stress management is an important life skill
- demonstrate strategies for managing stress.

Materials

Make a copy of the “Stress Management Strategies” transparency. A blackline master appears on page 35.

Make a copy of the “Try This At Home: Managing Stress ” worksheet for each student. A blackline master appears on page 36. (optional)

Poster materials—poster paper, markers, crayons for each student

Summary

The program begins with the Life Skills 101 song. Then the teacher, Mrs. Peterson, greets the children, and announces that she has a surprise for them—a test! She then asks students to reflect on how hearing about the test made them feel. Students respond: I was worried, I was afraid, my heart is beating faster, my stomach feels funny, my knees are shaking.

She goes on to point out that what she was testing was to see how their minds and bodies deal with stress. Stress, she says, can be anything that happens to you that puts pressure on your mind and body and causes you to feel worried, uptight, or tense. After the kids think of other stressful situations, the teacher introduces a video featuring Slim Goodbody intended to help them learn more about stress and the best ways to deal with it.

Slim begins by saying that in a stressful situation, some amazing changes take place in the mind and body. To really understand why this happens, he takes viewers on a brief trip back in time—to prehistoric days. He indicates that when our ancestors had to handle a stressful situation, there were only two things they could do to stay alive. They could either fight.... or run away.

In either case their bodies had to get ready very quickly – and to do that, rapid changes took place. Their brain sent chemical messengers racing through their bodies. These messengers, called hormones, made their hearts beat faster, blood flow quicker, and breathing speed up and digestion slow down. Hormones caused their muscles to get tense, their hearing to improve, and the pupils in their eyes to get bigger.

These changes were the body's way of preparing itself to deal with trouble. Scientists call these changes the “fight or flight” response because it helped provide the extra energy and strength needed to fight, or take flight, which means to run away.

What does this have to do with us today? Well, when faced with stress, the very same changes happen in our bodies that happened in the bodies of our pre-historic ancestors, even if the stressful situation is not life or death.

Slim goes on to say that if you hold this stress in, it can hurt your body. It can make you sick. And it certainly will make it a lot harder to act. He offers some suggestions of ways to handle stress in a song:

- Take some slow, deep breaths.
- Stretch your muscles.
- Get some exercise.
- Remind yourself that you're really smart and strong and you can deal with what is wrong.
- Get help from friends and others father, mothers, sisters, brothers.

Slim concludes that stress is natural. But to stay healthy, you need to learn ways to deal with it.

Back in the classroom, Mrs. Peterson gives an assignment: I would like you to make a report about some healthy ways you've learned to deal with a stress.

Next class, the children share their work. Jena reports how she asked her violin teacher for help in dealing with the stress associated with giving a concert.

Next, Roger and Cindy report that they went on the Internet and read about a relaxation exercise. They describe the exercise and sing a song, while practicing it.

Slim then reviews the strategies for dealing with stress. He concludes by saying that some doctors think that more than half the time people get sick, it's because they don't know how to deal with stressful situations. But there are good ways to deal with stress and keep your mind and body healthy.

Opening the Lesson

Indicate that today's lesson is about stress. Explain that stress is anything that causes physical or mental strain or pressure on you. Stress is a normal part of daily life. Give some examples of strain or pressure that you experience in daily life—for example, getting children ready for school, getting to school on time, grading essays, coming to a new school.

Ask the students to identify situations at school, at home, and with their friends that are stressful for them. What makes those situations stressful? What do they do to reduce the stress?

Showing the Program, “Dealing with Stress”

1. Tell students you are going to show a video program about stress and how to deal with stress.
2. Have students watch for strategies suggested in the video for dealing with stress.
3. Show the video program. It is about 10 minutes long. We recommend that you pause the video frequently during viewing to engage students in discussion and create a more interactive experience. Natural breaks occur in the video. Pauses may be used to check students' comprehension, or to ask them to make predictions, to answer questions asked by the host, or to make connections to their own lives.

An alternative is to show the entire video and then go back to look at sections in the video in more detail. Lesson plans in the guide suggest video segments that the instructor might wish to replay so that students can, for example, analyze the skills used in the segment.

After the Program/Follow-Up Activities

After showing the video, give students an opportunity to comment on the program, express opinions, or ask questions about what they saw. "Tell me what you heard and saw" is a good starting point for the discussion. Then continue, using questions and activities like the following. Students may ask you to replay portions of the video.

1. You might want to replay the opening segment of the video in which the teacher introduces the topic for the day, the students respond, and Slim Goodbody introduces stress using the cave man and woman. Ask students, "Why is learning to manage stress an important life skill?" (*Student response will vary but should include the idea that stress makes your body tense, which can hurt your body. So you need to find a way to handle stress.*) Then ask, "What do cavemen and the 'fight or flight' response, that Slim Goodbody mentioned, have to do with stress management?" (*Student*

responses will vary, but should include the idea that when cavemen encountered a stressful situation they could either fight or run away (take flight). In either case their bodies got ready to act—their hearts beat faster, breathing speeded up, muscles tensed. These changes were the body's way of preparing for trouble. The same thing happens to our bodies today when we face stress. We need to learn to manage that stress.)

2. You might want to replay the segment of the video in which Slim Goodbody articulates and illustrates strategies for handling stress. Project a copy of the “Stress Management Strategies” transparency. Ask students, “What are the strategies that Slim Goodbody suggests in the video for handling stress?” (*Students should respond: Take some slow, deep breaths, stretch your muscles, get some exercise, remind yourself that you're really smart and strong and you can deal with what is wrong, and get help from friends and others father, mothers, sisters, brothers.*) Record the steps identified by the students on the transparency. NOTE: These steps will be used in the next activity.
3. Divide the students into groups of three or four. Ask each group to select a stress management strategy from the list on the transparency. Indicate that they are to work in their groups to develop a plan for teaching that strategy to others. To get the students thinking about their task, you might want to revisit the segments of the video in which Slim identifies and illustrates stress management strategies and where the program kids do the same. Encourage students to use drawings, physical activity, a short play, or other appropriate interactive methods to get their message across. They should also be prepared to introduce and conclude their presentations. You might want to circulate among groups to monitor progress. When they complete their teaching modules, ask for volunteers to share their work with the class. Ask the audience to give constructive feedback. You might want to have the groups give their presentations to other classes.
4. **Try This at Home Extension Activity (optional).** Distribute copies of the “Try This At Home: Managing Stress” worksheet to each student. Ask students to work with family members to review the directions on the worksheet: to examine the strategies for stress management, to try using some of the strategies for handling stress at home, and to report back to the class on how it went.
5. Replay the segment of the video in which the teacher gives the homework assignment and children respond. Divide the students into groups of two to four members. Distribute the drawing materials to each group. Ask each group to create a summary of “Dealing With Stress.” Have them use the question posed in the video as a guide, “What are some healthy ways you’ve learned about to deal with stress?” Encourage students to create an outline, a mind map or an idea web, a poster, an advertisement, a bumper sticker or any other device that will enable them to communicate the summary to others. When the groups are ready, ask for volunteers to share their summaries with the class.

Transparency Master: Stress Management Strategies

Stress Management Strategies

Strategy

Try This At Home: Managing Stress

Note to Parents and Families:

The children have learned that stress—anything that causes physical or mental strain or pressure on you—is a normal part of daily life. (Examples of stresses are: taking tests, death of a loved one, peer pressure, separation/divorce of parents, and bodily injury.) They have learned several strategies for handling stress:

- Take some slow, deep breaths
- Stretch your muscles
- Get some exercise
- Remind yourself that you're really smart and strong and you can deal with what is wrong
- Get help from friends and others father, mothers, sisters, brothers.

As a family, review and practice the stress management strategies on the list. Then, when family members feel stressed, encourage them to try using one or more of the stress strategies. Reflect on which strategies seemed to work best for you. Encourage your child to share with the class your family's experience using the stress management strategies.

Literature List

Program 1: Media Wise

Advertising: Information or Manipulation?/by Nancy Day

Springfield, N. J.: Enslow Publishers, 1999.

Discusses how advertising has developed, how companies use it to entice consumers, and the impact of advertising on people, particularly young people.

The Secret Life Of The Underwear Champ/ by Betty Miles, illustrated by Dan Jones.

New York: Knopf, 1981

Ten-year-old Larry is “discovered” on the street and asked to appear in a television commercial. Only later does he find out what he is advertising.

Nibble, Nibble, Jenny Archer/by Ellen Conford, illustrated by Diane Palmisciano

Boston: Little, Brown, 1993.

Jenny Archer is excited about making a television commercial for a new snack food, until she discovers that the food she liked so much was meant for gerbils.

Program 2: Active Listening

Listen, Buddy/ by Helen Lester, illustrated by Lynn Munsinger

Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1995

A lop-eared rabbit named Buddy finds himself in trouble with the Scruffy Varmint because he never listens,

The Other Way To Listen/by Byrd Baylor, illustrated by Peter Parnall

New York: Aladdin Library, 1997

A young boy explores the desert with an old man and learns the wisdom of listening to the world around him.

Listen To Me/by Barbara Neasi; illustrated by Gene Sharp

Chicago: Childrens Press, 1986

Whenever Mom and Dad are too busy to talk and to listen, Grandma saves the day, helping out and being a good listener.

Program 3: Problems and Choices

The Best Vacation Ever/ by Stuart J. Murphy, illustrated by Nadine Bernard Westcott

New York: HarperCollins, 1997

A young girl uses data-gathering and problem-solving skills to determine where her family should go on vacation.

4 Pups and A Worm/by Eric Seltzer

New York: Beginner Books, A Division of Random House, 1996.

When needing to solve a problem, the reader can call upon four pups and a worm for help with anything from trying to tie to delivering bubbles.

Alison Saves The Wedding/by Catherine Connor, illustrated by Gabriel Picart
Portland, ME: Magic Attic Press, 1996.

Alison finds a way to turn a crisis into opportunity when her bike is damaged just before she was to ride in a parade.

Program 4: Speaking Your Mind

Dealing With Someone Who Won't Listen/by Lisa K. Adams
New York: PowerKids Press, 1997

Discusses the nature of listening, the problem of dealing with someone who will not listen, and what to do about it.

The Hating Book/ by Charlotte Zolotow, illustrated by Ben Shecter
New York: Harper and Row, 1969

A little girl knew her best friend hated her but she didn't know why until she finally got up the courage to ask why they were being so rotten to each other.

Dealing With Insults/by Marianne Johnston
New York: PowerKids Press, 1996

Explains why some people use words that hurt others, how one can avoid insulting others, and how to productively respond to insult.

Program 5: Dealing With Stress

Annie Stories/by Doris Brett
New York: Workman Publishing Company, 1988

Nine stories explore common childhood anxieties and fears about such subjects as nightmares, new babies, going to the hospital, starting school, sickness, divorce, and death.

The Tenth Good Thing About Barney/by Judith Viorst; illustrated by Erik Blegvad
New York: Atheneum, 1972.

In an attempt to overcome his grief, a boy tries to think of the ten best things about his dead cat.

Don't Pop Your Cork On Mondays: The Children's Anti-Stress Book/ by Adolph Moser, illustrated by Dav Pilkey
Kansas City, MO.: Landmark Editions, 1988.

Explores the causes and effects of stress and offers practical approaches and techniques for dealing with stress in daily life.

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