

LESSON 4

BECOMING AN ADVOCATE!

OBJECTIVES:

PARTICIPANTS WILL:

- Define “advocate.”
- Describe qualities of an advocate.
- Identify helpful individuals in your support circle.

LIFE SKILLS LEARNED:

- Healthy Lifestyle Choices
- Learning to Learn
- Self-Responsibility

NATIONAL HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARD 8:

Students will demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family and community health.

TIME NEEDED: 45 minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- White board or flipchart and markers
- **Advocate or Not an Advocate Handout**
- **Circle of Trust Handout**

DRUGS – Reference to drugs includes those drugs not permitted by law (illegal) and lawful drugs (prescription or over-the-counter) which are obtained or used illegally unless otherwise specified.

CONNECTING TO TOBACCO, ALCOHOL & DRUG USE

In order for youth to be able to take a stand and say no to vaping, they must identify key issues and people who are important to them. In this lesson, youth will identify people in their circle of trust who can assist them in becoming an advocate for healthy choices!

EXPERIENCE THE ACTIVITY

STEP 1

Write the word "advocate" on a whiteboard or flipchart. Ask youth to define or describe the term using only one word. Answers may include:

- brave
- confident
- fighter
- determined
- independent
- problem-solver
- caring
- supportive
- teamwork

After responses are recorded, explain to youth that being an advocate means that you are willing to take a stand for something that's important to you. Ask youth to think of things that are important to them. Answers may include:

- friends
- family
- school
- healthy choices
- doing what is right
- honesty

STEP 2

Have youth stand in a large circle, with enough room for students to move in the circle. Read through the scenarios on the **Advocate or Not an Advocate Handout**. Tell youth that if the scenario describes a self-advocate, or someone who is taking right steps to making good choices, they are to give their best pro-wrestler pose (flexing of muscles, excited roars, etc.). If the scenario does not describe a self-advocate, youth should give a big thumbs down and boo loudly. Read through scenarios and talk through choices.



TEACHING TIP – Train students to quiet down in between scenarios by raising your hand or making some other type of known gesture that signals attention.

STEP 3

Explain to youth that sometimes they might need someone with different strengths to help them become a better self-advocate in a challenging situation. These helpers form a Circle of Trust! Ask youth to list off people they might see as being helpful members of their Circle of Trust and write them on the whiteboard/flipchart.

Give each youth a **Circle of Trust Handout**. Have them write in the names of five different people they could rely on in times of need/challenging situations. Have them write down these names on the numbered blanks of the **Circle of Trust Handout**.



TEACHING TIP – If time permits, have youth share their Circles of Trust with the group.

STEP 4

Share:

- What is an advocate?
- What words describe an advocate?

Process:

- Why is it good to develop the skills necessary to be an advocate?
- How does it feel to be a self-advocate?
- How does it feel to NOT be a self-advocate?

Generalize and Apply:

- Are there situations where it is harder for you to be an advocate? Why/why not?
- What is one situation you feel strongly about that you want to be an advocate?

STEP 5

Reflection:

- Who are the five individuals in your Circle of Trust?
- Why are they members of your Circle of Trust?

STEP 6

Discuss the "Family Corner" and "Community Corner" with participants. Encourage them to do one or both. If they choose to work as a group, help them follow through.

- **Family Corner:** Talk with your family members about your Circle of Trust. Tell adults and friends in your circle that you trust them and care about them.
- **Community Corner:** With a group of friends, create positive posters that urge youth to become a self-advocate. Hang the posters in a community center or school, with adult permission.