



# Teen Group

Curriculum for Group Facilitators

Lily Anderson and Greg Routt



# Step-Up Group Teen Curriculum



## Facilitator Manual

Lily Anderson and Greg Routt

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Step-Up: A Curriculum for Teens Who Are Violent at Home  
was developed and written by Greg Routt and Lily Anderson  
with the Step-Up Program, a group counseling program for  
teens who are violent with parents or family members.

Step-Up is a program of King County Judicial Administration.

Edited by Sakson and Taylor Consulting

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# Introduction

The Step-Up curriculum is designed for counselors who facilitate groups with teens who have been violent towards a parent or family member. The curriculum uses a cognitive behavioral, skills based approach to help teens stop the use of violent and abusive behaviors and teaches nonviolent, respectful ways of communicating and resolving conflict with family members.

The curriculum employs best practice and evidence based approaches including cognitive behavioral exercises, skill development, solution focused and motivational interviewing strategies to help youth make specific behavioral changes related to stopping violence and abuse in the home, and building respectful family relationships. A collaborative, family based approach is used in the family groups where parents and youth learn and practice skills with feedback and support from others. In parent group, parents learn a model of respectful parenting that balances leadership and positive support, promoting non-violence and respect in the family.

Family safety is a priority of the intervention with development of a 'safety plan' followed by weekly check-ins within the family group to monitor the youth's progress in staying non-violent and safe with family members. Weekly behavioral goals related to non-violence and respect are set by the youth with progress reported each week in group, fostering accountability for behavior and keeping the focus on using skills learned at home.

Step-Up uses a Restorative Practice model of accountability, competency development and family safety to restore family relationships. Restorative inquiry is used to help youth recognize the effects of their actions on others, cultivate empathy and take steps to repair harm done. A restorative practice approach of engaging youth in a collaborative process with the victim (parent) in a community of families, holding a balance of accountability and support, is a key element of the program.

The curriculum is designed to include parents at the beginning of each group session and then separate into a parent group and teen group or stay together for the session to work on learning a skill together. The curriculum originally was developed for youth involved in the juvenile justice system who are court referred after a domestic violence offense toward a parent or family member. However, the curriculum can be used with voluntary families, as well.

The focus of the curriculum is twofold: to address the issues of teens as initiators of violence in their home and to address the needs of parents or family members who have been the targets of violence and abuse. In most cases, the teens and parents continue to live together and continue to have regular contact with each other. The curriculum addresses the needs of both teens and parents by having them participate together during some of the group session time and by having them separate into teen and parent groups during other times.

The curriculum has 21 sessions to be completed in approximately 24 group sessions (some sessions take more than 1 session to complete). Group facilitators can, of

course, change the number of sessions to suit time limitations and select session material they find useful.

Treating adolescent violence against parents is both intervention and prevention. Domestic violence treatment for teens, such as the Step-Up program, can stop the use of violent behaviors in the home where family members have a right to feel safe and protected from harm. Providing intervention to teens who use violence in the home also prevents domestic violence in their future relationships with intimate partners.

## ***Step-Up History***

In 1996, 63% of the 502 juvenile domestic violence charges filed by the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office were against juveniles who assaulted their mother or father. In 1997, the King County Department of Judicial Administration applied for and received funding from the Governor's Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee (GJJAC) to develop and implement a pilot project for teens who are assaulting their family members. Until the funding of this project, there was no specialized intervention in King County for treating teens who assault family members.

The success of the Step-Up Program has depended largely on coordination with the juvenile justice system. During the initial phase of program development, Step-Up staff collaborated with juvenile probation counselors, judges, prosecutors and other court system personnel to coordinate a plan for referral and follow-up of juvenile domestic violence offenders. The coordinated community response model used for adult domestic violence has been adapted for juvenile domestic violence. Because of differences in the nature of juvenile domestic violence and the juvenile court system, that model has not been duplicated, but has provided an outline of key elements in coordinating systems that respond to juvenile DV. Some examples include the development of protocols for probation follow-up of DV offenders, communication between treatment providers and probation and consistency in response to DV offenses.

Collaboration with law enforcement has been another important component. Step-Up developed a police training video on juvenile domestic violence to educate responding officers about mandatory arrest laws, how to communicate with victims and safety issues for the family. The response of the criminal justice system to teen's who are violent in the home has significant impact on the outcome for the teen and their family. Coordination between the Step-Up Program and the juvenile justice system has been crucial to its effectiveness in helping teen's change their behavior.

Step-Up staff came to the program with clinical experience in adult domestic violence perpetrator treatment and parent education. When group sessions began in 1997, the program used the adult perpetrator counseling programs as a model for developing a teen program. The program has evolved over time as the staff learned more about the specific needs of these teens and parents. Initially, parents and teens had separate group sessions. This structure soon gave way to one with group sessions where teens and parents interact together during much of the group time. Group facilitators learned from parents that they wanted to have some involvement in their teen's learning. It also became clear that it is beneficial to the teen and parent to learn some skills together.

## ***Structure of the Curriculum***

The curriculum contains 21 sessions. Every session begins with parents and teens together for check-in (see Check-In), and is followed by Group Activities, either together or in separate teen and parent groups.

The purpose of the combined parent/teen sessions is to teach interaction skills, such as communication techniques, problem solving together and taking Time-Outs. Parents are better able to support their teen's efforts in changing behaviors when they are involved with the learning process, in addition to gaining new skills for themselves.

Each session includes:

- Background Information - notes and guidelines for teaching the session
- Goals - what the participants should learn when they complete the session
- Important Messages - key points for teaching the session
- Session Overview - schedule for the session
- Group Activities - exercises for the session
- Take Home Activities - activities to work on at home

The order of the sessions is flexible. Since safety of family members is a primary concern, the sessions that address physical violence should be completed first. After parents have identified their concerns in the first parent session, the group facilitator may decide to change the order of the sessions.

The curriculum is divided into two sets of instructor notes. Each set of instructor notes includes either the teen or parent sessions and all of the combined sessions. There are also separate workbooks for parents and teens. The curriculum follows the schedule outlined below:

<b>Session</b>	<b>Teens</b>	<b>Combined</b>	<b>Parents</b>
1		Introduction	
2	My Family Relationships		Introduction to Parent Group: Strengths, Challenges, Changes
3	Goal Planning		Making Changes
4	Understanding Violence		How to Respond When Your Teen Is Violent
5		Taking a Time-Out	
6		Understanding Warning Signs	
7	Understanding Power		Time-Out for Parents
8	Understanding Feelings		When Your Teen Is Abusive: Effects on Parenting
9	Understanding Self-Talk		Adolescent Development
10	Understanding Beliefs		Consequences for Behavior
11	Hurtful Moves/Helpful Moves		Encouraging Your Teen
12	Accountability		Empowering Teens to Be Responsible for Their Behavior
13		Making Amends	
14	Responsibility		What Kind of Message Are You Giving Your Teen?
15		Assertive Communication	
16		Using "I" Statements	
17	Understanding Empathy		Listening to Your Teen
18		Guidelines for Respectful Communication	
19		Problem Solving Together	
20	Healthy Dating Relationships		Supporting Positive Changes in Your Teen
21		Moving Forward	

## ***Assessment and Screening***

Teens and parents attend an assessment interview prior to beginning the Step-Up program. Teens and parents are interviewed to learn about the teen's use of violence, and obtain a social, mental health, substance abuse and family history. The interviewing counselor uses an assessment form which includes specific questions to assess for domestic violence by adults in the home (present and in the past), the severity level of the teen's violence, and current safety of family members. The parent and teen are interviewed separately so that both feel safe about disclosing information.

The Behavior Check-List, (see addendum), filled out by both parent and teen, gives information about the specific abusive and violent behaviors being used by the teen in the home. In addition to the Behavior Check-List, it is important to ask the parent about the level of fear they have of their teen, and if they have taken any precautions in the home for safety, which gives an indication of the level of fear. For example, some parents will say they lock their bedroom door at night, or have removed all the knives from the home. Parents may not necessarily share information about the severity of the violence unless they are asked specifically.

The assessment interview is also intended to screen for the need for other services, such as a drug/alcohol evaluation or mental health evaluation. Teens with untreated substance abuse or mental health issues should be evaluated and begin treatment before attending the Step-Up program.

Another purpose of the assessment is to determine if the teen is appropriate for the Step-Up program. Some contraindications include mental health problems that interfere with the ability of the teen to function in the group and developmental or learning disabilities that interfere with learning in the group. Teens who had an isolated incident of violent behavior and are otherwise not violent or abusive in their relationships at home are not appropriate for the program. Referral to general counseling may be appropriate. Teens that are using violence to defend themselves against a violent family member are also not appropriate for the program. If you learn that a teen is being physically abused in the home, follow your mandatory reporting guidelines and report it to the appropriate authorities.

# Facilitator Notes for Teen Curriculum

## *Using the Curriculum*

**Order of the Sessions** – The order of the sessions is suggested. If you have an ongoing group, group members will cover the sessions in a different order depending on when each member started the group, but all group members will cover the same material. If you have a closed group, following the order of the curriculum is recommended because the sessions are designed to build on each other and maximize learning.

**Content of the Sessions** – The areas that are critical to the effectiveness of the program are the teen sessions that focus on safety of family members, accountability, goal setting, learning skills to prevent the use of violent behavior and how to resolve conflict in respectful ways.

Accountability is practiced each week during the ‘check-in’ part of the group session, when teens talk about their behavior during the previous week. The purpose of ‘check-in’ is to raise teens’ awareness of their behavior – both abusive and respectful. When teens become accustomed to weekly check-ins about their behavior at group, it begins to impact them during the week, knowing they will be reporting to the group. Group members become interested in how each other are doing, and everyone seems pleased when a teen who has been struggling for weeks proudly reports at check-in “I was on the Respect Wheel all week – I didn’t do anything on the Abuse Wheel”, and the whole group claps. This interest and support from other parents and teens motivates teens to make progress and is one of the most effective aspects of the program.

The Wheels provide a framework for the family to use in reflecting on how a conflict was handled. The question “were you on the Abuse Wheel or the Respect Wheel during the argument with your Mom?” can be asked when a teen or parent reports a conflict during the week. The concern is not the argument, which is normal in any family relationship, but how it was handled. The wheels are a helpful way to frame the discussion. Parents find the wheels provide a model for respectful family relations and state that it helps them pay attention to their own behavior, as well.

Skills to prevent the use of violent behavior include using Time-Out and creating a Time-Out / Safety Plan, self-calming techniques such as self-talk, recognizing there are choices about behavior and learning new ways to respond when angry or upset. Explaining the problem of violence as a safety issue, and that home should be a place where every family member feels safe from harm, helps teens understand the concerns about their behavior in a more receptive way. Most young people understand how important it is to feel safe, particularly if they have lived in a home where there has been violence in the past.

Resolution of conflict requires that teens are calm enough to discuss problems with their parents, are able to listen to another person’s point of view and are able to consider non violent solutions to the problem. Problem solving skill practice comes later in the curriculum when safety skills are established. If a teen is unable to communicate respectfully with their parent during their group, they are not ready for the problem solving exercise. Parents should also be encouraged not to problem solve at home or continue a discussion if their teen is using abuse towards them. Safety should always

take precedence over skill practice when a teen is not ready to engage without becoming abusive.

## ***Engaging Teens During Group Sessions***

When teens don't want to do an exercise during group, they may say it is "boring" or it's "stupid." Group facilitators are invited to use creative methods to engage the teens. Rewards, such as treats, or turning an activity into a game can make the activity livelier. Group facilitators can give points when teens give answers to group exercises and rewards can be given. Working in small groups or pairs, role plays and having teens take turns leading the discussion and writing on the board makes it more fun.

Some teens choose not to participate appropriately during group sessions. In order for teens to benefit from group sessions, they must be able to remain seated, listen to others and follow a topic. If they are not able to do these things, talking to them outside the group may help them understand how they are impacting the group session and may also help them understand that they cannot benefit from the program if they continue these behaviors. If they continue to make it difficult for others to participate, they should be asked to leave the group. While it may be a difficult decision for the group facilitator, keeping someone in the group who is disruptive can have a lasting impact on the group.

Sometimes teens or parents bring up issues that need more time and attention that is available during check in. The facilitator may need to invite them to talk about the issue further after group. If the issue is related to the topic for the session, it can be an opportunity to incorporate program themes into a real life scenario.

### ***When teens or parents report physical abuse or threats by the teen during the previous week during check-in:***

- Have the teen identify the behavior they used on the abuse wheel.
- Have the teen answer the questions, 'Taking Responsibility for Your Behavior' in Session 1 of the Teen Workbook.
- Have the teen review their 'Time-Out / Safety Plan' and figure out when they could have stopped and taken a time-out from the situation to prevent the violence or threat of violence. Have the teen and parent review the plan and make any changes that may be needed.
- Have the teen's weekly goal for the following week be a plan for preventing violence. Provide help in making the goal specific and behavioral.
- Talk to the parent about safety and how to respond, during the parent group or after the session. Always check-in with parents about how safe they feel going home with their teen. (See Safety Issues in Facilitator Notes for Parents Curriculum)

### ***If teens use physical abuse during the group:***

- Have the teen separate from the group with a facilitator and call 911 if needed (i.e., the teen has assaulted someone and/or will not calm down).

- Talk with the teen's parent about safety (see Safety Issues in Instructor Notes for Parents Curriculum).
- If the behavior did not warrant a call to the police and the parent feels safe and comfortable staying in the group, and the teen is calm and can be accountable, have the teen come back to group to talk about the behavior and go over the questions 'Taking Responsibility for Abusive Your Behavior' in the Teen Workbook.

### ***If teens use verbal abuse, intimidation or threats during the group sessions:***

- If you are concerned about the safety of anyone in the group, call 911. Have the teen separate from the group with a facilitator.
- Stop the group discussion
- Let the teen know they have just used emotional abuse or intimidation.
- If the teen continues to be abusive tell the teen they cannot continue participating in the group. You may have to call the police if there are concerns about safety.
- Let the teen know you may report their behavior to whoever is monitoring them
- If the teen is able to continue in group have the teen identify their behavior on the abuse wheel and answer the 'Taking Responsibility for Your Abusive Behavior' in the Teen Workbook.

### ***Group Rules***

Session one of the teen curriculum includes a list of rules for the teen group. It is important to be clear and consistent about group rules. You may want to modify these rules according to the needs of your group. It is helpful to review the group rules periodically and/or keep them posted in the room during group. The most common rule violation is the use of disrespectful language in the group. Teens should feel comfortable expressing their opinions and group facilitators should respect opinions as long as they are expressed respectfully. However, group facilitators should have guidelines regarding the teen's use of language during the teen group. Teens should not use any language during the teen group that attacks or demeans another person who is in the group or any person outside the group. The group facilitator should ask the teen to restate what they have said using respectful language.

The use of "swear" words and foul language can be an issue when teens are in a group together. If these words are used to attack another person, they are abusive and the group facilitator should identify the words that are abusive. The facilitator should decide what guidelines the teen group should have about "swear" words that do not attack or demean another person. Parents sometimes want to know what the guidelines are concerning the use of language in the teen group.



## ***Important Information for Group Facilitators***

**If a teen is a victim of abuse by the parent they are living with, either currently or in the past, they are not appropriate for Step-Up.**

Step-Up is a program for teens who are perpetrating violence toward parents or family members, and are not victims of abuse or violence. A teen who has been a victim of violence during childhood by a parent or caretaker he or she does not currently live with is appropriate for the program, provided the current residential/custodial parent (who is attending the group with them) is not abusive or violent toward them. There may be cases where the parent has responded to the youth's violence by pushing away or restraining that resulted in unintended injury, or they may have responded by slapping or pushing out of anger. If this has occurred, they are appropriate for Step-up if the behavior is an unusual occurrence and the parent recognizes it as inappropriate and is committed to non-violent/non-abusive parenting.

### **Parents of violent teens face many of the same victim blaming attitudes faced by adult victims of DV**

As with adult domestic violence, stereotypes about parents who are victims of their children's violence exist and make it more difficult for them to get support. These parents are often seen by others as too permissive and unable to set limits with their children. Some of these beliefs are expressed in the following statements people say about the parents of abusive teens:

If these parents were more consistent in their parenting, they wouldn't have children who are abusive and violent.

They shouldn't let their kids run all over them.

They should just lay down the law and let their kids know they can't get away with their bad behavior.

Most parents who are victims of violence already feel they have failed as parents and take responsibility for their children's behavior. The stereotypes reinforce these feelings and leave parents more isolated and hopeless. Parents who are living with a violent teen are usually doing the best they can to deal with their teen's behavior. Support and understanding is what is most helpful to parents who are victims of their teen's abuse.

### **Teens who are violent may also be stereotyped.**

They may be viewed as either sociopathic and dangerous or as innocent victims. Neither stereotype helps a teen make positive change. Some teens who are violent with family members have been exposed to domestic violence in the home or have experienced violence in the past. It is not helpful to teens when their own violence is excused because of this, because they come to believe they have no control or choice about their behavior. It is most helpful to acknowledge their past experiences in a supportive and understanding manner, while at the same time letting him or her know that even though they witnessed or experienced abuse, they are not bound to repeating the behavior. The message that they are capable of not repeating the violence or abuse is empowering to them, and helps them feel supported to make positive change.

**Separate the behavior from the person.**

When talking with teens about their use of violence or abuse it is most helpful to refer to the specific behavior they are using, separate from who they are as a person. It is not helpful to teens to be labeled as ‘abusers’. Keep the focus on the specific behavior they are using, not on the teen as a person.

**Give support to respectful behaviors.**

The Mutual Respect wheel gives the teens a chance to talk about the respectful behaviors they have used and also gives the facilitators and parents a chance to support positive, respectful behaviors the teens are using. Identifying the respectful behaviors teens use with family members is a more effective way to support change than identifying only the abusive behaviors they use.

**Being accountable to family members is a sign of personal strength.**

Often teens feel ashamed when they talk about the abusive and violent behaviors they use in their families, and sometimes, they see themselves as weak and incompetent when they are asked to talk about their behavior. When teens understand how their behavior impacts their family members and they learn ways to be accountable, such as talking about it with their parent and taking action to repair harm done (making amends), their sense of shame is reduced and they begin to feel better about themselves. This reduces further acts of abuse and violence.

**Violent and abusive behavior is a usually a choice.**

Low self-esteem, substance abuse, stressors in a person’s environment, and some mental health problems can contribute to acting out aggressively. Most teens who are violent are not thinking about their choices, and do not recognize that they have options. Once they learn that there are other ways to respond to conflict that work out much better, they usually stop using violence. An important part of the Step-Up program is to help teen’s understand that regardless of the difficulties in their lives, they have control over their own behavior and they have choices about how to respond to most situations.

**Helping teens become non-violent is most successful with a team approach where there is collaboration between intervention providers, the court system, community and family.**

When teens receive clear, consistent messages about the use of non violence in their relationships from everyone they come into contact with, including counselors, judges, police, teachers and other family members, they will more likely be successful in making positive change.

**It is important to recognize each family has its own history of values and traditions.**

Ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds of group members provide a context for family members to resolve conflicts and to communicate with each other. When facilitators remain aware of each family’s differences, they can facilitate the curriculum in a way that respects differences and supports change.

# Outline of Sessions

Session	Teens	Combined	Parents
1		Introduction	
2	My Family Relationships		Introduction to Parent Group: Strengths, Challenges, Changes
3	Goal Planning		Making Changes
4	Understanding Violence		How to Respond When Your Teen Is Violent
5		Taking a Time-Out	
6		Understanding Warning Signs	
7	Understanding Power		Time-Out for Parents
8	Understanding Feelings		When Your Teen Is Abusive: Effects on Parenting
9	Understanding Self-Talk		Adolescent Development
10	Understanding Beliefs		Consequences for Behavior
11	Hurtful Moves/Helpful Moves		Encouraging Your Teen
12	Accountability		Empowering Teens to Be Responsible for Their Behavior
13		Making Amends	
14	Responsibility		What Kind of Message Are You Giving Your Teen?
15		Assertive Communication	
16		Using "I" Statements	
17	Understanding Empathy		Listening to Your Teen
18		Guidelines for Respectful Communication	
19		Problem Solving Together	
20	Healthy Dating Relationships		Supporting Positive Changes in Your Teen
21		Moving Forward	



# Session 1: Introduction to Step-Up

## Teen and Parent Session

### *Background Information*

You may need to vary the introductory section depending on the context in which you're teaching the class. The content of this session assumes that parents and teens are in attendance together, and that the teens are required to attend because of arrests or a referral.

The purpose of this session is to introduce participants to the program and to each other, and to explain the program goals and ground rules of the group. Participants will learn about the check-in process and do their first check-in.

Most teens don't know what to expect when they come to their first group session; they often perceive their attendance at Step-Up as a punishment. This first session is a time that they can ask questions about the program and voice their opinions about being required to attend. Many teens appreciate the chance to speak openly in this first session. You should, however, always remind group members to speak respectfully in the group.

The warm-up exercise is a relationship-building activity for parents and teens. The purpose is to have parents and teens begin thinking and talking with each other in positive ways. Many teens and parents who come to this program are in the habit of communicating negatively with each other. This exercise helps them remember what it is like to relate with each other in a positive way. Feel free to replace or enhance this exercise with materials of your own.

## ***Goals***

To inform participants about the purpose of the program  
To set participant expectations about program content and requirements  
To introduce participants to check-in

## ***Important Messages***

Group sessions can be a positive experience.  
Even though things seem difficult between you and your parent, you can probably find positive parts of your relationship.

## ***Session Overview***

*Complete the Introductions and Warm-Up Exercise.*  
*Discussion: Goals for Teens, Ground Rules for the Group, Rules for Attendance, and Communication Contract.*  
*Discussion: Requirements for Completion of the Program.*  
*Discussion: Check-in*  
*Exercise: Check-in.*

# Group Activities

Begin the group by introducing the facilitators and passing out the workbooks. Welcome parents and teens to the group and tell them that during this session the group will get to know each other and learn about the program. Start with group member introductions.

## *Group Member Introductions*

Refer teens to their workbook and ask teens to introduce themselves by answering the questions under Introductions. Invite parents to say their names and what they want to get out of the group.

1. What is your name?
2. What behavior brought you here? (Note: Often teens will say “the judge told me to come” or “I have a domestic violence charge.” Ask them what behavior led to them coming to the program).
3. What would you like to learn in this group that might help you in your relationship with your family members?
4. On a scale of 1 to 10, what is your personal commitment to change? (1 is none, 10 means you want to put a lot of effort into changing your behavior.)

Parents will introduce themselves to the group by saying their name and what they want to get out of the group.

## *Warm-Up Exercise*

Have parents and teens spend a few minutes writing down responses to the *Warm-Up Exercise* questions in their workbooks. When they are finished, invite them to share their responses with the group.

## *Goals for Teens*

Refer the group to *Goals for Teens* in the workbooks. Go over the goals, and then ask if there are any questions.

## ***Ground Rules for the Group***

Refer the group to *Ground Rules for the Group* in the workbooks. Go over the rules, and then ask if there are any questions.

## ***Rules for Attendance***

Refer the group to *Rules for Attendance* in the workbooks. Go over the rules, and then ask if there are any questions. Let participants know that any unexcused absences and tardiness will be reported to the court.

## ***Communication Contract***

Refer the group to *Communication Contract* in the workbooks. Explain that the communication contract is a guideline for how to communicate in the group. Tell the group that the goal is for teens to communicate this way with family members at home, too. Group members can help each other follow the communication contract in the group by reminding others when they are not communicating by the guidelines. Let the group know that they will be learning more about each principle listed during the coming weeks in the group.

## ***Requirements for Completion of the Program***

Refer the group to *Requirements for Completion of the Program* in the workbooks. Tell the teens that to complete the program successfully, each teen must do each task.

## ***Check-In***

Explain that every session will begin with a check-in. After check-in, there will be a break, followed by a session in which teens and parents will learn new skills. Sometimes teens and parents will work together, and at other times they will work separately.

To explain the check-in process, start by reviewing the **abuse and respect wheels**. Tell the class the following:



The two wheels show two different kinds of behavior used in relationships with family members. The behaviors on the abuse wheel are behaviors that emotionally or physically hurt family members and are used to gain power over them. The behaviors on the respect wheel are ones that acknowledge other people's value and that consider other people's concerns.

The purpose of Step-Up is to help you move from the abuse wheel to the respect wheel in your relationships with family members. All of the skills we teach in the program will help you replace behaviors on the abuse wheel with behaviors on the respect wheel.

We will use the abuse and respect wheels for check-in each week. We will begin every session by referring to the wheels in your workbook and pick out behaviors you have used during the week. After you talk about the behaviors you have used on the wheels, your parents will look at the wheels and identify behaviors you have used during the week. If you have been physically abusive to a family member, made serious threats of physical abuse, or destroyed property during the previous week, you will be asked to answer the questions from *Taking Responsibility for Your Behavior*. (Refer the group to the questions in their workbook).

After you finish explaining the process, ask the group if they have questions.

After you answer their questions, ask for a volunteer to begin the first check-in. Have each teen identify one or more behaviors he or she used in the previous week on both wheels. After the teen has talked about his or her behaviors on the wheel, have the teen's parent look at the wheel and point out behaviors the teen used during the week. Go around the group and have each teen and parent repeat the process.

### ***Closing***

Commend everybody for completing check-in and welcome them to the group.

## ***Take Home Activity***

Refer teens and parents to *My Personal Strengths* in their workbooks. Ask parents and teens to think about the teens personal strengths during the following week. Have them write down three strengths on the worksheet to share with the group next week.

# Worksheets

## *Warm-Up Exercise*

Take a few minutes to answer the following questions:

1. A time I couldn't have made it through something difficult without my mom/dad/teen was:

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2. A time when I appreciated my mom/dad/teen was:

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3. Something I like about my mom/dad/teen is:

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## *Goals for Teens*

After you complete the program, you will be able to:

Be accountable for your behavior. This means you can talk about your abusive or violent behavior without denying, justifying, or minimizing it, or blaming others.

Understand the effects of your behavior on others and on yourself.  
Know how to actively take responsibility for your behavior when you have been abusive or violent.

Know how to take a break (a time-out) from a heated situation.

Understand the difference between abusive communication and respectful communication.

Know how to use respectful communication, even when you are upset or angry.

Know how to resolve conflict without abuse and violence.

Understand that you have choices about your behavior and be able to choose to stay nonviolent.

### ***Ground Rules for the Group***

To make this program successful for everybody, we should all strive to:

Be on time.

Allow others to finish speaking before you start.

Not engage in side conversations while the group is in session.

Keep information shared in the group confidential. Everything that is discussed in the group stays in the group. Do not identify group members to anyone outside the group.

Use respectful language.

Follow the issue; focus on the problem being discussed.

Come to each session sober, not under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

### ***Rules for Attendance***

To successfully complete this program, each participant must:

Attend and be on time for all group sessions unless excused due to illness or emergency.

Attend the full number of sessions required by court in order to complete the program.

Call the Step-Up office to explain an absence.

Make up excused absences.

Attend an extra session to make up an unexcused absence. An absence without a legitimate reason (determined by the parent) is an unexcused

absence. In other words, when a teen has an unexcused absence, he or she will be required to do two additional sessions.

Attend additional sessions to make up for chronic tardiness.

### ***Communication Contract***

Speak respectfully. This means no blaming, no criticizing, and no put-downs.

Think before speaking.

Speak in a non-threatening way.

Use "I" statements. (Instructors—let the group know that they will learn more about "I" statements in Session 16. You may also choose to give a brief description here.)

Try to understand each other's feelings and opinions, even when you disagree with them.

Listen to each other.

Do not interrupt each other.

### ***Requirements for Completion of the Program***

Identify behaviors you have used each week on the abuse and respect wheels.

Describe a time when you took a time-out.

Write a responsibility letter and read it to the group.

Write an empathy letter and read it to the group.

Demonstrate problem-solving skills during the group session.

Demonstrate respectful communication.

## ***Abuse and Respect Wheels***

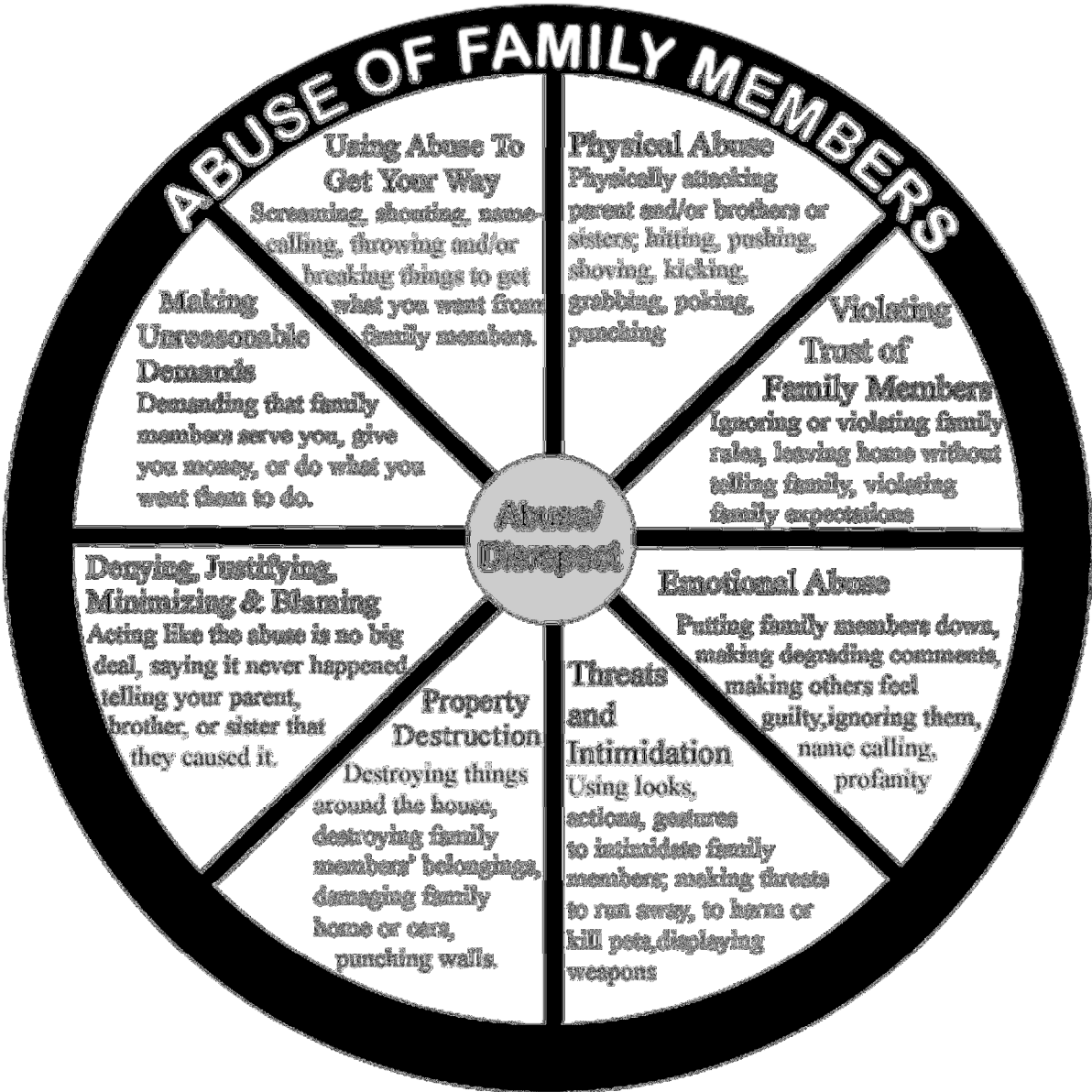
The two wheels show two different kinds of behavior used in relationships with family members. The behaviors on the abuse wheel are behaviors that emotionally or physically hurt family members and are used to gain power over them. The behaviors on the respect wheel are ones that acknowledge other people's value and that consider other people's concerns. Turn to the workbook for the abuse and respect wheels.

## ***Taking Responsibility for Your Abusive Behavior***

If you have been physically abusive to a family member, made serious threats of physical abuse, or destroyed property during the previous week, you will be asked to answer the following questions:

1. Who was harmed by your behavior?
2. What was the harm, damage or loss that was done (to yourself, others, and your relationship)?
3. What have you done, or what do you need to do, to repair that harm, damage or loss to "make it right"?
4. What could you have done differently?

*Abuse Wheel*



# Respect Wheel





*Take Home Activity*

Think of three of your personal strengths that will help you make positive changes.

My Personal Strengths:

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# Session 2: My Family Relationships

## Teen Session

### *Background Information*

During this session you will ask teens to think about their relationships with family members and to examine what they can do to improve their relationships. This is the first teen group session and many teen group members may still feel uncomfortable talking about themselves. This session is more about their families than themselves and can indirectly lead the teens to talk about themselves.

The *My Family Relationships* exercise gives the teens a chance to think about positive qualities and strengths of people in their families. It also provides an opportunity for group members to get to know each other and to learn about each other's families. It can be very beneficial for them to learn that other families also have conflict.

### *Goals*

To identify the strengths of each family

To learn about the families of the other participants and see that all have conflict

To identify behaviors that strengthen family relationships and behaviors that destroy family relationships

To identify ways group participants can impact family relationships in a positive way

To build relationships among the members of the group

### *Important Messages*

Every family has strengths and every individual has positive qualities. Conflict is a normal part of family life and can strengthen family relationships.

Violence and abuse destroy family relationships.

***Session Overview***

*Check in and review take-home activities.*

*Separate into parent and teen groups*

*Exercise: My Family Relationships.*

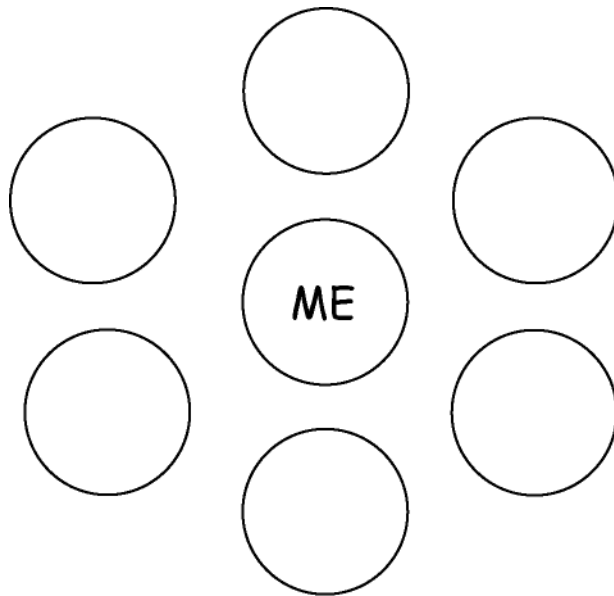
## Group Activities

Refer the group to the *My Family Relationships* worksheet in their workbooks. Have them fill out the worksheet and then go around the group and have each person talk about his or her family by using the worksheet.

# Worksheets

## *My Family Relationships*

Write the names of each of your immediate family members in the circles. You can include any other family members you are close to and see regularly. Add circles if there are not enough.



Draw a circle around the family member you feel closest to.  
What does this person do that helps you feel close to him or her?

---

Draw a square around the family member you have the most conflict with.  
What is the conflict usually about?

---

Draw a triangle around the family member you admire the most.  
What does this person do that you admire?

---

Draw a diamond around the family member you respect the most.  
What does this person do that earns your respect?

---

Think of one thing that you can change about your behavior that will help you have a better relationship with people in your family.

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### ***Take-Home Activities***

Ask teens to try making behavior changes (the changes they wrote about in the *My Family Relationships* exercise) during the following week. Ask teens to notice how the behavior changes affect their relationships. Let them know they will report back during check-in next week.





# Session 3: Goal Planning

## Teen Session

### *Background Information*

In the first session of this program, teens had an opportunity to think about some of the positive attributes of their family members. Now they are ready to set some goals toward improving relationships. Each week teens will make a goal of working on a specific behavior during the following week. Encourage them to choose a behavior they have been having difficulty with at home. If teens have a hard time choosing a behavior, ask them to pick one from the abuse or respect wheel.

Each week at check-in, each teen will report on his or her progress in achieving his or her goal for that week, and then choose a goal for the next week. This will become a routine part of the check-in process.

From our experience, simply stating a goal is not enough. Goal planning includes how each teen is going to accomplish his or her goal, or the steps he or she is going to take to change his or her behavior. When you talk through setting goals, prompt the teens to think about the exact behavior they currently use. For example, when a teen says he fights with his brother, ask for specific details of actions, such as yelling or pushing. Then help the teen make a plan for a new behavior to replace the old behavior. Acknowledge small steps in behavior change. Encourage teens to choose small realistic goals, rather than big goals that will be harder to accomplish.

### *Goals*

To identify personal weekly goals that reduce abuse and violence with family members

To identify behaviors that can support family relationships

To identify steps for each behavior change

## ***Important Messages***

You have choices about how to behave.

Changing a behavior takes thought and planning.

Being clear and specific about the behavior you want to change is important to success.

Be proud of small steps toward behavior change.

## ***Session Overview***

*Check in, review goal progress, and review take-home activities.*

*Separate into parent and teen groups*

*Discussion: Goal Planning*

*Exercise: Goal Planning.*

*Exercise: My Goal for the Week*

# Group Activities

## *Discussion: Goal Planning*

Tell the group that during each session, each person will make a goal for the week. There are two parts to setting the weekly goal:

**Choosing a specific behavior for your goal:** This can be a behavior you want to stop doing or a behavior you want to start doing. When you choose a behavior you want to stop, be sure to describe the behavior you will do instead. For example, if your goal is to stop yelling at your little brother, you need to think about what you will do when you feel like yelling at him (for example, ignore him, go to another room, talk to him in a normal voice).

**Figuring out what you need to do so that you can change your behavior:** You will make a plan for what steps you need to take to be able to stop the old behavior and replace it with a new behavior.

## *Exercise: Goal Planning*

Refer the group to *Goal Planning* in their workbooks. Go over the steps. Ask the group for examples of behaviors a teen might want to change to make things better at home. Write the behaviors on the board and then go through the four steps with each behavior.

Have each group member fill out the worksheet with a behavior he or she will work on during the following week. Group members may want to use the behaviors they talked about changing in the *My Family Relationships* exercise. They can also choose behaviors from the abuse and respect wheels. After everyone finishes the worksheet, have each teen share what he or she wrote.

Refer the group to the *My Goal for the Week* worksheets at the end of their workbooks. Explain that during each group session, each teen will choose one goal to work on during the following week. The teen will

write down his or her goal on the worksheet, and at the beginning of the next week's session, the teen will rate how he or she did on a scale of 1-10, and how the teen changed his or her behavior. Each person will report his or her progress to the group after check-in, and then make a new goal for the following week.

# Worksheets

## *Goal Planning*

Pick one behavior from the abuse wheel or respect wheel you want to work on during the following week. (Be specific; for example, *stop name calling, take a time-out when I get angry, talk to my mom without yelling.*)

The behavior I will work on is:

---

## *Steps for Changing My Behavior*

1. Have a plan for a new behavior to replace the old behavior.  
My new behavior is:
- 
- 
- 

2. Recognize when you are about to use the behavior you want to change.  
When do I usually use the behavior I want to change?
- 
- 
- 

3. Say something to yourself that will help you change your behavior. (Examples: *"I'm not going to let this get to me," "I can talk without yelling," "I can stay calm," "Take a time-out."*)  
I will say to myself:
- 
-

---

4. Do the new behavior.

## *My Goal for the Week*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Goal:** Write down a specific behavior

**How I Did:** rate on a scale of 1 (worst) to 10 (best).

**How I Changed:** What did you do different that helped you change?

Date	My Goal for the Week	How I Did	How I Changed

## *Take-Home Activities*

Ask group members to work on their goals this week.





# Session 4: Understanding Violence

## Teen Session

### *Background Information*

The goal of the Step-Up program is for teens to choose nonviolent and non-abusive behavior in family relationships. In this session you will ask teens to think about how their choice of violent and abusive behavior has affected their lives.

Some teens don't regard some of the emotionally abusive behaviors they use as abusive. Many have come to view name calling, yelling, and put-downs as normal behavior. It is important to stress that violence includes any behavior that physically harms, scares or threatens a person, and emotional abuse includes any behaviors that verbally attack, put down, humiliate, or are intentionally hurtful to a person.

When teens are violent and abusive, they usually act without thinking about the outcomes and consequences of the behavior they use. An important step toward choosing nonviolent and non-abusive behavior is to recognize the consequences of violent and abusive behavior.

In this session and throughout the program, you can help teens think about their behavior by asking, "What were the consequences of your behavior?" Use the questions on the back of the abuse and respect wheels for further guidelines.

### *Goals*

To define violent and abusive behaviors

To identify payoffs, outcomes, and consequences of violence and abuse

### *Important Messages*

Violent and abusive behavior hurts people even if they aren't physically hurt.

Violent and abusive behavior has negative consequences for the person who is abusive, as well as for the person who is the target of the behavior.

Violent and abusive behavior is learned.

People have choices about how they respond to a situation. Violent and abusive behavior is not a "reaction" over which an individual has no control.

### ***Session Overview***

*Check in, review goal progress, and review take-home activities.*

*Separate into parent and teen groups.*

*Discussion: Violent and Abusive Behavior.*

*Discussion: Payoffs, Outcomes and Consequences of Violent and Abusive Behavior.*

*Exercise: Payoffs, Outcomes and Consequences*

*Discussion: Choices*

# Group Activities

## *Discussion: Violent and Abusive Behavior*

After check-in, lead the teens in a discussion of the following questions. As appropriate, stress the important messages for this session when you discuss their responses to these questions.

1. What are violent and abusive behaviors? (List their responses on the board on a continuum from less severe to more severe.)
2. Where/how do people learn to use violence and abuse?
3. How do violence and abuse affect relationships? How do they affect the abusive person? The victim?

## *Discussion: Payoffs, Outcomes and Consequences*

Write the following three terms on the board, and read the definition for each to the teens.

**Payoffs:** The immediate results of being violent or abusive. This is what you get out of being violent or abusive that makes you more likely to do it again.

**Outcomes:** How being violent or abusive affects a situation. Typically, the outcome of violence or abuse does not match the outcome you want in the situation.

**Consequences:** The long-term results of being violent or abusive. What happens or may eventually happen if you continue being violent or abusive. How violent or abusive behavior will affect your life.

## *Exercise: Payoffs, Outcomes and Consequences*

Ask participants to fill out the *Payoffs, Outcomes and Consequences* worksheet in their workbooks, and then have them share their responses with the group. You may want to write their responses on the board. Sample responses follow.

**Payoffs:** Getting what you want, getting the last word in, feeling powerful and in control, getting someone to back off and leave you alone.

**Outcomes:** Getting arrested, being on probation, getting injured physically, getting grounded or restricted, getting kicked out of school, losing a parent's trust, making things worse.

**Consequences:** Dealing with stricter rules, getting labeled (by teachers, friends, and others) as a person with problems, developing a negative self-image, feeling bad about yourself, making a "habit" of using abusive behavior to deal with problems, making it harder to get along with people, losing freedom and independence, making relationships deteriorate.

### ***Discussion: Making Choices***

How does thinking about payoffs, outcomes and consequences affect the choices you make?

## *Worksheets*

### *Payoffs, Outcomes and Consequences*

**Payoffs:** The immediate results of being violent or abusive. This is what you get out of being violent or abusive that makes you more likely to do it again.

**Outcomes:** How being violent or abusive affects a situation. You don't always get what you want.

**Consequences:** The long-term results of being violent or abusive. What will happen to you if you keep being violent or abusive? How violent or abusive behavior will affect your life.

Give some examples of payoffs, outcomes and consequences below.

<b>Payoffs</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Consequences</b>



# Session 5: Taking a Time-Out

## Teen and Parent Session

### *Background Information*

In this session you will teach teens how to use time-outs to stop themselves from becoming abusive or violent. The goal is for teens to be able to take time-outs before they become abusive or violent. Parents are included in this session so that they can support their teens in using time-outs. Parents may want to let their teens know if they see that the teens need a time-out; or, parents may want to take their own time-outs when they recognize that conflicts are escalating. Parents will learn more about taking their own time-outs in the parent group.

Go over the time-out rules to help parents and teens understand the appropriate use of a time-out. It is important to point out that teens are responsible only for their own behavior; it is not appropriate for teens to tell their parents to take a time-out. Otherwise, teens may try to control their parents by telling the parents when to take a time-out. Teens may also use a time-out as a way to avoid discussing an issue or as an excuse to leave the house. Let parents know that if teens are misusing time-outs, they can talk about strategies for handling the problem in the group.

### *Goals*

To learn to use time-outs as a strategy to deescalate difficult situations

To complete a family time-out plan

To learn how to disengage from power struggles

## ***Important Messages***

A time-out is a step toward better family relationships.

A time-out may prevent a teen from hurting family members.

Taking a time-out means you care about the other person.

A time-out gives you a chance to calm down and think before you act.

## ***Session Overview***

*Check in, review goal progress, and review take-home activities.*

*Discussion: Time-out.*

*Discussion: Time-out Guidelines and Rules.*

*Discussion: What to Do After a Time-out.*

*Exercise: Time-out Plan.*



# Group Activities

## *Discussion: Time-Outs*

Start the meeting by writing the following on the board:

A time-out is a short break you can take to keep from becoming abusive in difficult situations.

You may want to compare the technique to a time-out in basketball or football. The game stops. The teams separate from each other to figure out a plan. The game restarts when the team members have a plan. Remind the group that a time-out is not a time to take off from home without telling anyone. It isn't just about leaving. A time-out is a constructive way to try to solve problems within families.

Tell the teens that, if used appropriately, a time-out can do the following:

Help you get along with your family  
Keep you from getting arrested  
Keep you from hurting others  
Help you have better relationships

## *Discussion Questions*

1. Has anyone in the group ever used time-outs before?
2. How could taking a time-out help keep you from getting violent?
3. How could taking a time-out help you be more respectful?
4. How could taking a time-out help you make better decisions?
5. What can make it difficult to take a time-out?

## ***Time-Out Guidelines***

Refer the group to *How to Take a Time-Out* in the workbook. Explain to the group that it is important for everybody in the class to follow common guidelines, so there is no confusion about how to take a time-out. Then, read through the guidelines with the group and invite participants to share any questions or comments they have about each guideline.

## ***Time-Out Rules***

Refer the group to *Time-Out Rules* in the workbook and go over the rules together as a group.

## ***After a Time-Out***

Read over *What to Do After a Time-Out*. Be sure to stress that what a family does after taking a time-out is just as important as taking the time-out. Time out is not a solution to the problem. Time out is a "short term " solution to prevent abuse or violence. After taking a time out, it is important to return to the problem and decide what to do.

## ***Time-Out Plan***

Have each parent and teenager complete the *Time-Out / Safety Plan* worksheet together. You can also have them do this as a take-home activity.

## ***Take-Home Activities***

Ask group members to take at least one time-out this week and to fill out the *Time-Out Log* in the workbook. Next week, at check-in, they will report on how the time-out went.

# Worksheets

## *How to Take a Time-Out*

When you are feeling upset, pay attention to your warning signs. Make a decision to take a time-out to prevent yourself from being abusive to another family member.

A time-out can take anywhere from 5 minutes to an hour.

Tell the other person that you are taking a time-out. You can then take a short walk or go into another part of the house where you can be alone.

Think of something to help you calm down. You can make better decisions when you are calm.

Recognize your negative thoughts. Try to identify what it is that makes you feel angry, frustrated, or irritated.

Try to stop your negative thoughts. Thinking negative things won't help you get what you want. For example, if you keep thinking about how "mean" your mom is, you will just keep getting angrier, and the argument will get worse.

Before you return to the conversation, look at what your choices are, and decide what you're going to do.

Return to the conversation and try to work out the problem calmly.

When you are calm, explain time-outs to any members of the household who aren't already familiar with them

## ***Time-Out Rules***

**A time-out should not be used as an excuse to leave the house.**

It is not a time-out if you go to a friend's house, or if you take off and don't say where you are going. If you leave the house to take a walk, let your parent know where you are walking and for how long.

**A time-out is a time to be alone, to calm down and to think about how to deal with the problem without being abusive.**

When you are in a time-out, do something to calm down (by thinking, taking deep breaths, walking, etc.). Once you have calmed down, think about how to talk about the conflict with your parent.

**You are responsible for taking your own time-out. Do not tell your parent when to take a time-out.**

Parents will make their own decisions about when to take a time-out. Sometimes your parent may need to tell you to take a time-out if you are being abusive and are not taking a time-out.

**Let your parent know how long you will be in a time-out. A time-out should not be more than an hour.**

It is best to have an agreed-upon amount of time for all time-outs so that you don't have to talk about it when you take a time-out. 20-30 minutes is usually enough time to calm down and think things through.

## ***What to Do After a Time-Out***

### **Let it go**

While you are cooling down, you may realize that whatever you were arguing about doesn't really matter that much. For example, it may not be worth your energy to continue a discussion about small problems, so just let it go.

### **Put it on hold**

You may recognize that some circumstance prevents you from being respectful while you talk about the issue. For example, you may be too upset, too tired, or too hungry to talk through the problem effectively. So, you can agree to put it on hold for a while until both people feel calm and ready to talk. Putting it on hold should not be a way to avoid the issue. It should be a way to make sure that the conversation can be respectful. If you decide to put the discussion on hold, make sure to set a specific time (for example, after dinner, or Saturday morning) when you are going to discuss it.

### **Discuss it**

If you feel calm after the time-out, you may decide that you are ready to talk about the issue with the other person. You must be ready to listen to the other person, use problem-solving skills, and communicate respectfully. If the conversation becomes disrespectful, you can always take another time-out.

## *Time-Out / Safety Plan*

I agree to the following plan to prevent abuse or violence:

1. I will take a time-out when:

- I start to feel angry or upset and might become hurtful.
- I start to use any hurtful behaviors including the following:
  - Screaming/yelling
  - Name-calling/profanity
  - Threats/intimidating behavior
  - Unwanted physical contact
  - Property damage

2. I will let the other person know I am separating by saying:

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3. I will separate from the other person and go to one of the following places:

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4. While I am separated I will do something to calm myself down, such as:

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5. I will stay away from others for \_\_\_\_\_ minutes, or until I can be respectful to everyone in the house.

6. I agree to follow the rules of the time-out:

I will not use this plan as an excuse to leave the house, get out of chores or things I'm supposed to do.

I will use this plan as a time to be alone, calm down, and think about how to deal with the problem.

If the other person separates from me, I will respect their time alone and not bother them.

After my separation time I will return and make a plan with the other person about what to do next: finish the discussion, plan a time later to talk about it or let it go.

I agree to be non-violent at home.

Youth Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

***Parent Agreement:***

I also agree to be non-violent and to respect his/her time alone while in time-out.

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## *Time-Out Log*

During the following week, use a time-out whenever you are starting to feel upset or angry during a conflict. Try to take a time-out *before* you become abusive. After your time-out, write down how it went in the log below.

Situation:

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When did you decide to take a time-out?

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Where did you go and what did you do during your time-out?

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What did you do after your time-out—let it go, put it on hold, or discuss it?

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Did taking a time-out help you stay non-abusive? How?

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# Session 6: Understanding Warning Signs

## Teen and Parent Session

### *Background Information*

In this session parents will help teens to identify their red flags and use self-calming thoughts. Red flags are personal warning signs that a time-out is necessary or a situation may get abusive. Self-calming thoughts are used to help de-escalate one's emotions and separate from a potentially difficult situation.

Parents work on identifying their red flags in a separate parent session. While parents can help their teens figure out warning signs, it is not appropriate or helpful for teens to tell their parents what their red flags are.

### *Goals*

To identify personal red flags  
To identify self-calming thoughts

### *Important Messages*

The sooner you take a time-out when you start to feel upset, the better. It is more difficult to take a time-out when you are angry or agitated.

Identify the first red flag that indicates you may get abusive. The goal is to recognize that you need a time-out, and then to take it, **before** you become abusive.

### *Session Overview*

*Check in, review goal progress, and review take-home activities.*

*Discussion: Red Flags*

*Exercise: My Red Flags*

*Discussion: Self-Calming Thoughts*  
*Exercise: My Self-Calming Thoughts.*  
*Exercise: Role-Play Time-Out Scenarios.*

# Group Activities

## ***Discussion: Red Flags***

Start by reviewing the definition of red flags provided in the *Red Flags* worksheet.

## ***Exercise: My Red Flags***

Next, have teens fill out *My Red Flags* in their workbooks. Parents can fill out *Identifying Red Flags in Your Teen* in their workbooks. Have the groups share their responses in small groups or with the class. As group members share their red flags, ask each teen to try to figure out what his or her *earliest* red flag is. Let them know that it's important to take a time-out at the earliest red flag.

Next, explain to the group that their thinking can affect their feelings and behavior. Point out that some thought patterns get people more worked up and angry, like dwelling on how stupid they think their parents are. Conversely, people can choose to think about things that help them calm down and deal with the situation, like, "This is getting me nowhere. I need to calm down."

## ***Discussion: Self-Calming Thoughts***

Next, explain to the group that their thinking can affect their feelings and behavior. Point out that some thought patterns get people more worked up and angry, like dwelling on how stupid they think their parents are. Conversely, people can choose to think about things that help them calm down and deal with the situation, like, "This is getting me nowhere. I need to calm down."

Have the group think of examples of calming thoughts that might help them take a time-out. For example, teens may say, "I need a break; I can talk about this later." Tell them to think also of calming thoughts to focus on during a time-out, like, "Things will work out better if I

calm down." If they are having difficulty thinking of examples, ask group members to think of a time when they were about to get violent or abusive and stopped. Ask, "What did you think or say to yourself that helped you stay in control?"

### ***Exercise: My Self-Calming Thoughts***

Refer teens to *My Self-Calming Thoughts* in the teen workbook. Ask them to write down three self-calming thoughts that will help them calm down and stay in control.

### ***Exercise: Role Play the Time-Out Scenarios***

Have the group divide into pairs and pass out *Time-Out Role Plays*. Each scenario has two roles, one for a parent and one for a teen. Each person will pick a role to play as a parent or teen. First, let each pair read through their scenario and decide when the people in the scenario should take a time-out. After everyone finishes, have them come back to the large group. Each pair will role play the scenario in front of the group, first without a time-out, and then again with a time-out.

### ***Discussion Questions***

After each role play, ask:

1. In the situation you just witnessed, what were some of the red flags?
2. What was the earliest red flag?
3. At what point do you think it might have been a good idea to stop the conversation to take a time-out?
4. What self-calming thought could the person have used to help him or her take a time-out?

### ***Take-Home Activities***

Have teens fill out another *Your Red Flags* worksheet during the week. Ask them to fill it out after they have had a situation when they either took a time-out or should have taken a time-out.

# Worksheets

## *Red Flags*

If we pay close attention to our bodies, thoughts and feelings, we can find some warning signs that we are getting angry or upset and may become abusive to our family members.

Paying attention to these warning signs in ourselves is the first step in taking a time-out. Time-outs help us to control our bad feelings and have more respectful relationships with others.

Everyone has his or her own red flags. Here are some examples:

**Negative thoughts:** "She treats me like an infant!" "She never lets me do anything!" "He's an idiot!"

**Difficult feelings:** Angry, frustrated, hurt, jealous, anxious, impatient, unappreciated, neglected, abandoned.

**Body signs:** Tight muscles in the neck, back or jaw; clenched teeth; upset stomach; flushed face; feeling short of breath.

**Actions:** Raising of the voice, shouting, saying bad words.

When you recognize these red flags in yourself, it's time to take a time-out.

## ***My Red Flags***

Describe a situation in the recent past when you were upset, and write down what your red flags were.

Situation:

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## ***What are my red flags?***

Negative thoughts:

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Difficult feelings:

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Body signs:

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Actions:

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## ***Self-Calming Thoughts***

Self-calming thoughts are things you think about or say to yourself to help you calm down.

You should use self-calming thoughts when:

You feel yourself starting to get upset or angry.

You start to use abusive behavior (yelling, name calling, put-downs, or anything physical).

You are taking a time-out.

Self-calming thoughts help you not get abusive.

### **Here are some examples of Self-Calming Thoughts:**

I'm not going to let this get to me.

I can stay calm.

Stop. Let it go.

I'm going to take a time-out now.

If I stay calm, things will work out better.

I can take charge of how I act.

I don't have to get mad.

Step away. Stay calm.

I'm going to go chill out. We can talk later.

It's okay. I can deal with this.

I'm not going to yell.

I can talk calmly about this.

Go take a walk around the block.

I'm not a little kid. I don't have to throw a temper tantrum.

This is no big deal.

I can handle this.

I can talk without yelling.

I can talk about how I feel without being abusive.

I will take three deep breaths and sit down quietly.

You can also think about positive things that make you feel better (something you are looking forward to, something relaxing, a place you enjoy, any image that calms you and feels positive).

## ***My Self-Calming Thoughts***

In the space below, write down some things you can think about or say to yourself that will calm you down.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

The next time you start feeling upset or angry, think one of these things.

## ***Take-Home Activities***

***During the following week pay attention to your red flags and add them to the (Your Red Flags) worksheet.***

## *Time-Out Role-Plays*

### **Scene One**

Jack told his mother he would be home at 11:00 p.m., but instead he arrives home at 1:30 a.m. Jack knows his mother will be upset when he gets in.

When Jack walks in the door, his mother asks, "Where were you and why are you so late?"

**Jack:** "I don't want to talk about it. I just want to go to bed."

**Mom:** "Have you been smoking pot or drinking?"

Jack gets upset.

**Jack:** "That's such a stupid question. You're being a paranoid idiot."

Jack decides to go to his room and brushes his mother aside as he walks down the hall.

**Mom:** "I want to talk to you." She follows him to his room.

**Jack:** "Why don't you get the hell out of here. You're a lunatic."

**Mom:** "I'm tired of you talking like that."

Jack pushes her into the hall and closes the door.

**Jack:** "You better leave me alone or you're really going to be sorry."

### **Scene Two**

Tanisha is on the phone with her friend. Tanisha's younger sister, Vanessa, is listening in on her conversation, which makes Tanisha mad.

**Tanisha:** "Vanessa, get the hell off the phone. Why don't you mind your own business? Mom, tell Vanessa to go to her room."

**Mom:** "Tanisha, you've been on the phone too long anyway, so you need to hang up."

**Tanisha:** "Vanessa, you're a little punk. Mom, you let her get away with everything."

**Mom:** "Tanisha, you shouldn't call your sister names. You should apologize to her."

**Tanisha:** "You never listen to a thing I say. You're crazy if you think I'm going to apologize to her. She's the one who listened in on my phone call. She should apologize to me."

At that moment, Tanisha hates her sister and mother. She walks over to her sister and slaps her.

### **Scene Three**

Maria's mother is planning to go out with her friend to have dinner and to see a movie. Maria is supposed to stay home and watch her 11-year-old brother, Max. Maria decides to ask some of her girlfriends over to hang out in her room while Max watches a movie in the living room. Maria's mom comes home early.

**Mom:** "What's going on in here?"

**Maria:** "Hey mom, you can knock before you come in? It isn't right that you just barge in without knocking."

Maria pushes her mom out of the room and slams the door in her face.

**Mom:** "You've been drinking beer. You're supposed to be watching your brother. I can't trust you anymore and I don't like your friends. I think your friends' parents should know what's going on. I'm going to call them."

**Maria:** "You're really going ballistic. Why don't you call the FBI while you're at it? You're really a nutcase. None of my friends are going to talk to me again if you call their parents. You're a creep and a narc."

### **Scene Four**

Raul is supposed to take out the garbage on Tuesday mornings. On this Tuesday, he forgets to take it out on time and his mother gets upset.

**Mom:** "Why can't you take out the garbage on time?"

**Raul:** "I just forgot."

**Mom:** "It's important to remember details. You don't seem to think that remembering days and times is very important. They're really important. You have to remember things like this if you want to make it in the real world."

Raul starts to get upset and says: "Stop talking to me like I'm a little kid. Do you think I'm stupid? This isn't a big deal. Why do you have to go on and on and on about it?"

**Mom:** "I don't think you understand how important details are and not forgetting about them. How are you going to remember more important things if you can't remember the little stuff like taking out the garbage?"

**Raul:** "Just shut up. I'm sick of you going on and on. All you do is nag me."

**Mom:** "Maybe if you had to stay home on Saturday night, you might remember."

**Raul:** "You're crazy."

Raul slams the door.

### **Scene Five**

Edgar wants to use the car on Saturday night, and his mother agrees if he promises to mow the lawn before he goes out. Edgar does not mow the lawn by Saturday afternoon.

**Mom:** "If you don't mow the lawn today, you can't use the car."

**Edgar:** "Can I do it on Sunday?"

**Mom:** "No."

**Edgar:** "That's not fair. There's no reason I can't do it tomorrow. You're making a big deal about nothing. Why are you always like this?"

**Mom:** "You agreed to mow the lawn before you use the car."

**Edgar:** "You're stupid. I'm not doing it until Sunday."

**Mom:** "Edgar, just mow the lawn, like you agreed."

**Edgar:** "Forget it. I'm not going to do it at all."

**Mom:** "If you don't do it today, you're not going to go out at all."

**Edgar:** "You're an idiot. And a really stupid one."

Edgar goes into his bedroom and punches a hole in the wall.

### **Scene Six**

Robin and Devon were good friends when they were in school last year, but Robin's mother doesn't want Robin hanging around with Devon anymore because he got arrested over the summer and he isn't going to school anymore.

One day, after Robin finishes talking to Devon on the phone, her mom says, "I thought we already talked about Devon. You know I don't want you seeing him."

**Robin:** "That's what you decided, not me. Anyway, I was just talking to him. What's the big deal with that?"

**Mom:** "We've already been through this. When you were going out with him last year, you started to miss a lot of school. We're not going through that again. I don't want to start getting calls from school telling me that you're not there."

**Robin:** "That was last year and I haven't missed any school this year. You don't even know anything about Devon. You think he's some kind of criminal. Well, he's not. I'm not a little girl anymore and I can think for myself. You need to open your eyes and look around to see what's going on."

# Session 7: Understanding Power

## Teen Session

### *Background Information*

Power in personal relationships is often defined negatively as getting other people to do things that you want them to do, and this kind of power means having power over people. Violent and abusive behavior is one way to achieve this negative kind of power. But there are nonviolent and non-abusive ways to achieve a positive kind of power. This kind of power uses negotiation and compromise. When teens identify their strengths, skills, knowledge, and resources, they can begin to recognize that they can use their personal power to make nonviolent and non-abusive choices.

### *Goals*

To identify personal power

To identify negative and positive uses of power

To examine how teens can use their personal power in positive ways

### *Important Messages*

Power in itself is not a problem. It is how we *use* our power with others that can sometimes be a problem.

Our personal strengths and skills can give us power in positive ways

### *Session Overview*

*Check in, review goal progress, and review take-home activities.*

*Discussion: How We Use Power in positive and negative ways.*

*Discussion: Ways We Have Personal Power using our Strengths and Skills.*

*Exercise: Identifying our Personal Strengths and Skills.*  
*Exercise: Using Personal Power.*



# Group Activities

## *Discussion: Power*

Begin the session with a discussion of the following. Be sure to write any key messages that come out of the discussion on the board.

### **What is power?**

(Examples: to be able to get your way; to have whatever you want; to have people look up to you; to have people want to be like you)

### **What are some different ways that people have power?**

(Examples: to threaten to hurt someone when they don't get what they want; to be skilled at doing something, like football; to be able to persuade people to a point of view)

### **What are some things people do to have power?**

(Examples: act threatening; coerce; develop a skill)

### **What are some destructive ways to show power?**

(Examples: threaten; coerce)

### **What are some respectful ways to show power?**

(Examples: develop a skill; stand by your friends)

Think of someone you know who has a lot of power. In which of the above ways does he or she have power? How does the person use his or her power?

## *Discussion: Ways We Have Personal Power*

Explain to the teens that power can be used in positive/respectful ways or negative/abusive ways. Use one or both of the following examples to illustrate the point:

Your math teacher has power because she has certain **skills** and **knowledge** about teaching math. She might also have some personal **strengths**, like using humor when she teaches the class. Or maybe she has a lot of patience and is willing to spend extra time so everyone in the class can learn. She can use her power in a **positive** way by using her skills to help you learn. She can use her power in a **negative** way by yelling at you, humiliating you in front of the class, or threatening to fail you.

You are baby-sitting your little brother, who is watching a show on TV. You want to watch a baseball game on a different channel. You have the power to change the channel, because you are older, bigger, have more **knowledge** and **skills**, and are **responsible** for your brother. If he objects, you can use your power in a **negative** way by threatening to hit him or lock him out of the house. Or, you can use your power in a **positive** way by negotiating a plan with him, like letting him have the TV for the rest of the evening after the game.

Continue the discussion of personal power by putting the following headings on the board: **Strengths**, **Skills**. Explain that one source of personal power comes from your strengths and skills. We all have personal strengths and skills that give us the power to make changes in our lives. Refer teens to the **Personal Strengths** and **Personal Skills** worksheet. Ask them to match each personal strength and skill with a definition. And write down three of their own personal strengths and skills.

# Worksheets

## Personal Strengths and Skills

One source of personal power comes from your personal strengths and skills. All of us have personal strengths that give us the power to make changes in our lives. These strengths also allow us to build close personal relationships with others and achieve our personal goals.

Personal Strengths:

- |                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| 1. Courage ____        | 1. To have sympathy and feelings for people with problems.  |
| 2. Open-Mindedness____ | 2. Being able to wait; taking your time to do things.   |
| 3. Endurance ____      | 3. To face danger or difficulties in spite of fear.   |
| 4. Dedication ____     | 4. Being accountable; following through; acknowledging when you are wrong.                                  |
| 5. Patience ____       | 5. To have the ability to work well with others; taking others into consideration when speaking and acting. |

6. Reliable \_\_\_\_                      6. To push yourself to meet a goal.
7. Cooperative \_\_\_\_                    7. To stand behind friends and family no matter what happens.
8. Accountability \_\_\_\_                8. Ability or strength to continue on even though you are tired, stressed or have a long way to go.
9. Loyalty \_\_\_\_                        9. Being dependable and consistent
10. Compassion \_\_\_\_                 10. Being interested in the opinions and ideas of others; being willing to consider new ideas.

**Personal Skills**

Another source of power comes from personal skills that allow you to assertively communicate your point of view in a respectful way. These skills will get you what you need for yourself and build stronger relationships with your family. Match each personal skill with the definition of the skill.

1. Listening	1. To take action to deal with feelings calmly.
2. Compromising	2. To figure out a solution to a conflict

3. Respectful Communication	3. To express your thoughts and feelings using language that acknowledges other people's dignity.
4. Empathy	4. Paying attention to what someone is saying.
5. Problem Solving	5. To put yourself in someone else's shoes
6. Coping with difficult emotions	6. Being willing to give something up to come to an agreement

Now, refer the group to the **Ways We Have Personal Power** worksheet. Have them answer the questions for each of the scenarios and share the answers with the group.

### **Ways We Have Personal Power**

The following scenarios provide examples of personal power. What personal strengths and personal skills could the people in these scenarios use?

1. Neko is failing her math class and her mother is upset. Neko is grounded until she brings her grade up. She agreed to stay after school to get some extra help and she made a list of special assignments that she can do to improve her grade. Neko knows it will take time before her grade gets better and doesn't think she should be grounded. What should Neko do? What skills and strengths will she use to resolve this issue?

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2. Jason is baby-sitting his little brother, who is watching a show on TV. Jason wants to watch a baseball game on a different channel. What can Jason do? What skills and strengths will he use with his

brother?

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3. Linda has a 10:00 p.m. curfew. She has had problems with keeping to her curfew and forgetting to call when she will be late. She wants a later curfew because most of her friends can stay out until 11:00 p.m.

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4. Larry just had an argument with his girlfriend, Lindsey, about their plans for the weekend. Larry wants them to go to a friend's party and Lindsey wants to see a band at a club. They keep arguing about it.

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5. Lisa's parents have been checking on her a lot lately because she was going places she wasn't supposed to go. Her mom wants to know the phone numbers where Lisa is all the time and she calls to check on her. Lisa is getting really annoyed by this. She wishes her mom would trust her. What could she do?

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***Exercise: Personal Power***

After you are sure the teens have a good sense of personal power, have them fill out the **What Personal Power Do You Have?** worksheet to identify their own strengths and skills that give them personal power in a positive way.

### ***What Personal Power Do You Have?***

Strengths

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Skills

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## **Worksheets**

### ***Personal Power Scenarios***

Read each scenario below and ask:

How could the person use his or her personal power in a negative way?

How could the person use his or her personal power in a positive way?

Which way will be more effective?

1. Sara wants to go to a party Saturday night. Her mom already told her that she needs to stay home all weekend and study because her grades are dropping. What could Sara do?

2. Larry just had an argument with his girlfriend, Lindsey, about their plans for the weekend. Larry wants them to go to a friend's party and Lindsey wants to see a band at a club. They keep arguing about it. What could Larry do?
3. Jennifer is tired of her younger sister going into her room and borrowing her clothes without asking. What could she do?
4. Max's dad said that Max has to clean out the garage before he goes anywhere today. Max's friend just called and invited him to a movie. Max really wants to go. What could he do?
5. Linda has a 10:00 p.m. curfew. She has had problems with keeping to her curfew and forgetting to call when she will be late. She wants a later curfew because most of her friends can stay out until 11:00 p.m. What could she do?
6. Craig has had problems with skipping school a lot. He is grounded until he can go to school consistently without skipping for 3 weeks. What could he do?
7. Lisa's parents have been checking on her a lot lately because she was going places she wasn't supposed to go. Her mom wants to know the phone numbers where Lisa is all the time and she calls to check on her. Lisa is getting really annoyed by this. She wishes her mom would trust her. What could she do?

### ***What Personal Power Do You Have?***

#### **Strengths**

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#### **Skills**

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### ***Take-Home Activities***

Ask the teens to think of ways they use their personal power during the next week and let them know they will report back to the group during check-in.

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# Session 8: Understanding Feelings

## Teen Session

### *Background Information*

The exercises in this session are designed to bring teens to a deeper understanding of anger.

Anger is only one feeling among other feelings that we experience in our lives. During this session, we want to help teens recognize that when they are angry they also have other feelings. The facilitator can help teens understand this by asking them what feelings they are having besides anger when they talk about being angry. You may need to help them with this by giving them examples of feelings they might be experiencing. Most teens have never learned how to talk about their feelings.

### *Goals*

- To identify the relationship between power and anger
- To separate feelings of anger from the behavior a teen chooses
- To recognize feelings, in addition to anger, experienced by a teen
- To understand the relationship between anger and other feelings

### *Important Messages*

Anger itself is not a bad thing. Anger is a feeling that lets us know that things are not right for us. When we feel anger we know that we need to do something—to figure out a problem, make a change, talk to someone about our feelings, or make a decision to try to let it go. Anger can be a motivator to take respectful action toward a positive change. Anger has been the force that changed many injustices in our country's history, and has brought communities together to create positive change.

It is OK to feel angry; it is how we behave when we are angry that can be a problem. More specifically, anger should not be used to justify violence and abuse, or to intimidate or make other people feel powerless. There are ways to express anger without violence and abuse. Anytime you are angry, you also have other feelings. When you express feelings other than anger, people are more likely to listen to you and understand you. You have a choice about what to do with your anger, and you are responsible for the way you choose to respond. You are *not* responsible for someone else who chooses to respond to his or her anger with violence. If you are the victim of someone else's violence, *you are not to blame.*

### ***Session Overview***

*Check in, review goal progress, and review take-home activities.*

*Separate into teen and parent groups.*

*Discussion: Using Anger to Justify and Gain Power.*

*Discussion: Identifying Feelings*

*Exercise: Identifying Feelings.*

*Exercise: Anger Scenarios.*

# Group Activities

## *Discussion: Using Anger to Justify and Gain Power*

Begin the session with a discussion of the following questions. Be sure to emphasize any important points that come out of the discussion by writing them on the board.

1. How is anger used to justify violent or abusive behavior?
2. How do people use anger to have power over others?
3. Can you be angry and respectful at the same time? How?
4. What can you do to help control your anger so you can stay respectful?

Have the class brainstorm some of the negative ways people behave when they are angry (hitting, yelling, etc.) Then ask what other choices people have for how to respond when they are angry. Have them think of ways to respond that are respectful. Ask participants what advantages there might be to responding in a respectful, non-abusive way when they are angry.

## *Discussion: Identifying and Talking about Feelings*

Use the illustration of the iceberg in the worksheet to introduce participants to the idea that anger is used to mask other feelings.

Tell students that anger is the tip of the iceberg. The part of the iceberg under the water is where all the other feelings are. Tell the teens that people often show only anger to the people around them. But just as a captain must know what lies beneath the water in order for a ship to successfully navigate around an iceberg, people need to understand what lies beneath their anger and other people's anger in order to cope effectively with their feelings.

## Why does putting our feelings into words help?

Explain the following:

In addition to anger, we have feelings that range in many different directions. When we communicate these other feelings to people, they understand us better and it is easier to work out problems with them. So talking about feelings can make our relationships stronger.

Talking about feelings can also help us stay calm. Brain researchers have found that simply identifying feelings of sadness and anger makes them less intense. Studies at UCLA in 2007\* showed that when people labeled a negative feeling, like sadness or anger, it activated a part of the brain responsible for processing emotions and impulse control. At the same time it calmed down activity in the part of the brain that triggers negative feelings like fear and panic. So, when you say what you are feeling, it calms you down. It also works this way when you identify a feeling in someone else. For example, if your brother looks at you in an angry way and you think to yourself, "he is angry", you will activate the part of your brain that calms down your own negative feelings and prevents your impulse to react to him.

The next time you are getting angry or upset about something, try thinking about what you are feeling and say it to yourself. You can say it out loud, think it or write it. This is a good thing to do during a time-out.

\* Lieberman, Matthew D. (2007) *Putting Feeling Into Words: Affect Labeling Disrupts Amygdala Activity in Response to Affective Stimuli*, *Psychological Science* 18 (5), 421-428.

Next, discuss the following situations with the group to examine how we are socialized at an early age to hide our feelings:

*Let's say a 7-year-old boy gets punched and knocked down by a 9-year-old boy. If the 7-year-old starts to cry, what will the other kids say to him? What will they say about him? What will he learn about showing pain and fear?*

*If a five-year-old girl comes into the house crying and tells her mom that her brother said she couldn't play with him because she was stupid, her mom may say, "Oh, he's just being a boy. Stop crying." What will the girl learn about feeling sad?*

*Point out that it is these types of experiences that teach us that anger is a much safer feeling to show than other hard feelings.*

When you are sure the class recognizes that anger is not felt in isolation from other emotions, tell them that it is more helpful to communicate the feelings they are having than to act out the anger.

Use the following story to illustrate this point:

*Let's say you are mad at your mom because she picked you up late. If you think about it, you can figure out what other feelings you are having besides anger. Maybe you are worried you will be late for practice, or something else you had planned to do. Instead of just telling her how mad you are, or acting angry with her, you can tell her how you feel—"I'm worried I will be late for practice."*

*Then your mom can understand why you are upset, and it is less likely to turn into an argument that escalates into blaming and anger.*

### ***Exercise: Different Kinds of Feelings***

Refer participants to the 'feelings wheels' in their workbooks.

Explain:

On the next two pages, you will see two wheels with feelings. One has difficult feelings that are common when people are having conflict with each other. The other has helpful feelings that describe how you feel when you are able to stay calm and solve problems.

For this exercise, you will look at the two wheels and think about a situation when you felt one of the feelings on the wheel. We will go around the group and share until we have talked about all of the feelings on each wheel.

### ***Exercise: Identifying Feelings***

Have the participants turn to the *Identifying Feelings* worksheet in the workbook. Ask them to read each scenario and think about what feelings the person might be having. They can do this individually, in small groups, or as a large group. Have them share their answers with the whole group while you write down the feelings on the board.

### ***Exercise: Anger Scenarios***

Finish the session by doing some role-playing. Have volunteers act out various scenarios in which they get angry. Have them think of situations in their own lives when they get angry. Ask the volunteers to try to communicate any feelings they might have other than anger and consider how their choices might change the outcome of the experience. Encourage group members to help each other identify possible feelings and how to communicate those feelings.



## ***Take-Home Activities***

Ask group members to pay attention to other feelings they are having when they get angry during the following week. Ask them to try to communicate the other feelings instead of the anger. They will report back to the group about their experiences during check-in.

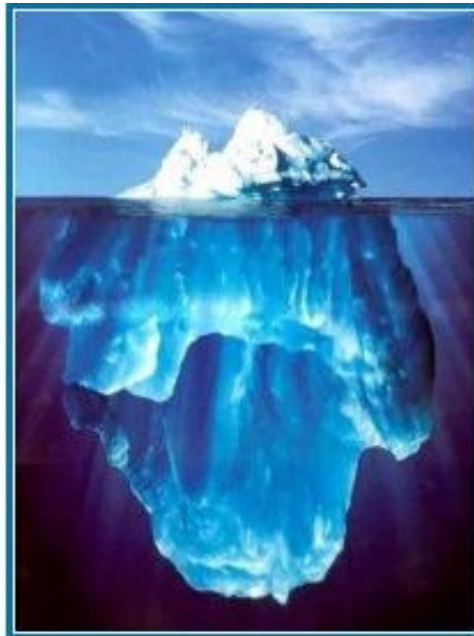
# Worksheets

## *Iceberg of Feelings*

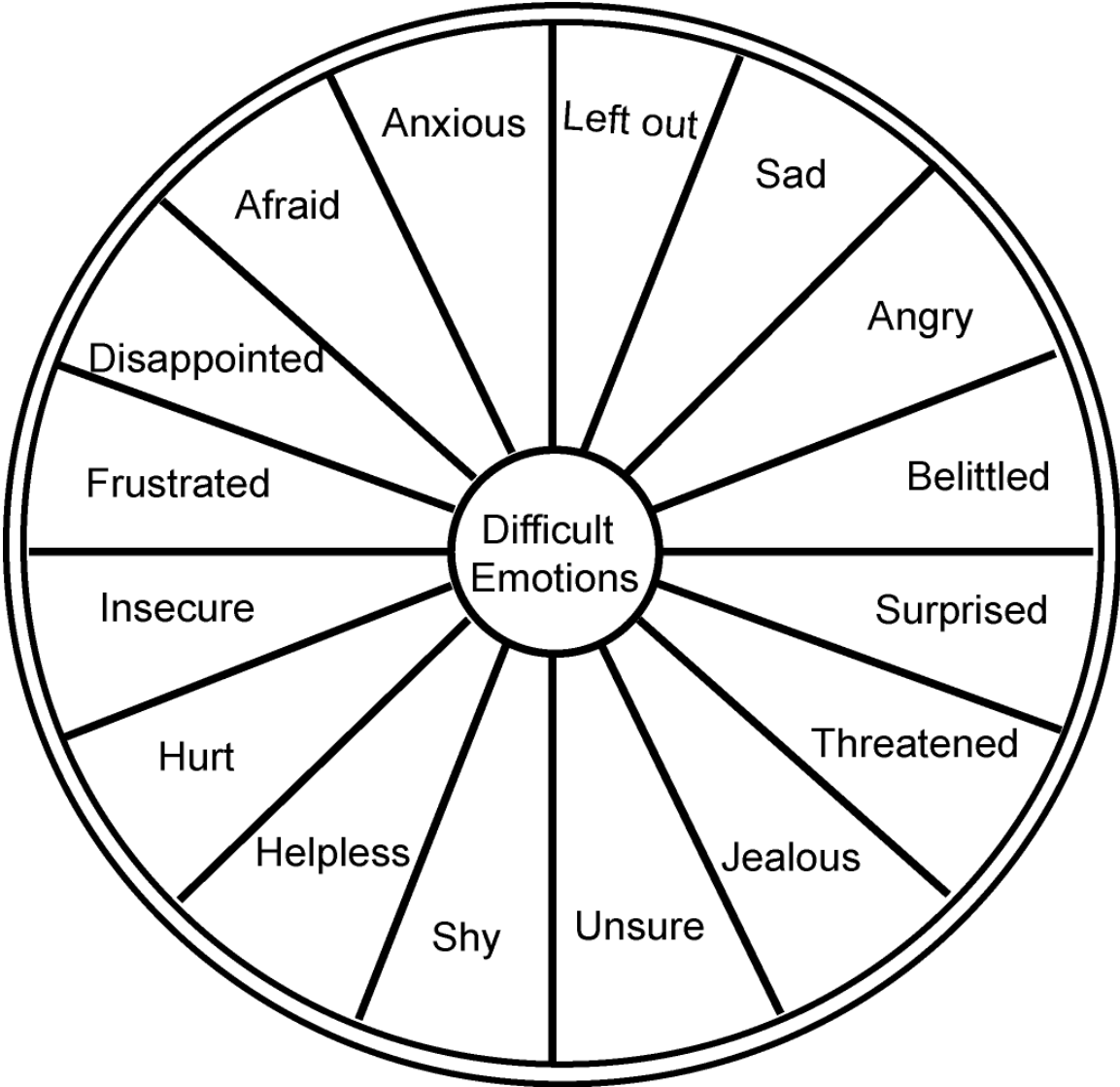
For a lot of people, anger is used to mask other feelings and the iceberg is a way of showing how this works. Anger is the tip of the iceberg. The part of the iceberg under the water is where all the other feelings are. People often show only anger to the people around them. But just as a captain must know what lies beneath the water in order for a ship to successfully navigate around an iceberg, people need to understand what lies beneath their anger and other people's anger in order to cope effectively with their feelings.

**Anger**

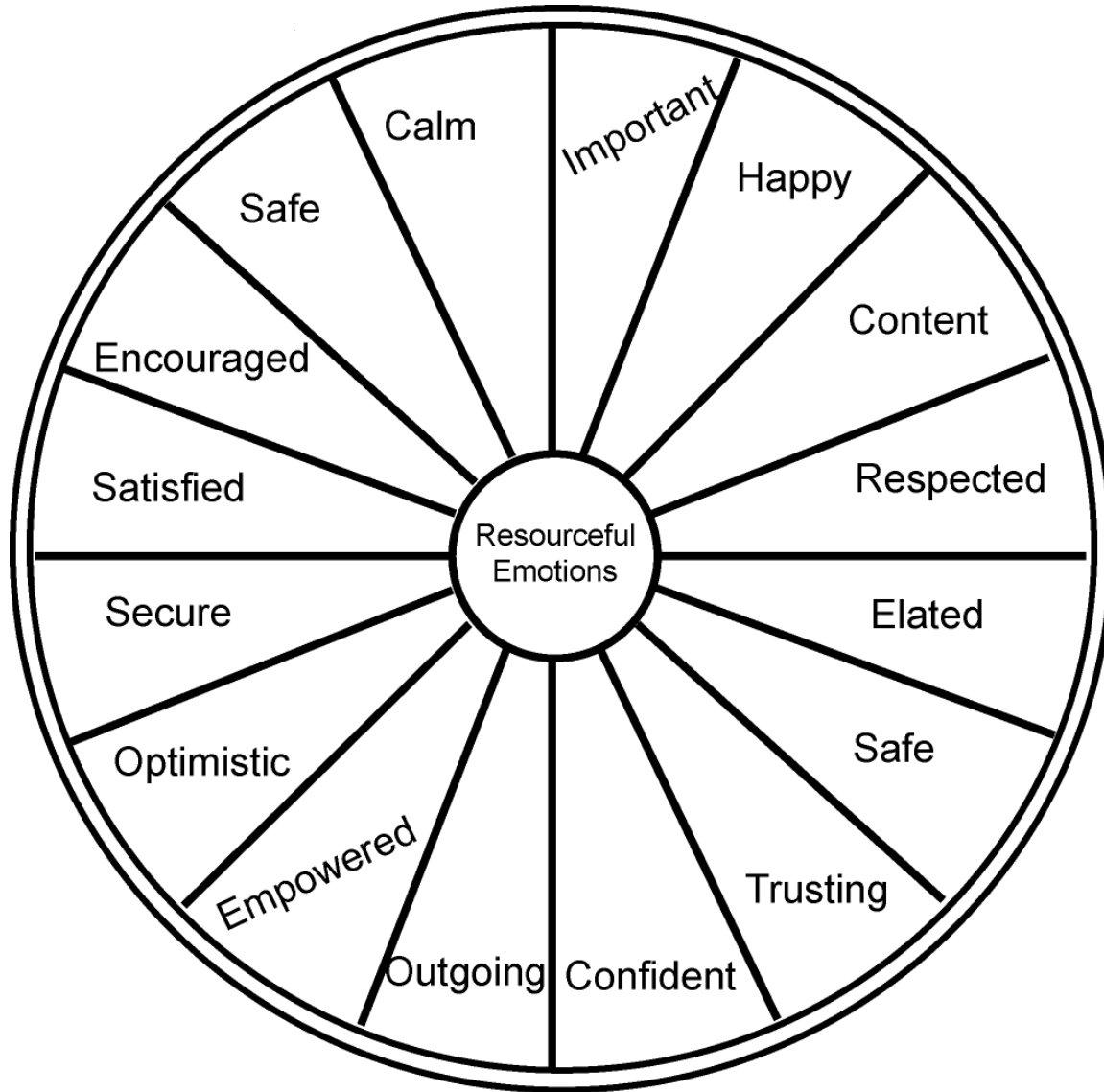
**Submerged  
Feelings**



*Difficult Feelings*



## *Helpful Feelings*



# Identifying Feelings

Read each scenario below and write down the feelings, besides anger, the person might be having.

1. Barb gets kicked out of math class for arguing with the teacher again. She is sent to the vice principal, who tells her that she'll be suspended for a week because this is the third time she's been kicked out of class. Barb knows that her basketball team has a major game that she's going to miss.

She says to the vice principal, "Well that's just great! THANKS!" She walks out and slams the door behind her.

Barb is angry. What else might she be feeling?

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2. Jake has been seeing Monica for five weeks. One afternoon he asks her if she wants to go get pizza after school. She says, "No, I don't want pizza, and I really don't want to hang out with you anymore." Jake yells at her, calls her a name and walks off.

Jake is angry. What else might he be feeling?

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3. Alex spent all the money he saved fixing up his car. He got a new CD player, a new muffler, new rims and a detail job. One morning he goes out to the car and finds his rims gone. He screams and goes into his house to call his friend and tell him about it. His sister is on the phone. He shouts at her to get off the phone. She ignores him. He grabs the phone out of her hand.

Alex is angry. What else might he be feeling?

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4. Katie just came back from a weekend visit with her dad. When she was at his house, he talked about how he thinks the divorce was all her mom's fault. When Katie gets home, her mom says, "Did you get your homework done this weekend?" Katie screams at her mom, "Why can't you just leave me alone?"

Katie is angry. What else might she be feeling?

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Think of a situation when you were really angry and got abusive to another person. Write down the situation (what happened, what you did), and then write down the feelings you were having besides anger.

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# Session 9: Understanding Self-Talk

## Teen Session

### *Background Information*

Self-talk is another word for thinking. In difficult situations, our thinking will determine how we behave and what choices we make. We begin by asking teens to be aware of the things they say to themselves or things they are thinking in difficult situations. When teens can identify what thoughts they are having, they can then decide if their thoughts are helping them resolve problems or are making the problems worse. If they are successful at examining their thinking, they can change their thoughts during difficult situations so they can resolve conflicts without abuse and violence.

### *Goals*

To identify self-talk

To learn how to use self-talk to control behavior

To learn how to use self-talk to make better choices

### *Important Messages*

When I control the way I think, I have more control over the way I act.

When I can change my thinking, I make better choices.

My own thinking is the best tool I have to control myself.

### *Session Overview*

*Check in, review goal progress, and review take-home activities.*

*Separate into parent and teen groups.*

*Discussion: Who Controls Our Behavior.*

*Discussion: Self-Talk.*

*Discussion: Changing Negative Self-Talk into Helpful Self-Talk.*  
*Exercise: Changing Negative Self-Talk into Helpful Self-Talk.*



# Group Activities

## *Discussion: Who Controls Our Behavior*

### **Explain the following:**

The biggest goal of Step-Up is to learn how to stop abusive behaviors and how to use more respectful behaviors. To reach this goal, we need to figure out how to control how we act.

Lots of times we feel like other people control our feelings and our actions. We might say things like, "My mom makes me mad," "My sister makes me frustrated," "My girlfriend makes me happy." Other people definitely influence us, but we can get pretty good control of our own feelings and behavior. This control helps us have more power in our lives.

We always have a choice about how we behave. No one can "make" us behave in a certain way (for example, someone is not raising my hand for me to hit this person—I make the choice and act).

Feelings are a little more complicated. People and situations influence how we feel. It seems like we have no choice about it. However, we can have some control over our feelings. We can have a bad feeling about something, and then we can change the negative feeling by changing the way we think about it or by looking at it in a different way.

Here is an example of how a person's thinking can affect the way he or she feels:

Jon is in a supermarket with narrow aisles. He's in a hurry and he's trying to move quickly with his cart. He needs to get to the check-out counter and get out of the store to catch his ride. A tall, broad-shouldered man is studying all the different cereal boxes on the shelf in front of him. He and his cart are blocking Jon's way. Jon says, "Excuse me." He doesn't move. Jon says, "Excuse me," louder. The man still doesn't move.

Discuss the following questions:

What kinds of things might Jon start to think?

**Example:** Jon might think, "What a jerk. This guy is just trying to make me mad. Who does he think he is? I'd shove him out of the way if he wasn't so big."

How would he feel?

**Example:** He might feel frustrated, irritated, impatient, and mad. Then he might yell at the man to move out of his way.

Now imagine that a woman comes up to the large man and they start speaking in sign language. Jon then realizes that the man is deaf. How would that knowledge affect:

Jon's thinking?

Jon's feelings?

Jon's actions?

In the example above, what made Jon mad?

It may seem like the man blocking the aisle made Jon mad. What really made Jon mad was his thinking and his feelings. When Jon thought, "What a jerk. This guy is just trying to make me mad." he got irritated and then mad. If he stopped for a second and instead thought, "I wonder what's up? Maybe he is deaf and doesn't hear me," Jon wouldn't have gotten mad, but instead could have just found out whether the man heard him or not.

Although we may not be aware of it, we have choices in how we think about things.

When we get angry about something that happens, or something a person does/says, there are two parts to what is contributing to our anger:

1. The event that happens—called **external triggers**.
2. The thoughts we have about what happened—called **internal triggers**.

We don't have much control over external triggers, especially when it is another person's behavior. There are lots of things that people do that can make us mad. And there are a lot of situations and events in life that can make us mad. Sometimes we have control over preventing a situation or event from happening, and sometimes not.

We do have control over internal triggers. We can control the thoughts we have about what happens.

## ***Discussion: Self-Talk***

### **Explain the following:**

We can decide how we are going to think about every situation. We may explain things to ourselves in a way that makes us more and more angry, or we may explain things to ourselves in a way that helps us stay calm and figure things out. Explaining things to ourselves is called self-talk.

We talk to ourselves all the time and aren't aware of it. If you start paying attention to it you will hear yourself. You hear your mom's car pull up in the driveway and you think, "Dang, I didn't do the dishes. She's going to yell at me about it." Or you get home and see that your sister is on the phone and you want to make a call, so you say to yourself, "She is always on the phone. She'll be on for hours." If you listen to yourself carefully for a day you will hear all sorts of things that you say to yourself.

## ***Discussion: Identifying and Changing Self-Talk***

### **Tell the group:**

How we talk to ourselves can affect how we feel and how we act. The first step in controlling our abusive behavior is to learn about how our thinking is affecting our behavior.

When something difficult happens, we can think about it in ways that get us more worked up and mad about it, or we can think about it in ways that help us calm down and figure out how to deal with it.

Refer the group to *What Is Self Talk?* in their workbooks.

Tell the following story as an example:

*Sally's sister, Ramona, comes home a half hour late. Sally is mad because Ramona was supposed to give her a ride somewhere, and now Sally is late. Sally starts yelling at Ramona and Ramona argues with her, and they both end up yelling and screaming at each other.*

*Sally calls Ramona a name and storms off to her room. Ramona says she will never give Sally a ride anywhere again.*

Ask the following questions about the story:

1. What kinds of negative things might Sally be thinking?

Examples: “She is so selfish,” “All she thinks about is herself,” “She messed up my evening,” “I’m going to miss out on a good party,” “I can’t believe she did that,” “I hate her.”

2. How do those thoughts make her feel?

Examples: more angry, helpless, resentful, frustrated, powerless

3. How do these thoughts and feelings affect her behavior?

Example: She yells and screams at her sister, calls her sister a name.

4. How does Sally’s behavior affect her sister?

Example: Ramona gets mad, doesn’t want to give Sally a ride.

5. What could Sally think instead that would help her calm down and deal with the situation?

Example: “Okay, I’m upset about this, but yelling and screaming at her about it is a waste of time. I want to go meet my friends. Maybe if I calm down and talk to my sister she will still give me a ride. It’s not the end of the world to be a late. I can explain what happened to my friends. My sister didn’t come home late on purpose just to mess me up. She probably forgot she was going to give me a ride or something happened. It doesn’t help matters to make her mad at me.”

We are going to do more practice with figuring out negative self-talk, and changing it into helpful self-talk.

### ***Exercise: Changing Negative Self-Talk into Helpful Self-Talk***

Refer the group to *Changing Negative Self-Talk into Helpful Self-Talk* in the workbook. This exercise can be done as a whole group, or the

teens can break into groups of two and come back together to share answers. Be sure each group member does number 8 and shares it with the group.

### ***Take-Home Activity***

Tell teens to be aware of how they have negative self-talk and helpful self-talk in a situation during the next week. They will tell the group about it during check-in.

# Worksheets

## *What Is Self-Talk?*

**We can decide** how we are going to think about every situation. We may explain things to ourselves in a way that makes us more and more angry, or we may explain things to ourselves in a way that helps us stay calm and figure things out. Explaining things to ourselves is called **self-talk**.

*Sally's sister, Ramona, comes home a half hour late. Sally is mad because Ramona was supposed to give her a ride somewhere, and now Sally is late. Sally starts yelling at Ramona and Ramona argues with her, and they both end up yelling and screaming at each other.*

*Sally calls Ramona a name and storms off to her room. Ramona says she will never give Sally a ride anywhere again.*

Ask the following questions about the story:

1. What kinds of negative things might Sally be thinking?

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2. How do those thoughts make her feel?

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3. How does Sally's behavior affect her sister?

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4. What could Sally think instead that would help her calm down and deal with the situation?

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## 5. Changing Negative Self-Talk into Helpful Self-Talk

Below are some different situations that can be difficult. Read each one and write down:

**Negative self-talk** that you might have

**Helpful self-talk** that will help you calm down and deal with the situation or be able to let it go and walk away.

1. Your little brother keeps coming into your room and getting into your stuff.

**Negative self-talk**

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**Helpful self-talk**

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2. Your mom says you have to clean your room before you go out. You had planned to leave right away to meet your friends at the mall.

**Negative self-talk**

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**Helpful self-talk**

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3. Your friend said she would go out with you, and then she changed her plans. Later you find out she is going somewhere with another friend of yours and they didn't invite you.

**Negative self-talk**

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**Helpful self-talk**

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4. A girl who doesn't like you is whispering things to her friend in your class.

**Negative Self-talk**

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**Helpful self-talk**

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5. You come home an hour late and your dad says you are grounded.

**Negative self-talk**

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**Helpful self-talk**

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6. A girl/boy you have been in an ongoing conflict with is getting into your face and acting like she/he wants to fight.

**Negative self-talk**

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**Helpful self-talk**

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7. Your younger brother keeps pestering you. He is poking you and calling you stupid.

**Negative self-talk**

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**Helpful self-talk**

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8. Think of a situation in your life where you usually get angry. Write it below, and then write negative self-talk and helpful self-talk.

**Situation**

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**Negative self-talk**

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**Helpful self-talk**

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# Session 10: Understanding Beliefs

## Teen Session

### *Background Information*

Teaching teens to be accountable for their behavior is an important goal of the Step-Up program. In this session, you begin to address accountability by asking teens to examine beliefs that support the use of violence or that place the blame or responsibility for violence on another person. In particular, you will address the common belief that anger causes people to be violent. It is important to point out that people can be angry without becoming violent, and that we all have choices about how we handle difficult emotions.

### *Goals*

To assess how our beliefs about anger affect our actions  
To learn strategies for changing unhelpful beliefs and behaviors

### *Important Messages*

Our beliefs influence how we think and act.  
Beliefs can change with our personal experiences.  
Beliefs are rules we give ourselves about our behavior.  
Beliefs are often at work below the surface of our awareness, so we don't often think about them.

### *Session Overview*

*Check in, review goal progress, and review take-home activities.*

*Discussion: Beliefs and "Should" Statements*

*Discussion: Beliefs About Anger and Abuse.*

*Exercise: Beliefs People Have About Anger and Abuse.*

# Group Activities

## *Discussion: Beliefs and "Should" Statements*

Begin the session with a discussion of the following questions. Be sure to emphasize important points by writing them on the board.

1. What are some beliefs people have about friendships?  
Examples: A good friend would never lie to you. You should stand up for your friends.
2. What are some beliefs people have about school?  
Examples: School is the most important thing in your life. School is a waste of time.
3. What are some beliefs people have about intimate relationships?  
Examples: Your girlfriend/boyfriend should be your most important relationship. It's better when you're the one who breaks up first.
4. What are some beliefs people have about mothers?  
Examples: Your mother should take care of you. Always show respect for your mother.
5. What are some beliefs people have about fathers?  
Examples: Fathers should support their families. Your father should be there for you.
6. What are some beliefs people have about money?  
Examples: You should save your money. Money is the most important thing in life.

Point out to the teens the predominance of "should" statements in the responses they offered. Tell them that our beliefs frequently include how things "should" be or what people "should" do or not do. These beliefs affect how we feel and how we behave. Sometimes beliefs are helpful to us (for example, "I should work hard in school so I can get a good job"), but sometimes they are unrealistic and actually cause stress or get us into trouble (for example, when someone does something that bothers you, you have to get back at him or her).

Ask the group to come up with some examples of helpful beliefs.

Possible responses follow:

It is important to be honest.

It's not okay to intentionally hurt people.

You should admit when you are wrong.

It's okay to make mistakes.

Now ask the group to come up with some examples of unhelpful beliefs.

Possible responses are:

Don't ever let anyone think you are weak.

You're a loser if you walk away from a fight.

I'm not smart enough to get good grades in school.

When things go wrong it's not my fault/when things go wrong it's all my fault.

When someone does something I don't like, I have the right to criticize him or her.

Refer back to the list of beliefs generated from the discussion questions, and ask the teens to identify which of those beliefs are helpful and why, and which ones are unhelpful and why. You may want to prompt them to think about how each of those beliefs can be either helpful or unhelpful, depending on the situation.

### ***Discussion: Beliefs About Anger and Abuse***

Start this discussion by telling the group that beliefs people have about anger and abuse affect the behavior they choose and how they justify their behavior when they are abusive. These beliefs also affect the ability to take responsibility for behavior. You may also want to write this point on the board. Provide the group with the following examples to illustrate your point:

If I believe that it's never okay to hit someone in my family, I will probably try to figure out another way to get my point across when I am mad. If I do hit someone in my family, I will feel pretty bad about it.

If I believe that I have the right to yell and call another person names when I am angry, then I will probably do that and justify my behavior by saying that that person made me angry. I will give him or her responsibility for my abusive behavior.

The connection between anger and abuse—that anger “causes” people to be abusive, or that it is okay to be abusive when you are angry—is a common belief. Many people also believe that if someone does something that makes you angry, he or she is responsible for your abusive response; for example, “If he hadn’t gotten into my stuff, I wouldn’t have pushed him,” or “She was calling me names, so she deserved to be hit.”

### ***Exercise: Beliefs People Have About Anger and Abuse***

Refer the group to *Beliefs People Have About Anger and Abuse* in their workbooks, and ask group members to answer the questionnaire. Let them know they will not have to share their answers with the group. When participants finish filling out the worksheet, ask them the following questions about each point:

1. How would this belief affect how you choose to behave?
2. How would this belief affect your ability to take responsibility for your behavior (that is, how much you blame others or how you justify your behavior)?
3. If someone has a belief system that supports abusive and violent behavior (for example, the person has always believed it is okay to abuse someone who makes him or her mad), do you think that the person can change his or her beliefs?
4. What do you think it would take to make someone decide he or she wants to change his or her unhelpful beliefs?

### ***Take-Home Activities***

Ask the group to continue to think about beliefs in the coming week and report back to the group during check-in about any other beliefs they have that support nonviolent behavior.

# Worksheets

## *Beliefs People Have About Anger and Abuse*

<b>Belief</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
When I get angry I can't control what I do.		
When I get really angry I have the right to yell.		
If someone hits me, I have the right to hit back.		
If someone makes me really mad it's okay to hit him or her.		
Sometimes I get so angry, I just can't think.		
It's okay to be angry if someone hurts someone in my family.		
It's okay to hurt someone if he or she hurts someone in my family.		
No matter how angry I am I should never hit another person.		
When I get angry, I can make a choice to be respectful.		
I am responsible for how I act when I get angry.		
Sometimes getting angry is the only way to get my point across.		
Sometimes yelling and screaming is the only way to get my point across.		
I can get my point across when I'm angry without being abusive.		

After you have finished completing the worksheet, the group will discuss the following questions:

1. How would each belief affect how you choose to behave?
2. How would each belief affect your ability to take responsibility for your behavior (that is, how much you blame others or how you justify your behavior)?
3. If someone has a belief system that supports abusive and violent behavior (for example, the person has always believed it is okay to abuse someone who makes him or her mad), do you think that the person can change his or her beliefs?
4. What do you think it would take to make someone decide he or she wants to change his or her unhelpful beliefs?



# Session 11: Hurtful Moves/Helpful Moves

## Teen Session

### *Background Information*

An important part of changing behavior is to examine the choices we make. In earlier sessions teens critically examined their feelings, their self-talk and their beliefs. In this session teens will learn how these work together to impact how they choose to respond to an event. They will identify the feelings, self-talk and beliefs they typically have in a difficult situation and how to change them so they make better choices about their behavior.

### *Goals*

To learn to identify feelings, self-talk and beliefs experienced during difficult situations

To learn how to change negative/unhelpful feelings, self-talk and beliefs to positive/helpful ones and make behavior changes

### *Important Messages*

Feelings, thinking and beliefs all influence how we choose to respond to a situation.

When we change how we think about a situation, our feelings change. Changing our feelings can help us make different choices about our behavior.

Our beliefs support our thinking, feelings and behavior.

### *Session Overview*

*Check in, review goal progress, and review take-home activities.*

*Separate into parent and teen groups.*

*Exercise: Turning Hurtful Moves into Helpful Moves.*

*Exercise: Turning Your Own Hurtful Moves into Helpful Moves.*

# Group Activities

## *Exercise: Turning Hurtful Moves into Helpful Moves*

We have been learning about feelings, self-talk and beliefs and how they affect our behavior. Now we want to see how they all work together to affect the choices we make.

Refer the group to *Turning Hurtful Moves into Helpful Moves (Part A)* in their workbooks. Explain that this exercise presents a scenario and shows the feelings, self-talk and beliefs associated with a helpful move and the feelings, self-talk and beliefs associated with a hurtful move.

Read the scenario and go over the hurtful moves and helpful moves. When discussing self-talk, explain that negative thinking often includes "shoulds" and "blamers" or "put-downs." Shoulds are when we think about what others *should* do. Blamers are when we blame the problem on others. Put-downs are when we try to make people feel bad about themselves. Tamers are thoughts that help you calm down and solve a problem.

After the group has had some discussion about hurtful moves and helpful moves, refer them to *Turning Hurtful Moves into Helpful Moves (Part B)*. This page has a scenario and blank space in each box. Ask group members to fill in the boxes with their ideas of what the person might feel, think, believe and do. This exercise can be done in small groups or pairs. When they have completed the exercise, have them share their answers with the group.

## ***Exercise: Turning Your Own Hurtful Moves into Helpful Moves***

Refer the group to *Turning Your Own Hurtful Moves into Helpful Moves* in the workbook. Ask group members to think of a situation when they were violent or abusive (it might be the incidents that brought them to Step-Up), and write it in the blank space at the top of the page. Then, have the group members go to the *Hurtful Moves* side of the page and write down the self-talk, feelings and beliefs that they might have had that led to the abusive action. Have the group members go to the *Helpful Moves* side of the page and fill in different self-talk, feelings and beliefs that would have helped them use nonabusive behavior. Finally, have group members write down the feelings and behavior that might have resulted from the change in their thinking and beliefs.

Have group members share their answers with the group.

# Worksheets

## *Turning Hurtful Moves into Helpful Moves (Part A)*

Scenario: Jason gets up one hour late and misses his bus. He asks his mom for a ride. She is going to work and doesn't have time.

<b><i>Hurtful Moves</i></b>	<b><i>Helpful Moves</i></b>
<p><b>I Think/Self-Talk</b></p> <p><i>You Should</i> "You should give me a ride."</p> <p><i>Blamers/Put-Downs</i> If you got me up on time, I wouldn't have missed the bus."</p>	<p><b>I Think/Self-Talk</b></p> <p><i>I Can</i> "I messed up but I can figure it out."</p> <p><i>Tamers</i> "Mom isn't responsible for my being late; she needs to get to work on time.""</p>
<p><b>I Feel</b> Resentful, helpless, controlled</p>	<p><b>I Feel</b> Frustrated, anxious, worried, motivated, competent, able</p>
<p><b>Behavior</b> Jason yells at her and calls her a name.</p>	<p><b>Behavior</b> Jason takes the city bus to school.</p>
<p><b>I Believe</b> Other people are responsible when things go wrong. I have the right to yell and call names when someone doesn't do what I want.</p>	<p><b>I Believe</b> I am responsible for figuring out solutions to my own problems. I don't have the right to yell and call names when I don't get what I want. Other people's needs are important.</p>

## ***Turning Hurtful Moves into Helpful Moves (Part B)***

Scenario: It's 11:30 p.m. and Terry is 30 minutes late for his curfew. He was at a party and didn't want to leave. Terry is mad at his mom because he thinks 11:00 p.m. is too early for a curfew.

<b><i>Hurtful Moves</i></b>	<b><i>Helpful Moves</i></b>
<b>I Think/Self-Talk</b>  <i>You Should</i>  <i>Blamers/Put-Downs</i>	<b>I Think/Self-Talk</b>  <i>I Can</i>  Tamers
<b>I Feel</b>	<b>I Feel</b>
<b>Behavior</b>	<b>Behavior</b>
<b>I Believe</b>	<b>I Believe</b>

## *Turning Your Own Hurtful Moves into Helpful Moves*

Think of a difficult situation in your life and describe it below, then fill out the worksheet for your situation.

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<i>Hurtful Moves</i>	<i>Helpful Moves</i>
<b>I Think/Self-Talk</b> <i>You Should</i>  <i>Blamers/Put-Downs</i>	<b>I Think/Self-Talk</b> <i>I Can</i>  Tamers
<b>I Feel</b>	<b>I Feel</b>
<b>Behavior</b>	<b>Behavior</b>
<b>I Believe</b>	<b>I Believe</b>





# Session 12: Accountability

## Teen Session

### *Background Information*

In this session teens will learn how to be accountable for their abusive and violent behavior. In the Step-Up program we define accountability as acknowledging one's own abusive/violent behavior and how the behavior has had a harmful effect on others.

It is important to have teens practice talking about their abusive/violent behavior without denying, justifying, or minimizing it, and without blaming the other person. They should also talk about how their behavior affects others and their relationships.

You may also want to encourage the teens to notice when other group members are not being accountable and teach them how to point out the avoidance in a respectful way. For example, tell the teens to say things like, "It sounds like you are minimizing" or "I think you are blaming your mom for your behavior." With your permission and modeling, teens will start to help each other be accountable for their behavior.

### *Goals*

To define accountability

To recognize how we avoid accountability

To learn ways to show accountability by making amends

To learn how to take responsibility for our behavior

### *Important Messages*

The first steps in changing an abusive/violent behavior are to acknowledge that you are using the behavior and to recognize how it is a problem.

You are responsible for your own abusive/violent behavior, regardless of what the other person said or did that upset you.

### ***Session Overview***

*Check in, review goal progress, and review take-home activities.*

*Separate into parent and teen groups.*

*Discussion: What is Accountability.*

*Discussion: What People Do Instead of Being Accountable.*

*Exercise: Accountability Scenarios.*

# Group Activities

## *Discussion: What Is Accountability?*

Begin the group with the following discussion questions:

1. What does it mean to be accountable? What do people do to be accountable about something they did?  
Example: Just say what you did; be honest.
2. Think of a time when you saw someone be accountable when that person did something wrong. The person could be a friend, a parent, a teacher, or anyone you know. What did you feel about this person?  
Example: "I remember when a friend lost a CD I loaned him. I was glad that he just told me right away and paid me back as soon as he could. I didn't mind loaning him another CD because I knew I could trust him."
3. What are some of the ways our society holds people accountable?  
Examples: Going to court; getting arrested.
4. What is the difference between being accountable for yourself and having accountability imposed on you?  
Example: When a person chooses to be accountable, it shows he or she has personal strength. When a person is forced to be accountable, his or her accountability doesn't carry as much weight or have as much value.
5. Who are you accountable to?  
Examples: Friends, parents, teachers, probation officers.
6. What makes it hard to be accountable when you've done something wrong?  
Examples: fear of punishment, shame, embarrassment.
7. What feelings do you have when you've decided you've done something wrong?  
Examples: Guilt, shame, embarrassment.
8. What do people sometimes do instead of being accountable?  
Examples: deny, justify, minimize, and blame.

9. How does being accountable help someone change his or her abusive/violent behavior?  
Example: Accountability shows that the person recognizes that he or she wants or needs to change.

### ***Discussion: What People Do Instead of Being Accountable***

Ask group members to turn to these words in their workbook and ask the group for definitions or examples of each word in relation to abuse/violence.

**Deny:** Saying the behavior never happened.

**Justify:** Saying that abusive/violent behavior is OK under certain circumstances.

**Minimize:** Saying the behavior is no big deal. Making it sound less serious than it was.

**Blame:** Saying that the behavior was caused by another person or by something else besides you.

After participants come up with definitions and examples, tell the group: "When you are able to talk about your abusive or violent behavior without denying, justifying, minimizing, or blaming, you are showing you are able to take responsibility and be accountable for your behavior. This can be a difficult thing to do. It is particularly challenging when you believe that the other person was wrong or when you don't agree with the other person." Tell the group that for the remainder of the sessions, you will be working on strategies for being accountable and working through problems without denying, justifying, minimizing, or blaming.

Tell the group that as a start, they can help each other by pointing out, during check-in, when they hear someone denying, justifying, minimizing, or blaming to excuse his or her abusive/violent behavior.

### ***Exercise: Accountability Scenarios***

Refer group to **Accountability Scenarios** in workbook. Read the scenarios and discuss the questions at the end of each scenario. This

exercise can also be done in small groups, and come back together to share answers.

### ***Take-Home Activities***

Refer the group to the *Accountability for My Behavior* worksheet in their workbooks. Ask them to write about an abusive behavior they have used in their families without denying, justifying, minimizing or blaming. Tell them they will share their responses with group at check-in next week.

# Worksheets

## *What People Do Instead of Being Accountable:*

- Denying:

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- Justifying:

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- Minimizing:

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- Blaming:

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## ***Accountability Scenarios***

Jeff is 14 years old. He has tryouts for the basketball team at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday morning. He asks his Mom, Rita, to wake him up at 6:30 a.m. so he can get ready. Rita says, "I will try to wake you up but I have to leave for work at 6:45, so you better set you alarm." Jeff says, "OK." He stays up until 11:00 p.m. surfing the Web and forgets to set his alarm. Rita wakes him up at 6:30 a.m. She leaves for work. Jeff goes back to sleep and wakes up at 9:00 a.m. Then he calls Rita at work and says, "You didn't wake me up. You made me miss tryouts. You're so selfish. You care about your job more than you care about me."

1. Is the abusive/violent person denying, justifying, minimizing, or blaming? How?

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2. What could the abusive/violent person in this situation do to be accountable?

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Pete likes to play computer games on the Internet. His mother gets upset sometimes because Pete ties up the telephone line. One time after his mother told him to get off the Internet, Pete grabbed a hockey stick he had in his room and said that if she didn't leave him alone he was going to hit her with it. He waved the stick at her like he

was going to hit her. She ran out of the room. Later, Pete said what he did wasn't so bad because he didn't actually hit her like he had done one other time.

1. Is the abusive/violent person denying, justifying, minimizing, or blaming? How?

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2. What could the abusive/violent person in this situation do to be accountable?

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Randy hates to vacuum the living room floor. His mother said he has to do certain chores each week since he's a member of the household. Randy spends a lot of time in his room and doesn't think he should have to clean the living room. After his mother asked him to do housework, Randy told her to "shut up." His mother got upset and started to cry. Then Randy said she was always whining and had no backbone. Randy said he was just expressing his anger and didn't see why his mother always acted so "wimpy."

1. Is the abusive/violent person denying, justifying, minimizing, or blaming? How?

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2. What could the abusive/violent person in this situation do to be accountable?
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Jeremy asks to borrow his friend Tim's mountain bike. Tim says, "OK, but be sure to lock it. Here's the lock." Jeremy rides to his girlfriend's house and leaves the bike leaning against the porch. He spends two hours with her and when he comes out, the bike is gone. He tells Tim, "Hey some jerk stole the bike. The house is in a bad neighborhood." Tim is upset. He asks Jeremy, "What are you going to do about the bike?" Jeremy says, "Oh come on, it's just a bike. My brother's friend Ted had his Harley stolen!"

1. Is the abusive/violent person denying, justifying, minimizing, or blaming? How?
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2. What could the abusive/violent person in this situation do to be accountable?
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Paul and Christie are seeing each other, and tonight, they are going to a party together. Christie shows up at Paul's house wearing a short, tight

skirt and a clingy top. Paul looks at her for a while, and then he calls her a slut and tells her she must be trying to get with other guys. She says she wore it because she likes the way it looks and she thought he'd like it. He says, "Don't lie to me." He slaps her. She starts to cry. He says, "If you didn't show up dressed like a slut this wouldn't have happened."

1. Is the abusive/violent person denying, justifying, minimizing, or blaming? How?

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2. What could the abusive/violent person in this situation do to be accountable?

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Amy has been on the phone with her friend for an hour. Her mom has to make a call and tells Amy to get off the phone. Amy ignores her. After asking Amy five different times, Amy's mom disconnects the phone. Amy and her mom start to argue. Amy pushes her mom and her mom falls onto the coffee table, cutting her head. Her head is bleeding. Amy's mom says, "You really hurt me this time! This has to stop." Amy says, "Why are you making such a big fuss? You should be careful not to trip over things."

1. Is the abusive/violent person denying, justifying, minimizing, or blaming? How?

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2. What could the abusive/violent person in this situation do to be accountable?
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Mr. Franklin is a high school science teacher who doesn't like teaching. He thinks the kids are stupid and badly behaved. Every morning he writes the whole lesson the board, and he spends the entire class reading it out loud. One day, all the kids in the class start laughing and talking and throwing things. Mr. Franklin says, "You are all a bunch of idiots! I'm going to fail everyone in this class."

1. Is the abusive/violent person denying, justifying, minimizing, or blaming? How?
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2. What could the abusive/violent person in this situation do to be accountable?
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Randy thinks of himself as a "good guy." He never gets into fights and is generally good-natured. Randy and his friends are walking by the school and they see Jim, who everyone says is gay. Jim is walking by himself. Bob (one of Randy's friends) says, "Hey, let's get the faggot!"

They surround Jim and taunt him for a while. Randy joins in. Then someone pushes Jim, and Randy and all of his friends stand over him and threaten him. Someone spits on him. Bob kicks him in the stomach. When they walk away, Randy says, "That little queer. He deserved it."

1. Is the abusive/violent person denying, justifying, minimizing, or blaming? How?

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2. What could the abusive/violent person in this situation do to be accountable?

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Dennis has a two-year-old son, Jeff. One night, Dennis's wife goes out with her friends and leaves Dennis alone to take care of Jeff. Jeff is cranky and he keeps whining. When Jeff refuses to eat his dinner, Dennis smacks him hard across the face. When Dennis's wife gets home, she notices that Jeff has a red handprint on his face. She asks Dennis what happened. Dennis says, "He wouldn't eat his dinner. I had to make him behave."

1. Is the abusive/violent person denying, justifying, minimizing, or blaming? How?

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2. What could the abusive/violent person in this situation do to be accountable?

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Ron works in a company mailroom. Mr. Swenson, a sales manager, brings a package down to the mailroom when Ron is at lunch. He leaves a note on it that says, "Please mail this out soon." Ron gets back from lunch and has a lot of work to do. He goes home without mailing the package. The next morning, Mr. Swenson calls Ron and asks if he mailed the package. Ron says, "No." Mr. Swenson yells at Ron and curses him out. "I told you it needed to go out yesterday," he says. "Are you just too stupid to do your job?"

1. Is the abusive/violent person denying, justifying, minimizing, or blaming? How?

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2. What could the abusive/violent person in this situation do to be accountable?

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Josh and his mom are arguing about the fact that Josh comes home late every night. Josh punches his mom. She calls the police and when

the police come, Josh says, "I never punched her. She bumped into a wall and hurt herself."

1. Is the abusive/violent person denying, justifying, minimizing, or blaming? How?

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2. What could the abusive/violent person in this situation do to be accountable?

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Lisa has a tank full of tropical fish. She is going away for three weeks at Christmas and she asks her friend Nora to feed the fish every other day. Nora promises she'll do that. Nora feeds the fish every other day for two weeks, but then she goes to stay with her boyfriend, who lives on the other side of town. When Lisa gets back from her trip, all the fish are dead. She is upset. She calls Nora and says that Nora really let her down and should get her some new fish. Nora says, "Stop tripping. If you were so worried about your fish, you shouldn't have gone away."

1. Is the abusive/violent person denying, justifying, minimizing, or blaming? How?

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2. What could the abusive/violent person in this situation do to be accountable?

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Stephanie and Rob have been seeing each other for a year. Then Rob starts seeing Tonya too. One night Stephanie drives past Rob's house and she sees Rob and Tonya out on the porch, kissing. The next day, Stephanie finds Rob's car in the parking lot at school and slashes his tires. Rob asks her why she did it. "You asked for it," Stephanie says.

1. Is the abusive/violent person denying, justifying, minimizing, or blaming? How?

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2. What could the abusive/violent person in this situation do to be accountable?
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### ***Accountability for My Behavior***

Without denying, justifying, minimizing or blaming, describe an abusive/violent behavior you used with someone in your family.

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# Session 13: Making Amends

## Teen and Parent Session

### *Background Information*

The second part of being accountable for abusive or violent behavior is to repair the harm or damage caused by the behavior. In this session teens learn specific things they can do to make amends for their behavior when they have been abusive or violent.

Parents are involved in this session because they can help teens think of ways to make amends for abusive/violent behavior in the family. This session also helps parents learn ways they can help their teens be accountable for their abusive/violent behavior in the home.

You may want to use the questions on the back of the abuse and respect wheels to help teens think through how they can make amends for abusive/violent behaviors when they check in.

### *Goals*

To learn to show accountability by identifying specific things that can be done to make amends for abusive/violent behavior

To identify ways to repair relationships

### *Important Messages*

Making amends is a way to take responsibility for your behavior by repairing damage caused by your behavior.

Making amends is different from saying "I'm sorry."

The best way to make amends is to stop using abusive and violent behavior.

Repairing damage in a relationship is a long-term process.

## ***Session Overview***

*Check in, review goal progress, and review take-home activities.*

*Separate into parent and teen groups.*

*Discussion: Making Amends.*

*Exercise: Making Amends Scenarios*

*Exercise: Making Amends Worksheet*

# Group Activities

## *Discussion: Making Amends*

Begin by telling the group that when you hurt someone physically or emotionally, or you do something that causes a problem for another person, you can take responsibility for your behavior by doing something to repair the damage or hurt caused by the behavior, or by doing something to fix the problem created by the behavior. We call this **making amends**.

Ask the group:

1. What are some of the kinds of damage or harm that can be caused by abuse and violence? (List responses under the following headings: Physical, Emotional, Relationship.)
2. What are some ways to repair the damage or harm caused by the abusive/violent behavior?

Share the following different ideas for making amends if the teens don't come up with these ideas themselves:

Acknowledge that you were wrong.

Help fix the problem that was created by your actions.

Repair something that has been damaged or pay to have it fixed.

Help the person in some way.

Do something special for the person that shows you care about him or her.

Ask the person what you can do to make amends.

Discuss the following points:

Saying "I'm sorry" is not the same as making amends. People often apologize when they want the other person to forget what was done to him or her. Making amends involves taking concrete action to make things better. Most people who have been harmed feel better when action is taken to make things right.

When you do something to make amends for an abusive or violent incident, it doesn't mean everything will be just fine and go back to the way it was before the incident. The victim probably won't say, "That's okay, I'm not mad anymore." He or she may be angry and upset with you for a while. The purpose of making amends is not to get the person to "forgive" you or tell you everything is okay. The purpose of making amends is to take responsibility for your behavior, take action to fix damage or resolve problems created by the behavior, and put effort into improving the relationship with the person.

It is not always clear what to do to make amends. When something has been broken, such as a door or wall, part of making amends is to fix it or contribute money to get it fixed. It is more difficult to come up with ideas about how to make amends when someone is emotionally hurt.

### ***Exercise: Making Amends Scenarios***

Refer the group to the *Making Amends* worksheet in their workbooks.

Have group members take turns reading the scenarios and brainstorm ideas for making amends, or break into small groups/pairs and have each group write down ideas for each scenario and then share the ideas with the large group. Write all ideas on the board.

### ***Take-Home Activities***

Refer the group to the *Making Amends* worksheet in their workbooks.

Ask teens to think of a time when they were abusive/violent to someone in their families and write down at least three things they could have done to make amends for the behavior.

# Worksheets

## *Making Amends*

When you hurt someone (physically or emotionally), or you do something that causes a problem for another person, you can take responsibility for your behavior by doing something to make amends.

**There are a lot of different ways to make amends:**

Acknowledge that you were wrong.

Help fix the problem that was created by your actions.

Repair something that has been damaged or pay to have it fixed.

Help the person in some way.

Do something special for the person that shows you care about him or her.

Ask the person what you can do to make amends.

**What are other ways?**

## ***Making Amends Scenarios***

How could the people in the following scenarios make amends?

1. Terry was hurrying through the grocery store and he accidentally rammed his grocery cart into a woman who was holding an armful of groceries. The groceries fell to the floor.
2. Alice spilled soda all over her brother's paper that he had just completed for homework.
3. Tom was supposed to be home at 4:00 to baby-sit so his mom could go to the doctor. He came home at 5:00 and his mom missed the appointment.
4. Shelley and her little brother were arguing because they each wanted to watch a different show on TV at the same time. Shelley got mad at her brother and pushed him down so hard he bumped his head on the table.
5. Larry's mom was upset with him because he had not been home very much over the last three days and had not done his chores or any homework. As Larry's mom was telling him what he needed to do, he started yelling at her, called her names and pushed her.
6. Kate asked her mom for a ride to a friend's house. Her mom said she was too busy and couldn't do it. Kate said, "Fine, I'll just walk!" As she was getting her coat out of the closet she slammed the door really hard and then kicked it, leaving a dent in the door.

## ***Making Amends Worksheet***

Think of a time when you were abusive or violent to a family member. Write down three things you could do to make amends. (Remember that saying you are sorry is not making amends.)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

# Session 14: Responsibility

## Teen Session

### *Background Information*

This session teaches teens a specific technique for taking responsibility for their actions. Before people can change their behavior, they have to acknowledge they are using behaviors they want to change. Asking teens to acknowledge their behaviors in writing is one powerful step toward making change.

The goal is for every teen to write a responsibility letter to the person who was a victim of his or her abuse or violence. This may take more than one session. Some teens may be able to work on writing their letters at home. Writing is a challenge for some teens and you may need to spend individual time with them and have them do the letters orally while you write the letters for them. Each teen will read his or her responsibility letter in the group with his or her parent present, before completion of the program. One way to do this is to have one teen read his or her letter each week following check-in, while the parents are still in the group. Another option is to have each teen read his or her responsibility letter to his or her parent at the last session of the program.

The instructor should review each teen's letter and edit it with the teen before the teen reads it in the group. You are editing it to be sure the teen has covered each of the questions and to ensure that the teen makes changes if he or she is denying, justifying, minimizing, or blaming.

## ***Goals***

To compose a responsibility letter to the victim of the teen's abuse/violence, acknowledging the abusive/violent behavior without denying, justifying, minimizing, or blaming

To identify taking responsibility as empowering

## ***Important Messages***

Taking responsibility for abusive and violent behavior is a sign of personal strength.

Taking responsibility for abusive and violent behavior is a first step toward changing behavior.

Taking responsibility is a way to start repairing a relationship.

## ***Session Overview***

*Check in, review goal progress, and review take-home activities.*

*Separate into parent and teen groups.*

*Discussion: What is a Responsibility Letter.*

*Discussion: Sample Responsibility Letter.*

*Exercise: Two Versions of What Happened.*

*Exercise: Practice Responsibility Letter*

*Exercise: Writing the Responsibility Letter.*



# Group Activities

## ***Discussion: What Is a Responsibility Letter?***

Begin the group by reminding participants that an important part of changing their abusive behavior is being accountable to those people they abused. A responsibility letter is one way to do that. Have the group turn to the *What Is a Responsibility Letter* worksheet in their workbooks. Go over the instructions with them.

## ***Discussion: Sample Responsibility Letter***

Refer the group to *Sample Responsibility Letter* in the workbook and read through the questions and responses to each question.

## ***Exercise: Two Versions of Describing What Happened***

Refer the group to *Two Versions of Describing What Happened* in their workbooks. Have a group participant read these two versions of a responsibility letter. Both letters are about the same incident, but are written based on two different ways of thinking about the incident.

## ***Exercise: Practice Responsibility Letter***

This exercise gives teens a chance to practice writing a responsibility letter before they write their own letters. Refer the group to the *Practice Responsibility Letter* in their workbooks. This exercise can be done as a large group (with the instructor writing the letter on the board) or in small groups.

## ***Exercise: Writing the Responsibility Letter***

Now, tell the teens that you want each of them to write a responsibility letter to a family member about an incident in which the teen was abusive or violent to that family member. Ask each teen to give a brief description of the incident he or she is going to write about before he or she begins. They can begin the letter by answering

the questions on the worksheet. Let them know you will be collecting their letters when they are through.

If possible, spend some time with each participant to discuss his or her letter. Give him or her some tips on how to revise it, if necessary.

Point out any denying, minimizing, blaming or justifying in the letter.

Tell group members they will be reading their letters during a group session.

See *Background Information* regarding options for reading letters in the group.

### ***Take-Home Activities***

Have group members continue to work on their responsibility letters at home.

# Worksheets

## *What Is a Responsibility Letter?*

An important part of changing your abusive or violent behavior is looking at the choices you made during conflicts in the past. You are going to write a letter to a family member, describing an incident when you were abusive or violent toward him or her. This letter will not actually be sent to the person, but it will be written as if he or she were going to read it. In it, you will describe the behaviors you used without denying that you used these behaviors, minimizing the impact the behaviors had, or blaming the person for your choice of behaviors.

Here's how you do it:

1. You decide what incident you are going to write about and let your counselor know about it. You may do this during group session time when everyone will talk about what they are going to write about, or you may talk about it to your counselor apart from the group.
2. After your counselor approves the incident you will write about, use the blank letter in the worksheet and answer the questions.
4. The responsibility letter is not meant to be a writing assignment. If you have any problems with spelling or grammar, don't worry.
5. Give your letter to your counselor. He or she will read it and may ask you to make changes to it.
6. After you make all the changes, you will read the letter to the group.

## ***Sample Responsibility Letter***

*Dear Mom,*

**Describe what happened when you were arrested or had an abusive/violent incident. Be clear about what you did on the abuse wheel.**

*I'm writing to you about what I did on May 5. The argument was about me coming home late. I came home at 11:00 p.m. and went to my room. You came into my room a couple of minutes later. You asked me where I had been. I told you before I left that I'd be home at 10:00 p.m. I got loud and told you it was none of your business where I was. I told you to "get out of my room." You said you were sick of me talking to you that way and you wanted more respect. Tommy (my 7-year-old brother) came out of his room and told me not to call you names. I told him to shut up. Then he said, "I hate you." I kicked my foot toward him and said, "You better get out of here." He left crying. Then I started pushing you toward the door and I raised my hand like I was going to hit you. You screamed and I said, "Just shut up and get out." You were in the doorway and I pushed you down into the hallway. I slammed the door and locked it so you couldn't get back in. Then I turned on my stereo so loud that the windows were rattling. About ten minutes later the police came to my door.*

**What negative thoughts were you having that may have led to your abusive behavior?**

*At the time, I didn't think you had the right to ask me where I had been. I thought it was my business. I knew that when I got loud, you'd get scared. I was hoping you'd back down and just go back to bed.*

**What were you feeling?**

*When you ask me where I've been or what I've been doing, I feel like a little kid. I get angry and I feel humiliated.*

**What did you want your family member to do or stop doing?**

*I wanted you to say it was okay that I was late. I wanted you to let me do whatever I wanted without having to answer to you. I wanted you to leave me alone.*

**How could you have expressed your feelings in a respectful way?**

*I could have told you that I feel like a little kid when you question me and worry about me when I'm late. I could have called you to say that I was OK and told you that I'd be home at 11:00 p.m. I could have asked you if we could take a time out and talk about it tomorrow.*

**How did your abusive/violent actions affect other people in your family?**

*I hurt your back when I pushed you down. I know I scared you when I yelled at you, called you names and threatened to hit you. I also think you must be sad that your own son would do these things to you. After Dad left, we were so close for a while, but in the last couple of years, we've had more and more arguments. I know you have a lot of hopes and dreams for me and you must feel disappointed that I'm acting this way.*

*I also know Tommy is scared of me sometimes. When we were playing together the other day, he flinched when I raised my hand. I was just reaching up to get something. I never realized he was so afraid of me until he did that. When you and I argue, I've seen him in his room crying. One time he said, "You're just like Dad." That really pissed me off, but I realized later he was right.*

**What were the consequences to you?**

*I got arrested. I spent 3 days in detention. I went to court. I have to go to this program and do community service. When I was in detention, I was really pissed off at you. I thought it was all your fault. Now I realize I did some stupid things and might end up living in some foster home somewhere if I don't watch out. I don't feel good about what I'm doing to you and Tommy. I don't want to end up like Dad. He's all alone now.*

### **What could you have done differently?**

*Most of all, I need to think about what I'm going to say before I say it. When I'm upset, I say the first thing that comes to my head. That means I get loud, swear and start ordering people around. That's not right. You have to give people respect to get it. I'm trying to watch what I say and how I say it. I could have done all this on May 5.*

*I could have admitted to you that I was an hour late. I could have acknowledged that you had a right to worry about me and want me home on time. I didn't have to turn on the stereo so loud like I did. That was just to piss you off. Just not yelling can make a big difference.*

### **What would be a way to take responsibility for your behavior and make amends?**

*I know you will want me to do certain things because of what I did. I should be a man and do what you ask. I'll probably be grounded for a while and have extra chores around the house. I have to show that you can trust me again.*

*I'd like to make a plan with you about how to handle this kind of situation in the future.*

*I should also tell my brother that what I did was wrong. I should do something with him or just spend time with him so he can respect me again. I don't want him to do the things I did to you.*

*Most of all, I need to show both of you that when we disagree, you don't have to be afraid that I'll yell or swear or break something. I don't want you to be afraid of me.*

## ***Two Versions of Describing What Happened***

### **Version 1**

*I'm writing to you about what happened on May 5. I can't remember what we argued about except that when I came home you started nagging me about something. I didn't want to listen to it and just wanted to go to bed so I went into my room. I was really getting fed up with your complaining. I had to raise my voice so you would listen to me.*

*I went to my room and you followed me there. I asked you to leave my room and let me sleep. You just kept going on and on. Then Tommy got up and he started whining about something. I told him to go back to bed. He started crying like a baby for some reason. I don't know why. He finally went back to bed.*

*If you would have left, there wouldn't have been any problem. I shoved you a little to get you out so I could go to bed. I asked you to leave again. You didn't look where you were going and you fell in the hallway. Then you blamed it on me. I couldn't believe it. I turned on my radio to try to calm down and you called the police. You blew the whole thing out of proportion.*

### **Version 2**

*I'm writing to you about what I did on May 5. The argument was about me coming home late. I came home at 11:00 p.m. and went to my room. You came into my room a couple of minutes later. You asked me where I had been. I told you before I left that I'd be home at 10:00 p.m. I got loud and told you it was none of your business where I was. I told you to "get out of my room." You said you were sick of me talking to you that way and you wanted more respect. Tommy (my 7-year-old brother) came out of his room and told me not to call you names. I told him to shut up. Then he said, "I hate you." I kicked my foot toward him and said, "You better get out of here." He left crying. Then I started pushing you toward the door and I raised my hand like I was going to hit you. You screamed and I said, "Just shut up and get out." You were*

*in the doorway and I pushed you down into the hallway. I slammed the door and locked it so you couldn't get back in. Then I turned on my stereo so loud that the windows were rattling. About ten minutes later the police came to my door.*

After you have read the two versions, answer the following questions:

1. How are these two descriptions different?
2. In the first version, which statements in the first paragraph are denying, justifying, minimizing, and blaming? In the second paragraph? In the third paragraph?
3. How does the second version show accountability?
4. How would the parent respond to the two different versions?
5. How would the parent feel about each version?
6. Which version requires more thought?
7. Which version would be more difficult to write?
8. Which version shows more consideration for others?

### ***Practice Responsibility Letter***

Read the scenario below and answer the questions as if you are Chris in the story.

Chris comes home and his mom says she just got a call from school saying he was not in school that day. Chris's mom says, "Where were you all day? I thought you were in school." Chris says, "I was in school. The people in the attendance office are a bunch of crackheads." Chris's mom says, "So I'm going to call your teachers to make sure you were in school." Chris says, "What, you don't believe me?" Chris's mom starts walking toward the telephone and says, "I'm just going to make sure." Chris's mom picks up the telephone. Chris grabs the telephone out of her hand and throws it against the wall. Mom walks toward him, saying,



"Chris, stop!" He pushes her away, saying, "You stupid b\_\_\_\_\_. Stay out of my business." Chris's mom leaves the house and calls the police.

*Dear Mom,*

**Describe what happened when you were arrested or had an abusive/violent incident. Be clear about what you did on the abuse wheel.**

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**What negative thoughts were you having that may have led to your abusive behavior?**

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**What were you feeling?**

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**What did you want your family member to do or stop doing?**

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**How could you have expressed your feelings in a respectful way?**

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**How did your abusive/violent actions affect other people in your family?**

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**What were the consequences to you?**

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**What could you have done differently?**

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**What would be a way to take responsibility for your behavior and make amends?**

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# Session 15: Assertive Communication

## Teen and Parent Session

### *Background Information*

The purpose of this session is to help teens learn how to communicate their feelings and thoughts in a respectful manner. Often, teens in the program know only three ways to communicate negative feelings: They become aggressive and disrespectful when they try to get their point across, or they become passive and don't say anything at all to avoid conflict, or they become passive-aggressive. In any case, they do not feel anyone has heard them.

The assertive communication techniques covered in this session help teens and parents communicate respectfully with one another. Parents should practice the same techniques so that they can model assertive communication for their teens.

Be sure to stress throughout the session that assertive communication is not a tactic to get one's way. The purpose is to let the other person know how one feels and thinks about a situation.

You should also encourage the use of assertive communication during the remaining sessions of the program. Point out when a teen or parent has an opportunity to change an aggressive or passive statement into an assertive one. Over time, the whole group will benefit from such reminders.

### *Goals*

To examine different styles of communication

To learn skills for assertive communication

To learn how to use "I" statements

## ***Important Messages***

Assertive communication is a way to express your feelings and thoughts respectfully.

You can respond to a difficult situation without being aggressive or passive.

Assertive communication helps others hear your point of view, but it is not necessarily going to get you what you want.

## ***Session Overview***

*Check in, review goal progress, and review take-home activities.*

*Discussion: Styles of Communication.*

*Exercise: Styles of Communication Scenarios*

*Exercise: Practicing Assertive Communication*

# Group Activities

## *Discussion: Styles of Communication*

Begin the group with the following explanation:

There are four different ways that a person typically responds when he or she is upset or in disagreement with another person. One way is to respond by verbally attacking the other person and saying why he or she is wrong. It often involves criticism and put-downs, and does not involve listening to the other person's point of view. We call this **aggressive** communication.

The second way to respond is just the opposite of aggressive communication, and is called **passive** communication. The passive communicator does not say what he or she thinks or feels and tries to act like he or she is not bothered by the situation. The person usually acts like this to avoid conflict.

The third way is a combination of these two styles and is called **passive-aggressive** communication. This is when someone responds indirectly about his or her feelings by doing things to let the other person know he or she is mad, but never really saying what he or she thinks or feels. An example would be someone who sarcastically says "fine" and walks out of the room and slams the door.

There is a fourth way of communicating that is not passive or aggressive. Does anyone know what it is?

Guide the group to come up with ideas by asking:

1. Is there a way you can be direct about what you think and feel without criticizing, blaming, or using put-downs?
2. How would you do this?

After the group has discussed some of their ideas, explain the following:

The fourth way of communicating is called **assertive** communication.

When someone communicates assertively, that person shows respect for the other person and self-respect. An assertive person talks about his or her feelings and thoughts in a way that shows respect and consideration of the other person. An assertive person is respectful to himself or herself by being direct and honest.

If you feel the group needs more help understanding these styles of communication, go over the definitions in the *Styles of Communication* worksheet in the workbook.

### ***Exercise: Styles of Communication Scenarios***

Refer the group to *Styles of Communication Scenarios* in the workbook. Have group members read each scenario and identify the responses as assertive, passive, passive-aggressive or aggressive.

This can be done individually or in pairs. When everyone is finished, read each scenario and ask the group to identify the responses.

### ***Exercise: Practicing Assertive Communication***

Refer the group to the *Practicing Assertive Communication* worksheet in the workbook. Have the group divide into pairs, read each scenario, and write an assertive response to each situation. Have each pair share what they wrote with the group when finished.

### ***Take-Home Activities***

Ask group members to practice using assertive communication this week. Suggest that they pay attention to opportunities to tell people their feelings or thoughts in an assertive way. They can write down what they said in the blank space under *My Assertive Communication* at the bottom of the *Practicing Assertive Communication* worksheet.

# Worksheets

## *Styles of Communication*

### **Aggressive Style**

A person communicating in an aggressive style expresses his or her feelings in a way that violates the rights of another person. The aggressive person uses humiliation, criticism, sarcasm, insults or threats to get his or her point across.

The goal of aggressive communication is to dominate the situation and win at the other person's expense.

The aggressive person is giving the message: I'm right and you're wrong. Your feelings are not important. I don't need to listen to what you have to say. My view is the only one that matters.

### **Passive Style**

A person communicating in a passive style does not say what he or she is feeling or thinking. The passive person gives in to other people's requests, demands or feelings and does not acknowledge his or her own feelings, concerns or wants. When the person does express his or her feelings, it is usually in an apologetic or timid way so that it's easy for other people to ignore him or her.

The goal of passive communication is to play it safe, not rock the boat, put everyone else's needs first and avoid conflict at all costs.

The passive person is communicating the message: I don't count. What I need is not important. You don't have to take my feelings into account.

### **Passive-Aggressive Style**

A person communicating in a passive-aggressive style uses more hidden forms of aggression to express his or her feelings. The goal is to give the other person the message without having to say it directly.

### **Assertive Style**

A person communicating in an assertive style stands up for his or her personal rights and expresses thoughts, feelings and beliefs in direct, honest and appropriate ways. The person conveys his or her message without dominating, criticizing or degrading the other person.

The goal of assertive communication is to honestly state your feelings, and show respect for the other person's position as well. The assertive person is communicating the message: The feelings and needs of both of us are important. I am telling you what I need, and I also want to know what you need so that we can both be satisfied.



## ***Styles of Communication Scenarios***

Read each scenario and identify which of the responses is passive, aggressive, passive-aggressive, and assertive. Write Pa, Ag, Pa-Ag, or As next to each response.

*1) Nancy's 15-year-old son, Jeff, is supposed to be home by 9:00 p.m. He shows up at 11:30. Nancy has been waiting up for him and she is upset and worried. She could:*

- a) Greet him and ask him how he's doing. \_\_\_\_
- b) Start shouting at him when he comes in and telling him he's irresponsible and worthless. \_\_\_\_
- c) Not say anything, but the next morning leave for work without giving him a ride to school as she usually does. \_\_\_\_
- d) Say, "I've been really worried about you. I need you to come home on time, and if you're not going to do that, I need you to call me and tell me what you're doing." \_\_\_\_

*2) Ron is getting ready to go out with his girlfriend. His dad comes in and tells him to mow the lawn. Ron could:*

- a) Say, "I already told you I'm going out with Denise. Why are you always trying to mess with my life?" \_\_\_\_
- b) Change into his work clothes and get the lawnmower. \_\_\_\_
- c) Say, "I guess you don't remember that you told me I could go out with Denise today. How about if I mow the lawn at 10 a.m. tomorrow?" \_\_\_\_
- d) Go out to mow the lawn and run the mower over a rock, ruining the blade. \_\_\_\_

*3) Rita is getting ready for work one morning. She picks out her favorite white silk blouse, which her daughter, Lucy, borrowed over the weekend. She notices a big brown stain on the front of the blouse. Rita could:*

- a) Put on something else, and send the blouse to the cleaner without saying anything about it. \_\_\_\_
- b) Wake Lucy up and say, "I can't trust you with anything! Get out of bed right now and take this to the cleaner!" \_\_\_\_
- c) Say, "When you borrow my clothes, I need you to return them clean." \_\_\_\_
- d) Not say anything and refuse to give Lucy five dollars that she promised to give her. \_\_\_\_

*4) Your friend has borrowed money for lunch from you three times without repaying it, and now he asks you for another loan. You could:*

- a) Say, "I don't want to lend you anything now because you haven't paid me back from the last three times." \_\_\_\_
- b) Just hand the money over without saying anything. \_\_\_\_
- c) Say, "I'll never help you out with anything again! I don't care if you starve!" \_\_\_\_
- d) Lend him the money, and then tell all your mutual friends what an idiot he is. \_\_\_\_

*5) Olivia and her friend are sitting and talking in the living room. Olivia's son, Jim, is playing a computer game. Jim shouts the "f" word very loudly. Olivia is embarrassed. She could:*

- a) Tell Jim, "Shut up!" \_\_\_\_
- b) Keep talking to her friend, like nothing happened. \_\_\_\_
- c) Say, "Jim, I need you to speak respectfully in our house." \_\_\_\_
- d) Walk over and unplug Jim's computer. \_\_\_\_

## *Practicing Assertive Communication*

Read each situation below and think of an assertive statement that the person could make.

1. John's son, Dave, who is 17, borrowed John's car. When Dave took the car, it was clean and had a full tank of gas. John gets in the car and finds hamburger wrappers and soda cups on the floor, and an empty gas tank. What assertive statement could John make?

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2. Lisa just got on the phone with her friend. She has been doing her laundry and her clothes are in the dryer. Her mom comes in and tells her to get off the phone and get her clothes out of the dryer right away. What assertive statement could Lisa make?

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3. Pat's son, Frank, left a big pile of dirty dishes in the sink. He is in his room, watching TV. What assertive statement could Pat make?

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4. Jay made plans with his friends to meet at the mall Friday night. Friday morning, Jay's mom asks him if he will help that night with preparing for a garage sale she was planning for Sunday. What assertive statement could Jay make?

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5. Loretta was planning on going to an early movie and dinner with a friend. Her 14-year-old son, Neil, asks her to give him a ride to a friend's house at about the same time the movie will start. There is no way she can make it to the movie on time if she takes Neil at the time he wants to be at his friend's house. What assertive statement could Loretta make?

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6. Greg has had a really rough day at school. Things didn't go well at his afternoon job, either. He is exhausted and feeling stressed. He comes home, looking forward to just relaxing in his room and listening to music. His mom tells him she wants him to help her clean the basement. What assertive statement could Greg make?

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7. Craig asked his mom if he could have some friends over for the evening on a night when she is planning to be out. The last time she let Craig have friends over when she was not there, they left a huge mess in the kitchen and living room. What assertive statement could Craig's mom make?

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***My Assertive Communication:***

Think of a situation when you responded aggressively, passively, or passive-aggressively. Think about how you could have responded assertively. Below, write an assertive statement.

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# Session 16: Using "I" Statements

## Teen and Parent Session

### *Background Information*

In addition to teaching another facet of respectful communication, this session prepares participants for the coming sessions on problem solving. The goal is to teach teens and their parents how to talk about a problem without blaming, criticizing, or judging the people with whom they are in conflict. This is a difficult communicative skill to learn. You can help participants learn this skill by prompting them to change their comments into "I" statements when appropriate in this and the remaining sessions of the program.

### *Goals*

To learn how to use an "I" statement

To recognize how "I" statements help people understand each other

### *Important Messages*

"I" statements help you focus on your own experience of a situation.

"I" statements help you avoid blaming and criticizing other people.

Other people usually respond less defensively when they hear "I" statements.

### *Session Overview*

*Check in, review goal progress, and review take-home activities.*

*Discussion What is an "I" Statement?*

*Exercise: "You" Statement versus "I" Statement*

*Exercise: Changing "You" Statements into "I" Statements*

*Exercise: "I" Statement Practice*

# Group Activities

## *Discussion: What is an "I" Statement?*

An "I" statement is a way for a person to give valuable information about how an event or situation affects him or her. By beginning with "I," a person is acknowledging that the statement is how he or she thinks and feels. When you use "I" statements, people usually respond more positively because they are able to hear you and understand you better. When you use "you" statements that blame and accuse, people feel defensive and don't want to listen to you.

The most important skill for effective problem solving is to be able to talk about a problem in a way that helps others hear your point of view—and without criticizing, blaming, or using put-downs. Learning how to state your feelings and point of view in an "I" statement can be a difficult thing to do. At first, many people tend to start the sentence with "I feel..." but then go into the usual blaming and criticizing of the other person. A true "I" statement does not include blame or criticism, and only states the experience of the person speaking. It may need to include information about the behavior of the other person, but this information should be stated in as factual and non-judgmental a way as possible.

Refer group to *What Is an "I" Statement Worksheet* and discuss.

## *Exercise: "You" Statements versus "I" Statements*

Refer group to "You" Statements versus "I" Statements Exercise in workbook. Read statements and discuss how they would respond to each statement.



## ***Exercise: Changing "You" Statements into "I" Statements***

### ***Exercise: "I" Statement Practice***

Have group members divide into pairs and have them write an "I" statement for each of the scenarios in the *"I" Statement Practice* worksheet in the workbook. Then, have the pairs come back together and share answers with the large group.

Have group members fill out the *"I" Statement Exercise* worksheet in the workbook. You can have them complete this individually or as a large group.

### ***Take-Home Activities***

Ask parents and teens to try using "I" statements with each other during the following week.

# Worksheets

## *What Is an "I" Statement?*

An "I" statement:

Describes the behavior or situation that is a problem clearly and specifically, with as few words as possible.

Describes how a person feels or how the situation affects him or her, through "I" sentences.

Does not blame, accuse, criticize, or put down the other person in the conversation.

## *What Is the Purpose of an "I" Statement?*

The purpose of an "I" statement is to give factual information about how an event or situation affects you. When you use "I" statements, people usually respond more positively because they are able to hear you and understand you better. When you use "you" statements that blame and accuse, people feel defensive and don't want to listen to you.

## *How Do I Make an "I" Statement?*

**I feel** (feeling)

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**when** (behavior or situation)

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**because** (how it is a problem for you)

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-or-

**When** (behavior or situation) **happens**, I (what you experience or how it is a problem).

## ***"You" Statements versus "I" Statements***

The following are examples of "you" statements and "I" statements. Consider how you would feel listening to each of these statements. How might you respond to both?

"You" statement:

*"Why do you always lock the door before I get home? You know I'm not home yet. You make me have to knock and knock and you take forever to open it."*

"I" statement:

*"I feel frustrated when I come home and the door is locked. I don't like knocking and knocking because I start to think no one is home and I won't be able to get in."*

1. "You always pick me up late from school. You're never on time. Don't you know I have to be at practice by 3:00? You always make me late."

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2. "I feel frustrated when I don't get picked up by 2:30 because I worry about being late for practice."

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3. "You never listen to me. You are constantly interrupting and being rude. You really have no clue about how to have a conversation."

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4. “When you talk while I’m talking, I get really annoyed because I feel like you aren’t hearing anything I’m saying. I’d like to take turns talking so you can listen to me and I can listen to you.”

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## *Changing "You" Statements into "I" Statements*

Change the following "you" statements into "I" statements:

"You are always late. You are so slow in the morning. I'm going to be late again, thanks to you."

**"I" statement:**

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"You pig. You ate all the chips."

**"I" statement:**

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"You always come barging into my room. Have you ever heard of the word 'privacy' before?"

**"I" statement:**

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## ***"I" Statement Practice***

**Now, write an "I" statement to respond to each of the following situations:**

1. Craig agreed to clean out the garage before going to the mall. Cynthia, his mom, comes home and finds the garage is still a mess. When Craig comes home, Cynthia says:

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2. Gregory is watching his two younger sisters while his mother is at a meeting after work. She said she would be home at 4:00 p.m. He made plans to go to a 4:30 p.m. movie with his friend. His mom comes in the door at 5:00 p.m. Gregory says:

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3. Bridgett comes home and asks her brother if there are any phone messages because she was expecting a call about when and where to meet a friend. Her brother says that her friend called and said something about where to meet but he can't remember where, and that she left a phone number but he forgot to write it down. Bridgett says to her brother:

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4. Lisa walks in the front door with an armful of groceries and starts to trip over a pile of stuff (shoes, a backpack, and a coat) that her son, Mike, had dropped on the floor. Lisa says to Mike:

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# Session 17: Understanding Empathy

## Teen Session

### *Background Information*

The goal of this session is for each teen to write an empathy letter to the person who was the victim of the teen's abuse or violence.

Understanding another person's thinking, feelings, and experience of a situation can be the most important part of responding to a conflict with respect, and without abuse and violence. When asked about another person's experience, a teen will sometimes shrug his or her shoulders and say, "How should I know?" If the facilitator is patient, most teens will succeed in coming to an understanding about the feelings and experience of the victim of his or her abuse/violence.

### *Goals*

To define empathy

To discuss how empathy can have a positive impact on relationships

To practice empathy through letter-writing

### *Important Messages*

When two people try to resolve a conflict, they will be much more successful if they try to understand each other's feelings and perspectives.

When you try to think about how another person experiences a situation, you may feel less angry at him or her and you are less likely to use abuse/violence against him or her.

Having empathy can help you be more respectful.

### *Session Overview*

*Check in, review goal progress, and review take-home activities.*

*Separate into parent and teen groups.*

*Discussion: Empathy and Its Impact on Relationships.*

*Exercise: Empathy Letter.*

# Group Activities

## *Discussion: Empathy and Its Impact on Relationships*

Start the session by discussing the following questions:

1. **What is empathy?**

Examples: Identifying and understanding the feelings and experiences of another person; putting yourself in someone else's shoes.

2. **How does empathy affect your relationship with another person?**

Examples: Empathy brings people closer together; it makes a relationship stronger; it makes solving problems easier.

3. **What difference would understanding the feelings and experience of another person make when you are responding to something he or she did or said to you?**

Example: The response would be friendlier to the person.

4. **What situations make it hard to have empathy?**

Examples: When we don't like the other person; when we don't agree with the other person.

5. **Can you have empathy for someone even when you don't agree with his or her point of view?**

Example: Yes; empathy doesn't mean agreement with another person.

6. **What situations make it easy to have empathy?**

Examples: When we've had a similar experience to the other person; when we like the other person.

7. **Think of a time when someone had empathy for you. When he or she tried to understand how you felt or how you experienced a situation, how did it make you feel?**

Example: I felt I could be more honest with the person than I would have if he or she didn't have empathy.

8. **What does empathy have to do with mutual respect?**

Example: Respecting another person means we understand him or her.

9. **If a person didn't have empathy, what would he or she be like?**

Example: The person would have difficulty having relationships with other people.

***Exercise: Empathy Letter***

Introduce the empathy letter exercise by telling the group:

Think of a situation when you were abusive or violent to a family member. It might be the event that brought you to the program.

Put yourself in the place of the person you were abusive or violent to.

You will write a letter as if you are that person. In the letter, describe each abusive or violent behavior you used and how it made your parent or family member feel when you did those things.

In your letter you can also add comments that other family members might have made as they watched or heard what happened.

Refer group members to *Empathy Letter Example* in the workbook.

Read the letter aloud or have a group member read it.

Ask the group if they have questions or comments about the letter. If time permits, have group members begin their letters on the following page. They can work on their letters at home, and/or you can use time during the following group session for group members to write their letters.

Let them know you will collect their completed letters when they are done. Be prepared to give feedback to each participant and have him or her make changes to the letter, if needed. The letter should include a range of feelings experienced by the victim (not just anger) and show that the teen has thought through the experience of the person.

Schedule time in the following sessions for teens to read their letters.

The letters should be read with the parents present in the group. One

way to do this is to have one teen a week read his or her letter after check-in when the parents are still in the group.

After the teen reads his or her letter, ask the teen's parent for comments. Did the teen accurately describe the parent's feelings, thoughts and experiences? The parent can add anything that was missing or not accurate in the letter. The parent can also have time to express other thoughts or feelings about the letter.

### ***Take-Home Activities***

Instruct teens to finish their empathy letters if they did not already do so in class.

# Worksheets

## *Empathy Letter Example*

Think of a situation when you were abusive or violent to a family member. It might be the event that brought you to the program.

Put yourself in the place of the person you were abusive or violent to. You will write a letter as if you are that person. In the letter, describe each abusive or violent behavior you used and how it made your parent or family member feel when you did those things.

In your letter you can also add comments that other family members might have made as they watched or heard what happened.

Below is an example of an empathy letter.

*Dear \_\_\_\_\_,*

*I am writing you about what happened to me on May 5. The argument began because you came home late. You said you were going to be home at 10:00 p.m. but you didn't get home until 11:00 p.m. I was worried because I didn't know where you were. Then when you got home and I asked you where you were, you started yelling at me and started swearing. You also called me names. That really upset me, because I just wanted to know that you were OK. I feel degraded when you call me names. I can't believe my own son would call me those names. I was also upset because Tommy heard what you said and I think he'll start using that language if he hears you use it.*

*When you kicked your foot at Tommy, I was afraid for him. Tommy looks up to you and wants to be like you. I don't want him to think of you as someone who yells and hits people. I don't want him to start doing those things.*

*Then you came after me. The first time you pushed me, I was really surprised. You had never done that before. I wasn't sure what you were going to do next. You kept pushing me until I was near the door. I remember being so scared because you raised your hand at me like you were going to hit me. I thought for sure you were going to do it. Then you pushed me down on the floor in the hallway. After you slammed the door, I didn't know what to do. I was in shock. I wasn't sure this was really happening to me. My own son. I sat there trying to imagine what I was going to say to somebody if they asked me what happened. I was sure they'd think it was my fault.*

*I didn't want to call the police, but I didn't know what else to do to make you stop. I didn't want you arrested, I just wanted them to talk to you. I'm sorry this happened, but I can't live like this anymore. If getting arrested means you will stop being violent with me, calling me names and threatening me, then I think it was worth it.*

*Love,  
Mom*





# Session 18: Guidelines for Respectful Communication

## Teen and Parent Session

### *Background Information*

The skills covered in this session are critical to successful problem solving. Teens and parents will learn the first two steps of the 10-step problem-solving process: talking about the problem and listening. Because these are the most challenging parts of problem solving, we encourage you to spend an entire session practicing these skills so that participants can successfully complete the problem-solving process covered in the next session.

The purpose of this session is to learn the skill of talking about how a problem affects a person, and then listening and saying back to that person what he or she said. Listening and repeating back what was said is hard for many teens and parents, particularly when they disagree with what was said. Remind them that repeating back what was said does not mean that a person agrees with it. Also, be sure to stop participants from getting off track by talking about the problem (the who, what, and why) or trying to jump into solving the problem.

It is helpful to remind the group to use the "I" statements they learned in Session 16.

### *Goals*

To learn and practice talking about a problem by using the Guidelines for Respectful Communication

To learn and practice how to listen and say back what you heard by using the Guidelines for Respectful Communication

## ***Important Messages***

To resolve conflicts successfully, you must use respectful communication skills. This involves:

Talking about a problem without blaming or criticizing.

Listening to the other person's feelings and view of a problem.

## ***Session Overview***

*Check in, review goal progress, and review take-home activities.*

*Exercise: Guidelines for Respectful Communication.*

*Practice respectful communication skills.*

# Group Activities

## ***Exercise: Guidelines for Respectful Communication***

Refer participants to *Guidelines for Respectful Communication* in the workbook. Explain that these are guidelines for how to talk and listen when there is a problem.

Tell the group that each parent/teen pair is going to practice using the guidelines for respectful communication by taking turns talking with each other about a problem. Each pair will think of something that they view as a problem and talk and listen with each other while observing the guidelines from their worksheets. The rest of the group will observe and let them know if they are not following the guidelines (for example, if they start to criticize or interrupt each other).

Important: Do not let parents and teens start talking about solving the problems or about the causes of the problems. Let them know that they will have time to work on solving the problems later, when the group gets to the problem-solving steps in the following weeks.

## ***Take-Home Activities***

Tell group participants to use the *Guidelines for Respectful Communication* at home before the next group session.

# Worksheets

## *Guidelines for Respectful Communication When You Have a Conflict*

### **When you are speaking:**

1. Talk only about the specific behavior of the other person.
2. Talk about what the person said or did that upset you.
3. Describe how you feel.

### **Do not:**

1. Blame
2. Criticize
3. Put down
4. Bring up the past or other things that bother you (stick to one behavior or problem)
5. Talk about the other person's personality, attitude or motives

### **When you are listening:**

1. Don't talk.
2. Listen carefully.
3. Do not interrupt.
4. Listen for the feelings of the other person.
5. Don't think about how you are going to respond (this interferes with listening).

### **When you respond to the speaker:**

1. Describe what the other person said.
2. Describe what you think the other person was feeling.

### **Do not:**

1. Correct what the other person said
2. Argue about what happened
3. Deny the other person's feelings

4. Bring up the past or things that the other person does that bother you
5. Criticize
6. Put down
7. Justify your behavior

If you think there is genuine misunderstanding about the behavior or problem, ask if you can take time to explain it. Use the *Guidelines for Respectful Communication* to talk about your own behavior. If there is conflict that cannot be resolved, the next step is to move on to problem solving together.



# Session 19: Problem Solving Together

## Teen and Parent Session

### *Background Information*

In this session teens and parents practice the 10-step process of problem solving.

Be aware that you may need to stop the problem-solving process in some cases. If one person is not willing to try to solve the problem or is unable to follow the communication guidelines, problem solving will not work. Both people must be willing to work on the problem with a cooperative attitude.

Stop the problem-solving process if:

Either person becomes abusive.

Either person is unable to follow the guidelines for respectful communication.

Either person is not willing to negotiate.

Either person is not willing to try to solve the problem.

Point out that parents should not use the problem-solving process to negotiate the rules, but should use it to negotiate problems that result when teens break the rules.

Depending upon the size of your group, it can take two to three sessions for everyone to complete the problem-solving steps. Do not worry if they do not actually solve a problem during the session. You may want to ask them to continue the process at home and then report back to the group on their success.

### *Goals*

To apply respectful communication skills learned in the previous session to solve a problem

To learn and practice a 10-step process of problem solving  
To understand how problem solving together can improve relationships

### ***Important Messages***

Negotiating a resolution to a problem involves listening to the other person. You don't necessarily have to agree with the other person to listen to him or her.

Problem solving is most successful when both people want to come up with a solution.

### ***Session Overview***

*Check in, review goal progress, and review take-home activities.*

*Discussion: What is Problem Solving?*

*Discussion: Tips for Problem Solving.*

*Discussion: Ten Steps for Solving a Problem.*

*Exercise: Problem Solving Practice.*



# Group Activities

## *Discussion: What Is Problem Solving?*

1. What are some things that people do that get in the way of problem solving? (Examples: raising voices, cursing, name calling, criticizing, blaming, interrupting, not listening.)
2. If two people were problem solving and one of them started to threaten, criticize or put down the other person, could they continue to work out a solution? Why?
3. If you were watching two people “working out a problem,” what would they look like?
4. How would they talk to each other?

## *Discussion: Tips for Problem Solving*

Review *Important Tips for Problem Solving* in the workbook.

## *Discussion: Ten Steps for Solving a Problem*

Review *Problem Solving* in the workbook and read through the ten steps and examples.

## *Exercise: Problem Solving Practice*

Have each parent/teen pair go through the problem-solving steps together while the rest of the class observes. Either person can begin the steps with a problem he or she has identified. If both parent and teen have a different problem they want to work on, they can do the process twice, one time with each problem. The person who has identified the problem starts the process with step one.

Be sure to bring them back to the steps if they get off topic, start arguing, or start thinking of ideas to solve the problem too soon. Ask the group to let the pair know if they are not following the guidelines for respectful communication, and to help them stay on track with the

steps. Stop the problem-solving process if necessary (see *Background Information*). They can try it again next week if necessary.

When the pair gets to step 7, write their ideas on the board. After they have each thought of some ideas, you can invite the group to add any ideas they have. When the parent/teen pair does step 8, cross out ideas that are ruled out and circle ideas that both parent and teen might consider acceptable. The goal is for them to choose one idea to try during the following week. In step 9, help them make a plan that is very clear and specific (that is, who, what, when).

At the end of the problem-solving process, ask the group to give feedback to the parent and teen about what they observed and how they think it went. Group members learn from watching each other and giving each other feedback and support.

### ***Take-Home Activities***

Have each parent/teen pair implement the solution they came up with during the problem-solving exercise at home. Check in with each pair in the following session to ask how things went.

# Worksheets

## *Important Tips for Problem Solving*

Don't try to solve the problem when either person is angry or upset. Being calm is most important.

If either person becomes angry or upset during problem solving, take a time out and try it again when you are both calm.

Follow the *Guidelines for Respectful Communication* (see previous session for review.)

Both people must be willing to try to solve the problem and have a cooperative attitude. If either person is resistant, stop and try it again later.

The problem you are working on must be negotiable. It needs to be something that both people are able to compromise on.

## *Problem Solving (Teen Starts the Process)*

<b>Step</b>	<b>How to do it</b>	<b>Example</b>
1. Describe the problem.	Use "I" messages. Don't accuse, blame or criticize.	<b>Teen:</b> "I don't like it when you tell me I have to come home before midnight. When I leave early, I feel like I'm missing the best part of the party."
2. The other person listens and then reflects back what he or she heard.	Listen quietly without interrupting, and then summarize the other person's thoughts and feelings without advising, criticizing or judging.	<b>Parent:</b> "You don't like it when I tell you to be home by midnight. When you have to leave early, you feel like you are missing the best part of the party."
3. Ask the other person for his or her thoughts and feelings about the problem.	Listen quietly without interrupting, asking questions or commenting.	<b>Teen:</b> "What do you think about the problem?" <b>Parent:</b> "I get upset when you stay out after midnight because I worry that you won't get enough sleep or that something bad might happen."
4. Reflect back what you hear.	Summarize the other person's thoughts and feelings without advising, criticizing or judging.	<b>Teen:</b> "You get upset when I stay out after midnight because you worry that I won't get enough sleep or that something bad might happen."

Step	How to do it	Example
5. Summarize the problem, including both people's needs and feelings.	Avoid judging, criticizing and blaming.	<b>Teen:</b> "Seems like the problem is that you want me to come home before midnight, and I don't like to leave parties before my friends leave."
6. Invite the other person to problem solve with you.	Each person come up with several possible solutions. Some will be workable, some won't.	<b>Teen:</b> "Let's each try to come up with some ideas to work this out."
7. Take turns listing ideas.	Be respectful of each other's ideas, even if you don't agree with them.	<p><b>Teen:</b> "Well, just don't worry about me."</p> <p><b>Parent:</b> "Come home before midnight."</p> <p><b>Teen:</b> "How about if I call you if I'm going to be late?"</p> <p><b>Parent:</b> "On weeknights come home by 10:00. On weekends, you can come home by 1:00 if you call me and tell me exactly where you are, and come home on time."</p>

Step	How to do it	Example
8. Take turns commenting on each idea.	Avoid judging or criticizing.	<p><b>Parent:</b> "Until you're grown, I will keep worrying about you."  <b>Teen:</b> "Sometimes I want to hang with my friends and not be at home so early."  <b>Parent:</b> "I like it when you call me, but when you call to say you're staying out all night, it doesn't solve the problem."  <b>Teen:</b> "OK, I can try that. But 10 seems kind of early."</p>
9. Make a plan for how the solution will work.	Include details and what each person needs to do.	<p><b>Parent:</b> "Let's try this for a week. You'll come home by 10 on weeknights and by 1 on the weekends. If it works well we can stay with it."  <b>Teen:</b> "So if I come home on time for a week, you won't ask me when I'm coming home every time I go out."</p>
10. Write the plan down and put it someplace where you both can see it every day.		<p><b>Parent:</b> "Let's write out our agreement and put it on the refrigerator so we both can see it."</p>

## ***Problem Solving (Parent Starts the Process)***

<b>Step</b>	<b>How to do it</b>	<b>Example</b>
1. Describe the problem.	Use "I" messages. Don't accuse, blame or criticize.	<b>Parent:</b> "I feel frustrated when I ask you to do the dishes, and 20 minutes later they aren't done."
2. The other person listens and then reflects back what he or she heard.	Listen quietly without interrupting, and then summarize the other person's thoughts and feelings without advising, criticizing or judging.	<b>Teen:</b> "You feel frustrated when you ask me to do the dishes, and 20 minutes later I haven't done them."
3. Ask the other person for his or her thoughts and feelings about the problem.	Listen quietly without interrupting, asking questions or commenting.	<b>Parent:</b> "What do you think about the problem?" <b>Teen:</b> "It seems you always ask me to do the dishes when I'm in the middle of something, like a good TV show or a video game."
4. Reflect back what you hear.	Summarize the other person's thoughts and feelings without advising, criticizing or judging.	<b>Parent:</b> "You don't like being interrupted and you'd like to finish your TV show or video game before you do the dishes."
5. Summarize the problem, including both people's needs and feelings.	Avoid judging, criticizing and blaming.	<b>Parent:</b> "Seems like the problem is that I need you to do the dishes and you don't like being interrupted to do them."
6. Invite the other person to problem solve with you.	Each person comes up with several possible solutions. Some will be workable, some won't.	<b>Parent:</b> "Let's try to work this out."

Step	How to do it	Example
7. Take turns listing ideas.	Be respectful of each other's ideas, even if you don't agree with them.	<p><b>Teen:</b> "I'll do the dishes when I'm done watching TV."</p> <p><b>Parent:</b> "When I ask you to do the dishes, give me a time that you'll do them."</p> <p><b>Teen:</b> "Let's eat off paper plates."</p> <p><b>Parent:</b> "Let's set up a time every day when you'll do the dishes."</p>
8. Take turns commenting on each idea.	Avoid judging or criticizing.	<p><b>Parent:</b> "I need to know more specifically when the dishes will get done."</p> <p><b>Parent:</b> "Paper plates are too expensive and I prefer real plates."</p> <p><b>Teen:</b> "It depends on when my favorite shows are on. Some nights I'll have them done by 6 o'clock and other nights by seven."</p> <p><b>Parent:</b> "I like your idea that you'll let me know each night what time the dishes will be done."</p> <p><b>Teen:</b> "All right, I can do that."</p>
9. Make a plan for how the solution will work.	Include details and what each person needs to do.	<p><b>Parent:</b> "I'd like you to make a schedule each week, because I don't want to have to ask you every night when you'll do the dishes."</p> <p><b>Teen:</b> "I'll get the TV guide and write down the time for each night."</p>



Step	How to do it	Example
10. Write the plan down and put it someplace where you both can see it every day.		<b>Parent:</b> "Let's put your schedule up in the kitchen where we both can see it."



# Session 20: Healthy Dating Relationships

## Teen Session

### *Background Information*

Teens learn about relationships and how to resolve conflicts in their families. As they move on to new intimate relationships outside of their families, they take the beliefs about relationships they learned in their families to these new relationships. Sometimes when teens have been abusive toward family members, they use these same behaviors toward their dating partners. During this session teens will consider how the use of abusive behavior in family relationships can influence behavior in dating relationships. They will discuss the differences and similarities between a family relationship and a dating relationship and think about what would motivate them to stay respectful in dating relationships. We want them to think about the characteristics of a healthy dating relationship and an unhealthy dating relationship.

### *Goals*

To identify characteristics of a healthy and unhealthy dating relationship

To identify ways to respectfully respond to difficult situations involving intimate dating relationships

### *Important Messages*

People often learn how to respond to conflicts in intimate relationships from the ways they responded to conflicts with family members.

Abuse and violence toward a dating partner is a choice.

Even when a person has been abusive or violent toward a family member, he or she can choose to be respectful toward a dating partner.

## ***Session Overview***

*Check in, review goal progress, and review take-home activities.*

*Separate into parent and teen groups.*

*Discussion: Family Relationships and Dating Relationships*

*Discussion: Characteristics of a Healthy Dating Relationship*

*Exercise: Healthy and Unhealthy Responses to Difficult Situations*

# Group Activities

## *Discussion: Family Relationships and Dating Relationships*

1. When someone grows up seeing people in his or her family use abuse and violence, how might it affect his or her behavior in dating relationships?
2. When someone has used abuse and violence during conflicts with family members, how might that person deal with conflicts with boyfriends/girlfriends?
3. Some people think they would never use abuse or violence with their boyfriends or girlfriends, and then they do. Why would this happen?
4. How is a dating relationship different from a family relationship?
5. How are they the same?
6. What would motivate you to stay respectful in a dating relationship?

## ***Discussion: Characteristics of Healthy Dating Relationships***

1. What is a healthy dating relationship?
2. Ask the group what they think are the behaviors of a healthy dating relationship. List their answers on the board.
3. Ask what they think are the behaviors of unhealthy an dating relationship. List on the board.

Refer the group to *Characteristics of Healthy Dating Relationships* and *Characteristics of Unhealthy Dating Relationships* in their workbooks and review.

Refer the group to *Healthy and Unhealthy Responses to Difficult Situations* in their workbooks. Break into small groups and have them complete the worksheet together. Come back together as a large group and have each small group share their answers.

## ***Take-Home Activities***

Ask teens to continue thinking about how their family relationships affect their present or future dating relationships.

# Worksheets

## *Characteristics of Healthy Dating Relationships*

### **Honesty and accountability:**

Accepting responsibility for yourself

Admitting when you are wrong

### **Non-threatening behavior:**

Making your partner feel safe through words and actions

### **Negotiation and fairness:**

Trying to find solutions that you both agree on when there is a problem

Being willing to compromise

### **Respectful communication:**

Not putting each other down, blaming, ridiculing, name calling

Talking to each other in a respectful way

Listening to each other

### **Shared responsibility:**

Making decisions together

Working out problems together

### **Respect:**

Listening non-judgmentally

Valuing opinions even if you disagree

Accepting each other's feelings

Treating each other with thoughtfulness and consideration

### **Trust and support:**

Supporting each other's goals

Respecting each other's rights to individual feelings, friends, activities and opinions

Allowing each other to make mistakes

### **Independence and autonomy:**

Accepting each other's "separateness"

Having your own life

## ***Characteristics of Unhealthy Dating Relationships***

### **Emotional abuse:**

Putting the other person down

Making the other person feel bad about himself or herself

Making the other person think he or she is crazy

Humiliating the other person

Making the other person feel guilty

Discounting the other person's feelings, words or behavior

### **Using social status:**

Treating the other person like a servant

Making all the decisions

### **Intimidation and threats:**

Making someone afraid by using looks, actions, gestures, smashing things, destroying property

Making someone feel like he or she is "walking on eggshells"

Becoming angry over small things

Threatening to hurt the other person

Threatening to leave or commit suicide

### **Denying, justifying, minimizing, blaming:**

Saying abuse didn't happen

Saying the other person caused it

Making light of abuse

Blaming the other person for problems in the relationship

### **Physical abuse:**

Hitting, pushing, shoving, slapping, kicking, punching

Physically hurting the person in any way

### **Sexual coercion:**

Manipulating or making threats to get sex

Getting someone drunk or drugged to get sex

Pressuring the other person to have sex

### **Isolation/exclusion:**



Controlling what the other person does, who he or she talks to, where he or she goes

Pressuring the other person not to be involved in other activities

Using jealousy to justify actions

Wanting to be with the other person all the time

**Using peer pressure:**

Threatening to tell others personal information

Spreading rumors

### ***Healthy and Unhealthy Responses to Difficult Situations***

1. John has been going out with Sally for three months. Sally is good in math and tutors other students who are having a hard time with math. She has been helping Steve with his homework for a couple of weeks. John sees Steve and Sally talking in the hall and they are laughing. John is starting to feel jealous.

a. What would be an unhealthy or disrespectful way the person might respond to this situation?

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b. What would be a healthy or respectful way the person might respond to this situation?

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2. Greg and Linda have been going out for two months. Greg told Linda he was going to go over to his friend's house for the evening to watch a game with the guys. Linda asked if she could go and Greg said he didn't want her to go because he wanted time to just be with his friends. Linda feels like Greg hasn't been spending

enough time with her lately and is wondering if he really cares about her.

- a. What would be an unhealthy or disrespectful way the person might respond to this situation?

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- b. What would be a healthy or respectful way the person might respond to this situation?

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- 3. Jordan has been trying to call Gretchen on her cell phone for 3 hours and she hasn't answered. He knows she is with her girlfriends and he wants to find her to see if she wants to go out. He is getting frustrated because she said she would have her cell phone on so he could call her to make plans for the evening.

- a. What would be an unhealthy or disrespectful way the person might respond to this situation?

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- b. What would be a healthy or respectful way the person might respond to this situation?

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4. Haley and Royce were at a party and Haley said she needed to go home because she had to get up early the next morning to study for a test. Royce kept trying to talk her into staying longer and Haley finally agreed to stay until 11:00. At 11:00 Haley said she had to go. Royce didn't want to leave. He felt like Haley was making excuses to go home early because she didn't like the party.

a. What would be an unhealthy or disrespectful way the person might respond to this situation?

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b. What would be a healthy or respectful way the person might respond to this situation?

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# Session 21: Moving Forward

## Teen and Parent Session

### *Background Information*

It is important to acknowledge that teens have taken steps toward using respectful behavior. It is often easier to identify how teens have been abusive rather than how they have been respectful. When teens start using new respectful behaviors, they should be acknowledged for the changes they have made. This last session is a way to assess the progress the teens in the group have made toward using more respectful behavior and look at goals they can continue to work on after they leave the group. This last session is also an opportunity for teens to give feedback to each other and to make statements about how particular group members have impacted them.

### *Goals*

For teens to identify how they have changed their behavior

For parents to identify how their teens have made positive changes and how their relationships have improved

For teens to recognize how their behavior changes have affected their relationships with their parents

For teens and parents to identify how they can continue working on having positive and respectful relationships

### *Important Messages*

Changes in behavior can have a positive impact on other people.

Learning how to change is empowering.

Both teens and parents have worked hard to learn how to have mutually respectful relationships.

You can continue to work together to have positive and healthy relationships with each other.

### ***Session Overview***

*Check in, review goal progress, and review take-home activities.*

*Exercise: Complete the Changes I Have Made and Changes My Teen Has Made worksheets.*

*Exercise: Message Exchange.*

## Group Activities

### ***Exercise: Changes I Have Made/Changes My Teen Has Made***

Refer to *Changes I Have Made* in the teen workbook and *Changes My Teen Has Made* in the parent workbook and have teens and parents answer the questions. Have teens and parents share their answers with the group after they have completed the questions.

### ***Exercise: Message Exchange***

Tell parents and teens: We are going to end the session by giving the teens positive messages. I will give you each several pieces of paper (the amount will be the number of teens in the group; for example, 8 if there are 8 teens). Take some time to think of something positive you would like to say to each teen in the group, and then write something for each teen on each piece of paper. Write something positive you have learned about the teen—for example, a strength, a compliment about the changes he or she has made, something you notice about him or her, etc.

Let parents and teens know that only the person receiving the note will read it. They do not need to put their names on the notes they write, unless they choose to do so. The notes will *not* be read aloud in the group.

Give the group members pieces of paper big enough for a couple of sentences. (An 8  $\frac{1}{2}$  x 11 piece of paper cut into 2-inch strips works well.) Have them fold the paper when they finish writing and put the name of the teen on the outside.

When they finish writing, collect the notes and distribute them to the teens. Teens can read their notes now, or can take them home and read them.

## *Closing*

Thank parents and teens for attending the program. Let them know they have worked hard together to improve their relationships. Congratulate them for completing the program.



# Worksheets

## *Changes I Have Made*

1. How has your relationship with your parent changed since you started the program?
2. Rate your relationship on a scale from 1 to 10.

<b>Beginning of Program</b>	<b>Worst</b>		<b>Best</b>
	1	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	10
<b>Now</b>	<b>Worst</b>		<b>Best</b>
	1	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	10

3. What have you changed in your behavior to contribute to the improvement in your relationship? (Look at the abuse and respect wheels as you think about behaviors you have changed.)
4. What did you do to change your behavior?
5. If you hadn't made these changes, what would your relationship with your family members be like today?
6. What behavior do you need to continue working on?
7. What do you need to do to work on changing that behavior?
8. What skills have you learned in Step-Up that will help you in relationships in the future?
9. What have you learned about yourself since you have been in the program (your strengths, ability to change, etc.)?
10. How do you feel about yourself now?

***Changes My Teen Has Made***

1. How has your relationship with your teen changed since you started the program?
2. Rate your relationship on a scale from 1 to 10.

<b>Beginning of Program</b>	<b>Worst</b>	<b>Best</b>
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
<b>Now</b>	<b>Worst</b>	<b>Best</b>
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	

3. What has your teen changed in his/her behavior to contribute to the improvement?
4. How have you changed to contribute to the improvement in the relationship?
5. If you and your teen hadn't made these changes, what would your relationship be like today?
6. What behavior does your teen need to continue working on?
7. What do you need to continue working on to support your teen's positive behavior?
8. What strengths does your teen have that will help him or her have positive relationships with family members and others?

# Additional Sessions

## Session 22: How We Change

*This session may be added when the facilitator thinks it would be useful. It is good way to help teens evaluate their progress in the program.*

### Parent and Teen Session

#### ***Background Information***

We rarely make changes overnight. Often a long period of time passes between the time when we first decide to change and when the change is complete. Understanding what steps we take to make change can help motivate us to move to the next step in making real change in our life. This session will help you understand the stages of change and what you have to do to get to the next step.

#### ***Goals***

To identify the stages of change

For each teen to know their current stage

To understand how the stages of change apply to different personal issues

#### ***Important Messages***

Personal change takes place in stages or steps

You do not have to change all at once to be successful

Small steps are important to making important changes

#### ***Discussion Questions***

If we look at positive changes we have made in our lives, we can divide them into two categories:

### Category 1

Someone tells us we have to change and if we don't, something bad is going to happen. Your parents say you have to come home by 10:00 PM or you'll be grounded for a week. Your teacher tells you have to complete your writing assignment by tomorrow or you will fail the class. A judge says you have to go to counseling or you will go to detention. In these cases, we change in order to avoid the bad thing that could happen if we don't change.

### Category 2

At other times, we change because we want to change. We make the decision to change. We decide to change on our own. No one tells us something bad is going to happen if we don't change. We weigh the pros and cons of changing or not changing in our minds and decide for ourselves what we will do.

What are the feelings connected with these two kinds of change?

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What is the difference between the two ways of changing?

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Which kind of change will last longer?

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Which kind of change is more difficult?

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Is it possible for one kind of change to crossover into the other?

For instance, maybe someone told you that you had to change and your first reaction was to resist any change. Then along the way you decided it was a good idea. The change you made started when someone told you to change and later you decided it was a good idea.

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Think of a change you made in your life. When did you first decide there was a problem that had to be fixed? Did you realize it gradually or did it happen all at once?

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Do you remember when you didn't think you had a problem? Do you remember if other people tried to tell you that you had a problem and you didn't believe them or you thought they were exaggerating the problem? Do you think you were even aware you had a problem? What feelings do you have to overcome to recognize a problem? How do they get in the way of really seeing a problem?

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People who have studied change created five stages of change that we all go through when we decide to make a positive change in our lives. These are the 5 stages:

**Denial:** not thinking about change; it doesn't apply to me; I have no control over the problem; other people or circumstances beyond my control are the cause of the problem; not facing serious consequences; John was arrested for hitting his mother. After he was arrested, he said he doesn't think it was his fault and doesn't think he needs to do anything different. He said he wants his mom to stay off his back and quit nagging him.

**Thinking:** weighing the benefits and costs of change; deciding whether it is worth the effort to change;

When John was in detention, he felt bad about what he did. He doesn't want to get arrested again and he is tired of all the arguing between him and his mother.

**Preparation:** experimenting with small changes

John is going to try not to argue with his mother so much. After he got out of detention, John and his mother have had fewer arguments. For the most part, John has been able to stop arguing after he has made his point.

**Action:** taking a definitive action to change with small steps

John has not been abusive towards his mother in any way since his arrest. John agreed to go to counseling. John and his mother decided to eat dinner together at least 3 nights a week so they can spend more time together. John is using the skills he's learned in counseling to problem solve respectfully with his mother.

**Maintenance:** maintaining new behavior over time

John and his mother have continued to eat dinner together 3 nights a week for six months. They have also done some counseling sessions together. John and his mother make time each week to talk through any problems that come up.

**Relapse:** normal part of change; feels demoralizing to return to old behaviors

John yelled at his mother when she asked him to do something at home. John realized how hard he had to work to stop being abusive towards his mother. John tells his mother he was wrong for yelling at her and asks her what he should do to make things right between them.

# Worksheet

Read each scenario. Identify the stage for each person and what steps they need to do to get to the next stage.

Scenario 1:

Latisha smokes marijuana 3 or 4 times a week. Her grades are dropping, she and her mother are arguing more and Latisha's best friend doesn't want to hang out with Latisha anymore. Latisha thinks everyone is making a big deal out of nothing and doesn't want to quit.

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Scenario 2:

James has been thinking about his grades over the summer break. He wants to go to a four year college, but unless he gets better grades, he won't be able to attend one. He thinks if he stays after school to study during the coming year, he may get better grades. If he stays after school to study, he won't see his friends as often as he did last year. James hasn't decided for sure what he'll do.

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Scenario 3:

George's mother works full time and wants him to cook dinner one night a week. At first he gives her lots of reasons why he can't do it, and finally agrees to try it. He looked at cookbook for the first time today to see if there is something easy to make.



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Scenario 4:

Jennifer likes to tease her sister, but her mother gets upset when she hears it. Jennifer said she won't do it as much just to please her mother and has teased her less in the last couple of weeks. Her mother still thought it was too much. For Jennifer, teasing is like a bad habit and she realizes the teasing will be more difficult to stop than she first expected. She tells her mother she'll really try to stop doing it completely.

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Scenario 5:

A few nights a week, John is on the computer past midnight. When he is up late these nights, it's hard for him to get up the next morning for school and he is often late for his first class. John thinks his first class is boring so he really doesn't care if he's late. His mother is worried about his grades and wants him to go to college.

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Scenario 6:

Ryan often yells and swears at his mom when she wakes him up for school in the morning. When he finally gets up, his mom is upset with him and when he leaves for school there's a lot of tension between him and his mom. He decides he doesn't like starting his days this way. He

decides he's going to try not to swear and yell when his mom wakes him up. The next morning when his mom wakes him up, he starts to swear at his mom and then stops himself.

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### Where Am I in the Stages of Change?

Think about the five stages of change we have discussed. When you think about changing your abusive behavior to respectful behavior, what stage are you in now?

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### What do you need to do to move to the next stage?

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## About the Authors

Lily Anderson has an M.S.W. from the University of Washington (1986) and has worked in the field of domestic violence since 1978. Prior to working with the Step-Up Program she developed and coordinated a parent education program for Family Services Domestic Violence Treatment Program in Seattle. She wrote a parent's anger management and parenting skills curriculum, *Skills for Respectful Parenting*, for use with court referred parents. In 1997, she co-authored a curriculum for parents of children who have experienced domestic violence, *Helping Children Who Have Experienced Domestic Violence: A Guide for Parents*. Lily currently works with the Step-Up Program facilitating parent groups and co-facilitating parent/teen groups.

Gregory Routt has an M.A. in psychology from Antioch University (1992). He has worked as a chemical dependency counselor with inmates in the King County Jail and with adult perpetrators of domestic violence at Family Services Domestic Violence Treatment Program in Seattle from 1992 until 1996. He currently coordinates the Step-Up Program and facilitates teen groups and co-facilitates parent/teen groups.



# Addendum

## Behavior Checklist Parent

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

This is a list of behaviors that many teens use against their parents and brothers and sisters.

Try to remember how often *your child has done these things to you or your partner in the last 3 months prior to their arrest or involvement with juvenile court*. Circle the response that shows your closest estimate.

- 1 = Never
- 2 = Rarely (once)
- 3 = Occasionally (once a month)
- 4 = Frequently (once a week)
- 5 = Almost every day

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Called you names.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Tried to get you to do something by intimidating you.        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Gave you threatening looks or stares.                        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Screamed or yelled at you.                                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. Threatened to hurt you.                                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. Pushed, grabbed or shoved you.                               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. Put down you or other family members.                        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. Threatened and/or physically hurt brothers or sisters.       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. Demanded that you or family members do what they want.       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. Said things to scare you.                                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. Slapped, hit or punched you.                                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. Told you that you were bad parents.                         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. Threw, hit, kicked or smashed something during an argument. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. Kicked you.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

## Behavior Checklist Teen

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Here is a list of behaviors that many teens use against their parents. Please try to remember how often *you have done these things to either parent in the last 3 months prior to your arrest or involvement with juvenile court.* Circle the response that shows your closest estimate.

- 1 = Never
- 2 = Rarely (once)
- 3 = Occasionally (once a month)
- 4 = Frequently (once a week)
- 5 = Almost every day

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Called your parent names.                                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Tried to get your parents to do something by intimidating them. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. Gave your parents threatening looks or stares.                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Screamed or yelled at your parents.                             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. Threatened to hurt your parents.                                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. Pushed, grabbed, or shoved your parents.                        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. Put down your parents or other family members.                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. Threatened and/or physically hurt brothers or sisters.          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. Demanded that your parents or family members do what they want. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. Said things to scares your parent.                             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. Slapped, hit, or punched your parent.                          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. Told your parent that they were a bad parent.                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. Threw, hit, kicked or smashed something during an argument.    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. Kicked your parent.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |