

Communication 1: The Basics

Grades 7 and 8, Lessons #16

Time Needed

One class period

Student Learning Objectives

To be able to...

1. Distinguish among assertive, aggressive, passive and manipulative behaviors/statements.
2. Describe and appreciate the consequences of each of these kinds of behaviors in a relationship with a parent, other adult, or peer.

Agenda

1. Explain the relevance of the next five lessons.
2. Use The Story of Logan to introduce the concepts: assertiveness, aggressiveness, passiveness, and manipulation.
3. Hand out and discuss the Communication Reference Sheet.
4. Hand out and begin working on Communication Worksheet 1 as a large group and/or individually, with discussion. DO NOT EXPECT TO FINISH THIS IN CLASS.
5. Optional: Assign homework.

Materials Needed

Student materials: (1 per student)

- *The Story of Logan*
- *Communication Reference Sheet*
- *Communication Worksheet 1*
- *Optional: Family Homework Exercise: Communication 1*

Activities

1. Explain the relevance of the next five lessons.

We have looked at decision-making: Deciding about teen pregnancy, deciding about touch and abstinence, deciding about birth control. But I have had students say to me, “Look, I know what I believe in and what I want, I just don’t know how to stick up for myself without losing friends! When my friends ask me to do something or to give them something, I have a hard time saying ‘no’.”

These next five sessions will be on:

- a. How to make and keep friends.
- b. How to get what you want (whether it’s a job or a hug) without using other people and without getting used by other people.
- c. How to respect yourself and other people at the same time.
- d. How to get along with your parents.
- e. How to communicate your decisions.
- f. How to stand up for yourself without standing on top of someone else.

2. Hand out copies of the “Story of Logan” and read it aloud to them or, have students volunteer to read it aloud.

3. Hand out the Communication Reference Sheet and use Part A in this way: Have a volunteer read a definition aloud. You may want to give an example and ask the class what the consequences might be. For example:

Aggressiveness

Example: You want to borrow your friend’s coat, so you take it. Or you ask, but if your friend says “no,” you call her a stingy creep.

Consequences: You might get to borrow the coat if you just take it, but you’ve probably lost a friend ... and maybe other friends, when your reputation gets out.

Example: Your friend asks to borrow your coat and you say “no” and shove him away from your locker.

Consequences: You don’t lose the coat but you may lose the friend... and maybe other friends, if they saw the argument.

Passiveness

Example: You’re cold, you’ve lost your jacket, but you stand there shivering instead of asking to borrow your friend’s coat.

Consequences: You won’t get to borrow the coat. You might feel like a chicken. You’ll be cold.

Example: Your friend, who never returns things, asks to borrow your coat and you say “yes,” even though you know your mother’s going to yell at you if you go home without it.

Consequences: You lose the coat. Your mother yells at you. Your friend, who has now borrowed three things, considers you a wimp and feels like she can use you whenever she likes. You may get a reputation as an easy mark.

Manipulation

Example: You get your friend to lend you the coat by saying you’ll give it back when you get off the bus and then conveniently “forgetting.”

Consequences: You may not lose your friend this time, but if you keep it up, eventually he’ll “wise up.” He won’t trust you. You may lose other friends as your reputation as a “user” gets around.

Example: Your friend asks to borrow your coat and you say, “Oh, I can’t. The lock on my locker is broken” ... even though it is not.

Consequences: Your friend may not get angry right away, but as soon as he sees you open the locker, whether it’s tomorrow or next week, you’ll have some quick explaining to do. And suppose he offers to fix the lock and it turns out he really knows how to fix locks.

Example: Your friend asks to borrow your coat. You lend it to her, so that when you want to borrow money from her she’ll “have to” let you.

Consequences: Your friend will be glad for the-moment. But she may be annoyed when she discovers that you think she owes you a favor. She may not trust you after that.

Assertiveness

Example: You ask “Is it OK if I borrow your coat?” If your friend says “no,” you say “OK” and put on your own sweater.

Consequences: You might have gotten to borrow the coat. You’ve probably kept a friend. He may be willing to lend you things in the future.

Example: Your friend asks to borrow your coat, but he hasn’t returned the last two things he’s borrowed. You say “No, sorry. Say, I wish you’d give me back my money and my math book.”

Consequences: You might get your things back. You won’t get in trouble with your father for your coat being missing. You’ve probably kept a friend, who now will know he can’t use you.

4. **Hand out Communication Worksheet 1 and complete only as much of it as you have time for, aloud as a large group.** You or a volunteer can read each situation aloud. Then ask the group which alternative is aggressive. You may have to remind them of the definitions. When they agree on which alternative is “aggressive,” have them mark an “A.”

Continue with “passive,” (P), “manipulative,” (M), and “assertive,” (*). Then go on to the second situation, and so on. After doing a couple aloud, you may give the class five minutes to complete the first page individually. Then discuss it aloud.

YOU WILL PROBABLY FINISH ABOUT 4 TO 6 SITUATIONS. THE REST IS HOMEWORK.

Homework

Students' options...

- **Family Homework Exercise: Communication 1**
- Complete the remainder of **Communication Worksheet 1**

Communication Worksheet 1

ANSWERS

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| 1. M, A, ★, P | 13. A, ★, P, M |
| 2. P, ★, A, M | 14. P, A, M, ★ |
| 3. ★, M, A, P | 15. ★, P, M, A |
| 4. A, M, ★, P | 16. A, P, ★, M |
| 5. P, A, ★, M | 17. M, ★, P, A |
| 6. ★, A, M, P | 18. P, A, M, ★ |
| 7. ★, P, A, M | 19. ★, A, M, P |
| 8. A, P, M, ★ | 20. P, A, M, ★ |
| 9. ★, A, P, M | 21. A, ★, P, M |
| 10. M, A, P, ★ | 22. P, A, M, ★ |
| 11. M, P, A, ★ | 23. ★, A, M, P |
| 12. P, ★, M, A | 24. M, A, P, ★ |
| | 25. P, M, ★, A |

The Story of Logan

There once was a nice, but crazy, guy named Logan who had a habit of asking every girl he met to be his girlfriend.

“Be my girlfriend and I’ll sing to you,” he said to Jessie one day in the cafeteria. “Oh, spare me,” snapped Jessie. “You make me want to gag.” Logan looked crushed. Jessie’s friends exchanged glances which said they thought Jessie was being mean. After all, Logan was a nice guy. And it’s flattering to be asked, even by a guy like Logan. They didn’t like Jessie as well after that.

The next day, Logan bumped into Sophea at her locker. “Go with me and I’ll buy you flowers every day,” he asked. “No, that’s sweet, Logan,” Sophea answered, “but we don’t know each other that well ... and I’m not into going steady yet anyway ... not with anybody, know what I mean?” She waved goodbye with, “See ‘ya tomorrow.” He sighed and said, “So long.”

A few minutes later, at the bus stop, Logan asked Sally to be his girlfriend, offering to do her homework for a month. She pointed to the sky and said, “Oh, wow! Is it Halley’s Comet?” While Logan was searching for the comet, Sally slipped quietly away. When she told her boyfriend later, he began to worry whether she would treat him that way. A few days later, he broke up with her.

Logan, however, wouldn’t learn. He phoned Pam that same evening and pleaded, “Pam, darling, go with me and I’ll give you all my CD’s.” Pam said, “OK.” She honestly had no desire to go with Logan, or anybody else at that time, and she didn’t want his tapes, but what could she do? He needed her and she couldn’t turn him down. Fortunately, her parents didn’t agree. They said, “No,” and Pam was saved from a couple of terrible years.

Logan eventually took up football, instead of girls, and started making friends with both guys and girls. Eventually he fell in love with a cheerleader who also loved him, but it had been a painful few years before he figured out that friendship comes first.

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Logan's story, continued...

Suppose you were Logan. Which one of the girls would you feel best about? Go back and decide who you think treated Logan best.

Most people say SOPHEA. Sophea didn't give Logan what he wanted, but she stood up for herself without having to "trash" his feelings. She was ASSERTIVE.

Some people might prefer PAM, because she did say she would go out with him. Think about it, though. If you were Logan would you want someone to be your girlfriend, even though she didn't want to, just because she felt sorry for you? Saying "yes" whether you want to or not, is being PASSIVE. Being passive may be easier for Pam in the short run, but eventually Logan would have been hurt much worse by her dishonesty than by Sophea's straight, gentle refusal. Besides, Pam won't respect herself, or be very happy, if she always does what *other* people want instead of deciding what's right for her.

Some people are afraid of being "wimps," so they go to the other extreme, like JESSIE and SALLY. They stop caring about other people's feelings. Jessie was mean, or AGGRESSIVE. Sally was dishonest, or MANIPULATIVE. Neither one probably was very proud of herself ... and when other people saw how they treated Logan, they didn't like or trust them as much.

People who are ASSERTIVE, like Sophea, usually feel good about themselves. They ask honestly for what they want, although they know they won't always get it. They say "no" when they need to, but without putting other people down. They build reputations as people who care about other people ... and care about themselves, too.

In other lessons, we've looked at decision-making: deciding about teen parenting, about touch, about abstinence, and about birth control. You know what you believe in. You know what you want to do. Now it's time to figure out how to tell other people what you want, without losing them as friends. Now is the time to learn how to be ASSERTIVE.

Communication Reference Sheet

A Few Definitions:



AGGRESSIVENESS —

Taking what you want, threatening or forcing a person to give you something, or saying “no” in a way that puts the other person down or violates his or her rights.



PASSIVENESS —

Not speaking up when you’d like something or giving in and saying “yes” when you don’t really want to, in order to be liked or not hurt the other person’s feelings.



MANIPULATION —

Getting what you want or turning someone down in a dishonest way, or doing something for somebody only so they’ll give you what you want.



ASSERTIVENESS —

Asking straight for what you want or giving people an honest “no” to things you don’t want. It means not using other people and not letting yourself be used either.

Communication Reference Sheet, continued...

Consequences

THE AGGRESSIVE ALTERNATIVE...

Often gets you what you want, but the other
Person definitely does not appreciate it!
(You win; they lose.)

THE PASSIVE ALTERNATIVE...

Usually doesn't get you what you want, and
Other people may get the idea that you're an easy target.
You lose their respect.
(You lose; they win.)

THE MANIPULATIVE ALTERNATIVE...

Sometimes gets you what you want, but
Other people will eventually figure it out
And not like it. You lose their trust.
(You may win; they lose.)

THE ASSERTIVE ALTERNATIVE...

Often gets you what you want, though not
Always, but you keep your self-respect and
The other person usually appreciates it.
(You both may win.)

Communication Worksheet 1

Name _____

Due date _____

A = Aggressive P = Passive M = Manipulative ★ = Assertive

<p>1. You want a job in the store near your house, but you have no experience.</p>	<p>a. _____ Tell the owner you've been a grocery clerk and bagger for two years. b. _____ Ask for the job and if he says no, tell your friends to shoplift from the creep. c. _____ Ask him for the job. d. _____ Hang out at the store, hoping he'll offer it to you.</p>
<p>2. Your boyfriend or girlfriend promises to call you, and doesn't.</p>	<p>a. _____ Don't say anything about it, figuring he or she probably just forgot. b. _____ Say "I don't like it when you tell me you'll call and you don't. I wish you would call me when you say you will." c. _____ Say, "You never do what you say you'll do. You're dirt." Walk away without giving him/her the chance to explain. d. _____ You have a friend tell your boyfriend or girlfriend that you're hanging out with someone else, even though it's not true, to make him or her jealous.</p>
<p>3. You just hurt your arm in gym. Your friend offers to massage it, but you think it will only hurt worse.</p>	<p>a. _____ Say, "No thanks. I'm gonna put ice on it." b. _____ Say, "No thanks. It's all better." c. _____ Say, "Leave me alone. Can't you see I'm in enough pain? How stupid!" d. _____ Let your friend massage it, because it was a nice thing to offer.</p>
<p>4. You want permission from your parents to stay out late.</p>	<p>a. _____ Just do it, and say you didn't notice the time. b. _____ Do your chores and compliment your mother's new haircut, just to get permission. c. _____ Say, "There's a movie I want to see that won't get out 'till 9:30. Can I come home an hour late?" d. _____ Tell yourself, "Forget it; I never get what I want anyway. Why ask?"</p>

Communication Worksheet 1, continued...

<p>5. Your friends are all drinking wine and when you pass the bottle, without drinking any, someone calls you a chicken.</p>	<p>a. _____ Ignore it. b. _____ Punch her. c. _____ Say, "That sounds like a put down and I don't appreciate it." d. _____ Drink some, so she'll like you.</p>
<p>6. You want to offer your mother a backrub.</p>	<p>a. _____ Say, "You look tired, can I give you a backrub?" If she says "No," you say "OK." b. _____ Say, "You look tired, can I give you a backrub?" If she says "No," you say, "You're such an ingrate!" c. _____ Give it to her, so that she'll let your friend spend the night. d. _____ Don't offer, because you guess she'd rather take a hot bath anyway.</p>
<p>7. Your coach just "accidentally" bumped up against your behind for the second time this week. The first time, you ignored it.</p>	<p>a. _____ Say, "I don't like it when you bump up against my behind. I want you to cut it out." b. _____ Ignore it again. It must be accidental. He's such a nice guy, you must be imagining things. c. _____ Tell him, "If you do that again, I'll punch your lights out." d. _____ Start dropping little hints about your mother being a police officer, even though she isn't.</p>
<p>8. You're at a party. A guy or a girl you don't really like asks you if you want to go for a walk.</p>	<p>a. _____ Say, "Are you crazy?" b. _____ Go, in order not to hurt the person's feelings, even though you don't want to. c. _____ Say your feet hurt, even though they don't. d. _____ Say, "No thanks."</p>
<p>9. Your stepmother sends you to the store to buy her some cigarettes. You ask the clerk and he says "No".</p>	<p>a. _____ Ask if he'll call her. When he says "No" again, you say "OK" and leave. b. _____ Ask if he'll call her. When he says "No" again, you call him a "jerk" and tell him to "drop dead." c. _____ Shrug and walk out. d. _____ Step outside, scribble a note, sign her name, and go back in.</p>

Communication Worksheet 1, continued...

<p>10. You are at a party. Your boyfriend or girlfriend whispers "Let's go upstairs and 'do it'." You figure that means "have intercourse" and you don't feel ready for that.</p>	<p>a. _____ Pretend to be sick to your stomach. b. _____ Say "No! You're such a baby, having to go along with the crowd!" c. _____ Go upstairs because you don't want him or her to think you're a baby. d. _____ Say "No, I'd rather stay down here."</p>
<p>11. Your friend just finished eating an ice cream cone and asks for a bite of yours. You don't want to share the little bit you have left.</p>	<p>a. _____ Say, "I've got a cold," even though you don't. b. _____ Say, "OK" and spend the rest of the day feeling like a wimp. c. _____ Dump it on your friend's head. d. _____ Say, "No, sorry."</p>
<p>12. Your father asked you to save the last of the milk for your baby sister. You see your brother pouring the last glass.</p>	<p>a. _____ Don't say anything, figuring he won't listen to you anyway. b. _____ Say, "We'll both get in trouble if you drink that. I wish you would leave it for the baby." c. _____ Keep yourself out of trouble by offering him your cookies if he'll leave the rest of the milk. d. _____ Threaten to tell on him.</p>
<p>13. You'd like to know where the librarian keeps the books about puberty.</p>	<p>a. _____ Say loudly, "This place is so stupid! You can't find anything here." b. _____ Say, "Could you show me where to find a book about puberty?" c. _____ Wander around, not wanting to ask and risk looking stupid. d. _____ Say to your friend, "I bet you can't find the books on puberty," so your friend will do the looking <u>for</u> you.</p>
<p>14. You go to a party with your boyfriend or girlfriend, who spends the whole time dancing with someone else.</p>	<p>a. _____ Don't say anything. You don't "own" him or her and your feelings aren't that important. b. _____ Wait and hit him or her as soon as you are alone. c. _____ Cry or mope so he or she will notice and pay you some attention. d. _____ Say, "I'm feeling bored." or "I'm feeling ignored." and "I wish you'd dance with <u>me</u> sometimes."</p>

Communication Worksheet 1, continued...

<p>15. You want to know if someone you like likes you.</p>	<p>a. _____ Ask, "I'm feeling embarrassed asking, but how do you feel about me?"</p> <p>b. _____ Just keep wondering, because it's too embarrassing to ask.</p> <p>c. _____ Say, "This outfit sure is ugly," hoping the person will disagree.</p> <p>d. _____ Rip off the person's notes to a friend, in order to see if they talk about you.</p>
<p>16. Your mother's friend tries to kiss you on the lips and you don't like it.</p>	<p>a. _____ Say, "Oh gross. You make me sick."</p> <p>b. _____ Get the kiss over with as fast as you can.</p> <p>c. _____ Turn your head, so the kiss lands on your cheek.</p> <p>d. _____ Say "Oh, I've got a herpes cold sore," even though you don't.</p>
<p>17. Someone you hardly know asks to borrow lunch money. You don't want to lend it.</p>	<p>a. _____ Pretend you don't have any.</p> <p>b. _____ Say, "No." If you feel like it add, "But you could have half of my sandwich if you want."</p> <p>c. _____ Say, "OK," and not have enough left to get the bus home.</p> <p>d. _____ Roll your eyes and walk away without saying anything.</p>
<p>18. You overhear a group of your classmates talking about going swimming together. You wish you were invited.</p>	<p>a. _____ Walk away and feel lonely, because it would be too scary to ask. They might say "No."</p> <p>b. _____ Say, sarcastically, "Oh boy, wading in the kiddie pool. Mommy, Mommy, can I go?"</p> <p>c. _____ Mention that you just baked a whole batch of brownies, just so they'll invite you.</p> <p>d. _____ Say, "Sounds like fun. Would it be OK if I came, too?"</p>

Communication Worksheet 1, continued...

<p>19. Your three year old cousin comes to visit. You open your arms for a hug, but he turns away.</p>	<p>a. _____ Ask him, "Can I have a hug?" and if he says, "No," say, "OK, maybe later." b. _____ Figure he's just being shy and pick him up anyway. c. _____ Say, "I'll give you juice, if you hug me." d. _____ Walk away and spend the afternoon feeling hurt.</p>
<p>20. Your neighbor offers to sell you a watch. You think it's stolen and you don't want to get into trouble.</p>	<p>a. _____ Buy it so he won't think you're a "goody two-shoes." b. _____ Say, "You're a thief and you're lucky I don't turn you in." c. _____ Say, "I have three already," even though you don't, so he won't think you figured him out. d. _____ Say, "No, thanks."</p>
<p>21. Your boyfriend or girlfriend has been pressuring you to smoke cigarettes.</p>	<p>a. _____ Say, "Oh, go eat dirt, smog breath!" b. _____ Say, "No, I don't want a cigarette. Please stop asking." c. _____ Smoke, just to shut him or her up. d. _____ Pretend to smoke, but don't inhale.</p>
<p>22. You ask a girl or boy you like to "go with you" and they say, "No, I don't want to go steady 'till I'm in high school."</p>	<p>a. _____ Stop hanging out with him or her. b. _____ Ask, "Well, how about if we go to a movie Saturday anyway," and if the answer is "No," say, "You think you're too good for me? Well, you make me barf." c. _____ Tell everybody he or she said "yes" and spend all your time around him or her. d. _____ Ask, "Well, how about a movie Saturday," and if the answer is "No," say, "OK."</p>
<p>23. You ask your mother if you can skip your chores today. She says "No way."</p>	<p>a. _____ Say, "How about if I do it later, then, like 9:00?" b. _____ Plead with her for 10 minutes, and end up calling her a "witch" under your breath. c. _____ Pretend you have a 20 page paper due tomorrow and you need to go to the library. d. _____ Go to your room and sulk.</p>

Communication Worksheet 1, continued...

<p>24. Your church group leader offers you a back rub. You feel weird about it, and don't want to.</p>	<p>a. _____ Say, "Oh I can't. I have to be home in five minutes," just to get away.</p> <p>b. _____ Say, "What are you, some kind of pervert?"</p> <p>c. _____ Accept the backrub, but make it brief.</p> <p>d. _____ Say "No, thanks. Why don't we set up the chairs, instead?"</p>
<p>25. You notice burning when you go to the bathroom. You call the Health Department STD Clinic. They put you on hold, and the longer you think, the more you worry. Finally, they answer.</p>	<p>a. _____ Hang up, because you're too scared.</p> <p>b. _____ Say, "My friend has this problem and, um, wants me to ask something."</p> <p>c. _____ Say, "I have a burning feeling when I go to the bathroom, I'd like to make an appointment."</p> <p>d. _____ Get so angry about being on hold you shout, "A person could die of AIDS before you lousy bums answer the phone!" Then slam it down in their ears.</p>

A Family Homework Exercise: Communication 1

ALL FAMILY HOMEWORK EXERCISES ARE OPTIONAL.

First, read this aloud together:

Sometimes things get so hurried and chaotic at home, that families forget to say positive things to each other for weeks at a time. Mom notices that John puts away the dishes, but she forgets to say, “I noticed. Thanks.” John notices when Dad leaves the last piece of cake, but he doesn’t think to say, “I love you.”

Then:

Spend at least two minutes thinking silently of what positive things you have forgotten to mention lately. Then spend at least two uninterrupted minutes telling each other those things. For example:

“I’ve noticed how much you _____.”

“I like it when you _____.”

“I appreciated your saying _____.”

“I meant to tell you _____.”

NOTE: Turn in a Family Homework Confirmation Slip by _____ if you want credit.