

SESSION 1: Self-Awareness and Introductions

GOAL: The goal of the first session is to build on social skills, emotional skills, and self-awareness through reflection. These activities are also designed to get the group more comfortable interacting with each other. The opening activity involves moving around, and ties into the social and physical goals behind Positive Youth Development programs.

PREPARATION: Setting up table stations, printing templates, getting art supplies. *10 minutes.*

TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 60 minutes (1 hour)

MATERIALS: Newspaper templates, markers, colored pencils, magazines, scissors, glue. A sample newspaper template is included on the following page.

OPENING ACTIVITY | The Name Game (Adapted from the Smart Girls curriculum through Boys & Girls Clubs of America) | 10 minutes

- Have the students stand in a circle and think of a movement and an adjective that describes them and starts with the same letter as their first name. *2 minutes.*
- Go around the circle, having each student say their adjective and name and do their movement. After each person, the entire group performs and names the motions of everyone else who has gone before. *8 minutes.*

MAIN ACTIVITY | My Newspaper Page (Adapted from the Ohio Adjutant General's Department)| 35 minutes

1. Students they are making their own newspaper pages! Art supplies and sheets with ideas on what to include are at different table stations around the room. Students may answer the prompts by writing, making a collage with magazine pictures, or drawing. *30 minutes.*
 - **Modification:** If a student finishes early, have them to write down a list of rules, guidelines, and/or expectations they have for future group sessions.
2. Clean up! Put supplies away and have the group sit in a circle when done. *5 minutes.*

DEBRIEFING | Follow-up Discussion and Rules | 15 minutes

- Work around the circle and have everyone share their newspaper page with the group.
- Once everyone has shared, have a discussion. Ask questions about what things the group had in common and what unique/fun things some people are bringing into the group.
- After the newspaper discussion, debrief about what went well during today's session and what the students would like to see and work on for next time.
- Have either a staff member or a student volunteer write down a list of rules and expectations for future group sessions. Inform the students that these rules will be posted on the wall during all future meetings and that they will be held accountable to follow through on them.

Headline			
Feature story about Your greatest accomplishment	Self-portrait		Favorite foods
	Favorite songs or groups	Story about your friends	Funniest thing that happened to you
	Personal ad listing your strengths		Your future plans

Ohio Adjutant General's Department. (2003). *Emotional intelligence activities for teens*.

Retrieved from http://ong.ohio.gov/frg/FRGresources/emotional_intelligence_13-18.pdf

SESSION 2: Culture and Communication

GOAL: The goal of the second session is to build on social and emotional skills and get the group more comfortable interacting with each other. Students will finish the session recognizing that people/cultures socialize in different ways, and this affects the way people see things.

PREPARATION: Print out “Apple” and “Orange” group descriptions. *5 minutes.*

TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 60 minutes (1 hour)

MATERIALS: “Apple” and “Orange” group descriptions.

OPENING ACTIVITY | Birthday Line | 10 minutes

- Start with a quick recap of the activity from the previous week’s meeting. *3 minutes.*
- Have the students to form a line according to their birthday without speaking. *6 minutes.*
- Divide the line of students in half, forming 2 separate groups. *1 minute.*

MAIN ACTIVITY | Apples and Oranges Communicate (Adapted from the Smart Girls Curriculum from the Boys & Girls Club of America)| 40 minutes

1. Keep the teens in the same two groups formed during the opening activity. Assign one group to be the Apples group and the other group to be the Oranges group. Instruct both groups to stay on opposite sides of the room. *2 minutes.*
2. Provide each group with a list of behaviors that are considered acceptable within their fruit culture (see list of Apple and Orange group behaviors on the next page). *3 minutes.*
3. Give the groups time to plan how they will represent their fruit culture to the other group of students. *5 minutes.*
4. Ask the Apples and Oranges groups to come together and interact. Remind the students to stay in character and stick to the behaviors on their sheets. They are not allowed to just tell the other students what their fruit culture is, they have to show it! *10 minutes.*
5. Send the Apples Group and the Oranges Group to opposite sides of the room. Ask each group to summarize what happened during the Apple/Orange interaction. *10 minutes.*
6. Have each group present their summary to the whole group. Emphasize that the group not presenting must be quiet and attentive during the other group’s presentation. *10 minutes.*

DEBRIEFING | Follow-up Discussion | 10 minutes

As a whole group, ask the students follow-up questions about the Apples and Oranges activity. Below are some sample questions for the youth development staff to ask, but it’s okay to be flexible and adjust according to where the conversation goes:

- How did it feel to have to behave the way your group was supposed to behave?
- How hard was it to stay in character? Why?
- How did you feel about the way the Oranges/Apples treated the Apples/Oranges?
- What judgments did you make about the other fruit’s culture? Why?
- How can you apply this activity to real life? How did it compare to the warm-up activity?

Orange Culture Fruit Group

People in the Oranges Group are typically very shy and formal.

- Oranges prefer interacting with people from their own culture.
- Oranges always talk slowly. They usually wait about 10 seconds to respond after someone speaks to them.
- Oranges do not start conversations. They only speak when they are spoken to.
- Oranges talk very formally. They always say “Ma’am,” “Ms.,” or “Mr.” with a person’s last name. They do not refer to people by their first name.
- Oranges always squat when greeting someone.
- Oranges avoid direct eye contact and stare at the ceiling when answering a question.

Apple Culture Fruit Group

People in the Apples Group are typically very friendly, loud, outgoing, and informal.

- Apples link legs when they greet people instead of shaking hands.
- Apples are outgoing. They speak loudly.
- Apples gesture wildly when they are talking.
- Apples call everyone by their first name.
- Apples stand very close when talking to someone.
- Apples get excited in a conversation and constantly interrupt other people when they’re talking.

Laniz, A.E., Williams, R., & Riedo, S. (2007). *Smart-Girl: A handbook for leading positive youth development programs*. United States: Smart-Girl Organization.

SESSION 3: Teamwork and Problem Solving

GOAL: The goal of the third session is to tap into the intellectual, social, and emotional aspects of positive youth development through problem-solving and communication.

PREPARATION: Gathering materials for tower building, setting up stations. *10 minutes.*

TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 45 minutes

MATERIALS: Paper cups, paper, paper clips, tape, and drinking straws.

OPENING ACTIVITY | Hula Hoop Challenge | 10 minutes

- The students stand in a circle holding hands. A hula hoop will be around someone's arm.
- Challenge the students to move the hula hoop around the entire circle without ever letting go of someone's hand.

MAIN ACTIVITY | Team Tower Building (inspired by the PYD in-class activity and the RAHS Youth Advisory Council in Michigan) | 25 minutes

1. Count off the students into groups of 4-5. Have them go to a table station. *5 minutes.*
2. Distribute a bag of supplies to each of the table stations. Challenge them to build the tallest tower they can using only the supplies in their bag. The tower must be able to stand up without any supports. *10 minutes.*
3. The students stop building. Go around the room and have each team quickly share with the larger group what their logic was in building the tower the way they did. *5 minutes.*

DEBRIEFING | Follow-up Discussion | 10 minutes

As one large group, ask the students follow-up questions about the tower building activity. Have the group move away from their table stations and sit in a circle, using a "talking object" to ensure who has the floor. Some sample prompts for the youth worker to use are:

- What steps did your group take in order to figure out how to build your tower?
- What role did you take on in this activity? What roles did the other members of your group take on?
- Did anyone in your group get frustrated at one point? How was it handled?
- What things did your group do to show teamwork?
- Star power and shout-outs. If anyone has any praise for another group based on the way they built their tower, or for a member of their own team, they can acknowledge it in front of the entire group.
- When might communication and teamwork skills be helpful in real life? Why?

SESSION 4: Positive Communication and Problem Solving

GOAL: The goal of the fourth session is to tap into the social, intellectual, and emotional aspects of positive youth development by building on the student’s skills regarding effective communication, problem-solving, and emotional recognition/intelligence.

PREPARATION: Printing out scenarios for student groups. *5 minutes.*

TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 55-60 minutes (roughly 1 hour)

MATERIALS: Sheets for different groups with scenarios for them to act out.

OPENING ACTIVITY | Check-Ins and the “I Message” Formula (Adapted from the Smart Girls Curriculum through the Boys & Girls Clubs of America) | 15 minutes

- Have the students sit at the table stations. Go around and have the students share with the whole group how they’re feeling (thumbs up, thumb sideways, thumbs down) and then say one positive thing about this week and one thing from this week that they would like to improve. *7.5 minutes.*
- Pass out the “Formula for an I Message” worksheet from the next page. Ask students to review the sheet, think of an example of how they could use this style of communicating for something going on in their life right now, and write it down. *7.5 minutes.*

MAIN ACTIVITY | Finding Win-Win Solutions (Adapted from the Smart Girls Curriculum through the Boys & Girls Clubs of America) | 30 minutes

1. Break the students into groups of 4 according to shoe size. Have them go to a table station. Groups can have 3 students – 1 will just have to participate more. *5 minutes.*
2. Hand out a situation (they are found on the next page) to each group. Instruct them to act out 2 skits with the situation. In 1 the people involved are not using “I” statements and trying to reach a win-win solution, and in the other the people involved are using “I” statements. All of the students in the group have to act in at least 1 of the 2 skits. *10 minutes.*
3. Have the groups present their skits. Follow-up each presentation by asking all of the students for their feedback and observations. *15 minutes.*

DEBRIEFING | Follow-up Discussion | 10-15 minutes

As one large group, ask the students follow-up questions about the tower building activity. Have the group sit in a circle, using a “talking object” to ensure who has the floor. Some sample prompts for the youth worker to use are:

- How hard was it to think of a win-win solution?
- What was your process for coming up with a win-win solution?
- What methods did you and your groups use to problem solve?

SITUATIONS FOR ACTIVITY

- You want a friend to sleep over, but your grades have not been as good and your mom wants you to study.
- Your older brother/sister accuses you of stealing their favorite shirt.
- Your friend wants you to shoplift a hat. They call you a coward when you say no.
- Your teacher accuses you of cheating on an exam.

FORMULA FOR AN I-MESSAGE WORKSHEET

The I – Message Formula

I feel _____

(Describe feelings here)

when _____

_____.

(Describe only a behavior, not what you think are the other person's beliefs, motives, & etc.)

I want/need _____

_____.

For example, "I want you to stop yelling at me when you're trying to make a point."

Laniz, A.E., Williams, R., & Riedo, S. (2007). *Smart-Girl: A handbook for leading positive youth development programs*. United States: Smart-Girl Organization.

SESSION 5: Self-Evaluation and Reflection

GOAL: The goal of the fifth session is to tap into the intellectual, social, and emotional aspects of positive youth development through problem-solving and communication. The opening activity is physically active and involves teamwork and communication.

PREPARATION: Grabbing notecards, preparing a space for the Opening Activity. *10 minutes.*

TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 60 minutes (1 hour)

MATERIALS: Writing utensils, notecards, and a large empty room for the Opening Activity.

OPENING ACTIVITY | Human Rock-Paper-Scissors | 10 minutes

If a gym is available, go there. Otherwise, push tables to the sides of the room and use the middle space. Split the students in half and establish 2 “safety zones” on either side of the room for each team. Before playing, the 2 groups will meet and decide together if they are rock, paper, or scissors for the round. The teams will stand with their backs facing each other, do the hand symbol showing what they decided on, and turn around to face the other team. The “winning” team then attempts to tag out as many players as they can on the other team, who will then join the “winning” team. Do a few rounds of this until (almost) everyone is on 1 team.

MAIN ACTIVITY | Assessing Group Strengths and Weaknesses (Adapted from the Smart Girls Curriculum through the Boys & Girls Clubs of America) | 35 minutes

1. Have the group sit in a circle. The youth staff worker will facilitate a conversation asking the students what their experiences are working in groups. Then the staff worker can review the stages of progression within groups (forming, norming, storming). *10 minutes.*
2. Give each student 2 index cards. Have them write down one thing about Leadership Group that makes them happy on the 1 card, and 1 thing about Leadership Group that makes them unhappy, annoyed, or angry on the other card. Once the cards are written on, tell the students to place them face-down in the middle of the circle. The happy cards all go in one stack, and the other cards go in a different stack. *5 minutes.*
3. Go around the circle and have the students count off into groups. The staff can go around and hand the groups an even number of the happy and unhappy cards. The groups will be given 10 minutes to come up with 2 ways to increase the things that make them happy in Leadership Group and decrease the things that make them unhappy. *10 minutes.*
4. Have the groups present their suggestions and hold a discussion on which suggestions they want to try. As a group everyone can vote by closing their eyes and raising their hands when the suggestions they want to try are read aloud. *10 minutes.*

DEBRIEFING | Follow-up Discussion | 15 minutes

As one large group, develop an action plan by asking members what steps that can take to make positive changes. Write them on a sheet of paper and bring it in to future sessions. Staff must address youth who are upset by what was said during the debriefing to maintain a safe environment. Trust and community are crucial in order to ensure that this activity is positive.

References

- Eccles, J., & Gootman, J.A. (2002). Features of positive developmental settings. *Community Programs to Promote Youth Development*. Retrieved from <http://www.nap.edu/catalog/10022.html>
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- Michigan Regional Alliance for Healthy Schools Advisory Council. (2006). *RAHS youth advisory council training activities*. Retrieved from http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdch/Decision_Making_Activities_456247_7.doc.
- Ohio Adjutant General's Department. (2003). *Emotional intelligence activities for teens*. Retrieved from http://ong.ohio.gov/frg/FRGresources/emotional_intelligence_13-18.pdf