

Prevention Activities

AIM: The activities in this module are designed to enhance students' awareness of assertiveness skills and to provide an opportunity for students to rehearse these skills. Improving students pro social behaviour by being assertive not only reduces the potential opportunities to be bullied or to be a bully, it also enhances the social skill set of the student for lifelong effective functioning in all aspects of their social life as they grow and mature.

Level A – Prep to Grade 3

Are you as tiny as a mouse or as tall as a giraffe?

This activity is a drama activity. Students select an animal that they consider to be small and weak, an animal that is big and strong and an animal that is loud and cranky. Students act out and verbalise prescribed words according to the strength and weakness of the animal they are portraying. The activity allows students the practical and experiential means of expressing themselves through passive, aggressive and assertive behaviour and then comparing each emotion accordingly as experienced and acted out.

Aim for the stars

This activity is more for the younger students of this age level. The students colour a star shape then complete a physical activity and a speaking activity. As a step to increase confidence, students are to speak in front of the whole class.

Students are then rewarded with a gold star on completion of these activities to add to their star shape. The overall aim of the activity is to provide students with a preliminary awareness of being assertive.

Level B – Grade 4 to Grade 6/7

Nursery rhymes are powerful

This activity makes use of old fashioned nursery rhymes as a script for students to recite in three different styles - shy, cranky and confident. Students experience delivering and receiving messages (nursery rhymes) to gain an understanding of the difference between all three styles. The aim of the activity is to: assist potential targeted students in speaking up for themselves; having potential bullies experience negative, aggressive speech and behaviour from another and provide potential bystanders with the confidence to speak up.

Belly Watchers

This activity is conducted with the entire class and will need a large area for the students to walk around in a circle. Students compare two different communication styles – a timid style (belly watchers) with an assertive style. Students exhibit the two different styles, comparing the verbal and physical behaviours of each style as they walk around in a large circle. This is then followed by a short discussion about how the students felt about each style. Students are encouraged to adopt a more assertive behaviour by being observant of what is going on in the playground and speaking up when they see something that is not right.

Prevention Activities

Level C – Grade 6/7 to Grade 9

Stand up for yourself

This activity helps students explore how they treat themselves in comparison to how they treat others. The activity helps students to stand up for themselves and assert their own needs. Students complete a questionnaire pertaining to their friends then repeat the same questionnaire for themselves. The repetition of the questionnaire opens up the student's awareness of self assertiveness.

Practice makes perfect

This activity uses dice to demonstrate, when undertaking a new skill it is not always achieved on the first try. In small group work, students throw a dice a number of times and record the frequency of the numbers thrown. The activity also highlights that in demonstrating new skills, failures are required before total successes can be fully achieved. Overall this activity provides students with positive reinforcement to encourage persistence when undertaking a new skill such as being assertiveness.

Level D – Grade 10 to Grade 12

Dealer's Choice

This exercise uses the maturity of the older students as a component of assertiveness in itself. The students devise posters to be displayed around the school which inform the younger grades of what to do and say in an assertive manner if they are in a bullying situation. By older students completing this task, it reinforces to the student community that from within their own ranks, bullying is not acceptable behaviour.

Positions vacant

This activity consists of two parts. The first part of the activity makes use of an employment advertisement. The students devise an advertisement for the job of an effective and assertive bystander. Students identify through the construction of the advertisement, assertive skills required to reduce bullying. This activity is conducted in small groups. For the second part of the activity, students gain an experiential lesson on assertiveness by having to confidently inform the interview panel (the small groups) they have the necessary skills to be assertive and get the job.

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Material Required

Selection of picture books and toys

Step One

Have all the students sit down in a circle. Talk to students about the features of three different types of behaviour.

1. shy and quiet behaviour,
2. cranky and loud behaviour, and
3. confident and strong behaviour.

Step Two

Ask the students to select from pictures in books and/or toys in the room, animals that are

1. shy and quiet animals,
2. cranky and loud animals,
3. confident and strong animals.

Have the students place the pictures from the books or the toy animals into three designated areas on the floor in the centre of the circle. Where one pile is for animals that are shy and quiet, one pile for animals that are cranky and loud and one pile for the confident, strong animals.

Step Three

Select an animal from the first pile (shy and quiet pile) and ask the students:

1. to make the sound the animal makes.
2. to act out how the animal stands or moves.

Ask the children to stand up and show how a person who is quiet and shy would stand. Comment on the appropriate postures (hunched over, belly watching and lack of eye contact). Ask the students to keep the pose and say "I don't like that". (Voice would be very quiet and eyes looking down).

Step Four

Pick up an animal from the second pile (loud and cranky pile) and ask the students

1. to make the sound the animal makes.
2. to act out how the animal stands or moves.

Ask the students to stand up and to show how a person who is loud and cranky would stand. Comment on the appropriate postures (big open arms, pointed finger) and large eye contact. Ask the students to keep the pose and say "I don't like that". (Voice would be very loud and eyes would wide open as they look into the face of another person.)

Step Five

Pick up an animal from the third pile (strong and confident pile) and ask the students

1. to make the sound the animal makes.
2. to act out how the animal stands or moves.

Ask the students to stand up and to show how a person who is strong and confident would stand. Comment on the appropriate postures (standing straight and tall) and eye contact. Ask the students to keep the pose and say "I don't like that" (Normal speaking volume in voice and friendly eyes looking into the face of somebody).

Step Six

Talk to the students about the best way to behave when another student does something that they don't like. This is not in a shy and quiet way, not in a loud and cranky way but in a strong and confident way. Ask the students what they think would happen if they responded in a shy and quiet way, would the other person stop? Act this out using a large toy as the recipient of your message. Ask what the students think would happen if they responded in a loud and aggressive way. What might the other student do?

Using a domino effect select a student in the group turn to the student sitting on their left and in a strong and confident way say "I don't like that." Then ask the next student to say it to the student on their left until all students in the class circle have had an opportunity of saying it.

Compliment the students on speaking nicely and confidently to each other.

Aim for the Stars

This activity is more for the younger students of this age level. The students colour a star shape then complete a physical activity and a speaking activity. As a step to increase confidence, students are to speak in front of the whole class. Students are then rewarded with a gold star on completion of these activities to add to their star shape. The overall aim of the activity is to provide students with a preliminary awareness of being assertive.

Material Required

Sufficient photocopies of Star handouts for all students, scissors, container, photocopy of Things I do really well handout

Step One

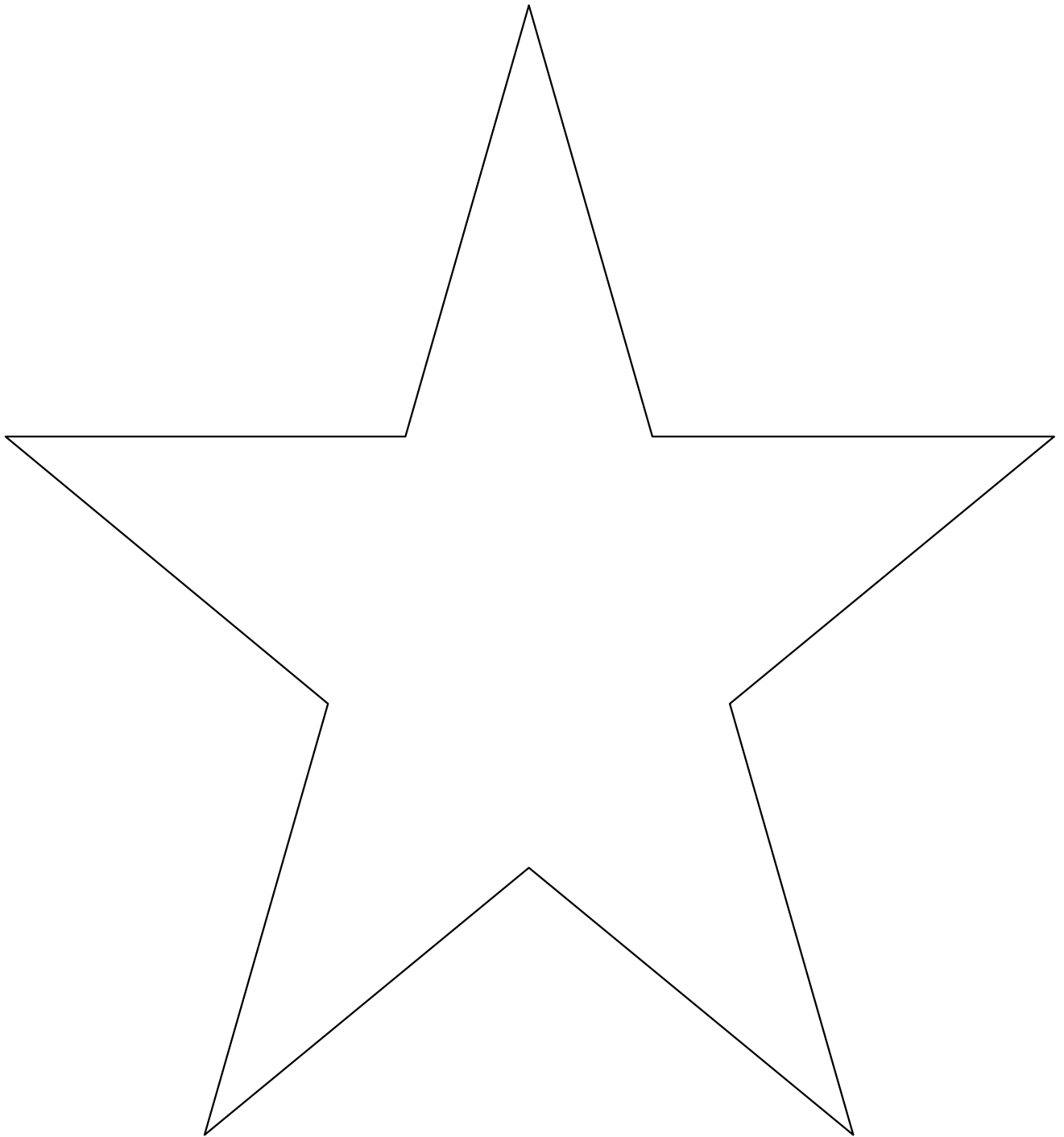
Provide the star handout for students and ask them to colour the star in with their favourite colours. Ask the students to cut out the star shape.

Step Two

Have a container with various behaviours written on separate pieces of paper - See 'Things I do really well' handout. Behaviours listed are : can stand on one foot, can hop, can tie shoe laces, can jump high, can skip, can sit very still, can clap 5 times, can stand up very straight, can curl up like a ball. Inform the students that they will be coming up to the front of the class one at a time with their star. They will be selecting one of the pieces of paper from the container. The student must then undertake the task. Place a gold star on the student's star for performing the task very well.

Step Three

After the student completes the behaviour, ask the student to select the next student to come up by saying "I would like (student's name) to come up next." Again give the student another gold star for being able to stand tall and talk up in front of the whole class. The first student then sits down with their star and the process is repeated with the next student until all students have completed the behaviour and have spoken in front of the class.





Things I can do really well

I can stand on one foot

I can hop

I can tie shoe laces

I can jump high

I can skip

I can sit very still

I can clap 5 times

I can stand up very straight

I can curl up like a ball

