

Communication/Active Listening

Summary

Communication is vital to maintaining close family relationships, or any other relationship for that matter. One critical component of effective communication is active listening; however listening is not always easy. Therefore it is important to help students be aware of the different listening skills and the opportunity to practice them, to better foster healthy dynamic relationships.

Time Frame

1 class periods of 45 minutes each

Group Size

Small Groups

Life Skills

Thinking & Reasoning, Communication, Social & Civic Responsibility, Employability

Materials

1. A computer with PowerPoint, a screen and an overhead projector to display presentation onto screen 2. PowerPoint Presentation 3. Listening Awareness Inventory and pencil for each student 4. Lecture presentation 5. Five or six sets of four notecards with role-play ideas 6. Four roles of yard

Background for Teachers

Dynamics of basic components of communication to include: talking, listening, reading and writing, and body language. For this lesson specifically, understand and be able to demonstrate the following types of active listening: reflective, clarifying, encouraging and empathizing.

Student Prior Knowledge

Students will have been introduced to the importance of effective communication in maintaining healthy relationships. This lesson is part of a unit on healthy relationships.

Intended Learning Outcomes

By the end of the class, students will be able to describe the various active listening techniques, demonstrate these techniques and distinguish between active and inactive listening skills.

Instructional Procedures

1. Attention Getter: Welcome students back from weekend/previous class meeting. Ask individual students how their weekend went, encourage responses and then actively not listen! Purpose is to emphasize how unpleasant inactive listening can be. Using PowerPoint presentation cartoon slides one and two, illustrate that inactive listening is common, everyone experiences it at some point in time, and show slide three for comic relief of a situation they will all be able to relate to! 2. Activating prior knowledge: Administer the "Listening Awareness Inventory" to let students assess the level of their listening skills. Then debrief. 3. Present short lecture with remaining PowerPoint presentation on Communication and Active Listening 4. Model/demonstrate reflective/empathetic listening techniques with the class. 5. Role-Play: Divide class into groups of three. Hand out a set of notecards to each group with examples of role-play ideas such as: (1) one person wants a loan from a friend who does not like lending money, (2) two teens are dating and one wants to break up, (3) one teen wants to get

ice cream with a friend who is trying to stick to healthy food choices, (4) one teen tells another about a crises at home. Include other ideas that may be pertinent to your specific class, or have the kids use ideas of their own. Have two students "communicate" while the third evaluates. Then switch partners so all have an opportunity. 6. If time permits, divide class into four groups and have them sit in a circle, or put their desks together. Give each group a role of yarn. One member holds the end of the yarn, asks another member of the group a question from the lesson such as "What is meant by reflective listening?", or "What is meant by empathetic listening?", or "Demonstrate one of the active listening skills." etc. When the student answers the question, the yarn is passed to the student answering the question. This continues until all have had a turn. Note: After a few questions have been answered and the yarn passed, you will see a spider web start to emerge from the yarn. Relate this to successful communication in that it pulls people together.

Strategies for Diverse Learners

During small group activity, pair fluent English-speaking students with students who have limited English proficiency, and allow fluent English speakers to speak first. This will enhance listening skills for all students!

Assessment Plan

Informal assessment will take place through observation of small group activity and through observation of the question and answer exchange during concluding yarn activity.

Bibliography

Power Point Presentation: Tamara Aho. Health Education Text: Olsen, L.K., Pierre, R.W., and Ozias, J.M. Being Healthy: Teacher's Edition. Orlando. Harcourt Brace & company. c1994. Listening Skills Inventory: Fred Pryor Seminar Handbook: How to Become a Great Communicator. c.1997. Half/Full Listening Cartoon: From How To Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk, by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish. http://www.pta.org/commonsense/4_family/cartoons/ct_listen.html. NICE GUY cartoon: www.matt-powell.com.

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