

## Purpose of the Lesson

The lesson will develop assertive communication skills and strategies students can use to be confident and stand up for themselves and their healthy decisions. Students will think about what they will say in a situation, then practice being assertive in delivering the message to a peer.

## Background Knowledge (Talking Points)

- Assertive communication includes: direct eye contact, confident face, confident posture and confident words.
- Being assertive makes sure people will listen to your decision to make healthy choices.

## Lesson Objectives

*Students will be able to:*

Objective	Activity
1. Practice using assertive communication skills when making a healthy decision with medicines or drugs in a scenario.	Assertiveness Peer Checklist
2. Describe healthy alternatives to using medicines or drugs.	What and Why: Choices and Reasons
3. Analyze assertive communication of a peer to determine strengths and areas to improve.	Assertiveness Peer Checklist
4. Describe how friends and peers influence making healthy choices about medicine or poisons.	What and Why: Choices and Reasons

**Time:** 20-30 minutes

## Materials

Be Confident Poster ([Attachment 1](#)); Copies of Assertiveness Peer Checklist ([Attachment 2](#)); and Assertiveness Scenarios - “What and Why: Choices and Reasons” Worksheet ([Attachment 3](#)).

## Introduction:

- Review:
  - o What should we do to make healthy decisions? **STOP, THINK, CHOOSE.**
  - o We can also make healthy choices by avoiding?
    - Unhealthy or unsafe: places, people, and things such as guns, knives, medicines or drugs.
    - We can also make healthy choices by following home, school and community rules.
  - o Always tell a \_\_\_\_\_ (trusted adult) if we feel unsafe or are pressured to make unhealthy choices about medicines or drugs.

- o Today we're going to give you one more tool to help you be healthy. We're going to practice our communication skills.
- o How do we communicate? Ask for help, say thank you. (with words and nonverbal gestures)
- o What can we communicate? (ask for help, say thank you)
- **Explain:** Today we are going to practice being assertive and confident to make healthy, safe choices.

## Teaching Steps

### Activity 1: The Elements of Assertiveness

- **Step 1:** What is assertiveness and why is it important?
  - o Vocabulary: What does it mean to be assertive?
    - Assertive is a style of communication. You can tell people your needs and ideas clearly and directly without being mean, aggressive, afraid or shy. Tell people what you want in a way that they want to listen.
  - o Ask students to give examples of when they have seen others be assertive.
  - o Ask students to give examples of when they might want or need to be assertive.
  - o When you are assertive, you are going to be able to stand up for what you believe is the healthiest, safest choice.
  - o Read the following examples and ask students to give a thumbs up if the person is being assertive and a thumbs down if they are not.
    - Mya keeps trying to talk, but she is interrupted every time by RJ. She folds her arms and slouches in her seat. (**not assertive**)
    - Desmond wants to be elected student council president. When he is asked why, he stands up straight, makes eye contact, and explains that he wants to make a difference in others' lives and find ways to help his school. (**assertive**)
  - o **ASK:** When someone is being assertive, what would we see them doing?
- **Step 2:** Teach the elements of assertiveness: (**Attachment 1**)
  1. **Direct eye contact**
    - Look them in the eyes. (*No looking down at the floor; no looking off to the side*).
  2. **Confident Face**
    - The look on your face matches your words. (*If you are serious, your face must look serious, NOT happy or smiling*).
  3. **Confident Posture**
    - Stand tall and straight.

#### 4. **Confident Words**

- Say words smoothly and clearly without hesitation.
- **Step 3:** Demonstrate the assertiveness skill to the students. The teacher says “No, I will not do that. I’ll make a healthy choice” using assertive communication (e.g., look directly at person, stand straight, use confident voice, etc.). Then demonstrate the same sentence without one of the elements of assertiveness (e.g, look at floor, hesitate in saying, “No,” slump shoulders, etc.).
  - o Briefly discuss what students saw in the demonstration. Contrast the difference between the two demonstrations. Then demonstrate assertiveness again before moving to the next step.
- **Step 4A:** With a partner have students practice using the 4 elements of assertiveness skills using this refusal statement, “No, I will not do that. I make a healthier choice.”
  - o Partners assess each other by using the Assertiveness Checklist ([Attachment 2](#))
    - \* *(If time) Select a student to demonstrate the Assertiveness Skill for the class. Provide feedback using a projected copy of the Assertiveness Checklist.*
- **Step 4B:** Another tool we need is how to refuse peer pressure to engage in an unhealthy behavior/decision. The tool has two steps:
  - o State your position: “No, I will not do that.”
  - o Give a reason: “It’s not safe or healthy for me to do that.” “I have something else to do that day.” “I don’t want to get hurt.”

#### **Activity 2: Situations – What and Why: Choices and Reasons (See Attachment 3)**

- Let’s look at a few situations and examine **what** we would do and **why** we would choose to do it.
- **Step 1:** Walkthrough with students
  - o You are at the local swimming pool with four of your friends. Two of them keep asking you to smoke. You are starting to feel uncomfortable. What would be the healthiest, safest choice?
    - A. Tell them if they do not stop asking, you will punch them.
    - B. Take a quick puff of the cigarette, hoping they will now stop asking.
    - C. Tell them no and leave that area of the pool.
  - o What would you tell your friends?
    1. What is your decision?
      - **Letter C** – Leave and go to another area of the pool.
    2. State your reason for suggesting an alternative to share with your friends.

- o Discuss each situation – what students chose to do and their reasons for doing so. **Emphasize:**
  - Was your decision safe?
  - Was your decision healthy?
  - Did your decision show respect for yourself?
  - What would you say?
- **Step 2:** Student Practice (Situation 2).
  - o You and your friend are studying for a test. Your friend’s sibling walks in, sees that you are studying very hard, and says, “Hey, I have some stuff that will help you two study better. Want some?” Your friend looks shocked and just stares back at them. What would be the healthiest, safest choice?
    - A. Tell your friend they have an awful family member.
    - B. Never go back to your friend’s house.
    - C. You decide to say “no.” When you get home, discuss what happened with a parent/guardian.
  - o What would you tell your friends?
    1. What is your decision?
    2. What is your reason?
    3. What would you say to them?
  - o Discuss each situation – what students chose to do and their reasons for doing so. **Emphasize:**
    - Was your decision safe?
    - Was your decision healthy?
    - Did your decision show respect for yourself?
    - What would you say?

# HOPE

Health and Opioid  
Prevention Education

4th GRADE  
LESSON 3

Be Confident and Assertive  
to Make Healthy Choices

## Closure

- Ask students to trace their hands on the back of the “What and Why: Choices and Reasons” sheet. On each finger, ask them to write one important thing they learned about making healthy choices about medicines and drugs.
- Share as many answers as time permits.

## Recommendation and Reminders

- Students could write their own situations and share them with others in the class to discuss, like the examples.
- Students could act out the situation in addition to discussing it.

## National Health Education Standards

**Standard 1:** *Comprehending Concepts*

**Standard 3:** *Accessing Health Resources*

**Standard 4:** *Interpersonal Communication Skills*

**Standard 5:** *Decision-Making*

## Healthy Behavior Outcome (HBO)

Alcohol and Other Drugs HBOs:

**HBO 1:** *Avoid misuse and abuse of over-the-counter and prescription drugs.*

**HBO 4:** *Avoid the use of illegal drugs.*

## ELA Standards

**L.4.6** Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being and that are basic to a particular topic.

**SL.4.2** Paraphrase portions of text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

# HOPE BE CONFIDENT

(Standing Up for Yourself)

**1**

## **DIRECT EYE CONTACT**

Look 'em in the eyes.

*No looking down; no looking off to the side.*

**2**

## **CONFIDENT FACE**

Look on your face matches your words.

*If you are serious, your face must look serious,  
NOT happy or smiling.*

**3**

## **CONFIDENT POSTURE**

Stand tall and straight.

**4**

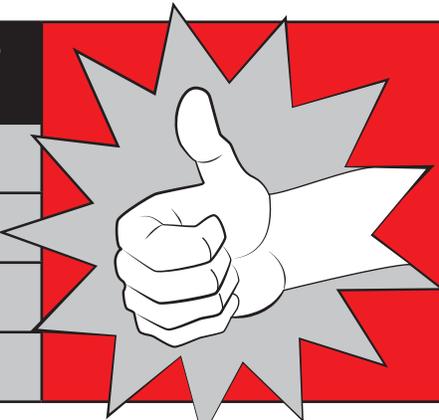
## **CONFIDENT WORDS**

Say smoothly without hesitation.

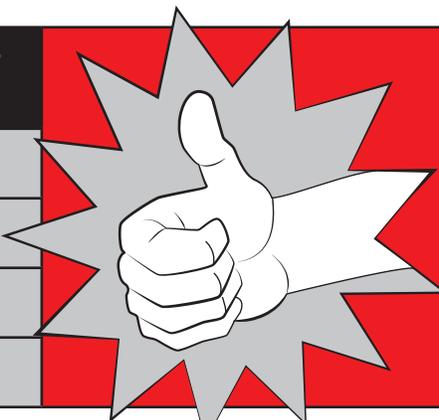
<b>HOPE</b> ASSERTIVENESS CHECKLIST: PEER ASSESSMENT	
<i>Check what your partner did well.</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Looked at me the entire time.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Look on my partner's face matched their words.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Stood up straight and tall the entire time.
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## WHAT AND WHY: Choices and Reasons

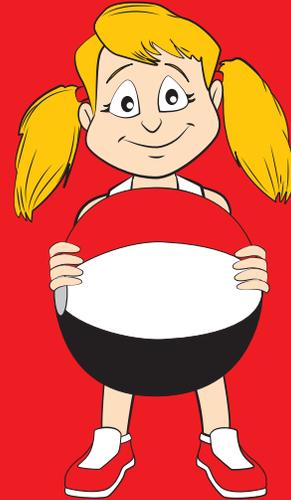
### SITUATION 1

*The Swimming Pool*

I choose:

Why?

What will I say to them?



**HOPE**

### SITUATION 2

*My Friend's House*

I choose:

Why?

What will I say to them?



**HOPE**