

LifeSkills Training

Sample
Lesson

Promoting Health and Personal Development



High School

About the Developer



Gilbert J. Botvin, Ph.D., developed the Botvin *LifeSkills Training* program and created National Health Promotion Associates as the national training center to support providers teaching the program. One of America's foremost experts on drug abuse prevention, Dr. Botvin is a professor of Public Health and Psychiatry at Cornell University's Weill Medical College and is Director of Cornell's Institute for Prevention Research. He has served as adviser and consultant to a host of renowned organizations including the World Health Organization, the National Centers for Disease Control, the National Institute on Drug Abuse, and the White House Office of Drug Control Policy. He has been honored with the FBI's National Leadership Award for his work in drug abuse prevention and received a prestigious MERIT award from the National Institute on Drug Abuse for his achievements as an outstanding prevention researcher.

Dr. Botvin earned a Ph.D. from Columbia University, has training and experience in developmental and clinical psychology, and has published more than 200 scientific papers and book chapters concerning prevention.

Botvin *LifeSkills Training*: High School Program

Program Overview

The Botvin *LifeSkills Training* High School program is a highly interactive, skills-based program designed to promote positive health and personal development for high school youth. Based on the highly effective *LifeSkills Training* curriculum, this program helps adolescents navigate the challenges of the high school years and prepares them for the transition to work or college and the independence and responsibilities that they will encounter as young adults. The *LifeSkills Training* High School program uses developmentally appropriate and collaborative learning strategies to help students achieve competency in the skills that have been found to reduce and prevent substance use and violence.

Program Structure

The Botvin *LifeSkills Training* High School program is designed for students in the 9th or 10th grade. The program consists of 10 class sessions (approximately 40–45 minutes each session). The program can be taught either as an intensive mini-series (consecutively every day, or two to three times a week) until the program is complete, or on a more extended schedule (once a week for 10 weeks).

The High School program can be used alone or in combination with the *LifeSkills Training* Middle School program as a maintenance program. The program can be taught in school, community, and after-school settings.

Program Learning Objectives

The Botvin *LifeSkills Training* High School program is an integrated approach that develops personal, interpersonal, and drug resistance skills. The curriculum is designed to strengthen student abilities in the following areas:

■ **Personal Self-Management Skills**

Provides students with strategies for decision-making, managing stress, and anger.

■ **General Social Skills**

Enables students to strengthen their communication skills and build healthy relationships.

■ **Drug Resistance Skills**

Empowers students to understand the consequences of substance use and risk-taking and the influences of the media.

LifeSkills Training

Promoting Health and
Personal Development

Contains
Sample Lessons
from Student Guide
and
Teacher's Manual

High School

Gilbert J. Botvin, Ph.D.

Professor of Public Health
and Psychiatry

Director of the Institute for
Prevention Research
Cornell University Medical College

Princeton Health Press
1.800.293.4969
www.lifeskillstraining.com



09.2

Copyright © Gilbert J. Botvin, 1979-2009. All Rights Reserved. No part of this manual may be reproduced in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing.

Sample Lesson Only – Not Intended for Duplication

Unit 6



Family Communications

Introduction

The core of who you are is built on family—its values, rules, expectations, and approaches to life.

A family can take many forms. For some it's blood relatives; for others it's an intricate network of friends and relations. When you were young, you received a lot of guidance and supervision from your family. Now that you're in high school, you want more independence. But people who care for you want to be sure you can handle the responsibility. There will be disagreements about your needs and expectations for one another, which may result in arguments, misunderstanding, and confusion.



The questions we'll be thinking about in this unit are:

1. What are your needs for independence? How does your family's caregiving style adapt to those needs?
2. How and why do misunderstandings about needs and expectations for safe and drug-free behavior typically develop?
3. What expectations regarding substance use should you and your family members have for one another?
4. What communication skills help families avoid misunderstandings about each other's needs and expectations?
5. What's the difference between misunderstandings and disagreements? Why is it important to know the difference?

Unit Concepts

**understanding
others' views**

**communicating
effectively**

validate

empathy



Think About It

Activity A: The More Things Change . . .

Group Activity. Brainstorm ideas about how your family roles have stayed the same and changed over the years. Write your ideas in the chart below.

Stayed the Same	Changed
<p>youngest child the "funny" one</p>	<p>more adult responsibilities get good grades</p>

Now discuss how families change as children grow older.

- What are family expectations for behavior?
- How do families communicate these expectations?
- What are your needs, and how does your family meet them?
- When you're trying to communicate your needs, what behaviors help others understand you? What contributes to misunderstandings?



Reflection

In what ways are you different now physically, emotionally, mentally, and socially from how you were in elementary school? In middle school? How do these changes impact your roles in the family now?



Figure It Out

Activity B: Effective Communication Skills

Concept

Effective communication is the respectful exchange of thoughts, feelings, and beliefs between a speaker and a listener in such a way that the listener interprets the message in the same way the speaker intended it.

Non-Verbal

SPEAKER AND LISTENER

- Maintain eye contact.
- Facial expressions, such as smiling and nodding, should show interest.
- Your body language and gestures should be confident but inviting.
- Find a physical distance that has you near enough to each other to talk easily, but not so close that you feel crowded.



Verbal

SPEAKER

- Your words should match your body language.
- Ask both specific (e.g., “Do you understand what I mean by... ?”) and open-ended (e.g., “What do you think of that idea?”) questions to check if the other person understands.
- Give the other person time to talk; don’t monopolize the conversation.
- Keep your tone of voice clear and respectful.

LISTENER

- Use passive listening: Nod, look engaged in what the person is saying, respond with short comments to show you’re paying attention.
- Let the other person finish sentences; don’t interrupt.
- Use active listening: Summarize what you have heard and check for understanding by paraphrasing (saying it in your own words), restating (saying it back using the other person’s words), or asking specific questions.
- Keep your tone of voice clear and respectful.



Do It Now

Activity C: Can You Hear Me Now?

Partners. Take turns reading and responding to the rules below and practicing the Effective Communication Skills on page 5. When you're finished, check off in the Effective Communication Skills box those cues that you used.

1. **A:** You can't ride in a car with someone who has been drinking.

B: *If someone has been drinking, I won't ride with them.* _____

SKILL(s): *Paraphrasing* _____

2. **A:** You have to call me at work when you get home from school.

B: _____

SKILL(s): _____

3. **A:** You have to be home early on school nights.

B: _____

SKILL(s): _____

4. **A:** You can't play on the computer until your homework is done.

B: _____

SKILL(s): _____

5. **A:** You can't hang out with those people.

B: _____

SKILL(s): _____

Make It Happen

Activity D: Family Interview

1. Read over the interview questions on page 8. Add two or more questions that you can think of on this topic to the worksheet.
2. Set up a time before your next class for your interview. Let your interviewee know that it will take about 30 minutes. Be sure to ask all the questions on page 8, but remember to include the questions you added.
3. Refer to the rubric for the Family Interview on page 12 for guidelines on completing the Family Interview Worksheet and the Reflection.
4. Follow your teacher's instructions on how to complete and submit your Family Interview Worksheet and Reflection.



Tips for Interviewing

There are a few points to keep in mind while doing your interview.

- Find a time that's convenient for both of you.
- Use the verbal and non-verbal communication skills that you learned about on page 5.
- Ask if you can record the interview, since it will help you focus on the questions and answers. Try to take notes when reviewing the recording.
- If you don't record, write down notes while you're interviewing that you can use to remind yourself of what the person said.
- If you want to know more about what the person said, ask a follow-up question.

Remember, an important part of this activity is to have fun!

Family Interview Worksheet

Interviewer

Name of Interviewee

Relationship to You

Date

Thank you for agreeing to this interview. I'd like to start by asking you some questions about when you were my age.

1. What did you like to do when you were my age?
2. What did you want to be when you got older?
3. What rules and expectations did your family have?
4. What messages did you get from your parents about alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs when you were growing up?

Sample Follow-Up Responses

- Tell me more.
- Can you give me an example?
- Then what did you do?
- Is there anything else?

Now I'd like to ask you some questions about your role as a caregiver.

5. What are your rules and expectations for me about the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs?
6. What are the consequences for me if I don't follow these rules?
7. Why do you think these rules are important?
8. What do you think is the most challenging part of taking care of a young adult?
9. What have you liked about participating in this interview?

Add two questions of your own.

10.

11.





Reflection for Family Interview

1. Which Effective Communication Skills did you use in the interview? How did they help?

2. I learned that _____

3. I was surprised that _____

4. I am puzzled about _____



Think About It

Activity E: I Was Surprised That...

Look back at question #5 on your Family Interview Worksheet. For each of the rules and expectations that your caregiver has for you, mark:

A next to those that you AGREE with and understand

D next to those you DISAGREE with but understand

P next to those that PUZZLE you—that you disagree with and don't understand

Concept

Understanding others' views involves comprehending what the other person means even if you don't agree with it.



Figure It Out

Activity F: Communicating for Understanding Skills

These Communicating for Understanding Skills follow five steps so that each person in the conversation understands what the other person is saying—whether they agree or not.

- Step 1: Initiate
- Step 2: Mirror
- Step 3: Summarize
- Step 4: Validate
- Step 5: Empathize

Concepts

Validate means showing you value the other person’s opinions even if you don’t agree.

Empathize means understanding and being sensitive to the other person’s feelings, thoughts, and experience.

Each step uses its own kind of sentence stems, examples of which are in blue type below.

1. Initiate

The sender asks for some time to talk.

Sender: “Can we talk?”

Receiver: “Sure. What’s on your mind?”

Sender: “I really want you to stop hanging out at the basketball courts. I’ve been hearing about drugs being sold and fights there.”

2. Mirror

The receiver checks for understanding about what the sender has said and means. This step should continue until the receiver understands the sender’s message.

Receiver: “So, if I’ve got it, what I’m hearing you say is that you’ve heard stories about fights and drug dealing at the courts and you want me to stop hanging out there. **Is there anything more you’d like me to know?**” (or “**Tell me more.**”)

Sender: “I know that you and your friends like to play ball there, but I’m worried about your safety.”

3. Summarize

The receiver summarizes the key parts of what the sender has said.

Receiver: “So let me see if I’ve got it all. You know my friends and I like to play ball at the courts, but you’ve heard a lot of stories about fights and drug dealing there, and you’re worried about my safety so you’d like me not to hang out there. Did I get it all?”

Sender: “You got it!”

4. Validate

The receiver shows understanding and valuing of the sender’s point of view even if they don’t agree.

Receiver: “I understand that you’re concerned about my safety and **I can see it’s important to you because** there have been some fights at the courts. I’ll talk to my friends and figure out where else we can go.”

5. Empathize

The receiver expresses care and sensitivity to the sender’s feelings, thoughts, or experience.

Receiver: “I imagine you feel worried when I’m at the courts.”

Sender: “Yes, it does worry me. Now, is there anything you want to talk to me about?”



Do It Now

Activity G: Agree to Disagree

Partners. Each of you will choose one rule from your interview that you marked with a P (or a D, if there is no P). Using the Communicating for Understanding Skills on page 10, practice having a conversation for understanding. Remember to use the Effective Communications Skills on page 5 as well. When you are done, switch roles. Then complete the Reflection.



Reflection

	Initiate	Mirror	Summarize	Validate	Empathize
Here's what I think I did well	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I found this difficult	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I'd like to improve this	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Make It Happen

Activity H: I Mean What I Say

At home, introduce the Communicating for Understanding Skills to your family. Use these skills to talk to your caregiver about one of the rules you marked with a P or D in Activity E on page 9 and come to an understanding about the rule you selected. After the conversation, write a Reflection paragraph about your conversation. Use the questions below to shape your paragraph.



Reflection

- What was your caregiver's reaction to you introducing these skills?
- How has your understanding about the rule changed?
- Do you still disagree about the rule?
- Whether you now agree with the rule or not, what would you like to have happen next (another topic you'd like to talk about, a way the rule could be changed, etc.)?

Evaluate your Reflection using the rubric for I Mean What I Say on page 13. Follow your teacher's instructions about submitting your Reflection.





UNIT 6, Family Communications

Rubric for Activity D: Family Interview

Criteria	Excellent (4)	Very Good (3)	Satisfactory (2)	Needs Work (1)
Family Interview Worksheet	Asked all questions on the worksheet Asked two or more additional relevant questions Recorded responses on the worksheet	Asked all questions on the worksheet Asked one additional relevant question Recorded responses on the worksheet	Asked most questions on the worksheet Recorded some responses on the worksheet	Did not ask all questions on the worksheet Recorded some or no responses on the worksheet
Effective Communication Skills Used During Interview	Identified the effective communication skills used Identified how skills helped the interview	Identified the effective communication skills used	Stated some effective communication skills used	Did not identify any effective communication skills
Reflection	Completed all reflection questions Responses are related to the interview Responses demonstrate thoughtful engagement with the activity	Completed all reflection questions Responses are related to the interview Responses demonstrate interest in the topic	Completed all reflection questions Some responses are related to the interview Responses demonstrate interest in the topic	Completed only some or none of the reflection questions Responses do not relate to the interview Responses show no interest in the topic
Presentation	Writing is legible and neat; no grammatical and/or spelling errors; easy to read and understand	Writing is legible and neat; few grammatical and/or spelling errors; easy to read and understand	Writing is legible; some grammatical and spelling errors but can be read and understood	Writing is hard to read; several grammatical and spelling errors; difficult to read and understand



UNIT 6, Family Communications

Rubric for Activity H: I Mean What I Say

Criteria	Excellent (4)	Very Good (3)	Satisfactory (2)	Needs Work (1)
Reflection Response	<p>Responded to all four questions</p> <p>Responses contained references to the four Communicating for Understanding skills</p> <p>Summarized practice by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• evaluating its success• describing conversation• identifying effective communication skills used and those that need improvement	<p>Responded to all four questions</p> <p>Responses contained references to at least three of the Communicating for Understanding skills</p> <p>Summarized practice by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• describing the conversation• identifying those communication skills used and those that need improvement	<p>Responded to all four questions</p> <p>Responses contained references to at least one of the Communicating for Understanding skills</p> <p>Summarized practice by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• describing the conversation• identifying those communication skills used and those that need improvement	<p>Responded to three or fewer of the questions</p> <p>Responses did not refer to any of the Communicating for Understanding skills</p> <p>Did not summarize the practice</p>
Presentation	<p>Writing is legible and neat; no grammatical and/or spelling errors; easy to read and understand</p>	<p>Writing is legible and neat; few grammatical and/or spelling errors; easy to read and understand</p>	<p>Writing is legible; some grammatical and spelling errors but can be read and understood</p>	<p>Writing is hard to read; several grammatical and spelling errors; difficult to read and understand</p>

Teacher's Manual

Unit 6: Family Communications



- Lesson 1 Activities:** A. The More Things Change...
B. Effective Communication Skills
C. Can You Hear Me Now?
D. Family Interview
- Lesson 2 Activities:** E. I Was Surprised That...
F. Communicating for Understanding Skills
G. Agree to Disagree
H. I Mean What I Say
- Concepts:** understanding others' views
communicating effectively
validate
empathy

Key: Teaching Skills

F Facilitation

C Coaching

BR Behavioral Rehearsal

A Assessment

BH Behavioral Homework

Background to the Unit

Two important ingredients in preventing and reducing substance use and other risky behaviors in adolescents and young adults are: (1) the clear and consistent communication from parents and caregivers that the use of substances and other risky behaviors are not safe, and (2) the establishment of expectations for healthy and safe behavior.

Students live in a variety of family structures. Completing this unit may be difficult for some. You will need to be sensitive to students who live in “nontraditional” or challenging settings and help them successfully complete this unit.

In Activity D, students interview a parent or caregiver. You may need to arrange ahead of time for a group of people from your school to serve as interview subjects for students who need someone to interview. Keep in mind that the Family Interview and its follow-up activity (I Mean What I Say) will take about 30 minutes each, so your students will need to schedule time accordingly with the people they're interviewing.

You may want to begin the unit with a brief discussion of what a family is, emphasizing that there is no right or wrong definition.

Goals for Family Communications

After completing this unit, students will better understand:

1. What young adults' needs are for independence and how family caregiving styles adapt to those needs.
2. How and why misunderstandings about needs and expectations for safe and drug-free behavior typically develop.
3. The expectations regarding substance use that young adults and their families should have for one another.
4. Which communication skills can help families avoid misunderstandings about each other's needs and expectations for safe and drug-free behavior.
5. The difference between understandings and agreements and why it is important to know the difference.



Lesson 1



Think About It

Activity A: The More Things Change . . .

15
minutes

Goal After completing this activity students will better understand:

- #1. What young adults' needs are for independence and how family caregiving styles adapt to those needs.

Instructions



1. State the goal for the activity.
2. Write these column heads on the board:
Stayed the Same, Changed.
3. **Group Activity.** Place students in small groups. Appoint a recorder and reporter for each.
4. **Brainstorm.** Have students brainstorm in their groups how their family roles have stayed the same and changed over the years. The recorder should write down the group's observations.
5. Ask each reporter to give their group's observations. Write their responses on the board in the appropriate category.
6. Instruct students to turn to **Activity A on page 4** in the Student Guide. Have them write down in the chart any ideas that apply to them.
7. In the same groups, have students discuss the questions and the Reflection at the bottom of page 4 in the Student Guide.

Think About It

Activity A: The More Things Change . . .

Group Activity. Brainstorm ideas about how your family roles have stayed the same and changed over the years. Write your ideas in the chart below.

Stayed the Same	Changed
youngest child the "funny" one	more adult responsibilities get good grades

Now discuss how families change as children grow older.

- What are family expectations for behavior?
- How do families communicate these expectations?
- What are your needs, and how does your family meet them?
- When you're trying to communicate your needs, what behaviors help others understand you? What contributes to misunderstandings?

Reflection
In what ways are you different now physically, emotionally, mentally, and socially from how you were in elementary school? In middle school? How do these changes impact your roles in the family now?

Family Communications 43



Option: Run a length of string down the classroom and mark it at different points with these grade levels and ages: pre-school (0-4), elementary school (5-9), middle school (10-12), and high school (13-15). Have students write on index cards the changes they experienced in their roles at these different times and paper clip the cards to the string at the appropriate ages. Then invite students to stand by the group that is most interesting to them. Ask open questions about each stage. Using the responses, have students compare the changes from birth to now (if there are ages no one chose, use open questions to find out why).

7. Summarize using open-ended questions such as:



Observe

“How have your roles changed? How have they stayed the same?”

Analyze

“Why do you think these changes occurred? Why have some stayed the same? How have you and your family adapted to these changes?”

Predict

“What roles have stayed the same that you would like to change?”

Suggest

“What can families and young adults do to better understand each other’s needs?”

Points to Make

- ✓ We have different needs and abilities at different times in our lives. These affect our roles within our families.
- ✓ Adolescents need independence, peer relationships, the opportunities to take healthy risks and make their own decisions, and the space to develop their identities.
- ✓ Adolescents often need caregivers to trust them as they explore new experiences.
- ✓ Teens need to remember that caregivers have to adapt to these new needs. Families need to learn to work together to adjust their evolving roles.
- ✓ Adults have to learn how to balance teen needs with parental concerns to enable the teens to make good decisions, engage in safe activities, and maintain healthy communication with the family.



Figure It Out

Activity B: Effective Communication Skills

10
minutes

- Goal** After completing this activity students will better understand:
- #2. How and why misunderstandings about needs and expectations for safe and drug-free behavior typically develop.

Instructions

1. State the goal for the activity.
2. Write on the board, *Effective Communication*.

- F** ▶ 3. Ask students to call out their responses to the question, “*What is effective communication?*” After gathering responses and writing them on the board, have students open to **Activity B on page 5** in the Student Guide. Review the concept:

Effective communication is the respectful exchange of thoughts, feelings, and beliefs between a speaker and a listener in such a way that the listener interprets the message in the same way the speaker intended it.

Ask students to identify the key words and ideas in the definition.

- C** ▶ 4. Review the Effective Communication Skills and these terms:
- *Eye contact* is looking directly into someone’s eyes (in a nonconfrontational manner) while listening or speaking; it shows the other person you’re paying attention to them.
 - *Non-verbal/body language* is the “message” your body gives; e.g., looking around the room instead of at the person suggests you’re not paying attention.
 - *Active listening* shows understanding by repeating back what the other person just said, sometimes by putting the message in your own words.
 - *Passive listening* shows interest and understanding such as by occasionally nodding your head or using short phrases (e.g., “I see”) at appropriate breaks in the conversation.


Figure It Out
Activity B: Effective Communication Skills

Concept
Effective communication is the respectful exchange of thoughts, feelings, and beliefs between a speaker and a listener in such a way that the listener interprets the message in the same way the speaker intended it.

Non-Verbal

SPEAKER AND LISTENER

- ❑ Maintain eye contact.
- ❑ Facial expressions, such as smiling and nodding, should show interest.
- ❑ Your body language and gestures should be confident but inviting.
- ❑ Find a physical distance that has you near enough to each other to talk easily, but not so close that you feel crowded.



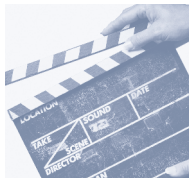
Verbal

<p>SPEAKER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Your words should match your body language. ❑ Ask both specific (e.g., “Do you understand what I mean by...?”) and open-ended (e.g., “What do you think of that idea?”) questions to check if the other person understands. ❑ Give the other person time to talk; don’t monopolize the conversation. ❑ Keep your tone of voice clear and respectful. 	<p>LISTENER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Use passive listening: Nod, look engaged in what the person is saying, respond with short comments to show you’re paying attention. ❑ Let the other person finish sentences; don’t interrupt. ❑ Use active listening: Summarize what you have heard and check for understanding by paraphrasing (saying it in your own words), restating (saying it back using the other person’s words), or asking specific questions. ❑ Keep your tone of voice clear and respectful.
---	---

44 Student Guide

- C** ▶ 5. Invite a student to demonstrate the non-verbal skills with you. Start by coaching the student on how to maintain eye contact, proper facial expressions, body language, and distance.
- BR** ▶ 6. Invite another student to help you demonstrate the verbal skills. Coach the student in the listener role as you communicate a simple idea such as, “*If I communicate effectively, you will understand me.*”
7. Thank the students for their help.

▶ Be sensitive to cultural differences in communication styles. For instance, in some cultures, it is not appropriate for a female to look directly into someone’s eyes.



Do It Now

Activity C: Can You Hear Me Now?

10
minutes

- Goals** After completing this activity students will better understand:
- #2. Why and how misunderstandings about needs and expectations for safe and drug-free behavior typically develop.
 - #3. The expectations regarding substance use that young adults and their families should have for one another.

Instructions

1. State the goals for this activity.
- F** **C** 2. Ask students to turn to **Activity C on page 6** in the Student Guide. Call up a volunteer to read the “parent” (A) rule in item 1. Model the B response using verbal and non-verbal skills. Ask the class to identify which skills you use.
- BR** 3. **Partners.** Have students work in pairs, taking turns on each rule (each student should come up with a response and write it on their worksheet) and identifying the skills they used. Circulate and coach as necessary.
- C** 4. Bring the class back together and ask a few pairs to report on their responses and use of the skills.
5. Summarize with open-ended questions such as:



Observe

“What was difficult about this activity? What was easy?”

Analyze

“What communication skills did you use?”

“Why do families have rules and expectations?”

Predict

“What happens if you don’t use clear communication skills—if the person misunderstands your message?”

“What happens if family members don’t talk about their rules and expectations about staying safe?”

Suggest

“How do you think these skills can help you with difficult discussions with your family or your friends?”

Do It Now

Activity C: Can You Hear Me Now?

Partners. Take turns reading and responding to the rules below and practicing the Effective Communication Skills on page 44. When you’re finished, check off in the Effective Communication Skills box those cues that you used.

1. A: You can’t ride in a car with someone who has been drinking.
 B: *If someone has been drinking, I won’t ride with them.*
 SKILL: *Paraphrasing*
2. A: You have to call me at work when you get home from school.
 B: _____
 SKILL: _____
3. A: You have to be home early on school nights.
 B: _____
 SKILL: _____
4. A: You can’t play on the computer until your homework is done.
 B: _____
 SKILL: _____
5. A: You can’t hang out with those people.
 B: _____
 SKILL: _____

Family Communications 45

Points to Make

- ✓ Using Effective Communication Skills can help prevent misunderstandings with others.
- ✓ Verbal and non-verbal techniques include active and passive listening, using open-ended questions, and looking at the person.
- ✓ Practicing the Effective Communication Skills can help you become more comfortable with them.

Make It Happen

Activity D: Family Interview (Out-of-Class Activity)

10
minutes

- Goal** After completing this activity students will better understand:
- #3. The expectations regarding substance use young adults and their families should have for one another.

Preparation

If a caregiver is not available for an interview, offer students other options. For instance, they could interview a teacher or administrator with whom they have a good relationship or a parent of a friend.

Instructions

1. State the goal for the activity.
- F**▶ 2. Have students turn to **Activity D on pages 7-8** of the Student Guide. Inform students they will be interviewing a caregiver or trusted adult before the next class.
- F**▶ 3. Facilitate a discussion with students about why knowledge of family expectations about drug use and safe behavior is important.

Sample Facilitation Questions

1. Why might it be useful to know family rules or expectations?
2. Why is it important to know what our families think is safe or risky behavior?
3. How do you think you could find out?

Family Interview Worksheet

Interviewer _____ Name of Interviewee _____ Relationship to You _____ Date _____

Thank you for agreeing to this interview. I'd like to start by asking you some questions about when you were my age.

1. What did you like to do when you were my age?
2. What did you want to be when you got older?
3. What rules and expectations did your family have?
4. What messages did you get from your parents about alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs when you were growing up?

Now I'd like to ask you some questions about your role as a caregiver.

5. What are your rules and expectations for me about the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs?
6. What are the consequences for me if I don't follow these rules?
7. Why do you think these rules are important?
8. What do you think is the most challenging part of taking care of a young adult?
9. What have you liked about participating in this interview?

Add two questions of your own.

10. _____
11. _____

Sample Follow-Up Responses

- Tell me more.
- Can you give me an example?
- Then what did you do?
- Is there anything else?

Family Communications 47



4. Assign the Family Interview and Reflection (on page 9) and review the instructions. Remind the students of the Effective Communication Skills on page 5. If you will be collecting and grading the Family Interview Worksheet, review the rubric for the Family Interview (page 12) with the students. Be sure to set a due date for the completion of the assignments.



5. Check with students for any questions or issues about the assignment.
6. Tell students that in the next session they will learn more skills to help them communicate clearly with their families, and that the family interview will be used to complete those activities.

Lesson 2



Think About It

Activity E: I Was Surprised That . . .

10
minutes

Goals After completing this activity students will better understand:

- #4. Which communication skills can help families avoid misunderstandings about each other's needs and expectations for safe and drug-free behavior.

Instructions

1. State the goal for the activity.
2. Check for students' comprehension of the concept of *understanding others' views*. Ask for an example or two of when students have understood someone though they didn't agree. (Examples might include their family's curfew rule or not being allowed off-campus during the school day.)



Understanding others' views involves comprehending what the other person means even if we don't agree with it.

3. Have students open to **Activity E on page 9** in the Student Guide.



Reflection for Family Interview

1. Which Effective Communication Skills did you use in the interview? How did they help?

2. I learned that _____

3. I was surprised that _____

4. I am puzzled about _____



Think About It

Activity E: I Was Surprised That . . .

Look back at question #5 on your Family Interview Worksheet. For each of the rules and expectations that your caregiver has for you, mark:

A next to those that you AGREE with and understand

D next to those you DISAGREE with but understand

P next to those that PUZZLE you—that you disagree with and don't understand

Concept

Understanding others' views involves comprehending what the other person means even if you don't agree with it.

48 Student Guide



For any students who didn't do the interview, have them write down rules that they think apply to them on the interview sheet, then classify them.

4. Ask students to look back at their Family Interview Worksheets on page 8 and indicate their reaction to each of the rules and expectations that their caregiver has for them by marking:

A next to those that they AGREE with and understand

D next to those they DISAGREE with but understand

P next to those that PUZZLE them—that is, disagree with and don't understand

5. Have students call out a rule or expectation they heard from their parents. Write them on the board.



6. After collecting a few representative rules, ask students if they:

- have a similar rule in their family
- agree with and understand it
- disagree with but understand it
- disagree with and don't understand it

7. Summarize with open-ended questions such as:



Observe

“What happened during your interview? How did it go?”

“What kinds of patterns are there to the expectations and rules we understand and those we don't?”

Analyze

“What kinds of patterns are there to the rules we agree with? To those we're puzzled by?”

Predict

“How can understanding those things we might not agree with help us and our relationships with others?”

Suggest

“How can we use communication skills to turn misunderstandings into understandings?”

Points to Make

- ✓ Understanding doesn't necessarily mean we agree with others' points of view. Similarly, misunderstanding doesn't mean that we disagree.
- ✓ Understanding can increase the opportunities for agreement and respectful acceptance for disagreement.



Students who did not do the interview should listen to the others and contribute to the upcoming discussion.



Figure It Out

Activity F: Communicating for Understanding Skills

10 minutes

Goal After completing this activity students will better understand:

- #5. The difference between understandings and agreements and why it is important to know the difference.

Instructions

1. State the goal for the activity.
2. Facilitate a discussion about the roles of understanding and agreement.



Sample Facilitation Questions

1. What does it mean to understand what another person is saying?
2. Does understanding mean we necessarily agree?
3. If we don't understand each other, what can we do to make it happen?
4. How do understanding and agreement differ?

3. Have students turn to **Activity F on page 10**.



4. Review the skills and provide the following definitions as needed.

Validate means showing that you value the other person's opinion, even if you don't agree.

Empathize means understanding and being sensitive to the other person's feelings, thoughts, and experience.



5. Ask for a volunteer to model the steps on page 10 with you (see **page 6.11** for the script).



If students are confused by "validate," explain that they may be able to see why something makes sense to the other person even if it never makes sense to them; the key point is understanding and respecting that person's view despite disagreeing with it.

Figure It Out
Activity F: Communicating for Understanding Skills

These Communicating for Understanding Skills follow five steps so that each person in the conversation understands what the other person is saying—whether they agree or not.

Step 1: Initiate
Step 2: Mirror
Step 3: Summarize
Step 4: Validate
Step 5: Empathize

Concepts

Validate means showing you value the other person's opinions even if you don't agree.

Empathize means understanding and being sensitive to the other person's feelings, thoughts, and experience.

Each step uses its own kind of sentence stems, examples of which are in blue type below.

<p>1. Initiate The sender asks for some time to talk.</p>	<p>Sender: "Can we talk?" Receiver: "Sure. What's on your mind?" Sender: "I really want you to stop hanging out at the basketball courts. I've been hearing about drugs being sold and fights there."</p>
<p>2. Mirror The receiver checks for understanding about what the sender has said and means. This step should continue until the receiver understands the sender's message.</p>	<p>Receiver: "So, if I've got it, what I'm hearing you say is that you've heard stories about fights and drug dealing at the courts and you want me to stop hanging out there. Is there anything more you'd like me to know?" (or "Tell me more.") Sender: "I know that you and your friends like to play ball there, but I'm worried about your safety."</p>
<p>3. Summarize The receiver summarizes the key parts of what the sender has said.</p>	<p>Receiver: "So let me see if I've got it all. You know my friends and I like to play ball at the courts, but you've heard a lot of stories about fights and drug dealing there, and you're worried about my safety so you'd like me not to hang out there. Did I get it all?" Sender: "You got it!"</p>
<p>4. Validate The receiver shows understanding and valuing of the sender's point of view even if they don't agree.</p>	<p>Receiver: "I understand that you're concerned about my safety and I can see it's important to you because there have been some fights at the courts. I'll talk to my friends and figure out where else we can go."</p>
<p>5. Empathize The receiver expresses care and sensitivity to the sender's feelings, thoughts, or experience.</p>	<p>Receiver: "I imagine you feel worried when I'm at the courts." Sender: "Yes, it does worry me. Now, is there anything you want to talk to me about?"</p>

Family Communications 49



Do It Now

Activity G: Agree to Disagree

20 minutes

Goals After completing this activity students will better understand:

- #4. Which communication skills can help families avoid misunderstandings about each other's needs and expectations for safe and drug-free behavior.
- #5. The difference between understandings and agreements and why it is important to know the difference.

Instructions

1. State the goals of the activity.
- F**▶ 2. Ask students to think about the skills they just reviewed and which ones they think will work well for them in resolving one of the rules or expectations they don't understand or agree with.
- C**▶ 3. Have students turn to **Activity G on page 11** in the Student Guide.
- BR**▶ 4. **Partners.** Have students work in pairs. Each person should choose a rule or expectation from their interview that they don't understand.
5. Pairs should practice coming to an understanding of the rule using the Communicating for Understanding Skills. Remind students to complete the Reflection on page 11.
6. Summarize using open-ended questions such as:



Observe

“What happened during your practice?”

“What did you think and feel while using the communication skills?”

Analyze

“Why did those things happen?”

Predict

“What happens when we practice these skills with our families and each other?”

Suggest

“What other skills have we learned that might help us communicate effectively about misunderstandings with our family?”

“What are some other tips that you think would help create effective communication with our families when we have misunderstandings about expectations for safe behavior and substance use?”

“How might using these skills be different if you were doing it with a parent or caregiver? Which do you think would work best? Why?”

Do It Now

Activity G: Agree to Disagree.

Partners. Each of you will choose one rule from your interview that you marked with a P (or a D, if there is no P). Using the Communicating for Understanding Skills on page 49, practice having a conversation for understanding. Remember to use the Effective Communications Skills on page 44 as well. When you are done, switch roles. Then complete the Reflection.

Reflection	Initiate	Mirror	Summarize	Validate	Empathize
Here's what I think I did well	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I found this difficult	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I'd like to improve this	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Make It Happen

Activity H: I Mean What I Say

At home, introduce the Communicating for Understanding Skills to your family. Use these skills to talk to your caregiver about one of the rules you marked with a P or D in Activity E on page 48 and come to an understanding about the rule you selected. After the conversation, write a Reflection paragraph about your conversation. Use the questions below to shape your paragraph.

Reflection

- What was your caregiver's reaction to you introducing these skills?
- How has your understanding about the rule changed?
- Do you still disagree about the rule?
- Whether you now agree with the rule or not, what would you like to have happen next (another topic you'd like to talk about, a way the rule could be changed, etc.)?

Evaluate your Reflection using the rubric for I Mean What I Say on page 52. Follow your teacher's instructions about submitting your Reflection.

50 Student Guide

Points to Make

- ✓ The more we practice these communication skills, the more we can decrease our misunderstandings and increase our understanding.
- ✓ Effective communication skills create trust and respect between people.
- ✓ Effective communication skills help reach agreements about rules and expectations that honor the needs of both young adults and their families.
- ✓ Some rules are non-negotiable because they are about safety.
- ✓ It is important is to understand even if you don't agree, and to know when something can be negotiated and when you have to follow the rules.
- ✓ We may experience strong emotions when we approach difficult communications with our family. There are techniques we can use to help us be good listeners and speakers.



Make It Happen

Activity H: I Mean What I Say (Out-of-Class-Activity)

5 minutes

Goal After completing this activity students will better understand:

- #5. The difference between understandings and agreements and why it is important to know the difference.

Instructions

1. State the goal for the activity.
- F** **BR** 2. Have students open to **Activity H on page 11** in the Student Guide. Direct students to pick one family rule (it can be the same one they worked on in class) and have a Communicating for Understanding conversation with their caregiver.
- C** 3. Suggest they explain that this is a follow-up to their interview and that they go over the Communicating for Understanding Skills (Student Guide, page 10).
- BH** 4. Following the conversation, the student should answer the Reflection questions on page 11 and write one or two paragraphs summarizing what skills worked well and which still need work. Students should include samples from the conversation.
- Target** 5. If you will be grading this activity, review the rubric for I Mean What I Say (**page 13**) with your students. Be sure to assign a due date.
6. Tell students that in the next unit they will be exploring skills that will help them create and maintain healthy personal relationships.

Do It Now

Activity G: Agree to Disagree.

Partners. Each of you will choose one rule from your interview that you marked with a P (or a D, if there is no P). Using the Communicating for Understanding Skills on page 49, practice having a conversation for understanding. Remember to use the Effective Communications Skills on page 44 as well. When you are done, switch roles. Then complete the Reflection.

Reflection	Initiate	Mirror	Summarize	Validate	Empathize
Here's what I think I did well	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I found this difficult	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I'd like to improve this	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Make It Happen

Activity H: I Mean What I Say

At home, introduce the Communicating for Understanding Skills to your family. Use these skills to talk to your caregiver about one of the rules you marked with a P or D in Activity E on page 48 and come to an understanding about the rule you selected. After the conversation, write a Reflection paragraph about your conversation. Use the questions below to shape your paragraph.

Reflection

- What was your caregiver's reaction to you introducing these skills?
- How has your understanding about the rule changed?
- Do you still disagree about the rule?
- Whether you now agree with the rule or not, what would you like to have happen next (another topic you'd like to talk about, a way the rule could be changed, etc.)?

Evaluate your Reflection using the rubric for I Mean What I Say on page 52. Follow your teacher's instructions about submitting your Reflection.

50 Student Guide

Script for Activity F: Communicating for Understanding Skills

1. Initiate

Teacher: "Can we talk?"

Student: "Sure. What's on your mind?"

Teacher: "I really want you to stop hanging out at the basketball courts. I've been hearing about drugs being sold and fights there."

2. Mirror

Student: "So, if I've got it, what I'm hearing you say is that you've heard stories about fights and drug dealing at the courts and you want me to stop hanging out there. **Is there anything more you'd like me to know?"** (or "Tell me more.")

Teacher: "I know that you and your friends like to play ball there, but I'm worried about your safety."

3. Summarize

Student: "So let me see if I've got it all. You know my friends and I like to play ball at the courts, but you've heard a lot of stories about fights and drug dealing there, and you're worried about my safety so you'd like me not to hang out there. Did I get it all?"

Teacher: "You got it!"

4. Validate

Student: "I understand that you're concerned about my safety and I can see it's important to you because there have been some fights at the courts. I'll talk to my friends and figure out where else we can go."

5. Empathize

Student: "I imagine you feel worried when I'm at the courts."

Teacher: "Yes, it does worry me. Is there anything you want to talk to me about?"

Unit	Unit Goals	Key Skills	Class Periods
1: The Value of Good Health	To introduce the LST HS program and how it is relevant to students' health.	Cooperative learning; using assessment rubrics; self-analysis.	1
2: Decision-Making for Health	To teach how to make decisions that benefit personal health practices.	Self-reflection and assessment; analysis of health risks; decision analysis.	1
3: Risk-Taking and Substance Abuse	To counter myths and misconceptions about drugs, their rate of usage, and effects; to increase awareness of effects of drug use on physical, mental, and emotional health.	Researching, analyzing, and applying data.	1
4: The Media and Health	To increase awareness of how the media influences our health behavior; to increase resistance to media manipulation and influence.	Content analysis of media techniques; comparing media messages to previous knowledge; oral presentations and projects.	2
5: Managing Stress, Anger, and Other Emotions	To teach recognition of stress and anger triggers and how they relate to behavior; how substance use is related to stress; techniques for managing stress and anger.	Self-reflection and assessment of stress and anger triggers and responses; resulting risky behaviors; analysis and practice of five techniques for managing stress and anger.	1
6: Family Communications	To increase awareness of changing roles in the family; to teach how to communicate effectively with family members.	Identifying developmental changes in oneself; interviewing family member; communication skills.	2
7: Healthy Relationships	To increase awareness of what students are attracted to in others and what attracts others to them; skills for effective social interaction; resolving conflicts in close personal relationships.	Reflecting on actions taken in personal relationships; verbal and non-verbal assertiveness; making social contacts; practicing conflict resolution.	2

The Botvin *LifeSkills Training* High School Program Companion Website

Taking prevention beyond the classroom!

For students:

- Activities that reinforce classroom lessons
- Links to health-related information



For teachers:

- Instructions for web-based student activities
- Resource section with information to support lessons



www.lifeskillstraining.com/hsweb