

Health Skill:

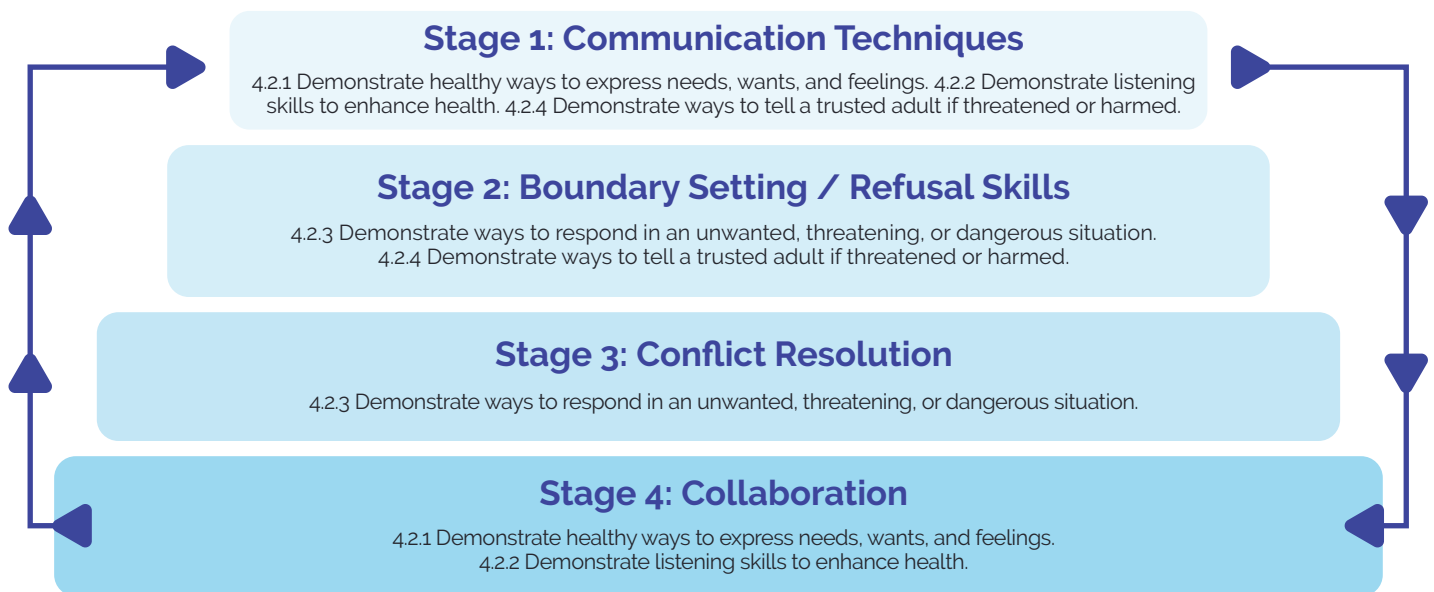
Interpersonal Communication



Background Information

The health skill, *Interpersonal Communication*, guides students to better understand, practice, and reflect on their interactions with others. By providing students with a safe space to practice strategies for healthy communication in school, students are more prepared to handle social situations throughout their life. The *Interpersonal Communication* health skill begins with practicing appropriate communication techniques, then explores healthy boundaries with strategies to uphold those boundaries, moving to examining the importance of productive conflict and conflict resolution, and ends with strategies to ensure effective collaboration. Each stage of *Interpersonal Communication* supports students to better understand themselves and their community, while working toward having more authentic, intentional communication with others.

The four stages of *Interpersonal Communication* are designed to support the growth of each student toward more complex levels of communication, beginning with the individual and ending with effective team work. The *Teaching Progression* for the four stages were developed in sequential order to ensure strategies build upon one another, leading to more inclusive, authentic, and collaborative teamwork. However, teachers can rearrange the stages as appropriate for their classroom.



NATIONAL HEALTH EDUCATION STANDARD (NHES) 4:

Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.

National Health Education Standard Rationale: Effective communication enhances personal, family, and community health. This standard focuses on how responsible individuals use verbal and non-verbal skills to develop and maintain healthy personal relationships. The ability to organize and to convey information and feelings is the basis for strengthening interpersonal interactions and reducing or avoiding conflict.



Grades PreK-2 Framework

In grades PreK-2, students learn a variety of strategies to effectively communicate in a variety of modes. The graphic below outlines the strategies learned in each stage, beginning with *Stage 1: Communication Techniques* and ending with *Stage 4: Collaboration*. Teachers should use the strategies listed as a starting point and add strategies to meet the needs of their students.



Notes on Grade Level Progression

Activities, vocabulary, and language throughout the models are vertically aligned and build upon one another. If students require scaffolding refer to previous grade levels for additional ideas for activities and instruction that address gaps in student skills. For enrichment activities, look at higher grade levels in order to provide additional practice opportunities or for ideas on how to deepen understanding.



Stage 2: Refusal Skills & Boundary Setting

The *Interpersonal Communication* health skill model continues with *Stage 2: Refusal Skills & Boundary Setting* to teach students to advocate for themselves and set appropriate, healthy boundaries in relationships. The strategies used in *Stage 2: Refusal Skills & Boundary Setting* are designed to help students practice using a strong voice and safe strategies when they face pressure to do things that feel unsafe or unhealthy for them. By the end of *Stage 2: Refusal Skills & Boundary Setting*, students in all grade-levels will have foundational strategies for saying *no* in high pressure social situations and maintain healthy boundaries. Students who master these techniques will be better equipped to follow through on healthy decisions in relationships and set appropriate boundaries to feel safe and comfortable with others.

The Steps:



Step 1
Listen to
My Feelings



Step 2
Say No



Step 3
Look Back
& Learn

Grades PreK-2 Framework

Students in grades PreK-2 are inherently curious and social. As young students begin developing relationships and learning the rules of interacting with others, it is important to give students guidance on establishing and maintaining healthy boundaries. To set students up for healthy relationships, teachers should provide students with skills to maintain appropriate boundaries. Because early elementary students have a particular curiosity in their own bodies and the bodies of others, skills in this health model will focus on appropriate touch and physical boundary setting. They will explore the importance of rules in society that provide boundaries to protect and keep people safe. Sharing is also an important boundary for students to practice at this age. Students in grades PreK-2 should spend time deciding when and how they want to share and practice kind ways to communicate that they do not wish to share their belongings if they are not comfortable. Many of the activities in the *Teaching Progression* are written for students who have not started reading and writing. If students are reading and writing, adapt or add to activities to reinforce literacy skills. For some activities, guidance is provided for how literacy may be included.

Mastery of *Stage 2: Refusal Skills & Boundary Setting* for grades PreK-2 means students will be able to explain how rules keep them safe, recognize appropriate versus inappropriate touch, and verbalize their personal boundaries for their possessions.



Stage 2: Refusal Skills & Boundary Setting

The Steps:



Step 1: Listen to My Feelings

Step Overview: When learning to set boundaries, it is important to listen to your feelings. Our bodies tell us when we do not feel safe or comfortable and learning to recognize these feelings allows us to know when we need to state a boundary or say *no*. This step allows students to stop and think about how they are feeling in order to recognize when their boundaries are crossed. In this step, it is important for students in grades PreK-2 to focus on two types of boundaries: boundaries for their bodies and boundaries for their belongings. Teachers should spend time focusing on these two types of boundaries and incorporate additional boundaries when students are ready.

Sub Skill(s):

- Name my feelings
- Define boundary
- Know my boundaries for my body
- Know my boundaries for my stuff



Step 2: Say No

Step Overview: Step 2 of *Refusal Skills & Boundary Setting* teaches students how to state their boundary clearly and assertively, whether that is just saying *no* or stating what they need the other person to stop and do differently. Students should practice identifying when situations need a firm *no* and when boundaries may be a little more complex, like sharing personal belongings or playing with one another.

Sub Skill(s):

- Identify situations that require saying *no* or getting help
- Use a refusal/boundary setting strategy
 - Say *no* firmly and loudly. Stand tall and be clear.
 - Avoid or leave the situation
 - Politely decline
 - Get help from a trusted adult



Step 3: Look Back & Learn

Step Overview: Learning to reflect takes practice and intention. After an individual upholds a personal boundary, it is important to reflect on how they feel. It is possible that upon reflection, they will need to seek additional resources or help in case the situation comes up again in the future. Building time for students to reflect is crucial in developing metacognition, which supports health skills, *Self-Management and Advocacy for Self & Others*.

Reflection Question(s):

- What is my boundary?
- What do I say if someone is crossing boundaries for my body?
- What do I say if someone wants me to share, but I don't want to?
- When should I get an adult to help?



Teaching Tips

- Use movement to help students understand the concept of boundaries. For example, tape off an area of the room and prompt students to enter and exit the boundary.
- Practice *Stage 2: Refusal Skills & Boundary Setting* with sharing belongings. Prompt students to identify objects they are okay with sharing and others they are not. Then, have students practice asking for consent for borrowing and saying *no* if they do not want to share.
- Use role play to give students an opportunity to practice communicating and upholding their boundaries.
- Be sure to include the following situations when learning about seeking help from a trusted adult when boundaries are crossed: sexual assault or harrasment, talk of self harm or suicide, threats toward others, etc.

See *Teaching Progression* for suggested learning activities.



Teaching Progression:



Step 1: Listen to My Feelings

SUB SKILL(S):

- Name my feelings
- Define boundary
- Know my boundaries for my body
- Know my boundaries for my stuff

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

What is a boundary? What are my boundaries? How do I know when my boundaries are crossed?

NHES PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

4.2.1 Demonstrate healthy ways to express needs, wants, and feelings.

VALUABLE VOCABULARY:

*feelings,
personal preference,
boundaries,
emotional boundaries*

Step 1: Listen to My Feelings | Sub Skill: Name My Feelings



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 1:

Explain to students that our bodies tell us when we feel happy and when we feel sad. Explain to students that when we feel happy we get energy and smile, but when we feel sad we may have a stomach ache and frown. Ask students to show you how they look when they feel happy, and then, how they look when they feel sad. Next, have students practice identifying and naming 5-6 key emotions (i.e., happy, sad, scared, excited).

Language of Health Literacy:

I feel ___ when ____.

*My body tells me I feel ____
I feel this ____ (area of body
or way they know).*



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 2:

Give students 4-5 key emotions to focus on during this activity (i.e., happy, sad, scared, excited). Show images of different emotions a person could experience.

Have students answer the following questions for each image you show:

- How does this person feel?
- How do you know that this person feels that way?

TEACHING NOTES:

- During the discussion, have students explain specific features they see when people have certain feelings. Example: I think they feel sad because they are crying.
- See *Resource Bank* below for example emotions cards.



Teaching Progression: Step 1 | Listen to My Feelings (Cont.)



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 3:

Tell students that our bodies talk to us to help us know how we are feeling. Explain to students that when our bodies talk to us we can feel it in our stomach, head, and even our skin. Tell students they are going to focus on listening to what their body is telling them in different situations.

Present images of people experiencing different situations that would evoke strong emotions. Tell students to turn and talk with their partner. Using the *Language of Health Literacy*, have students answer the following question for each image: How would you feel?

Once students have completed several rounds of the activity, have students focus on how their bodies talk to them for each situation. Show each image for a second time, but this time, have students point to where in their bodies they have a feeling. For each situation, have students answer the following question with a partner using the *Language of Health Literacy*.

- How does your body talk to you to tell you your feelings?

After students complete the activity, use the following questions to lead a student discussion.

- What feelings do you get when you are happy or sad?
- What feelings do you get when you are excited or scared?
- How does your body help you know your feelings?

TEACHING NOTES:

- Examples of images: opening a birthday present, someone pulling someone's hair, finding a giant spider under your pillow, etc.
- Model and provide the *Language of Health Literacy* to support students in identifying their feelings.
- Use different movement options as necessary to accommodate students.
- During the discussion, lead students to explain specifically how their bodies feel when they experience different emotions.



Teaching Progression: Step 1 | Listen to My Feelings (Cont.)

Step 1: Listen To My Feelings | Sub Skill: Define Boundaries



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 1:

Define *boundaries* for students. *Boundaries are limits and rules placed on people to keep everyone safe, healthy, and happy.*

Tell students that they are going to play a game to practice identifying boundaries. Create a large circle in the classroom using tape on the floor, cones, or other objects to visually identify a boundary line. Have students stand on the outside of the circle. Explain to students that boundaries can be thought of as rules.

Tell students that right now they are following the boundaries set by being on the outside of the circle.

Next, tell students that the new rule is to be inside the circle. Model for students by quickly moving to the inside of the circle. Ask students to point at the boundary that they should not cross. Tell students that for this game, they need to encourage the entire class to stay within the boundaries of the circle. If they see someone moving outside of the circle's boundaries, they should say, "Stop!" Now play follow the leader within the circle. Make funny moves, play music and encourage students to follow your moves within the boundary of the circle. Every now and then, start to step outside of the circle. Students should say loudly "Stop!" When you feel it is appropriate, allow students to become the leader of the game. Continue to encourage everyone to stay in the boundary by saying, "Stop!" when someone steps outside of the circle.

After students complete the game, remind students that a *boundary is a rule or limit put in place to protect and keep people safe, healthy, and happy*. Use the following questions to lead a student discussion:

- What boundaries do we have in the classroom?
- What boundaries do you have during recess?
- What boundaries do you have when you are playing (e.g. games at recess, soccer, basketball, football)?
- What happens if you don't follow boundaries put in place by others?



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 2:

Explain to students that in school and at home adults give us boundaries to keep us safe and healthy. Show students images of kids interacting at home and school. Within the images, show students following rules or upholding a boundary. Tell students to stand when they see an image of students following a boundary.

After each image showing a boundary, have students respond to the following questions using the *Language of Health Literacy*:

- What boundary do you see?
- Why is this boundary in place?

After students complete the activity, use the following questions to lead a student discussion.

- What boundaries do you follow at home?
- How are these boundaries keeping you safe and healthy?
- What boundaries do you follow at school?
- How are these boundaries keeping you safe and healthy?



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 3:

Instruct students to draw an image showing the most important boundary they follow every dayz (e.g. holding their guardian's hand in a parking lot, not taking objects out of sibling's room). Tell students to draw the boundary and be ready to explain how the boundary keeps them safe and healthy.

Language of Health Literacy:

Boundaries are _____.

The boundary is _____.

This boundary helps keep me safe because _____.



Teaching Progression: Step 1 | Listen to My Feelings (Cont.)

Step 1: Listen To My Feelings | Sub Skill: Know My Boundaries For My Body



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 1:

Ask students if they have ever felt uncomfortable when someone gets too close to them. Explain that this is because we all have something called *personal space*.

Define *personal space* to students. *Personal space is our space surrounding our bodies that is private*. Tell students that a very important boundary for people to follow is personal space.

Explain to students that each person has a specific bubble of personal space that helps them feel comfortable, and we need to be aware of each person's bubble to help people feel happy and safe. Tell students that each person has a different sized bubble of personal space, and we need to be aware of our personal space bubble and others. Tell students that in school we should give all students at least an arms length distance to respect their personal space bubble. Give students a handout with different images of people interacting. Have students color in green images of appropriate personal space (e.g. people coloring next to each in their own personal spaces, people walking down the hallway) and color in red images with inappropriate personal space (e.g. people hanging on each other walking in the hallway, someone sitting too close to another person while working).

Once students finish the activity, lead a discussion to have students reflect on the following questions:

- What is personal space?
- How much space should you give friends at school?
- What should you do if you want to give someone a hug or touch them?



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 2:

Tell students that when we want to enter another person's bubble, we need to ask them for permission or consent. Define *consent* for students. *Consent is an agreement that it is okay to do something*. Tell students that if they want to give their friend a hug, they must first ask for consent.

Explain to students that asking before we touch our friends is important because it helps people feel safe and happy. Have students practice asking for consent for hugs with peers. Tell students that they are always allowed to say, "No thank you," to decline hugging if they do not want a hug, and that they will learn strategies to say *no* in the next step.

Once students finish the activity, lead a discussion to have students reflect on the following questions:

- Why do we need to ask for consent to hug or touch our friends?
- Why is it okay to say *no* to a hug?
- How does your body tell you if it is okay or not okay to hug?

Language of Health Literacy:

*I feel _____ and I would like a hug.
Can we hug?*

My boundary is _____.

*I feel _____ when _____, so I
want/do not want _____.*

TEACHING NOTES:

- Model and provide the *Language of Health Literacy* to have students practice asking for consent to hug their peers.



Teaching Progression: Step 1 | Listen to My Feelings (Cont.)



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 3:

Remind students that our bodies talk to us about our feelings to help know when we feel safe and comfortable. Explain to students that we need to listen to our feelings to know our own boundaries for our bodies. Share with students that we get to decide boundaries for our bodies. Remind students that *boundaries are rules we have for our bodies to keep us safe and happy.*

Explain to students that there are types of personal touch that are appropriate and okay with our boundaries. Tell students that there are also types of touch that are inappropriate and against our boundaries. Tell students that when someone crosses our boundaries we will feel uncomfortable, like something is wrong. Explain to students that when someone touches us it should not hurt. If it hurts, feels wrong, or makes us scared, then our personal boundaries were crossed.

Share with students that they are going to practice recognizing their personal boundaries in the next activity. Tell students that they are going to see images of different people touching. Tell students that when they see an image that shows appropriate touch they should give a thumbs up, and when they see an image that shows inappropriate touch they should put up their hand and yell, "Stop!" Show students images of different people interacting through personal touch.

Once students finish the activity, lead a discussion to have students reflect on the following questions:

- How do you know when touch goes against your boundary?
- How does your body tell you when something is wrong when someone touches you?

TEACHING NOTES:

- Examples of images: hugging, pushing someone down, holding hands.



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 4:

Explain to students that their "swimsuit parts" are places on their body that are private. Only people responsible for keeping them safe, clean and healthy are allowed to touch their private parts. If anyone tries to touch them in these areas, they need to get a trusted adult's help immediately.

To demonstrate their learning, have students draw two images on personal touch. Instruct students to draw an image of "good" touch with a friend at school that makes them feel happy. Next, instruct students to draw an image of touch that would cross their boundaries at school, or "bad" touch. Collect drawings to assess students' understanding of personal touch and boundaries.



Teaching Progression: Step 1 | Listen to My Feelings (Cont.)

Step 1: Listen To My Feelings | Sub Skill: Know My Boundaries For My Stuff



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 1:

Tell students that they can also set boundaries for their personal belongings. Remind students that it is important to share with one another, and it is also okay to say **no** to sharing in a nice way. Read to students a story to demonstrate the importance of sharing. After you finish the story, tell students that they will learn how to politely ask each other to share, and how to kindly tell a friend that they can not borrow their things.

Language of Health Literacy:

I would like to share _____. Is that okay with you?

This is my _____, and I don't want to share it right now.

You can/cannot borrow _____ because _____.



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 2:

Have students identify when a person is kindly setting a boundary with their stuff and when they are not being kind when setting a boundary with their stuff. Show students images of children fighting over toys, kindly sharing, etc. For each image, instruct students to stand up when they see an example of someone setting boundaries with their things in a kind way. Tell students to shake their finger and say **no** when they see someone setting a boundary with their things in an unkind way.

Following the activity, lead students in a reflective discussion using the following questions:

- Why is it kind to share?
- Why do you sometimes not want to share?
- How should you not act if you don't want to share with someone?
- How should you act if you don't want to share with someone?



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 3:

Give students an assortment of toys, candy, or a game, or ask them to bring in a variety of objects that they could share with another student. Ask students to identify the objects they feel comfortable sharing and the objects they do not feel comfortable sharing. Prompt students to explain why they would share some objects but not others. Next, have students practice asking to share and stating their boundary with their partner.

TEACHING NOTES:

- Model and provide the *Language of Health Literacy* to support students stating which objects they want to share and which ones they do not.
- Be prepared to intervene with students who are upset that the person won't share, or if a student doesn't respect the boundary to not share. Debrief these moments and reinforce that everyone has a right to set boundaries about their things as long as it is in a kind, respectful way.



Teaching Progression:



Step 2: Say No

SUB SKILL(S):

- Identify situations that require saying *no* or getting help
- Use a refusal/boundary setting strategy
 - Say *no* firmly and loudly. Stand tall and be clear
 - Avoid or leave the situation
 - Politely decline - Thanks, but no thanks
 - Get help from a trusted adult

VALUABLE VOCABULARY:

boundaries, refusal, safety, help, assertive

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

Do I feel uncomfortable or comfortable? Should I say "No"?

NHES PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

4.2.3 Demonstrate ways to respond in an unwanted, threatening, or dangerous situation.

Step 2: Say No |

Sub Skill: Identify Situations That Require Saying No Or Getting Help



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 1:

Explain to students that there are situations when they will need to be very clear with their boundaries. Read out loud to students situations that would require them to say *no*. Tell students to stand if they hear a situation in which they would need to say "no" or "stop".

After scenarios are read, lead a discussion using the following guiding questions:

- How do you know when you need to say "no" or "stop"?
- What feelings do you get when you want to say "no" in a situation?
- How do you know when you need to get help from an adult?

Tell students if they feel they are not being listened to by others or if they do not feel safe, it is important to talk to a trusted adult immediately. Ask students to identify which scenarios they would seek help from a trusted adult.

See Next Page For Teaching Notes.

Language of Health Literacy:

I would say, "no," or "stop," because _____.

I would seek help from a trusted adult if _____.



Teaching Progression: Step 2 | Say No (Cont.)

TEACHING NOTES:

- Example Scenarios:
 - You are walking home, and a person pulls their car over. They insist that they should give you a ride and ask you to get in their car.
 - Someone is touching you inappropriately.
 - Someone pushes you down and your elbow is bleeding.
- Remind students that when they are effectively communicating with others they should stand tall, use a clear voice, and make eye contact with the person they are speaking to. For more detailed lessons on effective communication strategies, see *Stage 1: Communication Techniques*.
- Keep in mind that some students may be triggered by this task. Offer personal conversations or drawing options as deemed appropriate for your classroom and the students in need of additional supports.



See *Access Valid & Reliable Resources* for guidance on supporting students on locating trusted adults.



See *Advocacy for Self & Others* for guidance on supporting students asking for help.

Step 2: Say No | Sub Skill: Say No Clearly And Assertively



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 1:

Explain to students that they should be comfortable saying **no** to adults and friends.

Remind students that they are in control of their bodies and their possessions, and they have the right to say **no** if they do not want to be touched or share their belongings. Tell students that they will practice saying **no** to friends in a clear way to express their needs. Have students walk around the room and ask students for high fives or hugs. Tell each student that they need to practice saying **no** clearly and assertively using the *Language of Health Literacy*.

Language of Health Literacy:

No thank you, I don't want to _____

No, I will not _____. Leave me alone.

Stop _____ right now.

No, you can not _____. That makes me feel unsafe.

When students finish, tell them that saying **no** is not mean or a way to punish their friends. It is a way to keep your boundaries, feel safe, and express yourself. Encourage them to say **no** when they feel uncomfortable, afraid, or sad.



Teaching Progression: Step 2 | Say No (Cont.)

Step 2: Say No | Sub Skill: Use A Refusal/Boundary Setting Strategy



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 1:

Explain to students that sometimes they may not feel safe or comfortable directly communicating their boundary, and therefore, they should be ready with 2-3 refusal strategies in addition to stating their personal boundary. Model for students how to use multiple strategies.

Place students in small groups (2-3 students) to practice using refusal strategies. Provide students with 4-6 scenarios to practice strategies.

Provide students with a handout outlining the following refusal strategies:

Refusal/Boundary Setting Strategy	Language of Health Literacy:	Example:
Say <i>no</i> firmly and loudly. Stand tall and be clear.	"No, I do not want to _____."	"No, I do not want to play on the swing right now."
Avoid or leave the situation.	"I need to leave. I have to _____."	"I need to leave. I have to help my sibling."
Politely decline	"Thanks for _____, but I can't _____."	"Thanks for asking me to ride bikes, but I can't today."

If the person will not accept your no or respect your boundary, **seek the help of a trusted adult.**



Teaching Progression:



Step 3: Look Back & Learn

REFLECTION QUESTION(S):

- What is my boundary?
- What do I say if someone is crossing boundaries for my body?
- What do I say if someone wants me to share, but I don't want to?
- When should I get an adult to help?

VALUABLE VOCABULARY:

reflection

NHES PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

4.2.3 Demonstrate ways to respond in an unwanted, threatening, or dangerous situation.



SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY 1:

Ask students questions that will help them understand the importance of looking back on a situation that required them to set a boundary and what they learned. For example ask the following questions:

- What is my boundary?
- What do I say if someone is crossing boundaries for my body?
- What do I say if someone wants me to share, but I don't want to?
- When should I get a trusted adult to help?

TEACHING NOTES:

- Model this reflection process by sharing with students a time when you upheld a boundary to enhance your health and keep you safe.
- Provide multiple opportunities for students to answer these questions.
- Allow students to reflect in a variety of modes, including: writing, partner discussion, whole-class discussion, and one-on-one conferencing.



Assessing Stage 2: Refusal Skills & Boundary Setting

Students in grades PreK-2 will have mastered *Stage 2: Refusal Skills & Boundary Setting* by demonstrating their ability to showcase the performance indicators identified in Standard 4. Use the student friendly language below to support rubric creation and feedback to students.

Standard 4: Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.

4.2.3 Demonstrate ways to respond in an unwanted, threatening, or dangerous situation.

- I can recognize when a physical touch boundary has been crossed.
- I can recognize when a boundary for my stuff has been crossed.
- I can say no firmly when my boundaries are crossed.
- I can recognize when I need to leave an unsafe situation.

4.2.4 Demonstrate ways to tell a trusted adult if threatened or harmed.

- I can recognize when I need help from a trusted adult when my boundaries are crossed.

ASSESSMENT TOOL #1 (4.2.3, 4.2.4)

Give students an outline of a person. Have students color in green parts of the body that would be okay for someone to touch and color in red parts of the body that are not okay for someone to touch. Then, have students practice saying *no* if someone tries to touch them in an area they colored red.

ASSESSMENT TOOL #2 (4.2.3)

Give students a sheet with two different columns. In the first column, instruct students to list belongings they care about, either writing or drawing pictures. In the second column, instruct students to identify whether or not they would share this belonging by writing a check mark or an x. Then, have students practice stating *yes* or *no* to sharing.



Content Area Connections

Build content understanding through connections with other courses. Share suggestions with teachers to develop plans for content overlap and student language connections.

The use of effective refusal and boundary setting skills helps to create a safe and welcoming classroom. When planning for partner or group work, use the *Stage 2: Refusal Skills & Boundary Setting* to reinforce healthy ways of communicating. Explicitly teaching students how to say *no* when appropriate and voice their boundaries empowers students to advocate for themselves and ensures that students are set up for success and using common language.

Utilize content structures and topics in classrooms to reinforce student understanding and to support ongoing student development. *Stage 2: Refusal Skills & Boundary Setting* can be used across content areas when students feel uncomfortable with behavior around them. For example, if during story time, a peer is pressuring them to get off-task, they have the strategies they need to uphold the decision to do well in school and set this boundary with their friend. Teachers should also model healthy boundary setting with students by communicating their own boundaries and listening when students voice their own (e.g. participating in a learning activity makes them feel unsafe).

Reinforce the understanding that effective refusal skills and boundary setting can help in all areas of life by exploring the following questions with students across contents. Add specific content information in place of the italicized words as necessary. These questions are meant to be used when students are interacting with others, during partner or group work, or when reflecting on how their personal boundaries can help enhance and maintain their health. These questions are a guide for independent reflection when students are challenged to understand how best to communicate their boundaries and how others may be communicating to them.

- What does your body feel in *this moment*?
- What boundary is being crossed in *this moment*?
- How did you respect *this person's* boundary?
- Who is crossing *this boundary*?
- How could you state your boundary about *this* with *this person*?
- What boundary does *this person* have that might be coming up for them?

VOCABULARY REINFORCEMENT:

Utilize the vocabulary words below to reinforce student understanding and to showcase the ability to use words across content areas. For example, an entire grade-level team can decide to teach these words within the specific contexts of their classes to deepen understanding of vocabulary and language use.

*boundary, no, safe, comfortable, physical touch,
share, consent*



Resource Bank

RMC Health

- [Health Education Skills Model](#)

National Health Education Standards

- [Standards & Performance Indicators](#)

Name that emotion cards

- https://www.redlandsusd.net/cms/lib/CA01900901/Centricity/Domain/4821/1_feelings_and_actions_name_that_emotion.pdf

An Exceptional Children's Guide to Touch

- <https://www.amazon.com/Exceptional-Childrens-Guide-Touch-Boundaries/dp/1849058717>

Suggested Books about Sharing

- <https://www.edsys.in/story-books-teach-children-importance-sharing/>