

Children & Youth Advocate Manual

Section 12: Age-Appropriate Presentations



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Introduction & Importance

Many children and youth advocates frequently facilitate educational presentations for schools and communities. These various presentations often cover a wide variety of subjects like bullying, healthy relationships, teen dating violence, etc. Children and youth advocates should learn interactive training skills, be comfortable speaking in front of groups, know how to engage an audience, create interactive presentations and exercises, and develop content that is age-appropriate. These same skills are needed to facilitate support groups and, with practice, will become second nature.

The “Big Secret” to Presenting in Schools and Community Agencies

The key characteristics of advocates who are successful at presenting in schools and community agencies are:

- Being persistent in contacting the schools or community agencies.
- Showing up in person to talk to key staff.
- Continuing to build and maintain professional relationships.

TIP | Outreach | More initiative needs to be taken by the advocate outside of mailing flyers and sending emails.

Other helpful hints for successful advocates are to:

- Go with a seasoned advocate to tour and meet some of the school staff or other collaborating partners.
 - That way, the other organization knows who they will be talking with later when the newer advocates set up their presentations.
- Check-in with your contact from time to time.
- Find other ways to collaborate beyond doing presentations.
- Coordinate cross-training with each other’s staff so you can build relationships with others in the school or agency.
- Create a presentation letter for parents that the schools can send out
 - See an example [HERE](#)! (will need to download resource before viewing)

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Example Topics for Presentations by Age Group

These [Presentation Charts](#) provide example topics, tips and suggestions that advocates have used for various presentations. These are split up by presentation type and are meant as suggestions for presentations you may be asked to do. The presentation types are all presentations, elementary, middle school, high school, protective caregiver, and community.

Remember, you do not have to go at this alone. Teaming up with your agency staff or with collaborating partners to co-facilitate a presentation may enhance the experience through additional knowledge, insights, and experiences. Incorporate a variety of activities for different types of learning. Here is an [example letter to send or bring to schools](#). (Will need to download resource before viewing).

School Specific Presentation Considerations

For school presentations - tie in [the social-emotional learning \(SEL\) competencies for each grade](#).

All schools have a process for bringing in presenters to the classroom. It may be helpful to ask the school contact what that process is and how you can help along the way. For example, some schools may send a flyer home with students to let caregivers know you are coming to present to their children and what topics you will be presenting on. It may be beneficial to ask schools if they would like you to create the flyer or if they will create it. You can use Microsoft to create the flyer or [CANVA](#), a free online design website with hundreds of premade templates.

TIP: *You can also contact CANVA about their pro version rates for nonprofits.*

Some schools may ask you to have a meeting with key staff to explain the material and information you will be presenting to the students. These meetings are useful to adapt the information in the presentation to best suit the needs of the school. Some schools may ask that you host an information night for parents to address the topics you are presenting and their concerns. It is advised to have more than one advocate at these meetings to help field questions and concerns. Be prepared to address the concerns about the presentations.

Caregiver: *“Why are you coming into the MIDDLE SCHOOL to teach healthy relationships? They aren’t dating yet!”*

Advocate: *“We believe that it is important to teach children about ALL healthy relationships, like family, friends, classmates, and neighbors, because those relationships begin the foundation of what children will look for when they do start intimate relationships. It is crucial we teach children what healthy relationships look like outside of intimate relationships so they can start forming a healthy concept of intimate relationships when they do start dating.”*

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If you come across school staff who have a similar mentality to the above caregiver example, it is best to pause and try to meet them where they are at. Sometimes that might mean figuring out if you are willing to swallow your pride to present beneficial information to youth. Asking questions like:

- If I were to facilitate a presentation for the students, what are your expectations of me?
- Let's talk about the different content areas I can facilitate on; which ones are you comfortable with?
 - Which ones are you uneasy/not comfortable with?
- What are some things that students have said about these issues?
- How have you addressed these issues in the past?

***TIP:** Create a professional boundary with the schools that you are amenable to adapting the content and language of your presentation, AND that you will provide truthful information to the students' responses. This can show the school staff you are willing to compromise, AND you still have an obligation as an advocate to provide youth with the correct information.*

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Resources

[ADMYRE \(Advocate for MY Relationships\)](#) the Child Welfare Research and Training Project through Iowa State University in collaboration with the Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence offers a Teen Dating Violence Awareness Program! Learn more about this program at the [ADMYRE FAQ](#) page.

[Children's Safety Network](#) offers a wide variety of information on topics on injury prevention from motor vehicle, substance abuse, and violence.

[Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning \(CASEL\)](#) is a website that explains social-emotional learning and provides a wealth of resources; like explaining the [Core Social-Emotional Learning \(SEL\) Competencies](#), [Assessing SEL Toolkit](#), and [SEL Frequently Asked Questions](#).

[Consent Is... A Toolkit](#) consent is looked at more broadly, recognizing that preventing sexual violence starts with teaching youth active communication skills, empathy, and how to set and respect boundaries. No matter the activity, only yes means yes.

[Love Is Respect](#) (teens) has a lot of resources for teens and teen dating violence.

[One Love](#) (teens) changing the statistics around relationship abuse one conversation at a time. This website has a lot of resources around relationships. It also includes information on a variety of programs that your agency may wish to use as community engagement and education.

Pretty Good Design has created [Your Kids Aren't Too Young to Talk About Race: Resource Roundup](#). This resource contains links to podcasts, articles, books, toys, studies, and more to help adults talk about race to youth.

[Talking About Traumatic Events: Helping Children Cope](#) this PDF goes through steps on how to work with youth who have been through traumatic events.

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI): [Social-Emotional Learning](#) the DPI website has a specific section on Social-Emotional Learning (SEL). This part of their website hosts more resources on SEL, as well as, conferences and trainings specific to SEL. DPI's [Social Emotional Learning Competencies](#) guide is designed to provide educators and out-of-school-time youth service professionals with the essentials for implementing a comprehensive approach to SEL.

[Women's and Children's Health Network](#) (all ages) Is a website that has vast number of topics that children & youth want to talk about. When you click on a specific topic you will be taken to a page designated to that topic and it will give you further resources, information, and activities.

*Please notify the LGBTQ & Youth Program Director, [Cody Warner](#), if **ANY** links are no longer working.*
