

Advocate Graduate

A Lesson Plan from Rights, Respect, Responsibility: A K-12 Curriculum

Fostering responsibility by respecting young people's rights to honest sexuality education.

NSES ALIGNMENT:

IV.12.ADV.1 - Advocate for school and community policies that promote safety, respect, and equity for all people (e.g., race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, differing abilities, immigration status, family configuration)

TARGET GRADE: High School

TIME: 50 Minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Projector
- Laptop/Computer
- Speakers
- Screen
- [PowerPoint](#)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Develop a plan to advocate for school and community policies that promote safety, respect, and equity for all people [Skill]

LESSON RATIONALE:

This lesson serves as a culminating experience for the complete curriculum where students can apply all of the information they have learned around advocacy to select an issue that needs change and effectively plan and advocate for that change either in the school or community.

ADVANCED PREPARATION:

The more time that can be designated to this lesson the better. If possible, introduce the lesson and allow for a couple of weeks for the students to complete the activity within small groups. This approach will allow students the ability to truly apply the skill of advocating for a change around a school or community policy to promote safety, respect, and equity for all people. Additionally, pre-watch the video ([Advocates Youth Activist – Free the Pill](#)) to ensure that the video plays properly.

PROCEDURE:

STEP 1:

“Over the course of this curriculum you have learned about different areas that offer an opportunity to promote safety, respect, and equity for all people. We have talked about the role of power and privilege in a way that we are able to recognize, where we have more than others and are therefore able to identify ways to use our privilege to better the lives of other people. We have analyzed how race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, differing abilities, immigration status, family configuration can make an impact on a person’s life and access to opportunities. Now it is time to take all of the information we have gathered and put it into action. Today is the day of your Advocate Graduation and following today’s lesson you will be able to effectively advocate to create change to better the lives of other people. Congratulations, let’s get to work.”

(3 minutes)

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STEP 2:

Say, **“To set you up for success with your advocacy project, I am going to explain and then walk you through an example.”** Refer to the Advocate Graduate PowerPoint slide deck and follow along with the notes.

[Slide 2]: Read the five steps to consider when advocating.

[Slide 3]: **“What is the issue that you and your group want to focus on? Is there a specific area where you feel a new policy or a change would benefit others and specifically those who may always be forgotten? For example, is there a lack of wheelchair ramps at your local community center that would be an issue that doesn’t consider those who are not able to access the space without a ramp?”**

[Slide 4]: **“Once you have identified the problem, now you and your group will need to learn as much as you can on the issue. How prevalent is it? Has anyone in the past tried to address the problem and not been successful? How many people are impacted by this problem and what are their experiences and stories? How could fixing this problem improve the lives of others? What would it cost to fix this problem?”**

The goal is to become an expert on this issue so that you are prepared to communicate the issue and identify solutions in order to effectively advocate for change. To continue with the wheelchair ramps at the local community center example, it would be important to learn how many people are unable to access their local community center as a result of the lack of ramps. How much would it cost to install a ramp and make the space accessible? How could the changes impact the lives of those who are currently unable to access the space? What would they gain?”

[Slide 5]: **“This is the point where you have done all your research and have identified a strong position on the issue. It is important to make sure that your solution to the problem allows for other people to get involved and work toward the solution. The more involvement you have from your audience the better, so make sure to include space for others to be authentically engaged. Back to our example, the solution to the problem is to install two wheelchair ramps in the local community center to ensure ease of access for everyone to enjoy the space and amenities offered.”**

[Slide 6]: **“Problem: Explain the problem so that others understand the urgency and impact the issue makes on their lives and the lives of people they care about.**

Solution: Clearly communicate the solution to the problem and how it could make a positive change in the lives of others.

Action: Involve your audience and give them a task so that they can jump in and help make the solution happen.

Example: More than 75 people are currently unable to access the local community center which their tax dollars support and they have a right to use because there

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are no wheelchair ramps. This lack of access to the community center is ableist behavior and reduces the opportunities for people in our community to enjoy the recreational events offered. By installing two wheelchair ramps at the local community center we will ensure that everyone who wants to use the space will have access. Our friends, family, neighbors will all have the same access to a basic right afforded to this community. Please call 555-5555 today and tell your local council member how \$400 could rectify this inequity to access what should be a community space for all."

[Slide 7]: "This step is important in that it allows you and your group and team time to think on what went well, what you would do differently, how you could amplify the change or positive impact for other people. This stage could even lead to adjustments to your solution and revisiting the cycle to increase the impact of change."

(20 minutes)

STEP 3:

Cue the video on [Advocates for Youth – Free the Pill Youth Activist](#) to provide an additional example of young people championing change to impact the lives of others.

***Note to the Teacher:** When placing students into small groups of 3-4 people for this project allow students to select their working groups in order to allow them the ability to spend more time on the work assigned as opposed to building group relationships.*

After the students watch the video, place them into their Advocacy groups (3-4 people) to work on step 1: define the issue. Allow the students the rest of class to determine the issue they would like to advocate on and begin planning ahead for their advocacy culminating project. Circulate the room and offer support as needed. In order to assist students as they determine the issue they would like to advocate for, feel free to share the following list by writing it on the board. It is important to clearly communicate that the list is just a starting point but not inclusive of all issues.

- Birth control access
- Health education
- Affordable health services
- Health inequity
- LGBT Inclusivity
- Creating accessible spaces

***Note to the Teacher:** If you are unable to offer multiple class periods for students to work on this project in class, you can teach the lesson as is and then have students present a prospectus on what they would hypothetically complete in a full advocacy project. They could map out each of the five steps and share their steps with the class.*

(25 minutes)

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STEP 4:

"Advocacy is hard work but it is important work. You and your group have identified a problem that can actually be impacted by your voices. Your voices have power, your action creates change, you all impact the world. Thanks for your hard work."

(2 minutes)

RECOMMENDED ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OBJECTIVES AT CONCLUSION OF LESSON:

Objectives 1 was completed in Steps 2, 3 and 4.

HOMEWORK:

Prepare a one-page proposal on the issues/topic you selected to advocate for, that details what the issue is, the plan for action, and the call for change.