

NEW MEXICO 4-H

Aggie Next Step

Self-Advocacy Assertiveness Skills



Post Secondary Pathways



Newt McCarty, State 4-H Agent and Chelsey Juenemann, Education Specialist



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Self-Advocacy

LESSON FOCUS

Being your own advocate means knowing your worth, speaking up for your needs, and standing strong – without putting others down. In this lesson, participants will learn how to use assertiveness to express themselves with confidence and lead their lives with independence and purpose.

PREPARATION

Review lesson materials and determine which worksheets and handouts you will use for the lesson. Print enough pre/post assessments, worksheets, and handouts for each participant.

ACTIVITIES

1. Begin by having participants complete **Pre-Assessment**.

2. Facilitate a brief group discussion about assertiveness and self-advocacy. Use these prompts to guide the conversation.

Q: *What does it mean to stand up for yourself without putting someone else down?*

Q: *Can you think of a time when you did this – or wish you had?*

Q: *Why do you think it can be hard to speak up, even when you know what you want or need?*

3. Explain that participants will complete an activity to explore what assertiveness is and what it is not. Follow the directions for the **Assertiveness Is / Is Not Activity**.

4. Distribute the **Assertiveness Is / Is Not Handout**. Have participants compare it with their group's list, then discuss:

Q: *Which list do most of your actions fit into now?*

Q: *Can assertiveness look different based on personality or culture?*

5. Guide participants through the **I Wish I Were / I Can Be Activity** using the provided instructions.

Supplies

- Worksheets
- Handouts
- Pens/Pencils, Markers
- Flipchart (optional)

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- **Define** self-advocacy and assertiveness.
- **Differentiate** between passive, aggressive, and assertive behaviors.
- **Identify** and apply verbal and nonverbal assertive communication skills.
- **Demonstrate** how to express needs and feelings respectfully.
- **Practice** assertive responses to real-life scenarios.



Self-Advocacy

6. Distribute, review, and discuss the **Assertiveness Tips** and **Speaking Up for Yourself** handouts as a group.
9. Optional Extension Activities: See below for additional ideas to extend the lesson.
10. **Exit Ticket** – depending on time, this can be done as a class discussion, or students can complete the worksheet in class, as homework, or the following class.
- 15. Have participants complete *Post-assessment*.**

REFLECTION

Being a self-advocate means speaking up for your needs with respect and confidence. With the assertiveness tools and strategies you practiced today, you're better equipped to take control of your path and communicate your goals clearly and effectively.





Self-Advocacy

EXTENSIONS

- Assertive Behavior Role Play: Use the **Putting Assertive Behavior into Action** activity to help participants practice assertiveness in realistic scenarios.

Debrief Questions:

Q: Was it easy or difficult to act assertively?

Q: Which scenario felt closest to a real experience?

- Distribute the **Categories of Assertive Behavior** handout. Challenge participants to practice one assertive behavior during the week and reflect on how they felt.

DIFFERENTIATION

Content Support: Offer a visual example T-chart (already filled with 1-2 examples per side).

Break larger tasks into smaller steps with check-in points.

English Language Learners: Pair students with a supportive peer for discussions and collaborative activities.

Provide sentence starters:

- "This is assertive behavior because..."
- "In this situation, a person might say..."
- "Something I noticed was..."

Pre-teach key vocabulary: assertiveness, passive, aggressive, self-advocacy, etc.

Process Differentiation: Allow students to complete worksheets as a whole class discussion, in pairs, or in small groups.

Use color coding: green = assertive, red = not assertive

Advanced or Early Finishers: Challenge participants to create a comic strip showing a situation changing from passive to assertive.

Debate prompt: *Is being assertive always the best choice?*



Self-Advocacy

RESOURCES

Optional Videos:

Note: Please preview all videos before showing them to students to ensure they are age-appropriate, relevant, and aligned with your classroom needs.

COMMUNICATION: How can we communicate more assertively?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F3-yKoHTygg&t=12s>

How to Be More Confident

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=68ciKK1afDQ>

Being assertive

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ubSL1tFmgDc>

NM Standards:

NM PED Standards: Career and Technical Education (CTE):

CTE 2.1.1: Select and employ appropriate reading and communication strategies

CTE 2.1.2: Demonstrate use of the concepts, strategies, and systems to enhance communication in the workplace

CTE 2.1.7: Interpret verbal and nonverbal cues/behaviors to enhance communication

CTE 2.1.9: Listen and speak with diverse individuals to enhance communication

Common Career Technical Core (CCTC) Standards: Career Ready Practices (CRP):

CRP-1: Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee

CRP-4: Communicate clearly, effectively, and with reason

Optional ELA Alignment (Grades 6-12)

SL1: Participate in a range of conversations and collaborations

SL6: Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks