



## Agreeing to group rules

15-20 min 2/5 1/5 3/5



Adolescents set rules for working together in a way that is inclusive, respectful, supportive and enjoyable.



Use the **Reviewing group rules** activity at regular intervals to give adolescents a chance to reflect on their rules and change them accordingly.

### After

Can use early in a cycle, but should not be attempted at the first or second sessions, as adolescents may feel too shy or overwhelmed.

### Before

Marker board, Marker, Small piece of paper or blank card (two for each adolescent), Paper or notebook for writing personal ideas and thoughts, Flip chart paper or poster board, to write down the list of group rules.

### Supplies

## Activity Overview

**Purpose:** Collaborate to decide on group rules.

**Competency domains:** Communication and expression; Cooperation and teamwork; Problem solving and managing conflict.

**Works well for:** Circles that are just starting a new cycle or welcoming many new members; adolescents of any age.

**Phase:** Starting Our Circle.

## Do's & Don'ts

- ✓ Encourage the adolescents to frame their rules in terms of concrete things they will or will not do.
- ✓ At the beginning of the activity, let adolescents suggest their own rules, rather than suggesting rules yourself.
- ✓ Add your own questions or share suggestions for additional rules, to make sure that the circle will be fun for everyone.
- ✓ Encourage adolescents to include rules that will allow participants with different personalities, interests, abilities and strengths to participate equally.
- ✓ Let adolescents experiment with rules that may be difficult to follow, as long as they won't cause harm.
- ✗ Agree to rules that allow adolescents to insult, bully or exclude each other (including those who might join).



## Agreeing to group rules

1

Ask adolescents to sit in a circle. Optional: Give each participant two pieces of paper, and make sure they each have something to write with.

2

**||| Facilitator says:**

Today we are going to agree to rules for working as a circle in a way that helps us all to enjoy our time together, get along, and do our work well. Let's start by thinking about the following questions: What helps us to work well with other people?

3

Write on the marker board: **I work well with others when...and I have trouble working well with others when...**

4

**||| Facilitator says:**

Sit quietly while you think about or write your answers to the questions. Once you have had a few minutes to think, ask them to share a few answers.

5

**||| Facilitator says:**

"Now write down your ideas for rules that will help us to work well together. Think about things that everyone in the circle should always do, or never do, or anything else."

Give adolescents a few minutes to write down their ideas on their cards.

6

**Explain:**

Participants should place their pieces of paper in the middle of the circle, and explain their rules. As each adolescent shares a new paper, they can arrange it with the others, putting rules from related categories together. Ask everyone to sit quietly and listen while each person shares. Don't say anything out loud to agree or disagree.

7

**||| Facilitator says:**

"Do we all agree to these rules? Are there any that we will find difficult to carry out? Are there other important rules we should include to make sure that we all work together well, feel included and enjoy our time together?" Discuss their answers.

**Share and Take Away**

8

**Discussion:**

- ▶ How will we make sure that everyone feels included and welcome?
- ▶ Is there anyone who might not feel included and welcome, based on the rules already suggested? Make sure to include different groups of adolescents who are already part of the circle, or should be welcome to join, including boys, girls, adolescents with disabilities, those from different religions or ethnicities, and any other category.
- ▶ How will we make sure that everyone has a chance to share their ideas and try new things?
- ▶ What can we do to make sure that everyone feels comfortable sharing their ideas or trying something new?
- ▶ How will we share our opinions in a way that is honest but does not make anyone feel bad or disrespected?

9

Write a list of rules, including any new rules or changes to those suggested. Be sure to write the rules on a piece of paper or something else that can be posted and seen by the circle in the following sessions.

10

Conclude with a small ceremony to acknowledge the new rules. Adolescents can demonstrate their shared commitment to upholding the rules by reading them aloud, or signing the paper or board that displays them.



## Learning and mood post-check



### Activity Overview

**Purpose:** Share what participants know about a topic before a session and share how they are feeling.

**Competency domains:** Critical thinking and decision making.

**Works well for:** Circles that have decided to learn about a particular topic as one of their learning goals.

**Phase:** Starting Our Circle.

### Do's & Don'ts

- ✓ Make sure that the adolescents discuss what they learned from the session, and not just what they liked.
- ✗ Express frustration or disappointment if adolescents say they didn't learn from the session. Instead, explore ways that they can learn more about the topic in future sessions.

Adolescents can use the opinions they share to discuss how well they are progressing toward their learning goals.

#### After

Works well at the closing Review step of a session. **Optional:** Do the **Learning and mood pre-check** prior to this activity.

#### Before

- ▶ At least two stones for every adolescent in the group.
- ▶ A basket.
- ▶ Flip chart or marker board, and a marker.
- ▶ Cards or pieces of paper (to create emotion cards).

#### Supplies



## Learning and mood post-check

1

Bring all of the adolescents together in a circle and give each of them two stones.

2

Ask them:

- ▶ How much have you learned about the topic of the session today?
- ▶ How well do you know and understand the topic we discussed in our session today?
- ▶ How well do you think you can use the skills that you learned and practiced today?

Facilitation tip: Adapt the question that you ask the circle to the learning goal of the session:

3

Ask them to review their session by placing their stones in a basket that is passed around.

- ▶ Dropping two stones means they have learned what they want to know about the topic.
- ▶ Dropping one stone means they have learned something about the topic, but would like to learn more.
- ▶ Dropping no stones means they did not learn about the topic.

4

Give each of the adolescents Emotion Cubes. Ask them to select one of the cards (happy, bored, sad, angry, thoughtful) to demonstrate how they feel.

5

Calculate the results by counting the number of stones and different Emotion Cubes, and then discuss. If the adolescents have conducted the same exercise before the session, then compare pre-session and post-session results.

6

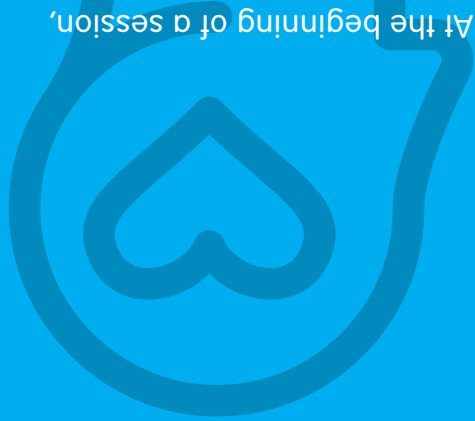
Keep the results for future sessions, to help adolescents to review progress toward their learning goals.



## Learning and mood pre-check



At the beginning of a session, adolescents share what they know about the topic to be explored and how they are feeling.



### Activity Overview

**Purpose:** Share what participants know about a topic before a session and share how they are feeling.

**Competency domains:** Critical thinking and decision making.

**Works well for:** Circles that have decided to learn about a particular topic as one of their learning goals.

**Phase:** Starting Our Circle.

### Do's & Don'ts

- ✓ Make sure that adolescents discuss what they know about the session topic, and not just what they like about it.
- ✗ Force adolescents to assess their knowledge of the topic or their mood if they don't feel like doing so.

### Supplies

- ▶ At least two stones for every adolescent in the group.
- ▶ A basket.
- ▶ Flip chart or marker board, and a marker.
- ▶ Cards or pieces of paper (to create emotion cards).

### Before

This activity works well at the beginning of a session.

### After

During the Review step at the end of the session adolescents should use the **Learning and mood post-check** activity to assess their progress toward their learning goal.



## Learning and mood pre-check

1

Bring all of the adolescents together in a circle and give each of them several stones.

2

### ||| Facilitator says:

- ▶ "How much do you already know about the topic of the session today?"
- ▶ "How well do you understand the topic we are going to discuss in the session today?"
- ▶ "How well do you think you can use the skills that you are going to learn and practice today?"

**Facilitation tip:** Adapt the question that you ask the circle to the learning goal they have identified for the session.

3

### Explain:

Participants should say how much they already know about the session topic by dropping their stones in a basket that is passed around.

- ▶ Dropping two stones means they already know a lot about the topic.
- ▶ Dropping one stone means they already know a little bit about the topic.
- ▶ Dropping no stones means they don't know anything about the topic.

4

### ||| Facilitator says:

- ▶ "How do you feel today?"

5

Place the 4-6 emotion cards in different spots on the ground or floor. Ask adolescents to drop a stone in front of the emotion card that best describes how they feel as they start the session.

6

Calculate the results by counting the number of stones representing their learning assessment and their moods, and then discuss. If the adolescents plan to conduct the same exercise at the end of the session, keep the results so that you can then compare changes in knowledge and feelings pre-session and post-session.

7

Keep the results for future sessions to help adolescents to review progress toward their learning goals and/or changes in their moods.



3/5 3/5 2/5 10 min

## Move or stay? Circle self-assessment



Adolescents assess their circle strength and decide if they are ready to move to another activity phase.

### Activity Overview

**Purpose:** Assess whether adolescents should stay in their current phase or move to another level.

**Competency domains:** Critical thinking and decision making; Leadership and Influence; Cooperation and Teamwork.

**Works well for:** Circles that may be ready to move to a new phase - This could include circles that are ready to take on a new challenge, or circles that want to repeat activities that they found helpful or enjoyable in previous phases.

Circles that can sit together and hold a simple discussion as a group (If they aren't ready to sit and talk together, they probably aren't ready to move to a new phase!).

**Phase:** Starting Our Circle.



Adolescents should move to another phase, or continue in their current phase.

### After

Adolescents should have held at least five sessions in their current phase. Use this tool if Circles might be ready to move to a new phase.

### Before

- ▶ Marker board.
- ▶ Marker.
- ▶ Paper or notebook for writing personal ideas and thoughts (optional).
- ▶ Flip chart paper or a poster board.

### Supplies

### Do's & Don'ts

- ✓ Let adolescents assess their own progress - Encourage them to be reflective and honest in their assessment.
- ✓ Make your own assessment of their progress (informally or formally), and encourage them to make a decision to stay or to move.
- ✓ Remind adolescents that the goal of the assessment is to find activities that work well for them, and that they will enjoy.
- ✓ Consider dividing the circle into smaller groups if there are groups with very different interests.
- ✗ Force adolescents to stay or to move if they don't want to.
- ✗ Allow one or a few adolescents to dominate the decision about whether the circle stays or moves.



## Move or stay? Circle self-assessment

1

Ask adolescents to sit in a circle. Post the Circle self-assessment tool on a marker board or flip chart.

2

Read through the assessment questions one by one. Ask adolescents to choose the answer that best describes their circle. Indicate which of the four circle strength levels they choose by making check marks or other notes.

3

Alternative strategy: If you can make copies of the Circle self-assessment tool or project an image of the tool that everyone can see, adolescents can do the self-assessment in small groups.

When they have finished answering all of the questions, look at the assessment scores and notes on the board or flip chart.

4

### Discuss:

- ▶ Are there things we should take more time to do and practice as a circle, so that we get stronger? If so, should we stay in this cycle, or go back to another phase that will help us?
- ▶ Are we ready to move to a new, more challenging phase?
- ▶ Are we interested in trying something new? Are we enjoying what we are doing right now? Or, would we like to do more of something we have done before in an earlier phase?

5

Reach a decision together about whether to stay in the current phase or move to a new phase (and if moving on, to which one).







## Practice and project time

2/5 3/5 1/5 3/5

At the beginning of a session, adolescents share what they know about the topic to be explored and how they are feeling.



### Activity Overview

**Time:** Participants decide the time.

**Purpose:** Work and progress on individual projects, group projects or activities.

**Competency domains:** Hope for the future and goal setting.

**Works well for:** Adolescents who want to continue work on individual/ group projects or to practice activities that they have started in previous sessions.

**Phase:** Starting Our Circle.



Adolescents may continue work on their project or skill in a follow-up session, or move on to a new activity. The group should agree on plans for the next session.

#### After

Use **Setting group goals** and **Reviewing progress toward group goals** to help adolescents reflect on how their individual/group project goals are linked to their longer-term goals.

#### Before

Depends on the type of projects adolescents work on.

#### Supplies

### Do's & Don'ts

- ✓ Have alternative ideas for activities ready - that way adolescents who don't want to continue working on projects, don't have the materials they need, or were not present for earlier sessions, have something interesting to do and still feel included.
- ✓ Encourage adolescents to reflect on their goals and identify the strategies they used to reach them.
- ✗ Discourage or reprimand adolescents if they don't achieve their goals for the session - Instead, focus on what they have learned about setting realistic goals, as well as planning and preparation.
- ✗ Scold adolescents if they don't come prepared for the session - Instead, identify ways that they could prepare better in the future, and discuss how other adolescents could support them.



## Practice and project time

1

### ||| Facilitator says:

"In our last session we agreed to take more time to work on your projects. Does everyone remember this? Is this all right with everyone?"

If any adolescent is confused or does not agree, explain to them that you will talk with them further once the session has started.

2

### ||| Facilitator says:

"What are your goals for today? What do you hope to do during the session? What do you hope to finish by the end of the session?"

Adolescents should take turns to briefly explain their goals for the session. If they are working in groups they can refer to their group work plans.

3

### ||| Facilitator says:

"Do you have what you need to work on your projects?"

Check that everyone has the materials they need. This could include: How well do you know and understand the topic we discussed in our session today?

- ▶ Ongoing projects, such as drafts, drawings or writings; and
- ▶ Art supplies, such as paper, pencils, and markers.

4

Let the adolescents start working on their projects. If any of the adolescents or groups don't have the items they need, help them to figure out a way to enjoy the session.

For example, they could work on a new draft of the same project, or could find an alternative game or activity.

5

Give adolescents the time they need to work on their projects. Encourage them and support them when necessary.

### Sharing and Take away:

6

### Discuss:

- ▶ What did you work on today?
- ▶ Did you reach the goals you set for today? Discuss adolescents' answers. Give them a chance to reflect on their progress, to discuss whether their goals were realistic, and to outline the steps they took to reach their goals. Help them to identify how they could plan and prepare better next time.
- ▶ Do you want to take more time to continue working on your project or activity in our next session? Agree on the plan for the next session with the adolescents.



3/5 1/5 2/5 07 min

## Reviewing group rules



Adolescents assess how well they have been using their group rules to work together in an inclusive, respectful and enjoyable way, and decide whether to make any rule changes.

### Activity Overview

**Purpose:** Assess and discuss how the group rules are working for the circle.

**Competency domains:** Communication and expression; Cooperation and teamwork; Problem solving and managing conflict.

**Works well for:** Circles that have already agreed to group rules.

This activity reminds adolescents of the group rules they created for working together, and gives them an opportunity to add or change rules as their circles evolve. It also serves as a structured way to address conflict or tension in circles.

**Phase:** Starting Our Circle.



Use this activity at regular intervals.

#### After

Adolescents should have already formed their group rules and agreements, and had at least two or three sessions to practice using them. See **Strong Circles** guidance. See **Group Rules** tool.

#### Before

▶ Flip chart paper or a poster board - for writing down the final list of group rules.

▶ Paper or notebook for writing personal ideas and thoughts (optional).

▶ Marker.

▶ Marker board.

#### Supplies

### Do's & Don'ts

- ✓ Encourage adolescents to frame their rules in terms of concrete things they will/will not do (rather than abstract ideas).
- ✓ Encourage adolescents to focus on positive things that they can do to improve the circle.
- ✓ Use the discussions to explore challenges that have come up in the circles.
- ✓ Let adolescents experiment with rules that may be challenging but won't cause harm (Experimentation is part of their learning experience).
- ✗ Let adolescents use this process to complain about each other, correct each other's behavior or to blame others - Instead, they should focus on positive actions they can take individually or as a circle
- ✗ Discuss sensitive issues.



## Reviewing group rules

1

Ask the adolescents to sit in a circle. Make sure they have a piece of paper or a notebook if they want to write their thoughts.

2

**||| Facilitator says:**

"Today we are going to discuss how well you are using the rules, and whether the rules are helping you to work together. Think about these three questions:

- ▶ What am I doing well to help the circle?
- ▶ What could I do better?
- ▶ What can other people in the circle do to help me improve?

You can use the group rules as you answer the questions. For example, you can mention a rule that you are good at following."

3

Write the three questions on a marker board. Give the adolescents time to write their answers, or quiet time to form their thoughts.

4

Ask each adolescent to share his or her answers.

5

**||| Facilitator says:**

"Now we are going to talk more about how well you are working together as a group."

**Discuss:**

- ▶ What is the circle doing well?
- ▶ What should the circle try to do better?

Again you can refer to the original group rules. Remember, in this activity focus on what the circle does well, or what the circle needs to improve.

Give time for discussion. Draw a star or another sign beside the rules discussed.

**Sharing and Take away:**

Refer to the group rules.

**||| Facilitator says:**

"Are there any group rules that you are very good at following, or that are helping the circle a lot? Are there any rules that should be changed or revised so that they work better for the circle? Are there any new rules that should be added?"

Give time for discussion. Draw a star or another sign beside the rules discussed.

**||| Facilitator says:**

"Do you agree to these new rules?"

Let the adolescents use a decision making process that works for them (e.g. voting or verbal agreement). Discuss the changes and new rules one at a time. If adolescents don't agree on the rules and want to discuss them further, consider continuing the activity into the next session. If adolescents seem close to agreement, suggest that they use the new rules on a trial basis. Remind them that they have the power as a circle to change and revise their rules at any time.

Conclude with a small ceremony to acknowledge the new, revised rules. Adolescents can read them aloud together, or can add their signature to symbolize their shared agreement to uphold them.



min 15-20 ⌚ 2/5 🧩 1/5 📋 2/5 🔋

## Setting group goals



Adolescents set goals for their circle.



## Activity Overview

**Purpose:** Create group goals for circle and then discuss them.

**Competency domains:** Hope for the future and goal setting; Critical thinking and decision making; Leadership and influence.

**Works well for:** New circles, circles that are starting a new cycle, and/ or circles that are welcoming many new members; adolescents of any age In the Starting Our Circle and Knowing Ourselves cycle this activity should not be done on the first day, as adolescents may feel too shy or overwhelmed.

**Phase:** Starting Our Circle.



Encourage adolescents to reflect on their goals or develop new ones at regular intervals. Adolescents can review their goals using the **Reviewing progress toward group goals** activity, and/or during the Review step of their sessions.

### After

Adolescents should have had at least two sessions together, in which they have had a chance to get to know each other. This activity works well early in a cycle. Review the guidelines for **Strong Circles**.

### Before

Marker board, Marker, Note cards (two for each adolescent), Paper or notebook for writing personal ideas and thoughts (optional), Flip chart paper or poster board for writing down the final list of group goals.

### Supplies

## Do's & Don'ts

- ✓ Encourage (but don't force) adolescents to agree to a list of five goals that includes at least two learning goals.
- ✓ Encourage adolescents to aim for something more achievable if they initially set very hard to reach goals.
- ✓ Allow adolescents to challenge themselves, as long as they are not setting themselves up for failure.
- ✓ Keep the final list of five goals and post it in the activity space every time you meet.
- ✗ Encourage adolescents to focus on goals that are unattainable or may result in frustration.
- ✗ Allow one or a few adolescents to dominate the decisions about which goals the circle chooses.



## Setting group goals

1

**Facilitator says:**

Give participants two note cards and/or make sure they have a notebook or paper to write on. Post a marker board and a piece of flip chart paper where everyone can see it.

2

**Facilitator says:**

"Today we are going to set some goals for our time together as a circle. Let's start by thinking about the following questions: What am I doing well to help the circle?"

- ▶ What is something that you would like to feel, know, learn or do by being part of this circle?
- ▶ You can think about new things (for example, new things you want to learn), or things that we already do in the circle (for example, things you enjoy doing that you would like to do more)."

3

Write: **Feel, Know, Learn** and **Do** on the marker board or a piece of flip chart paper, with a lot of room under each word. Ask the adolescents to sit quietly while they think or write about their answers to the questions.

4

Once they have had a few minutes to think, ask the adolescents to share answers one at a time. Write notes on the marker board or the flip chart as they answer.

**Sharing and Take away:**

5

**Facilitator says:**

"Now we are going to try to agree to a few goals that we share as a circle. Are there any goals that several people mentioned? Are there any goals that you heard that you like a lot?"

6

**Facilitator says:**

"Now let's try to agree to five really good goals that we all like."

**Discuss:**

- ▶ Do we have a good balance of different kinds of goals? Let's try to include some from the four categories (Feel, Know, Learn, Do), or at least not all five from the same category.
- ▶ Can we achieve these goals together in the time that we have in our sessions? Should we make them more ambitious, or more realistic?

7

Once the circle has agreed to their goals, write the final list of five on a piece of chart paper or something else that can be posted and seen by the circle in the next sessions.

8

**Explain:**

Participants should talk about these goals in their sessions, and discuss whether they are making progress toward achieving them.

9

Conclude by reading the goals aloud together. Ask the adolescents to demonstrate their commitment to the goals by signing them.