



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT™  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

**PROJECT  
CORNERSTONE**  
A YMCA of Silicon Valley Initiative

Dear Parents and Guardians:

The fifth book being read in your child's class this year is *Nobody Knew What To Do*, by Becky Ray McCain. This book tells the story of how one child found the courage to be an *UPstander* and *tell* a teacher about a fellow student who was being picked on and bullied by children in school.

We are often scared and ***don't know what to do*** when we witness a bullying or conflict. As students learn and use bully prevention strategies (and see them used by others) their confidence in their ability to be *UPstanders* increases. One important *UPstander* tool is learning that it is ok to *make a report* to an adult about a bullying or social conflict. Students should *tell* an adult when they see or hear anything that deals with *preventing or protecting* another student. This can be in cases of:

- *Protection* for themselves or others
- *Protection* for their own or someone else's property
- *Prevention* of something from happening
- Seeking help from a caring adult to problem solve a situation
- Danger from violence or weapons

Sometimes students can be confused with the difference between tattling and reporting. Tattling is done out of a desire to get someone in trouble, spread lies or get attention. *Telling and making a report* lets adults know what happened in a situation and enables them to address the problem. It is sometime hard for children to understand this difference, so please remind them that it is always ok to talk to a caring adult and ask for help. Frequently remind them that YOU are one of their caring adult.

You can play an important role in helping your child practice some of these techniques:

- Be the one your child can come to when they need to be heard. Listen and be aware of situations that need further attention.
- Stay calm and gather information by asking questions. In most instances, you can help your child identify and state the problem. "So Jack is picking on you at recess. What are some things you/we might do?" Help your child see their personal power is in how they choose to react.
- Discuss the potential consequences of the chosen strategy. "If you go to the teacher what would happen?" Look at 2 or 3 strategies and consequences and have your child choose one.
- Reassure your child. Thank them for sharing their worries and tell them that you will be "there" when they need help. Check back later to see if the strategy is working.
- If you are not sure what to *say or do*, reassure your child you will find a way to help and get back to them. Follow through on your promises.
- You and your child are not alone. You may need to seek the wise advice of caring adults at school to help solve the problem. Turning to resources at school is a way to help your child.
- If there is a weapon or violence, take immediate action to prevent and protect. Contact the school or/and call 9-1-1, if necessary.

What you can do at home:

Build your family's communication skills by practicing the Listening Exercise on the next pages!

# HEAR OUR VOICES

In this month's ABC lesson, we discussed the importance of *telling* a trusted adult when we need help. We learned about *reporting* when we need help. Reporting if someone is in danger, to protect someone or to prevent something from happening are important reasons to *tell* a caring adult.

A related activity that you can help your child do is to practice listening, and hearing another person's story. Listening with empathy and caring is essential to developing caring relationships. Let's give it a try!

**Day One:** Choose a quiet place to do this activity. You will need a clock or timer.

1. Ask an adult to sit facing you in a chair with your knees almost touching.
2. Decide who will be "the talker" and who will be "the listener".
3. "The talker" will talk for 2 minutes. Here is the question: Describe your experiences in school when you were young.
4. "The listener" is not allowed to talk, question, or respond with words. He/she must listen closely for 2 minutes.
5. When the 2 minutes are up, "the listener" shares for 1 minute what they heard. (Again, this is without interruption)
6. Next, switch roles! "The listener" becomes "the talker" and "the talker" becomes "the listener". Choose one of the following for your new question:
  - Describe bullying you have experienced or seen at school.
  - Who are the caring adults you can go to for help at school? Tell about them.
  - Who are the caring adults you admire and can go to for help? Tell about them.

**Day Two:**

1. Do the listening exercise from Day One with the same partner. Reverse roles or choose different topics for discussion. Here's the new part: Do the Listening Activity while you are doing a physical activity together! Choose a hike, a walk with the dog, shoot hoops, play catch, roller skate... Do the activity while you practice careful listening!

Please answer the questions on the reverse with your Listening Partner.

This activity is due \_\_\_\_\_.

# HEAR OUR VOICES REPORTING SHEET

My Name: \_\_\_\_\_ My Listening Partner: \_\_\_\_\_

## For Day One:

1) How did it feel for **you** to be *the listener*?

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2) How did it feel for **you** to be *the talker*?

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3) How did **your partner** feel about the activity?

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## For Day Two:

4) Was it easier or harder for **you** to listen while you were doing a physical activity?

**Easier**

**Harder**

**Same**

5) How about **your partner**? Was it easier or harder for them?

**Easier**

**Harder**

**Same**

6) What did **you** learn from this exercise?

## I learned:

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## My partner learned:

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