

Say whaaaat? activity

Key Learning

To promote communication and support youth to develop healthy personal boundaries.

What You Need

Pens/Pencils

'Say Whaaaat?!' activity page

No. of Youth

1 or more

Preparation Activities

Photocopy the 'Say Whaaaat?!' activity page

Instructions

How to Play

1. Facilitate a conversation about difficult questions:
 - Sometimes, after we have experienced a major life event, like the dying or death of someone we care about, it can be difficult to answer questions and talk to people about the things that are going on in our lives. When we have been away from school or work for a period of time, people may ask questions. The sense of not knowing what to say to other people can be awkward and uncomfortable.
 - Have you ever had an experience where you didn't know how/ didn't want to answer a question? How did you handle the situation?
 - Have you ever disclosed personal information to someone but were disappointed by their reaction?
 - Have you ever disclosed personal information and felt badly about it afterwards?
 - What does it mean to have personal boundaries?
 - What is an example of a personal boundary?
 - How can healthy personal boundaries be helpful?
2. Explain that personal boundaries are the limits that we put into place that guide how we want to be treated by others. Healthy boundaries are those that honour our own personal values and communicate our needs. Healthy boundaries help us to determine who we can be vulnerable with, and when to say no. Each relationship will have its own unique set of boundaries.
3. Explain that we will be engaging in an activity that will help us to identify the supportive people in our lives who make us feel secure and emotionally safe. This activity can also help to build our confidence in asserting our boundaries and dealing with difficult questions and conversations with friends, peers and acquaintances.
4. Distribute the 'Say Whaaaat?!' activity page and show a sample.
5. Engage youth in a discussion that will help them to complete the sheet:

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- Has someone ever said anything about the illness/death or your time away that made you feel bad? What was it? How did you respond? Thinking back to the situation, if you could press rewind would you still respond that way?
- What was the most helpful thing that someone has said to you? How did the person make you feel?
- If you were to think about the people in your life (e.g. peers at school, colleagues, teammates, neighbours, etc.) where would they fall in the different categories? Who falls into the green category? Orange? Red?

6. Invite youth to complete the activity sheet by including the names of people in their life under the category that feels right for them. They can also include how that person/group of people make them feel, and phrases that they might use to respond to difficult questions or comments. Ask youth to hold off on completing the final two questions at the bottom of the sheet.

7. Remind youth that there is no right or wrong way to do this activity. If they find that they have a lot of people in one category and fewer in another, that is okay.

8. Invite youth to share their experience.

Discussion

Reflect

What thoughts and feelings came up for you during the activity?

Was this activity difficult for you in any way?

What was most surprising for you about this activity?

Connect

*Invite youth to complete the two question at the bottom of the activity page.

* What did you learn about yourself or the people around you?

Was there anything that a fellow group member said that could be helpful for you?

Apply

In what ways might this activity be helpful to you in the future?

Can you think of a time when something like this would have been helpful to use?

This activity was provided by Deana Slater, BSW, MEd, RSW for ***A Handbook for Supporters: Extending Compassion and Support to Grieving Youth*** by The Children and Grief Network and was reproduced here with permission. Deana has a private practice - Deana Slater Counselling Services - where she provides counselling to youth and adults who are struggling with grief, trauma and other life challenges. She also works at Sunnybrook's Odette Cancer Centre helping patients access prescriptions for treatment.

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*This activity has been adapted to the Reflect Connect Apply methodology used by **Right to Play**.*

***Right To Play** is an international organization that uses the transformative power of sport and play to educate and empower children and youth living in adversity to overcome the effects of poverty, conflict and disease. Partnering with more than 85 First Nation, Métis and Inuit communities and urban organizations across four provinces, the PLAY program is led by locally-hired Community Mentors who are trained and supported by Right To Play staff to implement regular weekly play-based programs that build and enhance essential life-skills. We would like to thank **Right To Play** for sharing the organization's experiential learning methodology (Reflect – Connect – Apply) for the activities included in this resource to support youth through their grief. To learn more, visit **Right To Play's** website or email canada@righttoplay.com.*

