

SEL Activity

Take a Stand



grades 4-8



15 minutes

Objectives

- Understand the importance of supporting others by taking a stand.
- Recognize the various ways they can take a stand.

Essential Questions

- How can we act as allies in our daily lives?
- What are the different ways we can take a stand for others?

Vocabulary

Ally: noun; a person or group that provides assistance and support in an ongoing effort, activity, or struggle/verb; to unite with another for mutual benefit.

Allyship: noun; the practice of emphasizing social justice, inclusion, and human rights by members of a privileged group to advance the interests of a less privileged, oppressed, or marginalized group.

Bystander: noun; a person who is present at an event or incident but does not take part.



MATERIALS

Worksheet: Taking a Stand Scenarios ([PDF](#))

Four Corners Signs ([PDF](#))

SEL CORE COMPETANCIES

Responsible decision-making

Social awareness

Self-management

Before you Begin

- Designate four areas of the room and hang up Four Corners Signs ([PDF](#)).
- Choose scenarios from the Worksheet: Taking a Stand Scenarios ([PDF](#)). Adjust the scenarios to fit your classroom community and target ongoing discussions.

Program Connections

This activity has been modified from a Middle School Allyship Spotlight lesson. Want to learn more? Visit our [PROGRAMS](#) page.

THINK • GIVE

Explain: We all have micro-moments that arise that offer us an opportunity to take a stand for someone. It is easy to think of taking a stand as a significant public act. However, taking a stand can be a small action. It can be a few words supporting someone or saying something privately to someone who might have acted unkindly and explaining how their words or actions might have hurt someone's feelings.

Activity: Taking a Stand Scenarios

Hang up Four Corners Signs ([PDF](#)) in different areas of the room. Read a scenario aloud from the Worksheet: Taking a Stand Scenarios ([PDF](#)).

Ask: How would you react to this scenario?

NOTE: Emphasize that there's no wrong answer; everyone can respond differently to these scenarios.

Students choose the action they would take if they were a witness/bystander, move to the appropriate corner of the room, and discuss why they made their choice with their group. Hold a brief class discussion after each scenario.

Possible questions:

- What is the more significant issue in this scenario (e.g., race, ability, gender)?
- How could you act as an ally in this situation?
- What are healthy, positive ways to stand up for someone so that a situation doesn't escalate?

Repeat the activity with other scenarios as time allows.

CONNECT + CLOSE

Discuss as a class:

- What are the challenges of taking a stand when you see something happening that you know is wrong?
- What words or phrases could you use to ensure a situation doesn't escalate if you intervene?
- Who are some people you might seek help/advice from? Once you seek out that help, what could you do next?
- Would your action change if you knew what you witnessed happened frequently?
- What is the possible ripple effect of standing up for a person or cause?

ACTION

Students identify an opportunity (in the coming days/week) to take a stand for a person, group, or cause they believe in. They could even take a stand for the environment or a place they love. There's no moment too small to take a stand.

REFLECTION

Lead a discussion or allow students to journal; use the following question as a guide:

- Who or what did you take a stand for?
- Describe how you took a stand.
- How did taking a stand help a person/cause?