

SETTING GROUND RULES



Time Required: 30-45 minutes

Principles:

- Students will acquire attitudes, knowledge, and skills that contribute to effective learning in school and across the lifespan.
- Students will acquire the knowledge, attitudes and interpersonal skills to help them understand and respect self and others.

Objectives (Students Will...):

- Identify attitudes and behaviors that lead to successful learning.
- Develop skills to interact positively with others.

GOAL: Students will create a set of ground rules to be applied to all future Advisory sessions.

Activity Statement:

It is good to establish ground rules for your group. It is best if group members generate their own standards for how they speak to one another, how they should behave in the meetings, and what they expect from one another and the advisor. In this activity, students will work cooperatively to establish reasonable ground rules for the group.

Materials:

1. Pencils
2. Paper
3. Whiteboard or chalk and blackboard
4. Dry Erase Markers

Procedures:

1. Tell students that the group will need to set a list of ground rules to be followed during all meetings.
2. Write a few samples of ground rules on the board.

Examples of Ground Rules:

- One person speaks at a time
- Respect others' opinion: You can agree to disagree
- Give full attention to a group member when he/she speaks
- No putdowns of yourself or others

SETTING GROUND RULES (cont.)

- Advisory meetings will start on time
 - Respect people's privacy. Say, "I know someone who...." (instead of naming names)
 - Do not blame or judge
 - There are no stupid questions or statements
3. Ask students to brainstorm additional rules. Add these to the list.
 4. After you have your list, ask the group if every member agrees to follow the suggestions. If a student doesn't agree with a ground rule, guide a discussion toward consensus. Decide whether to leave the rule, modify it, or take it off.
 5. Ask students to copy the ground rules on paper which they may keep in their portfolios.
 6. Review the Ground Rules at the beginning of each meeting. Have a student read them out loud. Hearing the Ground Rules read sets a positive tone for the meeting.
 7. After class, it would be good to put the Ground Rules on a poster board and post them in the room when you have your LINKS meeting. You may ask for volunteers from students who are artistic and would like to create posters for the class.

Discussion:

1. Does everyone agree to abide by these rules?
2. Are there any rules that are not clear?
3. Are there any rules that need modified?
4. Why is it important that we all follow these rules?
5. What might happen if we do not follow these rules?
6. Is anyone willing to put these rules on a poster to hang in the room?

Integrative Closing Statement:

Rules are created to keep safety and order and to see that everyone's rights are respected and have equal voice in future meetings. By having rules for our group, we, too, will have safety and order in our meetings. And, since you have personal ownership in these rules, you will likely be more able to see the value of the rules and be more willing to abide by them than if they were simply pre-written and handed out. By following these rules, our group can be a fun, safe place to learn and grow.

Additional Resources:

Helpful websites: <http://www.goodgroupdecisions.com/GroundRules.aspx>
<http://www.betterworkplacenow.com/qanda6.html>
<http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/lessonplans/groundrules.htm>

Extension Activities: Ask students to observe their other classrooms and determine how having clear expectations contributes to learning.
