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Small Group

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High

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Relationship Skills

How to Say "NO!" Confidently

This strategy reinforces the skills taught in the high school student-directed strategy *Say "NO!" Like a Pro.*

Pre-Teaching/ Guiding Language:

For many of us, "no" is a word we start hearing at a very young age. However, saying "no" or hearing the word "no" often has a negative connotation to it. Seemingly the more we hear the word, the harder it becomes to say. However, when we start to take on too many responsibilities, we may even end up neglecting ourselves. If we do not take care of ourselves, we will be unable to help anyone else. Our intentions may be the very best when we say "yes" all the time, but if our own mental or physical health suffers as a result, we really are not helping anyone. Being confident in saying "no" takes practice. Use these tips to help you be sure of yourself when you answer "no".

1. Think about your answer before responding.

2. Prepare yourself to say "no". Have a well thought out reason in your mind why you are saying no and stick to that reason.

3. Don't look back. When we decline an invitation or say no to something, we must try to focus on the good that saying no brings us (more time, more rest, etc.), instead of feeling guilty for saying no.

Key Takeaways:

- Students will understand appropriate times to say no.
- Students will understand appropriate ways to say no.
- Students will understand how to stick to their answers when they say no.

Duration + Materials:

- 30 Minutes

Key Vocabulary:

- **Neglecting-** Fail to care for properly.
- **Intentions-** An aim or plan.
- **Connotation-** An idea or feeling that a word invokes in addition to its literal or primary meaning.

Activity:

1. Teachers will use pre-teaching materials to explain why it's important to say no sometimes.

2. Provide examples of times when you've had to say no to someone, even when it's hard.

3. Ask for student volunteers to role play scenarios, and practice saying no.

4. Ask the group for feedback on what they think is hard about saying no, and how they could prepare to say no in the future.

Discussion Questions:

1. A friend invites you to a party and you don't want to go.
2. Your aunt asks you to babysit your little cousin, after you have had a long week at school.
3. Your job asks you to pick up an extra shift, but you have already made plans with friends.
4. Your friend wants to go see a movie, but you are really trying to save money.
5. A friend asks for a ride, but they live very out of the way.

Supplemental Materials:

Please see this example of a completed discussion question to help guide your classroom conversation.

A friend invites you to a party and you don't want to go.

- Ask for student volunteers to role play this activity.
- Prompt students to explore reasons that they would not want to attend a party.
  - Reasons can range from "I just don't want to" to "I have an early morning the next day" or "I won't know many people there."

- Remind students to think about their answer and how they want to decline the invitation. It is okay to say no, but we want to make sure we are also respectful when we do it.
- Ask students what they would do if their friend tried to guilt them into going.
  - Ask a student to demonstrate how it might look if someone tried to guilt them.
  - Ask them to think about how they would respond.
- Remind students to stand their ground when they say no and provide volunteers with praise when they finish.

Reinforcement Activities:

1. Give students a voice in your classroom - respect their opinions and empower them to speak their minds. This will help them build confidence in the real world to say no when they are uncomfortable.

   a. Be sure to remind students that sometimes we must do things we do not always want to do, like homework or a class we might not find interesting. However, empower them to take control of different situations and ask questions, be curious, and be confident in our values and beliefs.