

Express Yourself!



Give youth a chance to get creative with respect.

Why?

Learning by doing is a great way for kids to acquire new knowledge and skills. *Express Yourself!* lets youth tell the story of Choose Respect in their own language and in media they can relate to.

Where and When?

Express Yourself! fits easily into the regular activities of an English or drama class at school, or a program at a recreation center, library, or community- or faith-based organization. Youth can complete *Express Yourself!* in 2–4 hours or expand it into a series of sessions over 1 or more weeks, depending on the creative option you choose.

How?

The 13-minute Choose Respect video for teen audiences, *Causing Pain: Real Stories of Dating Abuse and Violence*, the *Video Discussion Guide*, and the Choose Respect PSAs can all be found in the Materials section on the USB Flash Drive that comes with this Playbook.

Give them the tools they need.

Start by helping youth learn about dating abuse and sort out what is healthy and what is not. Show the 13-minute Choose Respect video for teen audiences, *Causing Pain: Real Stories of Dating Abuse and Violence*, or show Choose Respect PSAs if you have played the video as part of a previous play. The *Video Discussion Guide* will help you lead a discussion and contains Choose Respect messages. If the group is large, divide into groups of four to six youth, with one discussion leader in each group. Talk about:

- Signs of healthy and unhealthy relationships
- Reasons why any kind of abuse in a relationship is not acceptable
- Warning signs of disrespectful and unsafe relationships
- Why it is important to have healthy, positive relationships with family, friends, and others



Plays in Action:

Community: Los Angeles

Choose Respect Challenge

The AmASSI Health and Cultural Center and the Jenesse Center, Inc. brought Choose Respect to Los Angeles kids with the Creative Expressions Challenge. To enter the challenge, kids had to create a poem, song, essay, speech, artwork, or a public service announcement that described respect. Winners of the challenge were recognized at a game night celebration by the Los Angeles WNBA team, the Sparks. Challenge winners made a triumphant entry into the arena with the Sparks team and joined in warm up drills with them. The Union Bank of California awarded a \$1,000 scholarship to the grand prize winner.

Get the creative juices flowing.

If access to computers is feasible, get everyone in a creative mood by playing the Choose Respect Game on www.chooserespect.org. This game lets kids have fun, and it reinforces Choose Respect messages.

When you're ready for them to make their own artistic statement, encourage youth to complete one or more of the creative options to create Choose Respect messages a friend would understand and believe. Adjust this activity to your setting, time, and budget. Kids may want to work in teams or independently. Your greatest resource—the creativity of youth—doesn't cost a thing! Give youth directions appropriate for the type of creative option you choose. For example, explaining that you would like them to take the Choose Respect message and create a skit of their own that shows how to act respectfully in a friendship. Creative options include:

Poster	Poem	School announcement
Rap	Temporary tattoo	Mural
Banner	Radio PSA	Video
Podcast	Skit	Internet blog

Encourage youth to convert their product to an electronic format and submit it at www.chooserespect.org.

Want to Do More?

- Keep the group together and work on a larger, more complex form of artistic expression such as a play, talent show, or podcast (see Success Story on page 1 of this play).
- Engage more youth and hold a contest to see who will be crowned the *Express Yourself* champion.

Resources Needed:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting space | <input type="checkbox"/> TV with DVD player (or video and PSAs may be downloaded from www.chooserespect.org) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 13-minute Choose Respect video for teen audiences, <i>Causing Pain: Real Stories of Dating Abuse and Violence</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Video Discussion Guide</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supplies and materials for the creative option(s) youth select to express themselves | <input type="checkbox"/> Computer with Internet access (optional) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Choose Respect PSAs | |

Evaluation:

Document what you accomplish using Choose Respect tracking tools:

- **Stand Up & Be Counted**

Keep track of play participants and audience members. The Zone 1 Evaluation Tools contain a sign-in sheet.

- **Cheers & Changes**

After the play is complete, note your successes, challenges, and opportunities for the future. The Zone 1 Evaluation Tools contain a worksheet to help you do this.

Choose Respect feedback tools are recommended if you implement multiple plays. Assess what youth learned from and thought of a series of Choose Respect activities using Choose Respect feedback tools:

- **Youth Feedback**

After completing a series of activities with youth, collect information for your evaluation. The Zone 1 Evaluation Tools contain a feedback form to help you do this.