

Communicating in Intimate Situations

Date, Time, and Length | Chapter, Community

Location | Cost | Registration Link

Outcomes

What will people do, say, feel, or know as a result of attending? Consider when this falls in your calendar and what your community needs from this program.

- The goal is to equip you with tools to communicate and receive communication as a participant in intimate situations, or as a caring bystander
 - Intimate situations = anything with a charge beyond friendship
- Communication is so important, both when things are going well and when they're not, yet it is often avoided. We're going to explore why that is, and how to overcome it.
- **This program has simulations involving dancing/linking arms and swaying. It's OK to opt out.**

Audience

Check your calendar to look at what happened before and what is happening after. Think through who you want to see at your program and set goals that you can work to achieve.

Target Audience(s):

- Chapter
- Teen leaders

Participation Goals

- Total Attendance:
- Prospect Attendance:

Support

Whether you're a first time or frequent planner, it's always helpful to look through resources for tips and inspiration. [Message](#) or [email](#) the International S'ganim for extra help.

- Plan [Inclusive Programs](#)
- Review [Community Agreements](#)
- Apply for [Funding](#) (Gamechanger Grants)
- Create an [Event Promotion Plan](#)
- Build a [Prospect List](#)
- Complete [Asset Mapping](#)
- Start with [The 5 Ws of Programming](#)

Environment and Setup

Does it relate to the topic? How does someone feel when they enter? What will engage participants? Think about lighting, music, slides, furniture, where "front" is, etc.

- Have someone greet people as they enter
- If you can, create a "dance-like" lighting environment for the two simulations: dimmed lights, fairy lights, etc.
- Six large post-its on wall, labeled as follows: "Host Check-In"; "Guest (Yes)"; "Guest (Yes, But...)"; "Guest (No)"; "Host Reply to No," "Bystander Check-In"
- Choose a Fast Song and Slow Song to Play (Ex. Fast: "Golden Boy", and Slow: "Stairway to Heaven")

Supply List

List out your supplies and where you'll get them. Include any other relevant information such as cost, usage, and quantity. Use the [Program Budget Sheet](#) if you want to get specific.

- Large Post-its
- Music and Speaker
- 1 piece of paper that says 0, 1, or 2 for each participant
- A few print-outs of the "Suggested phrases" document [last pages of this doc] on hand in case people need some starting suggestions

Outline

Script and Directions

Please explain in as much detail as possible. [Don't forget to practice!](#)

Supplies

Add links if necessary.

 **Please have an advisor or staff in the room to support navigating challenging conversations that may come up.**
For additional resources and support, visit [BBYO's Safety, Wellness, and Inclusion Hub](#).

Opening

Kick off discussion

Ask: What have you learned at this point in your life about communicating in intimate situations from movies, social media, parents and teachers, friends, lived experiences?

- Intimate situations = anything with a charge beyond friendship

Ask: What kinds of verbal and non-verbal communication typically gets used in these situations?

Main Activities

First simulation: Modeling non-verbal communication in a fast dance scenario. *Ask people to pair up.*

Say:

- Everyone will receive cards with numbers: 0, 1, or 2.
- 0 means you do not like the other person as more than a friend. 1 means you are potentially interested in them, but aren't sure yet, or you don't know how much you want to display affection at this time/place. 2 means you are super into this person and want to act on that.
- The goal is to dance with your partner in a way that reflects the feelings specified by your number, without telling them what the number is. After the simulation, partners will guess each others' numbers, then reveal their cards.

Do:

- Give everyone cards, remind them not to show their number
- Dim the lights. Play fast dance music for about 1 minute
- Turn the lights back on; have people return their cards to you

Say:

- Guess your partners' number. How many people had a miscommunication?
- What kinds of non-verbal signals did people give to communicate each position (facial expressions, body language)?
- For those who had a miscommunication, what happened?

- Music system
- Slips of paper labeled 0, 1, 2

Discussion overview: Interpersonal dynamics in intimate situations. *Introduce the concept of hosts and guests.*

Say:

- Often, particularly early in a relationship, or when people have different levels of experience, one person might initiate the situation and drive it forward more; we can think of this person as a host. The guest is then choosing how to respond.
- Host and guest roles are not fixed; they can switch or vanish completely after the interaction is initiated.

Ask:

- What's involved in being a good host?
 - ***[Key points to touch on: check in with your guest to make sure they're having a good time; observe their non-verbal communication, listen to and solicit verbal communication]***
- What does it mean to be a good guest? Does it mean going along with everything your host wants to do? What about a guest who steps over the boundaries of the initial invitation?
- Think about the situation where a host offers a guest something they're allergic to. What are the stakes for communication there? How is communication about boundaries around intimacy similar or different?
- What about bystanders? Have you ever been at a gathering and seen miscommunications between organizers and the guests, or situations where someone is being pushed on a boundary? What can you do?

Small group activity: Verbal communication

Say:

- Speaking up in intimate situations is daunting for many people. A good strategy is to come pre-loaded with short, direct phrases.
- The goal of this activity is to come up with phrases that you would actually use in a situation where you were a host or a guest in an intimate situation, or a bystander who sees their friend participate in an intimate situation -- either as a host, or as a guest.

Do:

- Count people off into six groups, each one starts at one of the post-its on the wall. If the group is small, they can do it in a smaller number of groups, or all together.
- Give the groups 2-4 mins at each station, then rotate.

Say: There are some "Suggested phrases" at the bottom of this program document in the appendix - if you want, check them out and see which ones you would actually say.

Print-outs of the
"Suggested phrases"

Do: Once everyone has rotated through all the stations, regroup and ask for volunteers to read the phrases for each category.

Ask:

- What do you think of these phrases? Do you feel like you might actually say some of these? What it would feel like to hear these from a partner, or a friend?
- What do you think would be **unhelpful** things for a host, guest, or friend to say? What have you heard people say that's unhelpful?

Second simulation: Modeling verbal communication in a slow dance scenario

Say:

- We're going to simulate a slow dance. *In this version of the world, slow dancing is **Havdalah-style arm linking**. Tapping someone's shoulder is a sign of intimacy analogous to kissing, tapping someone's head is going further.* In either case, someone might tap softly/subtly, or more energetically/forcefully
- Again, everyone will get cards with 0, 1 or 2 that explain how you feel about your dance partner; do not disclose your number to your partner. This time, however, you and your partner will join up with another pair.
- One pair in the group will start with linked arms. The other pair will be hanging out nearby.
- 1s and 2s will initiate tapping interactions; remember that tapping on the arms is less "serious" than tapping on the head
- The goal is to communicate verbally, not just nonverbally.
 - 0s, as guests, want to communicate the fact that they're not interested in going beyond basic dancing.
 - 1s should try to communicate that they are interested but don't want to go farther than shoulder tapping, or if they do consent to head tapping, they don't want it to be too intense/obvious. If a 1 thinks they are paired with a 0, they will be in the host role, and should follow host guidelines; if they think they're paired with a 2, they will be more of a guest. Their goal is to act on their interest in the other person without violating their own or others' boundaries.
 - 2s want to take things as far as they can, but want to be good hosts and be mindful of their guests' boundaries.
 - Bystanders should identify beforehand what friend they will be approaching afterwards, and pay attention to their verbal and nonverbal cues. When the music stops, approach your friend and talk to them, based on what you saw.
 - **[Facilitator note: Have teens form their groups, receive their cards, and identify which friend they will approach. Then play 1-2 minutes of the slow song. When you stop the music, remind the bystanders to approach their friends].**

document [last pages of this doc] on hand in case people need some starting suggestions

If your group has finished the simulation: Have the dancers guess each others numbers, then reveal theirs to the group. Then, have a quick **check in**:

- **Ask:**
 - What did people get right?
 - What was still unclear?
 - Did the bystanders' response feel like a good match for the situation?
- **Say:** Now we're going to repeat the activity, but with the dancer and bystander roles switched between pairs.

Do: Play song from the beginning again, 1-2 minutes. Repeat bystander check in, dancer guess/reveal, and brief discussion

Closing

Group Debrief

- How did it feel to be intentional about communication while dancing? How did it feel to look out for what others wanted and didn't want?
- What was difficult or awkward, and what felt natural? Do you think you could use these phrases in an authentic intimate situation? Why or why not?
- What did you learn from this that you would bring back to your chapter or region?

Reflection

At the end, meet with the planning team to debrief how it went, celebrate, and determine how to improve next time. If you can't meet right away, make it happen soon so the details are fresh. Use the [Evaluation Form](#) to write your thoughts.

Follow Up

Make a plan to reach out to all teens (members and prospects) who attended your program. Say thank you, see if they have any ideas or even want to help plan the next program. Be sure to invite them to the next event on the calendar!



Did you run this program? If yes, please [share your feedback](#) so we can improve this write up!

Appendix of Suggested Phrases

Host check-in

Everything OK?	How's it going?	Can I x?
Is this OK?	How're you doing?	OK if I y?
You OK?	Like this?	
No pressure, by the way.	More like that?	
All good?	Less or more?	
You good?	What would you like?	

Guest (yes)

Yeah	Great	Absolutely
Yup	Amazing	
Definitely	Fantastic	
Hell yeah	Yes please	
F yeah	More please	

Guest (yes, but...)

OK, but less x	This is good, but no farther	Later, not now
Good, maybe more y?	Not like that, like <i>this</i> is good	
Could we z instead?	OK, but a bit slower	
Let's go back to y	OK, but softer	
Actually, let's just x	OK, but only z	

Guest (no)

No, I'd like to stop	Not good, actually. Time out?	Nope, that ain't happening
No, not in public	Not ready for that	No
Actually, not so much	Actually, I'm not ready for this	
I'd rather not	No thanks	
No, I changed my mind	I think I'm done	

Host (reply to no)

OK	Sure	OK, I hear you
No problem	No pressure	
Gotcha	Sounds good	
Fair enough	OK, just thought I'd ask	
No worries	Cool	

Bystander Check-in

Hey, how are you feeling?	How are you?	
How was that?	Was that fun?	
You ok?	Are they ok?	
All good?	Do you want to talk about it?	
How do you think they're feeling?		