

Establishing Guidelines For Discussions:

If you have not already established ground rules for your Community time, it is suggested that you complete this activity. A useful way to encourage openness and positive behavior is to introduce working agreements or ground rules that communicate an expected standard of behavior. Encourage your students to collaboratively develop working agreements that ensure safety and respect. Suggest one or more of the following:

Respect Others:

- You will hear ideas that may be different or new to you, and opinions with which you may disagree. As you participate and interact, try to take in new information without judgment and to keep an open mind. Make sure that your words and body language reflect a respectful attitude toward others. Learn by listening to others.
- Speak From the “I”: Speak from your own personal experiences and try not to judge the experiences of others. Use I-statements such as “I feel...” or “In my experience...” Avoid “You should” or “You all think that ...” statements and generalizations of any kind.
- Ask Questions: Much of the information we will cover will be new to many of you. Feel free to ask any questions that come up for you—either during the activity or privately afterwards—without fear that they are too “silly.” Make sure to phrase all questions in respectful and nonjudgmental ways.
- Respect Confidentiality: Please make sure that everything said in the room stays in the room. When sharing personal anecdotes, make sure to avoid using the real names of other people.
- Share “Air Time”: While you are encouraged to express your ideas and opinions, please do not monopolize the group’s time. Help create a safe space in which everyone can speak. No one, however, is obligated to speak. “Passing” is okay.