



# SAY SOMETHING



# Warning Signs Unit

GRADES 6-8





**In this Warning Signs Unit**, students will gain specialized knowledge about the specific warning signs of violence and victimization, including chronic social isolation, access to weapons, and suicide ideation. Students will analyze case studies and Sandy Hook Promise Public Service Announcements to practice identifying warning signs and reaching out to a Trusted Adult for help.

### **Unit Essential Question**

**I think my friend needs help,  
where will I find resources and support?**



To learn more about the full curriculum components and the various resources associated with the *Say Something* curriculum, visit this [guide](#). Here, you will gain access to the curriculum's essential questions, thematic unit rationale, and additional engagement activities.

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# Create Your Safety Net Cards

## A WARNING SIGNS LESSON PLAN

### Lesson Objectives

#### Students will:

- Identify the Trusted Adult they can go to if they recognize a warning sign or threat.
- Create Safety Net Cards for notebooks, lockers, and phone cases.

### Standard Alignment

#### CASEL Competency

- Relationship Skills

### Materials and Resources

#### Students:

- [Safety Net Cards Handout \(English\)](#)
- [Safety Net Cards Handout \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Say Something Warning Signs Workbook](#)

#### Educators:

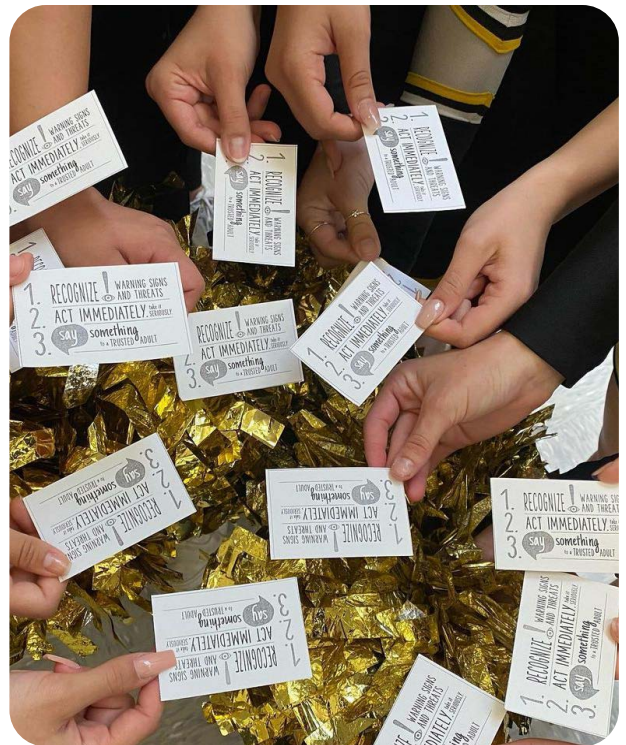
- [Say Something Cut-out Cards](#)
- [Say Something Anonymous Reporting System Cut-out Cards](#)

### Mindful Minute

#### Feelings Check In

Encourage students to check in with the classroom emotions tool, such as the Mood Meter or Feeling Wheel. Invite students to self-evaluate their emotions at the moment. Prompt students with a few questions to guide their self-assessment and emotions management. Allow for a quiet minute of reflection before moving to the student connector.

- *Is there anything you'll need to do to be present and participate in today's lesson?*



**Grades:**

6–8

**Estimated Time Needed**

15–30 minutes

**Notes**



- If you're feeling happy, joyful, content, calm, peaceful, or enthusiastic, what led you to feel these feelings? How can you stay in this emotional space today?
- Are there any unpleasant feelings or emotions that you can let go of right now?

## Student Connector

### Journal Time

Give students time to **Think-Reflect-React** on the following image in their [workbooks](#):

- What step of the Say Something Program is being displayed in this painting?

Remind students about the protocols for a **Think-Reflect-React**:

**Think:** Think about the three Say Something steps: 1. Recognize the Signs 2. Act Immediately, Take it Seriously, 3. "Say Something"

**Reflect:** Consider what step is being displayed in the painting.

**React:** Share or show your reflections.



## Main Activity

### Circle Up

#### Opening

Tell your students that they'll be participating in a [Circle Up](#) activity. Use the [Circle Up Norms](#) and *Know the Signs* Agreement when available as reminders to practice speaking and listening skills. Arrange chairs or desks in a circle formation or invite students to sit in a comfortable position in an open space. It can surround a centerpiece of significance to the group/class. Reinforce that it is important that all students feel seen and heard during circle rounds, can participate or pass, and are all important members of the circle community. Allow enough time for students to participate however they feel comfortable and encourage them to use the [Circle Up Handout](#), located in their workbooks. Additionally, model the Circle Up procedures:

- Set up a centerpiece.
- Use "I statements."
- Use a talking piece.
- Actively listen and be present.
- Listen and speak without judgment.
- Set a time and topic for the discussion.

## Discussion

Remind students of the three steps of the *Say Something* Program:

1. Recognize the Signs.
2. Act Immediately, Take it Seriously.
3. “Say Something.”

Engage the classroom in a discussion about who their Trusted Adults are, in and out of school. Here are a few guiding questions:

- *What do we do if we see a warning sign?*
- *When should we go to a Trusted Adult?*
- *What are some examples of how we can approach a Trusted Adult with a warning sign or threat?*
- *Provide examples of possible Trusted Adults.*

## Closing

To close the Circle Up, ask students to give a shoutout to one of their classmates who made a comment that resonates with them.

- *I appreciate \_\_\_\_\_ for sharing with us today.*
- *Way to go, \_\_\_\_\_, I like your idea.*
- *Thank you for sharing your opinion, \_\_\_\_\_.*
- *Give finger snaps or air high-fives or fist bumps in place of verbal appreciation or affirmation.*

## Safety Net Cards

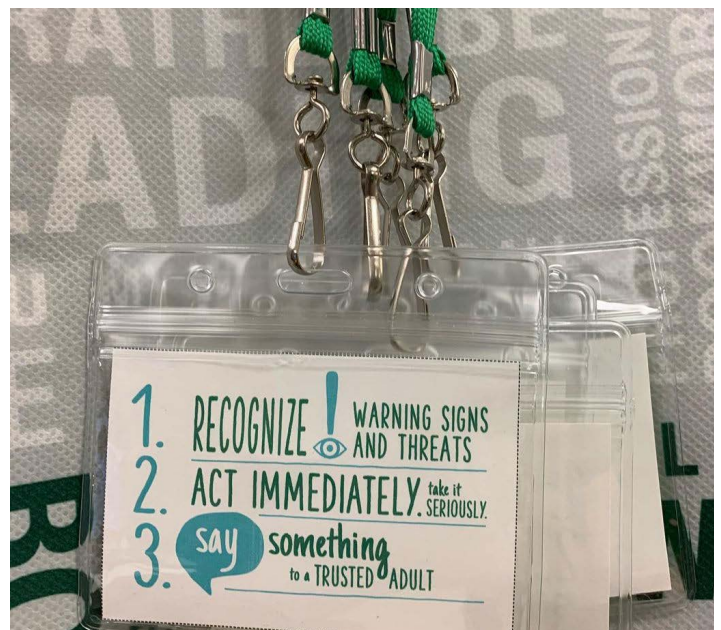
Have students complete the [Safety Net Cards Handout](#) ([Spanish](#) available). Then, have students cut the cards out and store them in places where they can always reference them. For example, they can place one in their locker, one in their wallet, or one in their backpack.

## Optimistic Closure and Promise Challenge

Express appreciation for students’ participation in a discussion that brings up difficult subject matter. Reinforce that students are to report any warning signs that they see online or in-person to their Trusted Adult or on an Anonymous Reporting System.

### Promise Challenge

Provide students with the [Say Something Cut-out Cards](#). Challenge students to always keep one of these cards on hand.





## Lesson Extension and Explore More

### Lesson Extension

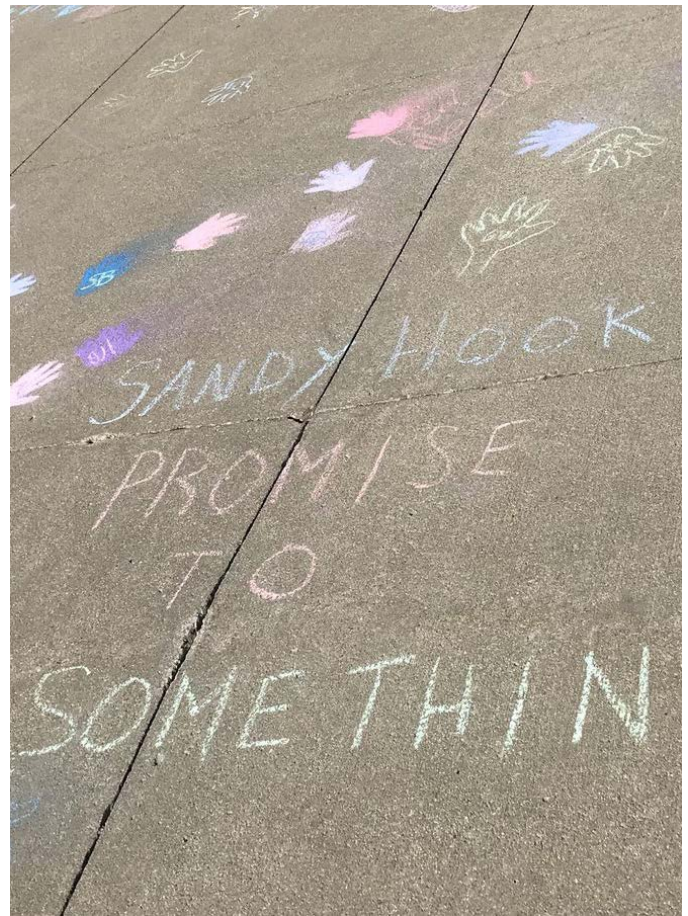
The [Say Something Signature Activity Guide](#) has 10 various activities to choose from. Use this guide to bolster the Say Something message in the classroom.

### Explore More

Check out this reel on Instagram where [@loveteachblog](#) talks about the value of being a Trusted Adult.

## Family Engagement

Encourage family members to have a conversation with their children about the importance of *saying something* and reaching out to a Trusted Adult if they notice a warning sign or threat. Then, they can discuss various scenarios and develop a plan together on what they would do if they said something to them.



# Weighing the Warning Signs

## A WARNING SIGNS LESSON PLAN

### Lesson Objectives

#### Students will:

- Analyze a case study and evaluate different types of warning signs.
- Classify various social media warning signs and threats by the level of seriousness and urgency.

### Standard Alignment

#### CASEL Competencies

- Relationship Skills
- Responsible Decision-Making

#### Social Justice Standards

- **Action 17:** Students will recognize their own responsibility to stand up to exclusion, prejudice, and injustice.
- **Action 19:** Students will make principled decisions about when and how to take a stand against bias and injustice in their everyday lives and will do so despite negative peer or group pressure.

### Materials and Resources

#### Students:

- [Say Something Warning Signs Workbook](#)

#### Educators:

- [Say Something Training Introduction Video](#)

### Mindful Minute

Take a deep breath. Keeping your eyes open or closed, root your feet into the ground, and find your quiet space. Take another deep breath, inhaling through the nose and exhaling through the mouth. Release any tension, anxiety, concern, worry, or hesitation that you might be feeling. Think of your breath as a



#### Grades:

6-8

#### Estimated Time Needed

45-60 minutes

#### Notes



superpower that you can use when you want to lessen anxiety and unpleasant feelings or boost confidence.

## Student Connector

### Safe Space Inventory

Encourage students to place learning materials (including electronic devices and cell phones) aside. Set a timer for one-minute and ask students to take that minute to breathe, stretch, rest, or do a quiet activity that is relaxing. Prior to the activity, model yourself doing a quick, quiet, centering activity. Encourage them to be creative and what feels right for them.

Once the minute is over, inform students that they'll do a safe space inventory check. Students may refer to the [Safe Space Inventory Checklist](#) in their workbooks or reference the inventory checklist posted in a highly visible area of the classroom.

Inform students that the Safe Space Inventory allows them to check in with themselves and their environment to ensure that they have a lot of resources to help make them feel safe and be productive throughout the day. The Safe Space Inventory is a tool to help youth and Trusted Adults:

- Be mindful about the physical space surrounding them.
- Find simple ways to feel comforted.
- Identify easy strategies to get into a healthy head space.
- Use their voice and "I statements" to advocate for safety needs and wants.
- Create a healing-centered classroom environment with their classmates.



### Main Activity

**Remind students that the information in this presentation has the potential to trigger strong emotions and behavioral responses due to past trauma. Be sensitive to students who show signs that this material is re-traumatizing and offer an alternate safe space for them to go during the presentation.**

Emphasize the difference between someone who's feeling down, sad, or needing alone time as compared to a student who has extreme, dramatic, sudden changes in mood without an obvious reason or explanation. For example, just because a student starts trying out a new fashion or style, it doesn't mean that one indicator alone is a warning sign. Similarly, if a student is feeling sad in school one day because someone in their family is having a problem or a pet is ill does not automatically indicate a warning sign.

*The Say Something training video taught you about two main warning sign categories: (1) those that indicate someone might hurt someone else and (2) those that indicate someone might hurt oneself. While not a comprehensive list, the warning signs in the [Weighing the Warning Signs Handout](#) offers a checklist of the most common warning signs that something is just not right.*

### Step 1: What are warning signs again?

- Significant changes in mood or behavior
- Bullies and seeking revenge
- Feeling isolated and/or rejected
- Making a direct or specific threat
- Informing someone of their plan to harm themselves or others
- Withdrawal from people and activities
- Sense of hopelessness
- Animal cruelty

### Step 2: Analyzing a Case Study

Students will get an option of three case studies located in the [Say Something Warning Signs Workbook](#). Feel free to have each group work on a different one or have the whole class focus on the same scenario. Divide students into groups of four. If this is not possible, the case study can be analyzed through a guided discussion by the educator.

As the group reads the case study aloud, direct students to annotate their case study by circling or highlighting warning signs while having the warning signs checklist out on the desk to review.

### Step 3: Case Study Checklist

Once students finish reading, they will review this checklist by circling yes, no, or unsure for the warning signs that they read about in the case study.

Key: Y = YES    N = No    U = Unsure

Yes	No	Unsure	This warning sign shows a significant change in mood or behavior.
Yes	No	Unsure	This warning sign shows someone who is being bullied and seeking revenge.
Yes	No	Unsure	This warning sign indicates the student is feeling isolated or rejected.
Yes	No	Unsure	This is a direct threat, not just a sign.
Yes	No	Unsure	This warning sign informs others of their plan to harm themselves.
Yes	No	Unsure	This warning sign informs others of their plan to harm others.
Yes	No	Unsure	This warning sign shows a student who is withdrawing from people and activities.
Yes	No	Unsure	This warning sign indicated the student feels hopeless.

### Step 4: Action Plan

Ask groups to brainstorm and create an action plan on what they would have done if they were in the shoes of the people referenced in the case study and noticed the warning signs. Ask groups to share the action plan aloud with the larger class.



## Warning Sign Action Plan

- These are the identified warning sign(s) and threat(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- Here's what I'm going to do to act immediately: \_\_\_\_\_
- Tell or Report to: \_\_\_\_\_

## Optimistic Closure and Promise Challenge

Express appreciation for students' participation in a discussion that brings up difficult subject matter. Reinforce that students are to report any warning signs that they see online or in-person to their Trusted Adult or on an Anonymous Reporting System.

## Promise Challenge

Next time you are eating lunch or outside for recess, look for someone who is alone and "start with hello". This is a great opportunity to ask them to join you and maybe even make a new friend!

## Lesson Extensions and Explore More

Personalize this lesson by assigning students a research project to access, aggregate, and present data on different forms of violence in the students' local communities. This project can be done in groups of four students and presents a wonderful opportunity for an interdisciplinary unit between Social Studies, Math, and English, and Science faculty. In each discipline, students could complete the following assignments for the research project:

- Math: Practice calculating central tendency (mean, median, mode) using the data collected. Create graphs using a spreadsheet.
- Science: Research the public health consequences of the data points.
- Social Studies: Study the historical trends of each data point or create a presentation on the economic impact of various crimes.
- English: Write a persuasive essay or Letter to the Editor taking a position on allocating resources to help prevent or reduce one of the crime or self-harm areas addressed.

At the middle school level, provide students with the sources for data. High school students can identify reliable sources of data.

Crime Data Points (can be broken down by age, gender, ethnicity, etc.)

- Dating Violence
- Ethnic Violence
- Gun violence
- Forms of abuse
- Racial Violence
- Violent Crime
- School bullying

## Self-Harm Data Points

- Young people affected by eating disorders
- Death by suicide

# Warning Signs Online

## A WARNING SIGNS LESSON PLAN

### Lesson Objectives

#### Students will:

- Identify warning signs and threats by analyzing images and scenarios found on social media and through text messaging.

### Standard Alignment

#### CASEL Competency

- Responsible Decision Making

### Materials and Resources

#### Students:

- [Say Something Warning Signs Workbook](#)

### Mindful Minute

Picture a place in nature that brings you happiness, joy, peace, or enjoyment. It could be a park, a beach, a mountain trail, a special tree, a lake, the desert, a garden, or any other natural setting. Imagine yourself grounded in that nature space for the next minute. What are your senses telling you? How do you feel? Take a gentle breath in and out. Enjoy your moment in this natural space.

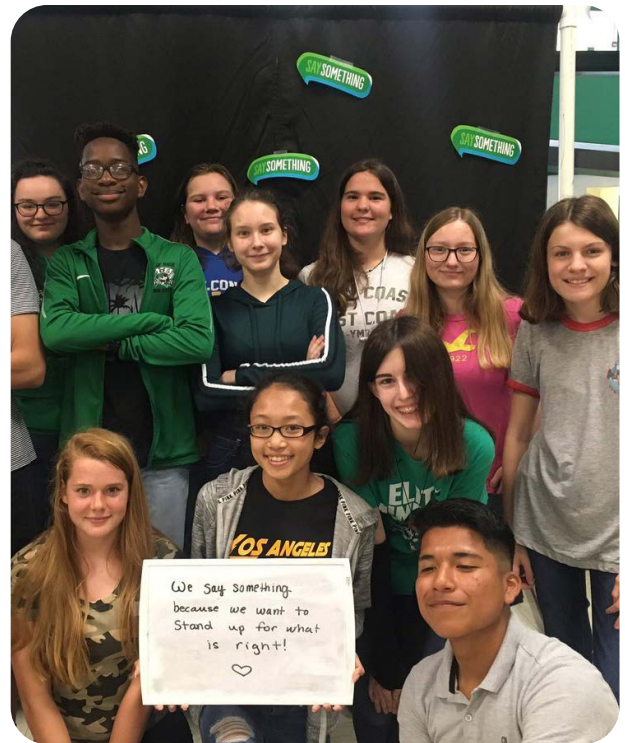
### Student Connector

#### Friendly Five

For the next three minutes, go around the room and give five different individuals a different compliment. Remember to start with kindness and say “hello.”

### Main Activity

Let students know that today they will be revisiting some of images that were featured in the *Say Something* training. Remind students that the information in this presentation has the



#### Grades:

6–8

#### Estimated Time Needed

30–45 Minutes

#### Notes

potential to trigger strong emotions and behavioral responses due to past trauma. Be sensitive to students who show signs that this material is re-traumatizing and offer an alternate safe space for them to go during the presentation.

*Social media is the main source of warning signs and threats. Sometimes seeing all these things on social media can feel overwhelming and can be stressful. You are the eyes and ears of social media and we need you to help keep one another safe by “saying something” to a Trusted Adult if you witness any warning signs or threats.*

Today, the class will go over two images and two scenarios that display warning signs and threats seen through text messaging and social media. Project the images or read the conversation aloud.

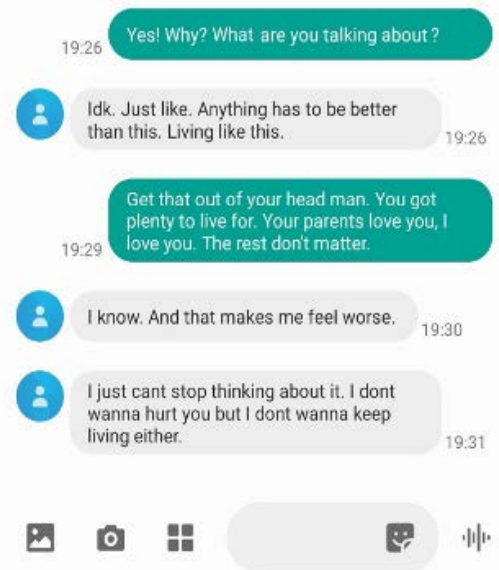
As a class, **Think-Reflect-React** to the conversation in the image below:

- What are the warning signs in this conversation?
- If they reached out to you, what would you do?

Then, place students into groups. As a group, they will **Think-Reflect-React** to the post in the image below:



- What are the warning signs in this social media post?
- What would you do if you saw this post?



### Independent Activity

Have students complete the [Warning Signs Online Handout](#). They will be reading two scenarios and identifying the warning signs or threats. Then, they will say something to their Trusted Adult by drafting up a text message with details on the scenario. Remind students to include as much information as they can about what occurred so that their Trusted Adult can properly address the situation.

### Scenario #1

It's Thursday night and you were watching a movie with your friends. When the movie got out, you checked your phone and saw that Bethany had sent a Snapchat about an hour ago to a group chat. Once you open up the image, you see that she took a picture of four firearms and a caption that read "See you at school tomorrow".

### Scenario #2

You get a friend request on Instagram from a handle that reads "charlie\_sux." As you check out their page, you notice they have only three posts. All three of these posts are images of Charlie, who is in your 4th-period math class. One of the captions reads "Too short to make the team (laughing



emoji).” You remember Charlie telling a classmate last week that he was so excited to try out for the basketball team and conclude that this is what they are talking about. Then, you begin to read the comments on one post and see that there is a conversation between Charlie’s actual account and the one running this page. Charlie responds, “Stop it, Devin. You make me want to end it all.”

## Optimistic Closure and Promise Challenge

Thank students for engaging in today’s activities regarding social media. Remind students that they are the eyes and ears of social media and we need them to help keep one another safe by “saying something” to a Trusted Adult if they witness any warning signs or threats.

## Lesson Extensions and Explore More

If time allows, have students partner up and practice having a difficult conversation with a Trusted Adult by roleplaying the situation.

## Family Engagement

Encourage families to have a Circle Up discussion on the dangers of social media. Then, have family members develop a plan on what they will do if their child/children see a warning sign online. Consider sharing the [Warning Signs of Violence in Youth Internet Use](#) information sheet.



# Warning Sign: Recognize Social Isolation

## A WARNING SIGNS LESSON PLAN

### Lesson Objectives

#### Students will:

- Develop strategies for combatting social isolation.

### Standard Alignment

#### CASEL Competencies

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Management

#### Social Justice Standard

- **Action 16:** Students will express empathy when people are excluded or mistreated because of their identities and concern when they themselves experience bias.

### Materials and Resources

#### Students:

- [Say Something Warning Signs Workbook](#)
- Poster paper
- Colored pencils or markers

### Mindful Minute

Sit in a comfortable position and take a couple of deep inhales and exhales. Take a moment to glance around you and notice your classmates that surround you. Without talking or making noises, smile at as many of your classmates as you can. This might feel awkward at first, but hopefully becomes more comfortable as the moments pass. Change your gaze to straight in front of you. Take another couple of deep breaths. Acknowledge the comfort in being with your classmates as a community. You may not all know each other, or you may know each other very well. Regardless, there is comfort in being surrounded by classmates.



#### Grades:

6–8

#### Estimated Time Needed

45–60 minutes

#### Notes

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## Student Connector

### Circle Up

#### Opening

Tell your students that they'll be participating in a [Circle Up](#) activity. Use the [Circle Up Norms](#) and *Know the Signs* Agreement when available as reminders to practice speaking and listening skills. Arrange chairs or desks in a circle formation or invite students to sit in a comfortable position in an open space. It can surround a centerpiece of significance to the group/class. Reinforce that it is important that all students feel seen and heard during circle rounds, can participate or pass, and are all important members of the circle community. Allow enough time for students to participate however they feel comfortable and encourage them to use the [Circle Up Handout](#), located in their workbooks. Additionally, model the Circle Up procedures:

- Set up a centerpiece.
- Use "I statements."
- Use a talking piece.
- Actively listen and be present.
- Listen and speak without judgment.
- Set a time and topic for the discussion.

#### Discussion

Assign a facilitator then engage the class in a discussion about social isolation and healthy alone time by asking some of the guiding questions below:

- *Do you enjoy being alone?*
- *What are the benefits of healthy alone time?*
- *What can you do if you see someone alone?*
- *How do you know if they want to be alone or are socially isolated?*

#### Closing

To close the Circle Up, ask students to give some feedback on the circle discussion by using the thumb method below.

##### Thumbs

- Thumbs up - I enjoyed the Circle Up.
- Thumb in the middle - I'm feeling unsure about today's Circle Up.
- Thumb down - This Circle Up wasn't very enjoyable for me.



## Main Activity

Remind students of previous conversations about social isolation, including how people who are socially isolated feel, what social isolation looks like, and why it is important to empathize with



people who are socially isolated.

Ask students to individually complete the [Recognize Social Isolation Handout](#) by writing a response to the following prompt:

- Create a list of the top five ways you could connect to a socially isolated peer. Describe each method.

In small groups of four, ask students to share their top five strategies. Explain to students that, as a group, they must take their lists and narrow to the group's top five strategies. So, students must discuss each other's strategies and make some tough decisions about which ones are the best.

Once each group has decided their top five strategies, provide groups with materials to create a poster of the "Top Five Ways to Connect with Others." Hang the finished products in the classroom or around the school.

## Optimistic Closure and Promise Challenge

Encourage students to continue their involvement in the shaping and problem-solving of school climate and culture.

### Promise Challenge

Leave students with a Promise Challenge to learn more about someone who may be different than them in some way.

## Lesson Extension and Explore More

### Lesson Extension

Fill out and share a [handprint](#) with someone that states:

- *How they reached out and helped you recently; and*
- *Why do you appreciate them?*

*It could be someone in the class, school, or larger community. If possible, give the handprint to the helper as a gift of gratitude.*

### Explore More

Here are some additional resources on social isolation:

- Tips on how to help a lonely student in class:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0BWCM1MzX5c>
- Strategies on how individual students can reach out and connect:  
<https://sandyhookpromise.app.box.com/s/khrme1nopf6thfjrbzt3gzc5e8xs1jv>
- Youth leader, Medha, shares how we can increase awareness about bullying and social isolation:  
<https://www.sandyhookpromise.org/blog/stories/medha-increasing-awareness-about-bullying-and-social-isolation/>

# What They Left Behind

## A WARNING SIGNS LESSON PLAN

### Lesson Objectives

#### Students will:

- Identify warning signs and brainstorm how acts of gun violence could have been prevented by watching a video and engaging in a Circle Up discussion.

### Standard Alignment

#### CASEL Competencies

- Responsible Decision Making
- Social Awareness
- Relationship Skills

### Materials and Resources

#### Students:

- Access to YouTube video or laptop
- [Say Something Warning Signs Workbook](#)

#### Educators:

- [What They Left Behind Video](#)

*Note to educator* – Please review the video prior to showing the students in your class. The video is about victims of gun violence. Be advised that Part 2 of the video does mention the use of drugs.

### Mindful Minute

Stand up and take a deep breath and reach for the sky. Stretch your arms up so that you are as tall as possible. Bring your arms back down as you exhale. Feel a sense of calmness that enters your body.



#### Grades:

6–8

#### Estimated Time Needed

45 minutes

#### Notes

## Student Connector

### Student Web

Student connection webs help students visualize their connectedness and commonalities. All you need is a ball of yarn or twine and a group of students. To model the activity, the educator takes the ball of yarn and makes a statement such as “I enjoy traveling to new places.” Students who identify with this statement raise their hands and the teacher holds onto the very end of the yarn and throws the ball to a student who raised their hand. The student with the ball of yarn proceeds to make a statement such as:

- *I can speak two or more languages.”*
- *“I eat most foods with hot sauce.”*
- *“In my free time I’m riding my bike.”*
- *“I make really good chocolate chip cookies.”*
- *“I babysit my younger sister/brother/cousin at least once a week.”*
- *“I’m a huge Marvel fan.”*
- *“I can play an instrument.”*
- *“I love wearing slides to school.”*
- *“My favorite show is Walking Dead.”*
- *“My favorite book is Harry Potter.”*
- *“I enjoy fishing.”*
- *“Last Halloween I dressed up as a superhero.”*
- *“I eat ranch dressing on pizza.”*

By the end of this activity, all students should be holding a piece of the string or yarn. It will most likely look like a spider web. Summarize the activity by stating that we are all connected to one another in some way. We share commonalities and differences, but even when we believe we are so different from someone else, a connection exists. The more connections and commonalities we find with one another, the stronger and more secure our web becomes.

### Main Activity

*Before you begin this activity, please talk to your students about the serious nature of this topic. Students will watch a video that discusses incidents of gun violence. Allow students to opt out of this activity and provide a safe space for them to go.*

Place students in groups of four and assign each group a number 1–3. Groups will watch a section of the video and respond to the questions on the [What They Left Behind Handout](#) in complete sentences.

- The group(s) that will watch Part 1 will start at the beginning (00:00) and end at 12:20.
- The group(s) that will watch Part 2 will start from 12:25 and end at 22:04.
- The group(s) that will watch Part 3 will start at 22:07 and end at 32:44.



## Circle Up

### Opening

Tell your students that they'll be participating in a [Circle Up](#) activity. Use the [Circle Up Norms](#) and *Know the Signs* Agreement when available as reminders to practice speaking and listening skills. Arrange chairs or desks in a circle formation or invite students to sit in a comfortable position in an open space. It can surround a centerpiece of significance to the group/class. Reinforce that it is important that all students feel seen and heard during circle rounds, can participate or pass, and are all important members of the circle community. Allow enough time for students to participate however they feel comfortable and encourage them to use the [Circle Up Handout](#), located in their workbooks. Additionally, model the Circle Up procedures:

- Set up a centerpiece.
- Use "I statements."
- Use a talking piece.
- Actively listen and be present.
- Listen and speak without judgment.
- Set a time and topic for the discussion.

### Discussion

Discuss the entire video together as a class by having each group share a summary of what they watched. Then, go over some of the following discussion questions.

- How did the part of the video you watched make you feel?
- How can we work together to prevent gun violence?

### Closing

To close the Circle Up, ask students to give a shoutout to one of their classmates who made a comment that resonates with them.

- I appreciate \_\_\_\_\_ for sharing with us today.
- Way to go, \_\_\_\_\_, I like your idea.
- Thank you for sharing your opinion, \_\_\_\_\_.
- Give finger snaps or air high-fives or fist bumps in place of verbal appreciation or affirmation.

## Optimistic Closure and Promise Challenge

Thank students for participating in such a serious conversation and for being Upstanders.

### Promise Challenge

Encourage students to stand up against gun violence by hosting a school-wide event where everyone wears the color orange to raise awareness about gun violence. Orange honors the life of Alex Orange who tragically lost his life to gun violence in 1989.

## Lesson Extension and Explore More

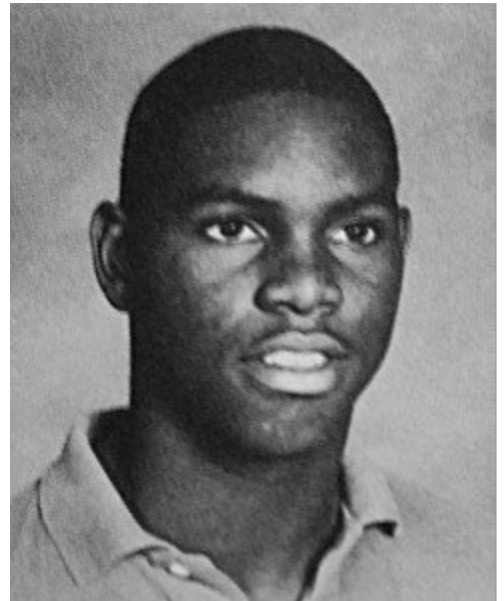
In April of 1989, students from West Charlotte Senior High School in North Carolina gathered at a party, a “stop the violence” jam. A carload of young men from a rival school showed up armed and looking for trouble. As teens panicked, 17-year-old Alex Orange stepped forward. Alex, a fullback on the West Charlotte football team, was a young man who looked out for other people. Alex told the intruders this was no place for violence. Sadly, shots were fired, and Alex fell to the floor. Surrounded by shaken friends and schoolmates, Alex lost his life to gun violence.

The following week, students returned to school mourning yet another young life taken too soon to violence. Joining together in their grief, they formed Students Against Violence Everywhere (SAVE).

In 2017, SAVE and Sandy Hook Promise combined efforts to educate and empower young people to help prevent gun violence and other forms of violence and victimization through the SAVE Promise Clubs.

### Explore More

- Feel free to share this [Secure Storage Toolkit](#) with youth that are interested in advocacy and policy.
- Check out this blog post on [How to Help Children Cope with a Gun Violence Tragedy](#).



# Break Biased-Based Bullying

## A WARNING SIGNS LESSON PLAN

### Lesson Objectives

#### Students will:

- Formulate and explain their own definition of biased-based bullying.
- Work with a group to use a EQUITY Check tool to assess how the group is building awareness and intervening when biased-based bullying occurs.

### Standard Alignment

#### CASEL Competencies

- Self-Awareness
- Social Awareness
- Relationship Skills

### Materials and Resources

#### Students:

- [Say Something Warning Signs Workbook](#)

### Mindful Minute

Think of an item that you cherish or hold close to your heart.

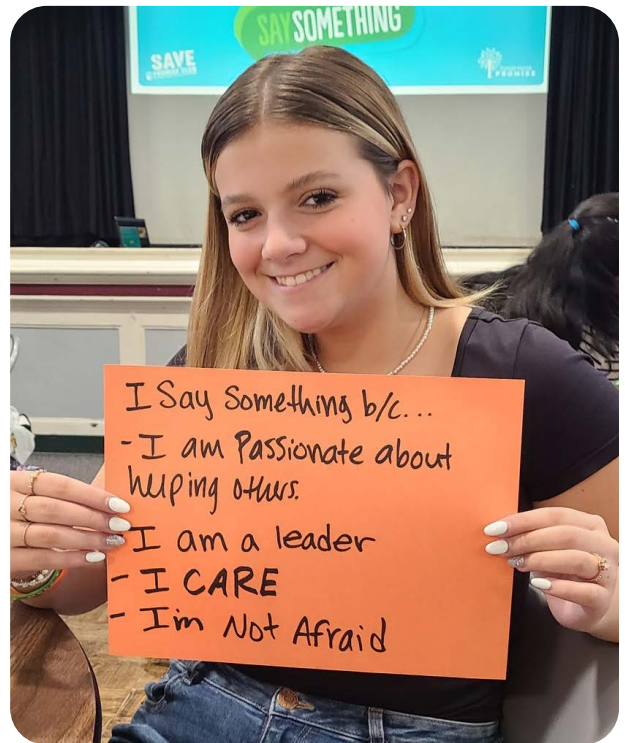
As you think of the item, what feelings come up for you? Happiness, sadness, excitement, or other emotion? Keep thinking of that item and smile to yourself.

This object, memory, trinket, photo, or other item is of value and importance to you. Hold this close to your heart and take a gentle breath in and a gentle breath out.

### Student Connector

**“Because the haters can’t see me.”**

This activity is inspired by [Sandy Hook Promise National Youth Advisory Board member](#), Jade, from Northern California.



#### Grades:

6-8

#### Estimated Time Needed

45 minutes

#### Notes



If available, provide or ask students to put on sunglasses for this activity. Encourage students to think about the following statement and how they would respond:

- *Sometimes, we may hide behind “masks”, “hoods”, or “sunglasses.” By hiding behind certain items, we may or may not be covering important aspects of our identity. We may also use items, like sunglasses, to hide our feelings and emotions from others who may be hurting us with their words or looks/stares.*

Put on or pretend to put on a pair of sunglasses. Ask students to **THINK-REFLECT** about the following questions and take pauses after each question to allow for ample wait time:

- *What layers of protection, support, or security do these sunglasses give you?*
- *Is there anything you don’t want people to see in yourself?*
- *Do you hide a special talent that you have?*
- *Do you hide a part of your identity?*
- *Have you ever put on sunglasses to build up an emotional wall so the perceived “haters” can’t see, stereotype, harm, or threaten you?*

## Connect

Next, focusing on the question listed below, begin the connection part of the activity:

- **Question:** What special, unique quality about yourself do you like to keep close and hide behind sunglasses?
- **Activity: 3-minute Speed HELLO-ing.** For the next three minutes, circulate the room, pause, say “hello,” and share a special quality or characteristic about yourself that your classmates may not know about you. If comfortable, you may want to share a special quality or characteristic that you hide behind “sunglasses.”



## Main Activity

The purpose of this activity is to consider a subset and very harmful type of bullying called **biased-based bullying**. This type of bullying may also be referred to as Identity-based bullying and stigma-based bullying. Introduce students to the new term and **unpack** the term by introducing the key components:

**Bullying** is unwanted aggressive behavior that involves a power imbalance, is repeated or is likely to be repeated, and may cause harm to the targeted youth (Centers for Disease Control). Bullying is repeated, targeted verbal, physical, or online harassment.

**For example:** *a student who is afraid to take the bus to school because they’re made fun of and harassed by a group of sixth graders for the clothes they wear every day.*

**Discrimination** is unfair treatment of one person or group of people because of the person or group’s identity (e.g., race, gender, ability, religion, culture, etc.). Discrimination is an action that can come from prejudice (Anti-Defamation League).

**Stigma** is a set of negative and unfair beliefs that a society or group of people have about something (Merrriam-Webster Dictionary).

*For example: when someone says teenagers are lazy or they exaggerate their problems and are over-dramatic.*

**Stigma-based bullying** targets individuals because of stigmatized identities and characteristics (Ramirez et al., 2022). Stigmatized identities may include: distinct behaviors, such as sexual harassment directed at girls, homophobic epithets directed at LGBTQ youth and youth presumed to be LGBTQ, or racial slurs directed at racial and ethnic minority youth (Earnshaw, 2018).

**Biased-based bullying** is bullying that targets race, ethnicity, religion, culture, ancestry, national origin, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, disability status, family status, or any other characteristic. Biased-based bullying can be offensive jokes, stereotypes and stigmas, hurtful comments, and hate crimes.

*For example: a student is made fun of and disrespected continuously because the language that they speak “sounds different and weird” and isn’t English.*

**Equity** is everyone getting what they need in order to have access, opportunities and a fair chance to succeed. It recognizes that the same for everyone (equality) doesn’t truly address needs and therefore, specific solutions and remedies, which may be different, are necessary. **The quality of being fair or just.**

Pause. Ask the class to think about the following questions:

- *Can you think of specific examples of biased-based bullying in our community or that you’ve seen in the news?.*
- *Have you or someone close to you been the victim of biased-based bullying?*

After unpacking the meaning of biased-based bullying, inform students that to have a connected, joyful environment for everyone, we all must feel safe from biased-based bullying and treat each individual fairly and equitably.

To assess or measure how the class is doing when it comes to biased-based bullying and building an equitable classroom environment, students will work in groups to do an Equity Check.

### **Instructions:**

- **Step 1:** Divide into triads, or groups of three.
- **Step 2:** Take out the [EQUITY Check Handout](#). Read and rate the criteria aloud. Use the *Know the Signs* Community Agreement to ensure everyone’s voices are heard and feel they can add value to the conversation.
- **Step 3:** Identify one area on the EQUITY Check that your group feels they can work on and improve upon. Then, create one action that your group members can do to improve on the criteria.

**Criteria for Improvement:** The group gave 1 star for ‘I’.

**Action:** Start to intentionally, proactively reach out to classmates that you notice sitting alone or being left out activities and invite them to join the activity you’re doing.

## Optimistic Closure and Promise Challenge

Encourage students to continue to use the EQUITY Check to ensure that no one is singled out or discriminated against due to their identities. Revisit the *Know the Signs* Community Agreement, if available, and close the lesson by stating:

- As part of our agreement, a goal is to make sure we build an inclusive classroom culture. We want everyone to feel that they belong. We want to make sure “othering” doesn’t happen and we are equitable so that everyone feels safe, secure, and joyful when they are here.

## Lesson Extensions and Explore More

Assign students a project to research groups that have been victims of biased-based bullying historically. Instruct groups to create an infographic, by drawing or using the computer, that shows how to stop biased-based bullying for that targeted group.

Some groups include immigrants, LGBTQ+, religiously affiliated groups, like Jewish people, and Black Americans.

## Family Engagement

Encourage students to speak to their families about their family’s cultural identity.

## References

The Anti-Defamation League Education Glossary: [Education Glossary Terms | ADL](#)

Earnshaw, Valerie A., et al. “Stigma-Based Bullying Interventions: A Systematic Review.” *Developmental Review*, vol. 48, June 2018, pp. 178–200. DOI.org (Crossref), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dr.2018.02.001>.

Ramirez, Marizen R., et al. “How Do Schools Respond to Biased-Based Bullying? A Qualitative Study of Management and Prevention Strategies in Schools.” *School Mental Health*, Dec. 2022. DOI.org (Crossref), <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12310-022-09565-8>.





# Unpacking a PSA: Evan

## A WARNING SIGNS LESSON PLAN

### Lesson Objectives

#### Students will:

- Apply the three steps of *Say Something* to identify warning signs and threats uncovered in the Evan video.
- Unwrap and evaluate the hidden messages and lessons found in Evan in a group discussion.

### Standard Alignment

#### CASEL Competencies

- Social Awareness
- Relationship Skills
- Responsible Decision-Making

#### Social Justice Standard

- **Action 19:** Students will make principled decisions about when and how to take a stand against bias and injustice in their everyday lives and will do so despite negative peer or group pressure.

### Materials and Resources

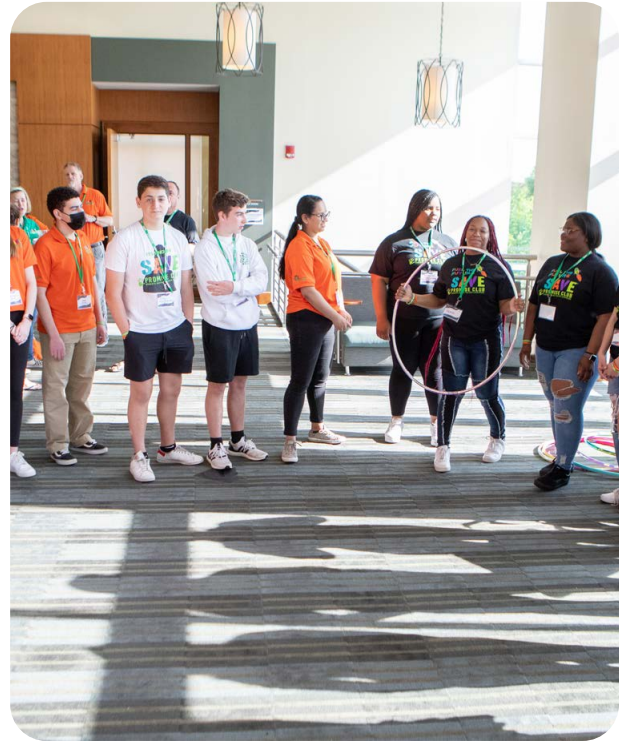
#### Students:

- [Say Something Warning Signs Workbook](#)

#### Educators:

- [Video – Evan PSA](#)

**Note to Educator** – It is recommended that you review the Evan PSA prior to showing it to your students. A circle format is the optimal teaching strategy for viewing this PSA. Make the statement that participation in the discussion is optional and that you have selected a safe space that students can go to if they feel uneasy, uncomfortable, or triggered by the video content.



#### Grades:

6–8

#### Estimated Time Needed

30–45 minutes

#### Notes

## Mindful Minute

### Journal Time

Guide students in completing the following I statement in their workbooks.

Notice how you feel. How do you feel in your body? How do you feel outside of your body?

I feel\_\_\_\_\_.

## Student Connector

### Small Changes

The goal of this activity is to notice and pay close attention to their peers. Have students in two lines facing each other. Give students 30 seconds to look at each other. One row turns around facing away from their partner while the other row changes something about themselves. For example, students untie their shoes or zip up their sweaters. Students will then face their partner again and guess what their partner changed. Then switch and the other row will go.

*Remind students that something so small can change our peers and friends. This is why it is important to notice changes in behavior that can contribute to warning signs.*

## Main Activity

### Circle Up

#### Opening

Tell your students that they'll be participating in a [Circle Up](#) activity. Use the [Circle Up Norms](#) and *Know the Signs* Agreement when available as reminders to practice speaking and listening skills. Arrange chairs or desks in a circle formation or invite students to sit in a comfortable position in an open space. It can surround a centerpiece of significance to the group/class. Reinforce that it is important that all students feel seen and heard during circle rounds, can participate or pass, and are all important members of the circle community. Allow enough time for students to participate however they feel comfortable and encourage them to use the [Circle Up Handout](#), located in their workbooks. Additionally, model the Circle Up procedures:

- Set up a centerpiece.
- Use "I statements."
- Use a talking piece.
- Actively listen and be present.
- Listen and speak without judgment.
- Set a time and topic for the discussion.

## Discussion

- **Round 1:** Set up the Evan video (2:28). Ask students to watch the PSA without taking notes or making comments.

Start by engaging students by asking the following two questions:

- What are two things that came to your mind as you watched the Evan PSA?
- What does social isolation mean to you?
- **Round 2:** Play the Evan video for a second time. Inform students to view the video from the lens of “knowing the signs.”

Possible discussion questions:

- What warning signs did you notice in the video?
- How was your experience viewing the Evan video the second time as compared to the first time you watched it?
- Why do you think most people miss the signs the active shooter was giving throughout the PSA?
- If you see some of these warning signs, what will you do? What decisions are you going to have to make?
- How can your SAVE Promise Club use this video and circle discussion to teach other students how to “know the signs?”
- What solutions can we come up with today to make sure social isolation is not a problem in our own school community?
- Ask for student-generated questions.

## Closing

Ask each student in the circle to share one feeling word that describes the impact the video Evan had on them. Sample words may include:

- Scared
- Frightened
- Confused
- Upset
- Terrified
- Sad
- Frustrated
- Anxious

Next, ask each student to share one feeling word that describes how they feel now that they know and understand warning signs that can help keep themselves and their friends safe.



Sample feelings words may include:

- Confident
- Hopeful
- Motivated
- Prepared
- Smart
- Equipped
- Informed

### **Small Group Scenarios**

Once students have viewed the video twice and analyzed the PSA in a circle format, they can put their own learning into practice with scenarios. Reference the [PSA – The Evan Experience Handout](#) and place the class into groups of four. Give each group three minutes to analyze and discuss each scenario. If you are short on time, number the groups, give each group a different scenario, and then ask each group to share what they discovered and uncovered as they discussed and played-out the scenario.

## **Optimistic Closure and Promise Challenge**

Encourage students to continue their involvement in the shaping and problem-solving of school climate and culture.

### **Promise Challenge**

Encourage students to take the [Say Something Pledge](#) by promising to take all warning signs and threats seriously by informing a Trusted Adult.

## **Lesson Extensions and Explore More**

### **Explore More**

Check out additional PSAs from Sandy Hook Promise.

- [How to Overload a Circuit – YouTube](#)
- [Back-To-School Essentials | Sandy Hook Promise – YouTube](#)
- [How to Make a Homemade Bomb – YouTube](#)

If you and your students enjoyed this lesson, check out our lesson on the Point of View PSA.

## **Family Engagement**

Share these various strategies on [how to talk to youth after a shooting](#) has occurred with parents, guardians, and caregivers. This is a great tool for families to have access to in case they are ever in a situation of gun violence.

# Unpacking a PSA - Point of View

## A WARNING SIGNS LESSON PLAN

### Lesson Objectives

#### Students will:

- Apply the three steps of the *Say Something* program to a video-based scenario.
- Recognize warning signs in a simulated high school day.

### Standard Alignment

#### CASEL Competencies

- Social Awareness
- Relationship Skills
- Responsible Decision-Making

### Materials and Resources

#### Students:

- [Say Something Warning Signs Workbook](#)

#### Educators:

*Note to Educator* – Strong emotions and traumatic experiences could potentially be triggered by viewing this video. It is good practice to inform students that they will be seeing the set-up before an act of extreme violence and offer students the choice to opt out of viewing the video. Also, a foundation of trusting relationships should be established in the classroom prior to watching and discussing emotionally intense subject matter.

### Mindful Minute

Stand up and take a deep breath and reach for the sky. Stretch your arms up so that you are as tall as possible. Bring your arms back down as you exhale. Feel a sense of calmness that enters your body.



#### Grades:

6–8

#### Estimated Time Needed

45 minutes

#### Notes

## Student Connector

Think of three things that make you special, unique, and/or a beautiful person. Turn-N-Learn with a partner. Each partner takes one minute to explain those things that make you special and beautiful.



## Main Activity

Inform students about the purpose of Public Service Announcements (PSAs). Explain to students that a PSA is:

- A video that educates an audience about a social issue or problem. It's different than a commercial because it's not selling a product to viewers.

Show students Sandy Hook Promise's PSA (1:50): Point of View two times. Before showing it the first time, preface that it does contain potentially triggering material and that students may choose to opt-out (see the educator's note). Once the video ends, inform students to apply what they learned in the *Say Something* training video and when they view the PSA again you would like them to look for:

- Warning signs of an active shooter.
- Examples of social isolation.

## Circle Up

### Opening

Tell your students that they'll be participating in a [Circle Up](#) activity. Use the [Circle Up Norms](#) and *Know the Signs* Agreement when available as reminders to practice speaking and listening skills. Arrange chairs or desks in a circle formation or invite students to sit in a comfortable position in an open space. It can surround a centerpiece of significance to the group/class. Reinforce that it is important that all students feel seen and heard during circle rounds, can participate or pass, and are all important members of the circle community. Allow enough time for students to participate however they feel comfortable and encourage them to use the [Circle Up Handout](#), located in their workbooks. Additionally, model the Circle Up procedures:

- Set up a centerpiece.
- Use "I statements."
- Use a talking piece.
- Actively listen and be present.
- Listen and speak without judgment.
- Set a time and topic for the discussion.

### Discussion

Engage the class in a discussion about the PSA. Here are a few guiding questions:

- What are two things that came to your mind as you watched the Point of View PSA?
- Why do you think the title of this PSA is Point of View?



- What warning signs did you notice in the video?
- How was your experience viewing the Point of View video the second time as compared to the first time you watched it?
- Why do you think most people miss the signs the active shooter was giving throughout the PSA?
- Now that you know the three steps of *Say Something*, what will you do if you notice any of the warning signs like those that you observed in Point of View?
- What solutions can we come up with today to make sure social isolation is not a problem in our own school community?

### Quick Scenarios to check for understanding

#### Scenario #1:

You see graffiti, drawings, or and other markings on a school locker and in the bathroom stalls that threaten to kill someone directly, what can you do?

#### Scenario #2:

You walk into the crowded cafeteria and there is one student sitting by himself or herself, what can you do?

#### Scenario #3:

You notice that a girl in the library is always looking up pictures of guns and weapons online. What should you do?

#### Scenario #4:

A friend was bored in class and started to scroll Instagram. He shared a screenshot with you from a classmate's Instagram Story that stated, "Don't come to school tomorrow." What should you do?

#### Scenario #5:

You're in the gym locker room and notice a group of boys making fun of a student. The group of boys are laughing, teasing, and throwing things at him. What can you do?

### Closing

To close the Circle Up, ask students to give a shoutout to one of their classmates who made a comment that resonates with them.

- *I appreciate \_\_\_\_\_ for sharing with us today.*
- *Way to go, \_\_\_\_\_, I like your idea.*
- *Thank you for sharing your opinion, \_\_\_\_\_.*
- *Give finger snaps or air high-fives or fist bumps in place of verbal appreciation or affirmation.*

## Optimistic Closure and Promise Challenge

Thank students for their willingness to share and listen during the discussion. Inform students that they have the power to help prevent violence in their school community by taking their knowledge of the three steps of *Say Something* seriously: Look for Warning Signs, Act Immediately, and “say something.”

### Promise Challenge

Gather all nominations for this unit. Recognize all students for taking action to prevent violence and build a safer, more inclusive community by presenting all of them with the [Certificate of Appreciation](#).

### Lesson Extension and Explore More

Make posters for the school building that promote the three *Say Something* steps. These posters can also include positive self-talk and kind language.



Chiddix Junior High School, Illinois

### Explore More

Read this kit on active shooter drills and simulations:

<https://sandyhookpromise.app.box.com/v/VfC-ActiveShooterDrills>

Check out additional PSAs from Sandy Hook Promise.

- [How to Overload a Circuit – YouTube](#)
- [Back-To-School Essentials | Sandy Hook Promise – YouTube](#)
- [How to Make a Homemade Bomb – YouTube](#)





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