

FREE SAMPLE LESSON

THE SOCIAL CLARITY PROJECT™

Grades 6–8 Edition

Preview Excerpt from the Full Social Understanding Curriculum

A Peer-Dynamics Understanding Program for Middle School Students
Grades 4–9 | Adaptable for Whole Class or Small Group Delivery
7 Lessons | Facilitator Guide | Discussion Prompts | Student Activities

Understanding Peer Aggression, Friendship, and Social Influence

A Behind the Behaviour™ Framework Program

Informed by: Rachel Simmons (Odd Girl Out), Ross Greene (CPS), The Ophelia Project

What's Inside This Sample

- Program Overview & Core Beliefs
- Scope and Sequence Overview
- One Complete Lesson (Lesson 4: Self-Advocacy and Accountability)
- Matching Student Workbook Page
- Teacher Implementation Support Page
- Continue the Learning: Full Curriculum Series

Program Overview

Purpose

The Social Clarity Project™ is part of the Behind the Behaviour™ Framework. This program teaches students to recognize aggression, interpret friendship patterns, understand bystander roles, practise self-advocacy, distinguish popularity from leadership, and respond responsibly in digital environments. Students build the language and skills to understand their social world rather than being told to “be kind.”

Who Is This For?

This program was designed for middle school students (Grades 4–9). The content is flexible. Facilitators should adjust the language, examples, and depth of discussion based on the group. The program works in small group settings (6–12 students), whole class delivery, or guidance pull-out groups.

Program Structure

The curriculum includes 7 lessons, each designed to run 40–60 minutes. Lessons build on each other but stand alone if needed. Each lesson follows a consistent format: theme, objectives, vocabulary, materials, facilitator notes, step-by-step activities, discussion prompts, and a closure activity.

Recommended Pacing

For best results, deliver one lesson per week over seven weeks. This gives students time to practise strategies between sessions. If running a compressed schedule (such as a bullying prevention week), allow at least one day between sessions so students can process the content. Avoid delivering more than two lessons in a single day.

Core Beliefs

- **Behaviour is the clue, not the cause.** When students act out, something is happening underneath.
- Aggression among girls often looks different from what adults expect. Rachel Simmons’ research shows girls frequently use relationships as weapons: exclusion, silent treatment, rumour spreading, alliance building.
- **Predictable structure reduces anxiety.** Students feel safer when they know what to expect.
- **Students need skills, not lectures.** Every lesson includes practice through role play, discussion, or scenario work.

A Note on Gender

This curriculum was originally developed for girls’ groups. The content applies to all students. Relational aggression, bystander dynamics, and friendship evaluation are relevant across genders. Facilitators should adapt language and examples to fit the group.

Scope and Sequence Overview

All versions share the same 7-lesson structure. The sequence is intentional: students move from awareness to analysis to action. Each lesson builds vocabulary and skills that feed the next.

| Lesson | Title | Core Skill | Key Vocabulary |
|--------|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| 1 | The Language of Peer Aggression | Naming and classifying aggression | Aggressor, Target, Physical/Verbal/Relational Aggression, Alternative Aggression, Revenge |
| 2 | Bystander to Upstander | Recognizing bystander power and practising intervention | Bystander, Upstander |
| 3 | Healthy and Unhealthy Friendships | Evaluating friendship patterns using clear criteria | Healthy Friendship, Unhealthy Friendship, Normative Beliefs |
| 4 | Self-Advocacy and Accountability | Speaking up for yourself and taking responsibility | Self-Advocacy, Accountability, Repair |
| 5 | Popularity and Leadership | Distinguishing social influence from social dominance | Popularity, Leadership |
| 6 | Cyberbullying and Digital Citizenship | Applying all concepts to online spaces | Cyberbullying, Anonymity |
| 7 | Bringing It All Together | Integrating all skills into complex scenarios | All terms reviewed |

Skill Progression Logic

Lessons 1–2: Awareness. Students learn to name what is happening around them.

Lessons 3–4: Analysis. Students turn inward and evaluate their own relationships and responses.

Lessons 5–6: Context. Students examine the social systems and digital environments that shape aggression.

Lesson 7: Integration. Students apply everything to complex, multi-layered scenarios and commit to action.

Complete Sample Lesson

LESSON 4

Self-Advocacy and Accountability

Estimated Time: 45–60 minutes

Lesson Bridge (Opening Script)

“Last week we looked at healthy and unhealthy friendships. This week, we’re building two skills: speaking up when something is wrong, and owning it when you’ve made a mistake.”

Theme

Students need two skills often missing from bullying curricula: speaking up for themselves when targeted, and taking accountability when they have caused harm. Self-advocacy is not aggression. A real apology is a skill worth practising.

Ontario Curriculum Connection

Health and Physical Education: SEL Skills, Strand D: D1, D3.

Objectives

1. Define self-advocacy and give examples.
2. Distinguish between a meaningful apology and a hollow one.
3. Practise self-advocacy and accountability through role play.

Vocabulary

Self-Advocacy, Accountability, Repair

Materials

- Chart paper and markers
- Scenario cards (Appendix E)
- Exit ticket slips
- Student Workbook (one per student)

Activities

Activity 1: What Is Self-Advocacy? (15 minutes)

1. Ask: "What do you usually do when someone hurts you?" Chart responses.

2. Introduce self-advocacy: speaking up directly and respectfully.
3. Teach the formula: "When you [behaviour], I felt [emotion]. I need [what you want]."
4. Model examples:

- "When you didn't save me a seat at lunch, I felt left out. I need you to tell me if plans change."
- "When you shared my secret, I felt hurt. I need to trust that what I tell you stays between us."

Grades 4–5 Alternative: Add simpler examples: "When you wouldn't let me play at recess, I felt sad. I need you to include me." "When you took my spot in line, I felt mad. I need you to wait your turn."

5. Ask: "What makes this hard?" Validate: the other person might get defensive. Self-advocacy is about what you do, not controlling their reaction.

Activity 2: Real Apology vs. Fake Apology (15 minutes)

1. Ask: "What does a bad apology sound like?" Chart patterns.
2. Introduce a meaningful apology:
 - Name what you did.
 - Acknowledge the impact.
 - Take responsibility. No excuses.
 - State what you will do differently.
3. Introduce the term repair. An apology is the beginning. Repair is following through.

Activity 3: Scenario Role Play (15 minutes)

Scenarios (see Appendix E):

- A friend screenshots your private message and shares it.
- Someone makes fun of your outfit in front of others.
- A friend always cancels when a "better" option comes along.
- You said something mean about a classmate and it got back to them.

Pairs practise: target uses self-advocacy, then switch for meaningful apology.

Facilitator Note: Some students will resist the apology activity. Ask: "What would it take for you to feel like someone's apology was real?" This flips the perspective.

Closure (5 minutes)

- "What is the hardest part of speaking up for yourself?"
- "What makes a real apology different from a fake one?"
- "Why is repair harder than just saying sorry?"

Exit ticket: "Write one self-advocacy statement you could use this week."

This Week's Challenge: Practise one self-advocacy statement. It doesn't have to be about bullying. Tell someone what you need.

Student Workbook Page

Lesson 4: Self-Advocacy and Accountability

You learned to speak up for yourself and what a real apology looks like.

When you _____, I felt _____, I need _____.

Write your own self-advocacy statement:

Real Apology Builder

What happened?

How did it affect the other person?

What will I do differently?

This Week's Challenge: Practise one self-advocacy statement this week.

Teacher Implementation Support

Facilitator Notes

Before You Start

- Establish group norms in the first session. Students need to know: what is shared here stays here, everyone gets a turn, no put-downs, and you have the right to pass.
- Let students know that if they disclose something that suggests they are being harmed or are at risk, you have a duty to report. Be transparent about this from the start.
- Avoid forcing personal disclosure. Always give the option to write about a hypothetical situation or to pass.
- These topics bring up strong feelings. Watch for students who go quiet, shut down, or become agitated. Check in privately after the session.

Room Setup

Arrange seating in a circle or U-shape when possible. This arrangement supports eye contact and equal participation. Avoid rows facing the front, which signals a lecture format. For small group delivery, a table where everyone sits together works well.

Managing Disclosures

Students sometimes disclose bullying, abuse, or other harmful situations during these lessons. If a student discloses:

- Thank them for telling you.
- Do not promise to keep secrets. Let them know you will help and that sometimes helping means involving other trusted adults.
- Follow your school's reporting protocol.
- Check in with the student within 24 hours.

Adapting for Different Groups

- **Grades 4–5:** Simplify vocabulary. Use shorter scenarios. Look for the "Grades 4–5 Alternative" boxes throughout the lessons for adapted prompts.
- **Grades 6–7:** The full curriculum as written works well here.
- **Grades 8–9:** Deepen the discussion prompts. Add more nuance to the scenarios.

Managing Role Play Resistance

Some students will freeze, refuse, or turn role play into a joke. Options: let students write a script instead of performing. Let them describe what the character would say. Pair reluctant students with a confident partner. Offer a written response option.

Using a CPS Lens

Throughout this curriculum, keep Ross Greene's framework in mind: students do well when they can. When a student struggles, the question is: "What skill is missing?" rather than "Why is this student choosing to be

difficult?"

Group Norms Poster (Display for Students)

- Everyone has the right to pass.
- We listen without interrupting.
- No put-downs or teasing.
- Confidentiality is respected (unless safety is involved).
- Everyone gets a chance to speak.

Continue the Learning

The Social Clarity Project™ Curriculum Series

The Social Clarity Project™ is a multi-age, multi-format resource package designed for schools, counsellors, small group facilitators, and home support use. The toolkit teaches students to recognize aggression, evaluate their own social patterns, build self-advocacy skills, and take responsibility for their role in the social environment.

Grades 2–5 Edition

A Peer-Dynamics Understanding Program for Elementary Students. 7 Lessons, 30–40 minutes each. Concrete language, visual supports, drawing-based workbook activities, facilitator-led role play with puppets or role cards, and simplified vocabulary. Designed for whole class or small group delivery.

Grades 6–8 Edition

A Peer-Dynamics Understanding Program for Middle School Students. 7 Lessons, 40–60 minutes each. Full vocabulary, student-generated role play, scenario analysis, the Flow of Friendship Story, self-advocacy formula, popularity continuum, and co-created digital citizenship guidelines. Includes Grades 4–5 alternative prompts throughout.

Grades 9–12 Edition

A Peer-Dynamics Understanding Program for Young Women. 7 Sessions, 50–75 minutes each. Seminar-style delivery. Covers covert aggression, bystander ethics, codependency and toxic loyalty, assertive communication, social capital and influence ethics, digital consent, and personal values statements.

Each Edition Includes:

- 7-lesson facilitator curriculum with lesson bridges, facilitator notes, and weekly challenges
- Student workbook (PDF, designed) with one page per lesson plus certificate
- Teacher implementation toolkit with posters, checklists, and observation tools
- Pre/post student survey for measuring growth
- Printable scenario cards
- Faith-based companion add-on with scripture connections and discussion prompts
- Ontario curriculum alignment mapped to SEL competencies and Strand D expectations
- Implementation checklist

Core Framework

- Behaviour is the clue, not the cause.
- Students do well when they can.
- Relational aggression is real aggression. It is not “drama.”
- Predictable structure reduces anxiety.
- Students need practice, not lectures.

A Behind the Behaviour™ Framework Program

Informed by: Rachel Simmons (Odd Girl Out), Ross Greene (CPS), The Ophelia Project