



Assertiveness

Definition

Assertiveness is the ability to express your thoughts, feelings, and desires in a clear, direct, and respectful way toward others, without being aggressive or passive. An assertive person stands up for their rights and opinions, but also respects the rights of those around them. Assertiveness involves a balance between expressing their point of view and actively listening to what others are saying. It is an essential skill in adolescent development, having a significant impact on interpersonal relationships, self-confidence, and social integration. It is important for parents and educators to support the development of assertiveness by encouraging open and respectful communication.

How does it affect teenagers

Adolescents who are assertive have a greater ability to manage conflicts effectively. They know how to express their needs and desires, which allows them to establish balanced interpersonal relationships. Assertiveness gives them confidence in their own strengths and contributes to the development of a positive self-image. It also helps reduce anxiety and social stress.

A lack of assertiveness can negatively affect an adolescent's social integration. If they do not express their opinions or desires, the adolescent may be more easily influenced by peers or social pressures. They may end up being excluded from social circles or tolerating behaviors that are not in line with their values.





Assertiveness and social inclusion

During adolescence, assertiveness plays a crucial role in managing conflict, expressing opinions, and building healthy relationships with others. Adolescents who develop assertiveness are more likely to get along better with peers, parents, and teachers.

An assertive adolescent is able to say “no” when necessary, express their dissatisfaction in a constructive way, and defend their opinions without becoming aggressive. These skills are fundamental in the process of social integration and in building a positive self-image.



How to tackle it?

- **Practice clear communication:** Teens need to learn how to express their wants and points of view in a direct but respectful way.
- **Set healthy boundaries:** It is important for teens to learn to set boundaries and say “no” when they feel they are being subjected to excessive demands or pressure.
- **Active listening:** Assertiveness is not just about speaking, but also about actively listening and respecting the points of view of others. Encouraging two-way communication can help teens feel more confident in their interactions.
- **Build self-esteem:** Teens need to learn to appreciate their own worth and understand that they have the right to express their opinions and needs.





Warm up questions

- How do you usually react when someone disagrees with you?
- Can you remember a time when you wanted to say "no" but ended up saying "yes"? Why did that happen?
- What is the difference between being assertive and being aggressive?
- How comfortable are you expressing your opinions in a group?
- What are some situations where it is important to be assertive?



Questions for discussion

- What are some polite, but firm ways to say “no” without offending someone?
- How can body language help or sabotage you when trying to be assertive?
- Do you think cultural background affects how assertive people are? Why or why not?
- What are the benefits of being assertive in everyday life or at work/school?
- How can someone learn to become more assertive even if it’s hard?

Find out more

- https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newCDV_87.htm
- <https://www.theassertivenessgame.com/>
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6p_yaNFSYao





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