



Teen Leadership 20

Intended Audience:

- Teens

Lesson Objectives:

Participants will:

- Identify characteristics of role models
- Reflect on who they serve as a role model
- Identify at least one trait that they will work on for the next two weeks

Time: 20 minutes

Equipment and supplies:

- Paper and pen for small groups
- How to Be an Everyday Super Hero handout for each participant

Do Ahead:

- Review lesson
- Make copies of How to Be an Everyday Super Hero

Everyday Super Hero

BACKGROUND

A role model is often hard to define, because it can be different for everyone, however most everyone has a role model in his or her life. Who your role model is depends as much on you as it does on the person you admire. With a little focus and intentionality, you too can become an Everyday Super Hero.

WHAT TO DO

Activity:

- Ask participants, "Who are role models you look up to?" These can be celebrities or people you encounter every day in your community.
- Ask, "Did those individuals mentioned choose to be a role model?"
- We want to explore what it means to be a role model. Break the participants into small groups of 3 to 5 people and ask them to brainstorm the reasons why someone is chosen as a role model. After allowing time for them to discuss, share their reasons with the group.
- Share the How to Be an Everyday Super Hero handout. Ask, "What 1-2 items do you see on the handout that speak to you about being a role model?"
- Complete the Talk It Over questions.



Sources:

- CampWorks Toolkit, 2011. *Role Model to the Rescue*. Professionalism Activity 4. Retrieved from: <http://youthsuccess.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Work-Based-Learning-Professionalism-4.pdf>

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TALK IT OVER**Reflect:**

- When you initially came up with examples of role models, were they celebrities or people you know? Why do you think that is?
- Who are you a role model for?

Apply:

- What is one trait that you personally will work on over the next two weeks to make you a better “Everyday Super Hero”?
- How will you know you have gotten better at that trait?

Please take time to complete the Participant and Facilitator evaluations, found online at go.osu.edu/TeenLeadership20.

Considerations for Conducting Virtually:

- Email handout prior to meeting.
- Put participants in breakout rooms of 3 to 5 people and ask them to brainstorm the reasons why someone is chosen as a role model. After allowing time for them to discuss, return to the main room and ask for a spokesperson from each group to share.
- Have facilitator screenshare the document while live, and ask participants to refer to it if you emailed it ahead of time.

How To Be An Everyday Superhero

- **Maintain a Healthy Lifestyle**

Youth should see you taking care of yourself. Model wise food choices as well as a commitment to exercise. Avoiding negative comments about your body (or anyone else's, for that matter) will project a sense of body confidence that can influence how students feel about their own bodies. And obviously, students should never see you participate in or talk about any experiences with drugs, alcohol, or tobacco.

- **Model a Love of Learning**

Youths' value systems are impacted by their interactions with adults. A positive attitude about education and learning on your part can foster similar attitudes in your students. Make sure they know that you believe education is important and worthy, and show them examples of how you continue to learn, as well.

- **Keep a Positive Attitude**

Negativity is contagious. By keeping a can-do attitude even when things get difficult, you model for youth the power of positive thinking.

- **Take Responsibility for Yourself**

Do not blame your problems on external factors or other people. When you make a mistake, admit it and work on fixing it. Youth see too many "role models" in the media who cannot take responsibility for what they do wrong. Show them a better option.

- **Use Good Problem Solving Skills**

When dealing with a problem, handle it maturely. Youth watch how you respond to difficult situations, and they take their cues from what they see. They also imitate emotional intensity levels, so keep stress to a minimum by responding to tough times in a calm fashion.

- **Show Kindness and Respect**

Youth will notice how you treat other people. Do not use derogatory names or terms, even in fun. That kind of behavior gives youth the idea that it is okay to disrespect others. Go out of your way to model helpful and kind behavior, especially to the elderly, disabled, or others who may need it.

- **Behave Ethically**

We all have expectations for youths' behavior. Make sure you are holding yourself to the same standard. In your everyday actions, are you honest, fair, compassionate, and tolerant? If not, make a conscious decision to show youth something better.

- **Model Good Coping Skills**

Let students see you engaging in positive examples of stress relief. Show them how you might shoot hoops to let off steam, or take a walk when you need a break. Help them uncover the stress relievers that will work for them.

- **Be Reliable**

Be someone the youth can count on. Unfortunately, many students have experienced being let down by adults. Do not be one of them. If you say you will do something, do it. No excuses. You will earn respect and admiration.

How To Be An Everyday Superhero

- **Model Positive Choice-making**

When it comes to being a role model, you must be aware that the choices you make impact not only you, but also the children who regard you as their superhero. When you are a role model it is not enough to tell those who look up to you what the best choices are to make. You must put them into action yourself.

- **Apologize and Admit Mistakes**

Nobody's perfect. When you make a bad choice, let those who are watching and learning from you know that you made a mistake and how you plan to correct it. This will help them to understand that (a) everyone makes mistakes; (b) it is not the end of the world; (c) you can make it right; and (d) you should take responsibility for it as soon as possible. By apologizing, admitting your mistake, and repairing the damage, you will be demonstrating an important yet often overlooked part of being a role model.

- **Follow Through**

To be a good role model, we must demonstrate stick-to-itiveness and self discipline. That means; (a) be on time; (b) finish what you started; (c) do not quit; (d) keep your word; and (e) do not back off when things get challenging.

- **Show Respect**

You may be driven, successful, and smart but whether you choose to show respect or not speaks volumes about the type of attitude it takes to make it in life. We always tell children to "treat others the way we want to be treated" and yet, may not follow that ourselves.

- **Demonstrate Confidence in Who You Are**

Be proud of the person you have become and continue to become. It may have been a long road and you may have experienced bumps along the way, but it is the responsibility of a role model to commemorate the lessons learned, the strength they have gained, and the character they have developed. We can always get better, however, in order for children to celebrate who they are, their role models need to show confidence in who they are.

Although it may seem like a great deal of pressure to be a positive role model, nobody is expecting you to be superhuman. We certainly would not expect that behavior from the children who are looking to us for answers and guidance—nor would we want them to expect that kind of flawless behavior from themselves or others. You can only do your best. And, if you mess up today, you can always refer back to the tips- apologize, admit mistakes, and try again tomorrow. Good role models show those who believe in them that they can do anything if they simply put their mind to it.