



second step Lesson Follow-Ups for Families

WHAT?

Second Step Lesson Follow-Ups are fun, engaging activities you can do with your middle school child and other members of your family. They include Family Projects, Table Talk, and Screen Time activities.

WHY?

These activities are designed to give your middle school child another chance to use new skills learned in *Second Step* lessons. They are also a way for you get to know more about what your middle school child is learning with the *Second Step* program. They're also a great way to spend some fun time together as a family.

WHO?

You can do these activities with your middle school child, and other family members can join as well.

WHERE?

Most of these activities can be done at home around the dinner table or in front of the TV screen.



Lesson 1, Health and Science

Table Talk: Could You Work in an Environment Like This?

What you'll need: focused time to talk (such as at the dinner table, on a car ride, or at bedtime), computer

1. With your child, find some websites about small scientific groups that work in cramped quarters (such as the Aquarius Underwater Laboratory or the space station).
2. Discuss the following questions: **What do you think it would be like to work and live for long periods of time in such a small space? How important do you think it is to get along with the people you work with? What group skills would you need? What do you think would happen if the people working in this space did not have good group skills? Would you like to work in a setting like this?**



Lesson 1, Media Literacy

Screen Time: Can Media Encourage Empathy for Victims of Natural Disasters?

What you'll need: newspapers, computer, or TV; focused time to talk (such as at the dinner table, on a car ride, or at bedtime)

1. Choose some news stories from newspapers, websites, or TV about any recent international, national, or local natural disaster.
2. Together with your child, read or watch the stories, then discuss the following questions: **How can media help people feel empathy for victims of natural disasters? How do you feel about the victims of this disaster? Do you think disasters get too much coverage? Do you think the media is fair in its coverage of all disasters?**



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Lesson 2, Language Arts and Social Studies

Screen Time: Could You Work in an Environment Like This?

What you'll need: computer

1. Go online with your child to find people who made a big difference by standing up for what is right. Visit the [Giraffe Heroes Project website \(giraffe.org\)](http://giraffe.org) for examples of ordinary people who have stuck their necks out for the common good.
2. Discuss what makes people willing to take these kinds of risks and what kind of rewards they might find.
3. Ask if there's anything your child strongly believes in, and what he or she might do to support this cause. Talk about ways you could help.



Lesson 2, Media Literacy

Table Talk: How Can Major Media Corporations Be Positive Leaders?

What you'll need: focused time to talk (such as at the dinner table, on a car ride, or at bedtime)

Five corporations control over 90 percent of the media in the United States.

With your child, discuss the following questions about these corporations:

What are their leadership responsibilities? Why is it so important that these corporations show positive leadership? Do you think these corporations are showing positive leadership? What can they do to inspire consumers?



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Lesson 3, Health and Science

Family Project: How Do You Handle an Environment-Related Grievance with a Corporation?

What you'll need: focused time to talk (such as at the dinner table, on a car ride, or at bedtime), computer or pen and paper

In the *Second Step* program, your child and his or her classmates are learning how to handle a grievance. They must explain their own point of view clearly, think about the other person's point of view, be assertive, and avoid using blaming words.

1. Discuss an issue about the environment your family might have with a corporation (such as cars that get low gas mileage or the amount of non-recyclable plastic used in packaging).
2. Write a letter together to a corporation talking about your concerns and using the skills for handling a grievance.



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Lesson 4, Media Literacy

Table Talk: Can You Find a Win-Win Solution?

What you'll need: focused time to talk (such as at the dinner table, on a car ride, or at bedtime)

In the *Second Step* program, your child is learning how to calmly and respectfully figure out problems in everyday life using these Action Steps:

- Analyze the situation
 - Brainstorm options
 - Consider each option
 - Decide on and Do the best option
1. With your child, discuss a media-related topic such as “video games and violence” or “the effects of exposure to media violence on teens.”
 2. Use the Action Steps before starting the discussion to analyze the situation, brainstorm ideas about how to find the information, and consider each option.
 3. Decide on the best option. Was everyone happy with the outcome? If not, you should figure out another way so everyone feels good about the outcome of the discussion (a win-win solution).
 4. Do the best option.



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Lesson 5, Health and Science

Family Project: What Do You Observe?

What you'll need: opportunity to go to a public place or event

The *Second Step* program definition of bullying is when one or more people repeatedly harm, harass, intimidate, or exclude others. Bullying is unfair and one-sided.

1. With your child, go to a sports game, arcade, mall, or some other place where people gather.
2. Keeping the bullying definition in mind, you and your child pay attention to the behaviors of the people you see. Notice what kind of relationships you observe. Do the people know each other? Are they friends? How can you tell?
3. Discuss with your child what you each saw. Use the bullying definition to decide if any of the behaviors you observed were bullying—even between friends.



Lesson 5, Media Literacy

Table Talk: What Could You Say to Your Friend?

What you'll need: focused time to talk (such as at the dinner table, on a car ride, or at bedtime)

Bullying between friends can even happen online. This is known as cyber bullying. Cyber bullying is when one or more people repeatedly harm, harass, intimidate, or exclude others using technology. It is unfair and one-sided. Because of the nature of technology, even one act of cyber bullying can have repeated and long-lasting effects.

1. Discuss this question with your child: **If your friend gave out your email password at school without you knowing it, would this be considered bullying? Why or why not?**
2. Help your child come up with at least two assertive statements he or she could say to the friend in response to this action.
3. Discuss how an incident like this could be prevented.



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Lesson 6, Language Arts and Social Studies

Table Talk: How Can Stereotypes Lead to Violence?

What you'll need: focused time to talk (such as at the dinner table, on a car ride, or at bedtime)

1. During many historical conflicts, stereotypes played a big, problematic role.
2. With your child, discuss historical times when stereotypes led to violence and the mistreatment of innocent people (such as the Holocaust, the U.S. Civil Rights Movement, immigration quotas based on racism in the early 1900s, Japanese-American internment camps during World War II, or confiscation of Native American land by the government).
3. Now discuss the following questions: **What is the difference between a positive and a negative stereotype? How do you think it feels to be labeled negatively? What effects did labels and stereotypes have in this historical situation? How did stereotypes make the poor treatment of innocent people seem okay? How can labeling and stereotyping others negatively be prevented?**



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Lesson 7, Language Arts and Social Studies

Table Talk: How Do You Want to be Treated?

What you'll need: focused time to talk (such as at the dinner table, on a car ride, or at bedtime)

1. Ask your child to think about what he or she as a member of one gender might say to someone of the opposite gender about how he or she would like to be treated by the opposite gender.
2. Have each family member come up with a few complete sentences to answer this question: What would I want a boy or girl to know about how my gender wants to be treated? Encourage your child to share things they might find hard to say out loud, especially if it goes against “popular” ideas about being a boy or a girl.
3. Discuss any themes that may have come up and what surprised you or your child about the responses.
4. Ask: **Do you feel different about or will you change the way you deal with the opposite gender now that we’ve talked?**



Lesson 7, Media Literacy

Table Talk: How Are These Lyrics Respectful?

What you'll need: MP3 player or CD player, focused time to talk (such as at the dinner table, on a car ride, or at bedtime)

1. Choose one of your child’s favorite songs and one of your own. The song must have lyrics that are respectful to the opposite gender.
2. Play the songs. Ask your child: **In what way are the lyrics respectful? Is it important that the lyrics be respectful for you to like the music? Why do you think some music groups write disrespectful lyrics about the opposite gender? What kind of message does that send? What do you think happens when people listen to disrespectful lyrics on how boys and girls act toward each other?**
3. Play the songs again. For each song, have your child come up with at least one line from the lyrics that he or she likes and that is respectful to the opposite gender.



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Lesson 8, Media Literacy

Table Talk: How Do the Media Escalate Minor Stories?

What you'll need: computer or TV; focused time to talk (such as at the dinner table, on a car ride, or at bedtime)

1. Choose a few news clips on a current hot topic (such as a coming storm, celebrity-related story, or political scandal). You can find clips on news websites or record them from TV.
2. Play the clips for your child. Ask: **What makes this story a hot topic? Did this story get so much coverage because it is important, or did the media make it important? How does the media make little, unimportant stories into a big deal? How can this be harmful?**



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Lesson 9, Media Literacy

Table Talk: Does the News Make You Feel Stressed?

What you'll need: focused time to talk (such as at the dinner table, on a car ride, or at bedtime)

1. With your child, think about a few recent news stories and how the stories make him or her feel (such as fearful, anxious, or stressed).
2. Ask: **How many of the stories made you feel stressed, and why?**
3. Then ask: **What can you do to keep from feeling stressed by these news stories?** Help your child come up with a plan to deal with the stress of news stories.



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Lesson 10, Language Arts and Social Studies

Table Talk: Can You Live Without Screen Time?

What you'll need: focused time to talk (such as at the dinner table, on a car ride, or at bedtime)

In the *Second Step* program, your child is learning how to calmly and respectfully figure out problems in everyday life using these Action Steps:

- Analyze the situation
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Can you and your child go without screen time for a week?

1. With your child, set a goal of going without screen time for one week (using a computer only for homework or work).
2. Make a plan using the Action Steps to accomplish this goal. Each of you should analyze the goal, brainstorm the options for ways to reach that goal, consider the options, then decide on and do the best option.
3. Ask your child to notice and keep track of the effects no screen time is having on different areas of his or her life, such as sleep, eating, stress levels, time management, other activities, and self-talk. Do the same yourself.



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Lesson 11, Media Literacy

Table Talk: Follow-Up Activity: Did You Accomplish Your Goal?

What you'll need: focused time to talk (such as at the dinner table, on a car ride, or at bedtime)

1. At the end of the week, evaluate the plan you and your child used in the previous activity to accomplish the goal of going without screen time for one week. Ask yourselves: Was the goal clear? Did we come up with enough ideas? Was it realistic? Could we measure how well we were doing? Did we have steps for reaching it? Did we have check-in points?
2. Decide if you want to make any changes as a family to the amount and ways you use screen time.



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Lesson 12, Media Literacy

Family Project: How Can You Voice Your Disapproval?

What you'll need: computer, pen and paper

Your child is learning about ways advertisers of alcohol and tobacco sometimes irresponsibly aim their ads at young people.

1. Go online to [The Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth's website \(camy.org\)](http://TheCenteronAlcoholMarketingandYouth.org), and choose a few irresponsible ads to show your child.
2. Help your child write a letter or email to irresponsible advertisers of alcohol or tobacco products, saying why he or she disapproves of what the advertisers are doing. Help find the contact information for these advertisers, and send the letter.