

SOCIAL AWARENESS

VARSIITY // BRANDS

BELIEVE IN YOU

EPISODE EIGHT / SEASON THREE

PAT LAFONTAINE

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING GUIDE

CREATED IN COLLABORATION WITH



— AND —

OPENPhysEd.org

EPISODE EIGHT

SEASON 3

TEACHER NOTES

Inside the Resources

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING COMPETENCY OUTCOMES

➤ **Social Awareness (Healing)**

- Students will be able to identify and utilize family, school, and community resources and supports to actively work toward personal and community healing.

➤ **Relationship Skills (Healing)**

- Students will be able to establish trusting relationships with adults and peers of diverse backgrounds and abilities. Seek and offer help from an established social network that includes diverse individuals.

WHAT'S INSIDE?

- **Episode Video:** Join Kevin as he works with inspirational leaders from around the United States. This guide focuses on Season 3: Episode 8 (Pat LaFontaine).
- **Community Circle Building Guide:** Community circles are proactive environments that help students build community, relationships, and communication skills for supporting, encouraging, and cooperating with their classmates, teachers, and adult mentors.
- **Letter Writing Guide:** For thousands of years, letter writing has been an important way to build and maintain relationships between people. We can use letter writing exercises in social and emotional learning to practice relationship skills, communication skills, and empathy.
- **Peer Interview Guide:** The process of conducting and then writing about an interview can be an effective way to teach students important communication skills — specifically listening skills. The best interviews are guided by active listening because it can lead to meaningful but previously unscripted follow-up questions. An interview can also build social awareness because it provides the person being interviewed with a platform to express their experiences and points of view.
- **Academic Language Cards:** Critical vocabulary from this Believe In You episode.

COMMUNITY CIRCLES



Implementation Tips

GUIDELINES FOR CIRCLE LEADERS

- **Sit in a circle.** This may seem obvious, but it's an important part of the process. If you're facilitating the discussion online via video call, there's little you can do to form an actual circle. Instead, have all students turn their cameras on so that everyone's nonverbal communication can be a part of the overall conversation.
- **Set norms or agreements** regarding how the group will communicate (listening and speaking). If possible, create and display visual reminders. Norms and agreements should be focused on respect for self and others, trust, and inclusion.
- **Use a talking piece.** This is an object that students will hold when it's their time to talk. This object can also be placed on the floor near the speaker's feet if there are concerns about sharing an object through touch.
- **Choose a formal leader.** This can be an adult or student. It's often effective to start with an adult facilitator and then progress to student leaders.
- **Use prepared discussion questions.** The first question should set the tone with a specific topic, and then a follow-up question should provide a reflection or connection to another important concept.
- **Close the discussion with everyone sharing.** A great way to do this is with everyone sharing "their weather." Students feeling happy and enthusiastic may say, "My weather is clear and sunny." Students feeling uncertain may say, "My weather is cloudy with a chance of thunderstorms." This provides students an opportunity to express their feelings without exposing personal details that they're not ready to share. Although this may be somewhat awkward when first implemented, it gets easier and provides a window into student emotions so that others can rally to help.



PAT LAFONTAINE

COMMUNITY Circle Building Guide

SOCIAL AWARENESS



Community circles are social environments that work to empower those who join the circle to support one another through active listening and courageous dialogue. Seek and provide support within this community of peers and mentors.

Watch Season 3: Episode 8 (Pat LaFontaine) and then use the questions below to help facilitate purposeful discussion in your community circle.

Community Circle Discussion Questions

• **Focus Question 1a:** Pat Lafontaine made some big sacrifices as a high school student to become a professional hockey player. Every goal requires sacrifice. For example, getting a good grade might require you to sacrifice time away from another activity so you can study. What goal have you pursued that has required a sacrifice?

- **Follow-Up Question 1b:** What was it that you sacrificed and why did you make that sacrifice?

• **Focus Question 2a:** Pat explains that life isn't all about scoring goals, but it's more about the assist. He was surrounded by teammates and coaches that gave time, money, and love to the communities that they lived in. What does Pat mean when he says — *life to me is about the assist*?

- **Follow-Up Question 2b:** What success have you had, what skills can you share, and what type of encouragement can you give in an effort to assist someone else?

• **Focus Question 3a:** Pat Lafontaine accomplished incredible success as a professional athlete and is in the Hockey Hall of Fame. Pat tells us that his greatest successes have happened off the ice and outside of the world of professional hockey. What do you think he means when he says this?

- **Follow-Up Question 3b:** What is your vision of success? How might Pat's example revise your vision?

LETTER WRITING



Implementation Tips

GUIDELINES FOR LETTER WRITING EXERCISES

- **Empathize with the reader.** Before students begin writing, instruct them to visualize and imagine the intended reader. Who are they? How are they feeling? What is the best way to communicate with that person?
- **Define the purpose of the letter.** Is this a letter of encouragement? Is the writer trying to persuade the reader in some way? Instruct students to define and formally write the purpose of the letter in 1 or 2 sentences before beginning to draft the letter itself.
- **Consider the reader's reaction to the letter.** Instruct students to consider the various ways that a reader might react to the letter.
 - First, what if they react positively to the purpose of the letter? What is it that the writer is asking them to do in response? Write to create a desired action, even if it is a simple one. For example, a thank-you note is a letter meant to create a feeling of appreciation transferred from the writer to the reader. The desired action is simple but important — I'm grateful for you, please feel appreciated by me.
 - Next, consider the possibility that the reader does not react positively and has a response that doesn't match the purpose of the letter. What can the writer expect the reader to do in response, and how can the student learn from that response? For example, a letter written to a community leader asking for a policy change may not be enough to get the policy in question actually changed. The desired action in this instance could be an explanation of why the policy cannot be changed. Asking the reader to respond with specific reasons and facts may help the writer work to improve an argument or possibly reconsider and revise a viewpoint or approach to the issue.



**PAT
LAFONTAINE**

WRITING YOU
Letter Writing Guide
SOCIAL AWARENESS



For thousands of years, letter writing has been an important way to build and maintain relationships. We can use letter writing exercises to practice relationship building and communication skills.

Watch Season 3: Episode 8 (Pat LaFontaine) and then use the exercises below to help draft a letter focused on building a support network to help build healthy habits and making good wellness choices.

Letter Writing Guide

- **The reader.** Write this letter to a younger student who you would like to encourage. You can choose a real student, or create a fictional student that represents the younger kids in your community.
- **The purpose.** This letter is meant to be an assist. Tell the person you are writing to that you are available to help them reach their goals. Share 1 or 2 specific personal experiences that communicate why you want to help this young student be successful.
- **The desired action.** You want the reader to feel encouraged and confident that they have someone supporting their efforts. You want the reader to feel comfortable asking you for help and advice and you want to tell the reader how they can communicate with you when they need your support.
- **Now, write the letter.** Type your letter. If you wrote it to a real student, give it to them. If you wrote the letter to a fictional student, save it in a place where you'll see it and be reminded to find students who need your support and give them an assist.
- **Use this letter.** Allow the positivity of this letter to be a personal call to action. Every day you will find someone who needs an assist. Your awareness, empathy, and action can make a lasting difference in someone's life.

PEER INTERVIEWS



Implementation Tips

GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING INTERVIEWS

- **Define the purpose of the interview.** Is this an open-ended interview meant to learn more about a person? Or is it a focused interview meant to gather a unique perspective on a specific subject or event? Write the purpose of the interview in 1 or 2 sentences before you begin drafting the interview questions.
- **Prepare targeted leading questions** with a follow-up question for each one. All questions should be crafted to get at the purpose of the interview. It's important to remember that follow-up questions can and should change to bring out interesting and alternative perspectives that come naturally from the interview process. Avoid yes/no types of questions and be prepared to rephrase a question if needed.
- **Listen and document what you hear**, not what you want to hear. An interview is meant to gather a diverse set of experiences and perspectives. Allow the interviewee to express themselves without casting a filter on what's being shared.
- **Start questions with open-ended pronouns:** who, what, where, when, why, and how. These types of questions help you avoid yes/no questions.
- **Allow some awkward silence.** If asked the right questions, the interviewee will need time to think about a meaningful response. Allow time for thinking and don't rush the process.
- **Stay in the moment.** Listen as the interviewee responds to your questions, document what you hear, and then ask follow-up questions. The best follow-up questions are influenced by the stories that are being shared. Don't allow your mind to wander to the next question. Be in the moment and listen carefully to what's being said.



**PAT
LAFONTAINE**

LISTEN/LEARN
Peer Interview Guide

SOCIAL AWARENESS



The process of conducting and writing about an interview can be an effective way to teach students important communication skills — specifically listening skills. The best interviews are guided by the use of active listening because it can lead to meaningful but previously unscripted follow-up questions. An interview can build social awareness because it provides the person being interviewed with a platform to express their experiences and points of view.

Watch Season 3: Episode 8 (Pat LaFontaine) and then use the guide below to create and conduct an interview with an adult mentor who has overcome a personal challenge. Take notes, then write a 1-page summary of your interview.

Interview Guide

- **The purpose of this interview:** You will use this interview to learn from examples of kindness and support that one of your peers demonstrated. How did they recognize that someone needed an assist? Why did they decide to help? What actions did they take and what effect did those actions have?
- Write 3 questions, each with 1 related follow-up question. Start your first question with how, your second question with why, and your third question with what.
- Use the following question as your final leading question: “*What would you say to encourage someone who is considering helping and supporting the goals of another person?*” Next, write 1 possible follow-up question.

ASSIST

(verb)

To help, often by doing a share of the work or carrying a significant load.

Pat cares about his community and looks for ways to *assist* people who need support and encouragement.

EMPATHY

(noun)

The ability to understand and share the feelings of another.

Pat had real *empathy* for kids in the hospital and he looked for a way that he could support their social and emotional healing.

SACRIFICE

(noun)

An act of giving up something valued for the sake of something else determined to be more important.

Pat made a big sacrifice during his senior year of high school to pursue his dream of becoming a professional hockey player.