

# Newark Public Schools



Connect with Kids



Safe Schools and Healthy Students Training Guide

# Becoming Dream Leaders



*Beyond the horizon of time is a changed world, very different from today's world. Some people see beyond that horizon and into the future. They believe that dreams can become a reality. They open our eyes and lift our spirits. They build trust and strengthen our relationships. They stand firm against the winds of resistance and give us the courage to continue the quest. We call these people **leaders**.*

– from *The Leadership Challenge* by James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner

The benefits of a peer leadership program to create Dream Leaders here in Newark are many and far reaching. Below are just a few of the goals of our Dream Leader program:

- To provide students with opportunities to develop and practice leadership and social action skills in order to become catalysts for change;
- To provide students with opportunities to develop awareness and understanding of community issues, problems, and resources;
- To use positive peer influence to promote a healthy, supportive, and respectful educational environment;
- To develop social responsibility in youth with opportunities to provide community service and model pro-social behavior;
- To increase young people's self-esteem, as well as critical thinking and problem-solving abilities through opportunities for real-life application in the school and community;
- To provide opportunities for the development of student-led programs to educate peers about relevant issues that impact the school climate.

The Dream Leader model is closely aligned and supports the tenets of character education and the development of key character traits that are linked to both academic and life long success. The character traits that correlate with the Dream Leader process include responsibility, perseverance, self-control, kindness, caring and many, many more.

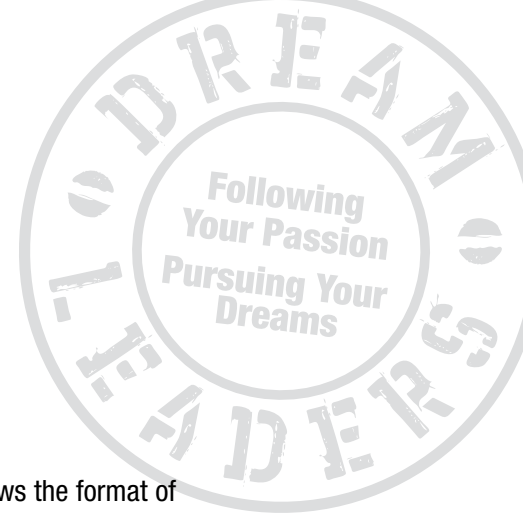
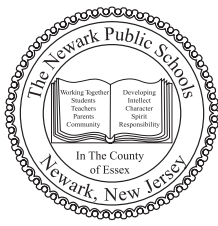
We at Newark Public Schools believe there is strength in each other and we can join together to create positive change. Through an expansive partnership with *Connect with Kids*, video, print and online resources have been created to encourage each and every one of us to become Newark **Dream Leaders**: to find our dreams and follow our passions!

We applaud your commitment and thank you for becoming a Dream Leader. The **Training Video** and this accompanying guide offer ideas, materials and a step by step process to empower school student leadership teams, parents and community leaders to implement a change process and address issues of concern to our students, schools, parents and the community.

The video and guide offers a roadmap for taking five steps to forever alter the landscape of Newark Public Schools and help secure a safe and sound learning environment for all of the children and families of Newark Public Schools.



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## How to Use This Guide

This guide organizes the process for creating change into five steps and follows the format of the accompanying ***Dream Leaders*** DVD. This process to affect change applies to many important issues that your school and community may face – whether the challenge is school attendance, school safety, creating resilient, resourceful youth, or engaging and involving parents and community leaders.

In order to become true Dream Leaders, the five-step process includes:

1. Understanding The Problem
2. Identifying Solutions
3. Using Tools for Change
4. Planning for Success
5. Measuring Success

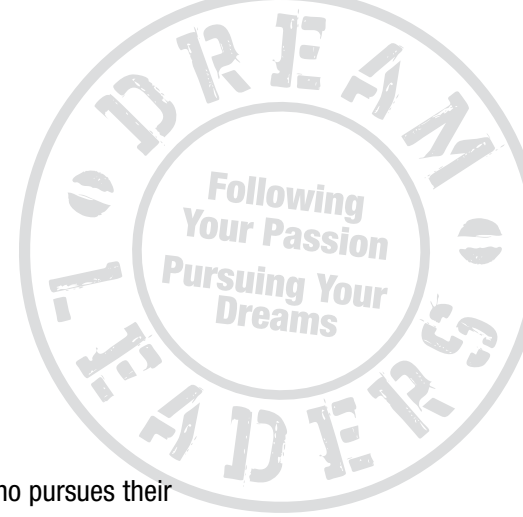
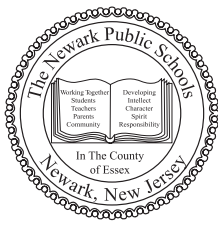
Users have the option to watch each video segment and complete each step in the guide, one at a time, or watch the program in its entirety before beginning your school's or organization's five steps to generate change—whatever your challenge might be.

Each section offers a list of discussion questions designed to help your group think in-depth about the step it is about to take, followed by specific activities to successfully complete the step and move on to the next. Instructions and discussion questions italicized within each section are designed to be read aloud by the group facilitator—whether an adult teacher, counselor or community group leader or a student peer leader—who can then guide the group toward consensus and action.

While there is much work ahead, the task of affecting positive change can be both satisfying and rewarding. Be sure to take time to enjoy the process!



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# Dream Leaders: Define Your Terms

The students of Newark Public Schools define a dream leader as someone who pursues their own passions and uses their leadership to influence others to change their behaviors in a positive way. Now it is time to create a definition that works for your group.

## Purpose and Objective

Group members will work together to define and achieve consensus on exactly what it means to be a Dream Leader.

## Materials

Whiteboard or flip chart

Paper, poster board and markers for visual approaches

## Discussion Questions

Watch Part I of the **Dream Leaders** DVD. Facilitators, encourage your group's discussion and reflection using the following questions. Keep track of responses by writing comments on a flip chart or whiteboard.

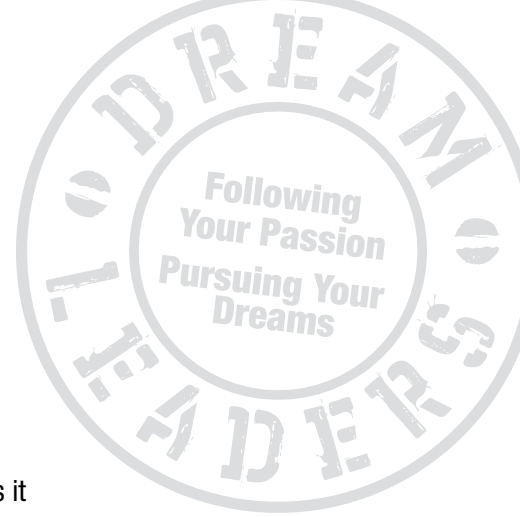
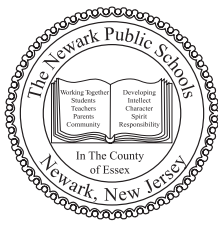
- What is a dream leader?
- What qualities does a dream leader possess?
- What are the challenges of being a dream leader?
- What are the benefits of being a dream leader?
- Do you think you possess the qualities to be a dream leader? Why? Why not?

## Activity

1. Having discussed the group's concepts of Dream Leaders, the task at hand is to develop a creative way of presenting it that helps participants express their idea of a dream leader. Depending upon the size of your group, members can work together in smaller teams, as a group or individually. Facilitators, ask the group members to find a creative way to express their vision of a dream leader. *Will you draw a picture? Will you present a skit? Will you rap your lyrics or recite a poem? Choose your medium, know your terminology and then present your ideas to everyone.*
2. Either in smaller teams or as individuals, allow group members to take five to 10 minutes to prepare a presentation to describe their vision of a Dream Leader.
3. Have group members present their ideas to each other. Ask, *What did each presentation have in common? How did the presentations differ?*
4. Using the presentations ideas as a platform, come up with a Dream Leader definition that will satisfy your group as a whole.

Now that your group has defined and understands just what it means to be a Dream Leader, it's time to forge ahead and embark upon the five-step process.





# Step One: Understanding the Problem

(WHAT is the identified concern, issue or problem; WHY is it important; WHO is it important to/for?)

In most situations, for change to take place the group must first be aware and accept that there is a problem. We must understand exactly what the problem is and define the problem clearly and succinctly. A simply stated message will help others to understand and support your mission.

## Purpose and Objective

Group members, as Dream Leaders, will work together to gather information to craft a message that will effectively raise awareness.

## Materials

Overhead/board

Dream Leaders Message Worksheet

## Discussion/Reflection Questions

Watch the Step One segment of the **Dream Leaders** DVD. Facilitators, guide your group to reflect upon and discuss the segment using these questions:

- What is the message about safe schools and healthy students you wish to convey to others?
- What are the words the people in our school/community need to hear?
- Do people in our school think that there are problems facing its students?
- How would you or others describe the problems in our schools?
- Describe an example of when your awareness of an issue was raised. How did that happen?

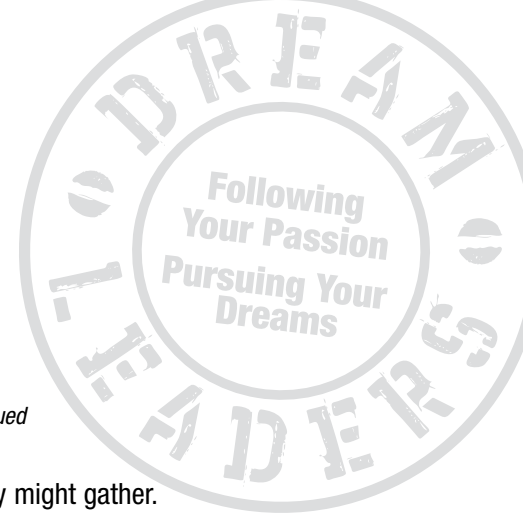
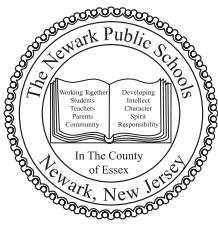
## Activity

1. Facilitators, say to the group: *Our group needs information in order to help others recognize and admit that safe schools or other problems and challenges exist within our school environment. What information do we want to collect within our school or community? Let's decide what specific information we need to know about a problem facing our schools and how we will measure the responses we get.*



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## Step One: Understanding the Problem *continued*

2. Review with the group some examples of different kinds of data they might gather. As an example, let focus on the topic of bullying. On the board/overhead, write these examples of easily measurable responses:

- Have you ever witnessed bullying on school grounds?  yes  no
- If so, how many times?  
 less than 5 times  5 times  more than 5 times  
 too many times to count

Explain to the group, *after we administer this kind of questionnaire, we need to count the check marks in each category to compile everyone's information.*

On the board/overhead, write examples of these story response questions, such as:

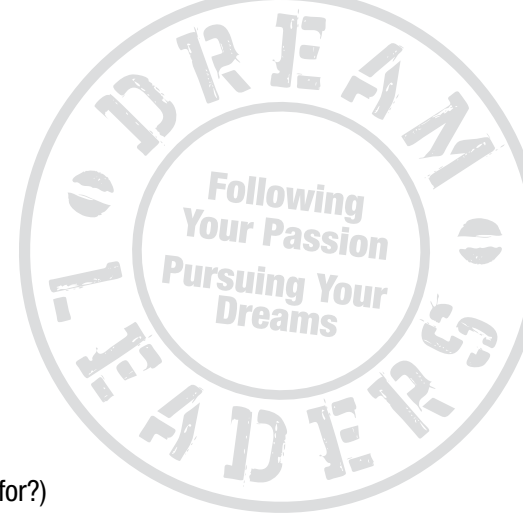
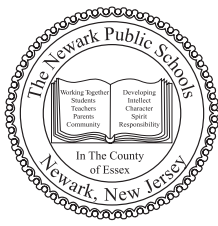
- *Describe a situation where you witnessed bullying.*
- *Describe the place on school grounds where most bullying occurs.*

Explain to your group, *after we administer this kind of questionnaire, we must read the stories and select those that are the same, stand out from the others or offer consistent themes and messages.*

3. Have group members, either as smaller teams or individually, create a list of questions to ask people about an issue of concern in order to gather information to craft the group's message. They should generate five to 10 questions.
4. Share and discuss the questions, deciding which five to 10 questions will work for a questionnaire or survey. Ask the group to determine which questions will truly help assess the safe schools problem at school.
5. Have the students administer their questionnaire to people in their class, school or community. Be sure to assign a specific number of interviews and a due date.
6. After administering the survey/questionnaire, the group must analyze their data. Ask, *What are the five most important things that we have learned about safe schools or the issue at hand?* Record the findings on the Our Message Worksheet.
7. Based upon the important things that you have learned, have the group clearly craft a message regarding safe schools or another identified issue in order to raise awareness in the entire community. Write it in the space provided on the Our Message Worksheet.







## Step Two: Identify Solutions

(WHAT are the solutions; WHY are they important: WHO are they important to/for?)

In Step One, we learned about the importance of understanding a problem before we begin to address it. We need to ask questions, collect data and analyze the information in order to understand the problems we want to fix. Now it is time to assemble a variety of possible solutions.

The key to this task is variety, because just as one size shoe does not fit all, one solution will not work for everyone. We know that teachers use several methods of instructions when teaching. Why? Because we all learn differently—some learn best when information is presented as a picture, others when they hear a spoken message, others when the message is set to music and still others when the information is acted out.

Think about the different ways each of us learns and process information. This will help the group generate a wide range of solutions to the safe schools problem—or any other challenge at hand that our team will address.

### Purpose and Objective

Group members will work together to develop and clarify possible strategies and action-oriented solutions to the challenge at hand.

### Materials

Overhead/board

**Dream Leaders** Message Worksheet

### Discussion/Reflection Questions

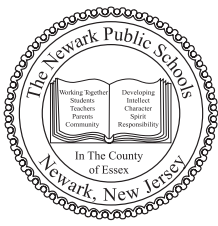
Watch the Step Two segment of the **Dream Leaders** DVD. Facilitators or student peer leaders, encourage the group to consider and reflect upon these questions:

- What are some of the solutions you heard in the **Dream Leaders** DVD?
- Do the solutions they talked about address our school/community's safe schools problem?
- What are the three levels of solutions they mentioned in the DVD?
- Why is it important to have a variety of solutions to address the problem?
- Which solutions would our school population relate to? Why?



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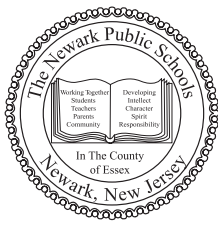


## Step Two: Identify Solutions *continued*

### Activity

1. Facilitators can say to the group: *One way to clarify our possible solutions is to get them down on paper.*
2. Using the attached Identifying Solutions Worksheet, work either as smaller teams or as a group to determine which solutions listed will work in your school.
3. In each box of the solution group members believe will work, write a reason it would work. Encourage group members to think about the following:
  - *Why would our students relate to this method?*
  - *Should we use a variety of methods daily, or should we spread them out over a period of time?*
  - *Which solutions are our students likely to ignore? Why?*
4. Identify additional solutions and fill in as many of the empty boxes on the worksheet as possible with new ideas.
5. If working in smaller teams, gather back together to discuss their solutions.
6. Pick the strategies that the group agrees will work best and write them on the board/overhead.

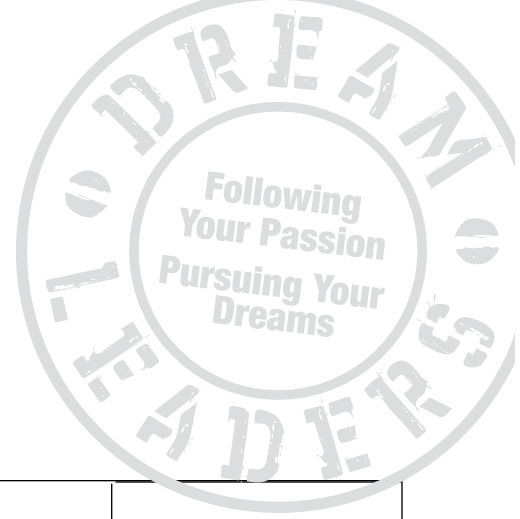
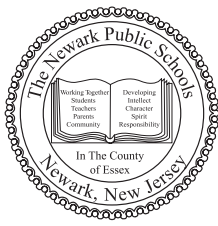




# Identifying Solutions Worksheet

<p>Classroom discussion using video materials</p>	<p>Classroom skit</p>	<p>Articles in school newspaper</p>	<p>Create and promote Tip Box</p>	<p>Assembly by students/ for students in a multi-class setting</p>
<p>Create our own video broadcast about safe schools</p>	<p>Freshman orientation presentation</p>	<p>Make speeches in the community</p>	<p>Presentations in after school settings</p>	<p>Create posters and display around school</p>

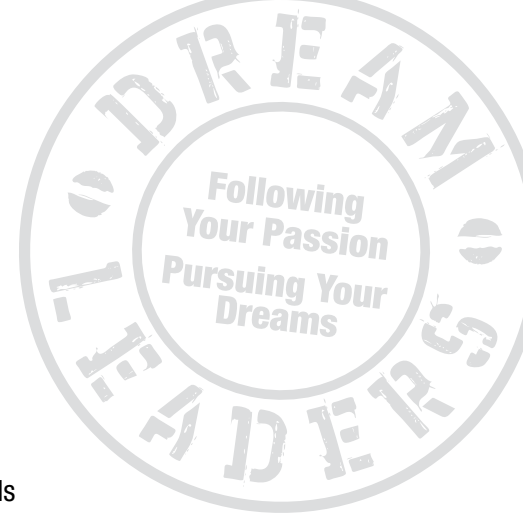
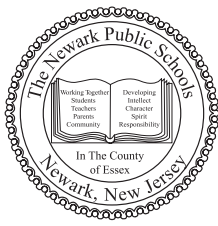




# Identifying Solutions Worksheet *continued*

<p>Distribute safe schools information on school fusion</p>	<p>Skits for multiple classes at one time.</p>	<p>Create a student mentor program that includes safe schools</p>	<p>Post information on school website</p>	<p>Morning announcements</p>
<p>Create a blogging email about safe schools</p>	<p>Create bullying prevention club.</p>	<p>Get others to commit to being dream leaders</p>	<p>Presentation to parents/PTA</p>	<p>Other Activity</p> <p>Classroom: School wide: Community:</p>





## Step Three: Using Tools for Change

(WHAT are the tools of change; WHY are the tools important; WHO are the tools important to/for?)

Just as with any project, each group must identify the strengths of its team members and identify the resources needed to implement an action plan.

In the previous step, the group thought about solutions that will help to solve the problem at hand. Now it's time to determine how to present our solutions. We must think about the skills and talents of our group members as leaders, facilitators, teachers and support staff. All of these roles will be crucial to our success.

### Purpose and Objective

Group members will become familiar with the resources and tools available, identify strengths and abilities among group members and hone facilitation and leadership skills in order to launch and implement an action plan.

### Materials

Overcoming the Odds DVD Segment  
Overcoming the Odds Discussion Questions  
[www.connectwithkids.com/newarkpublicschools](http://www.connectwithkids.com/newarkpublicschools)  
Strategies for Good Facilitation handout

### Discussion/Reflection Questions

Watch Step Three segment of the **Dream Leaders** DVD. As a group, discuss the following questions:

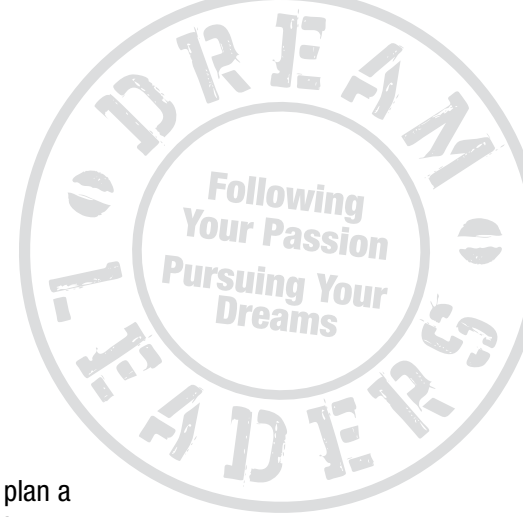
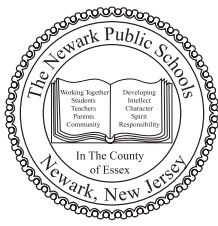
- What are “tools for change”?
- What other tools/ resources do you have? *Be sure the group is familiar with the several Connect with Kids tools, resources including the Connect with Kids website ([www.connectwithkids.com/newarkpublicschools](http://www.connectwithkids.com/newarkpublicschools)).*
- What talents do your team members have that will benefit the project?
- Which team members have skills in leading discussions?

### Activity

1. Explain that the group is going to practice leading a discussion after watching a segment of the *Connect with Kids* DVD **Overcoming the Odds**. Facilitators, say to your group: *It is never enough to just pop in a DVD and expect everyone to talk. We are going to use this DVD to learn how to lead a discussion group.*
2. Distribute the Strategies for Good Facilitation handout and ask your group members to review the guidelines.



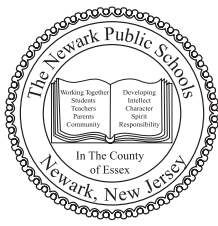
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## Step Three: Using Tools for Change *continued*

3. Paying particular attention to the Guiding Group Discussions section, plan a discussion of the **Overcoming the Odds** video segment. Review the following questions as a group:
  - How would we effectively begin a discussion to engage students? In other words, who would introduce the topic? What would that person say to focus the group on the content of the video segment? Who will assume this role?
  - How would we successfully lead a discussion? What are the skills of facilitation? How do we help participants relate the topic to their own lives? How do we create questions that will help participants apply situations described in the video to situations in their own world? Who will assume this role?
  - How do we deal with challenging situations? Predict any that might arise and plan ways to handle them.
  - How would we close an activity? What are some good ways to reflect on the discussion? How do we bring the members to determine what action to take next? Who will do this part?
4. Watch the **Overcoming the Odds** video and have the people you named in step three practice leading the discussion. The provided questions can help facilitate the discussion.
5. Have group members assess their own performance. What went well? What needs work? Give concrete suggestions for improvement as well as praise for a job well done.
6. Ask group members if they feel ready to become dream leaders and lead a discussion with another group on this same topic.

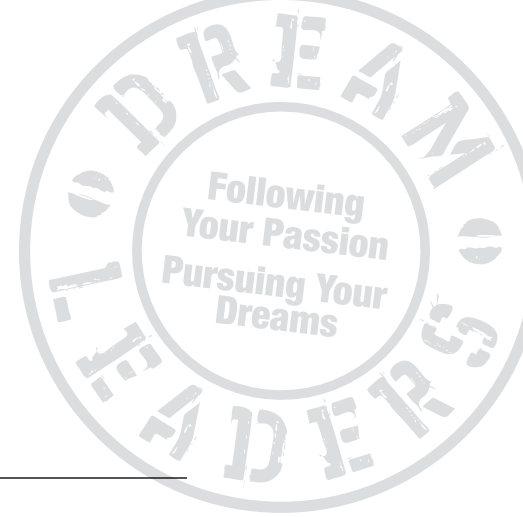
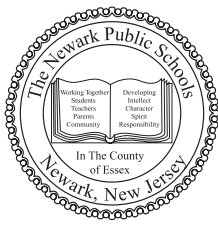




## Overcoming the Odds – Discussion Questions

- Define resilience
- What challenges did the kids in the video face? How did they overcome the challenges? How does this make them resilient?
- What skills should a person learn to become more resilient?
- What are the three “Ps” that make it hard to be resilient?
- Discuss the Robert Louis Stevenson quote: “Life is not so much a matter of holding good cards, but of playing a poor hand well.” What does it mean to you? How does it relate to resilience?
- Do you believe that “every child can succeed...against all odds?” Explain your answer.
- How is Melanie’s story a good illustration of resiliency?





# Strategies for Good Facilitation

## A Good Discussion Leader...

- Sets an agenda beforehand that allows for some flexibility.
- Sets ground rules for how discussion will proceed and sets time limits.
- Stays neutral—you want to gather their opinions, not state yours.
- Keeps the group on track—stay on the topic, please.
- Creates a safe environment—everyone should feel comfortable sharing.
- Responds to challenges in a productive way.

## General Strategies for Good Facilitation

1. Avoid giving advice or suggestions. Don't interrupt unless you have a dominating member of the group.
2. Respect everyone's rights. Try these phrases with domineering members: *"We've heard a lot from this side of the room. Are there people with thoughts on the other side of the room?"* Or, *"Let's hear from someone who has not spoken yet."*
3. Ask people to take turns. Try to identify who was first, second, etc., and get back to each person in order. You might want to agree to time limits for each speaker or ask that no one speak a second time until everyone has had a turn.
4. Keep your discussion on course. If someone becomes hostile or argumentative, tactfully intervene and try to turn the discussion in a more constructive direction.

## Guiding Group Discussions

**Introduction:** Focus on the content of the DVD. Ask, *What did you see? What did you hear? How did the individuals feel and react?*

**Discussion:** Move the participants to apply experiences in the DVD to their own lives. *"Have you ever experienced anything like this? What did you do about it? What else could you have done in a similar situation?"*

**Call for Action:** Ask your participants to talk about ways to apply what they learned to their daily lives. Ask, *"What can you take from this session to apply to your life?"*

## Responding to Participant Comments Appropriately

**Possible ways to reply to responses:** "Thank you for your response."

"Yes, that is what happened." "No, it did not happen that way. Do you have another idea?"

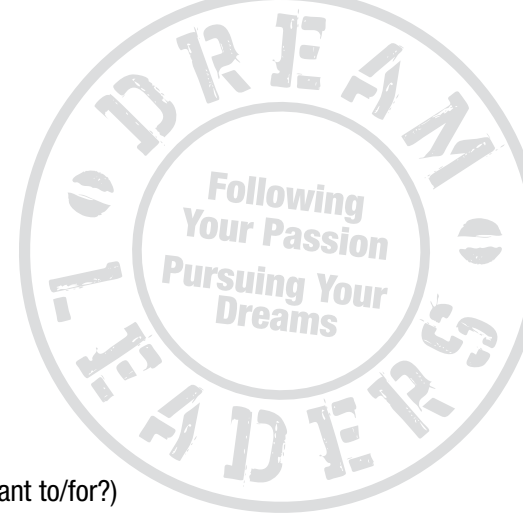
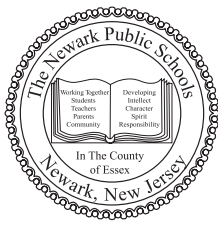
**Summarize opinions and/or emotional responses:** "So what you are saying is... (summarize the response without judgment)." "It seems you felt... (summarize the respondent's feelings)."

**When one member cannot see more than one solution:** "Let's brainstorm some alternative solutions."

**If something is beyond your scope:** Refer the participant to the sponsor (teacher, counselor, etc.)



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## Step Four: Planning for Success

(WHAT are the plans; WHY are the plans important; WHO are the plans important to/for?)

In the previous activities, the group has understood the problem, identified possible solutions and created ideas about how to put into action the available tools for change. The next important step is to decide just which tools to use, when and how often. Specific plans make for successful projects; this step takes all the ideas and figures out the best way and time to put them in to action.

### Purpose and Objective

Group members will work together to articulate goals and develop an ongoing implementation timeline in order to successfully execute activities to affect desired change.

### Materials

Overhead/board

Planning for Success worksheet

### Discussion/Reflection Questions

Watch Step Four segment of the **Dream Leaders** DVD. Facilitators, ask group members to discuss and reflect upon the following questions:

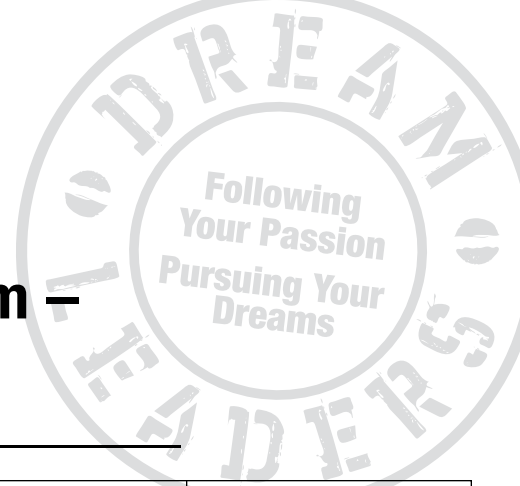
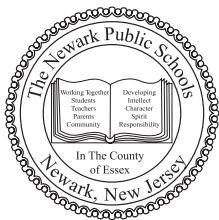
- What are the key elements for successful planning?
- When planning, how does a goal differ from a task? How do they relate to each other?
- How can we determine who does which tasks so that everyone feels useful, successful and that everyone's skills are utilized properly?
- How do you plan for success in other areas of your life?

### Activity

1. Distribute the Planning for Success worksheet, making enough copies for each group member to have one copy for each month of your plan.
2. As a group, decide the timeline for your program beginning with NOW. Facilitators, ask the group, *What are the initial steps we can take tomorrow? Next week?*
3. Work as a group to define the goals for each month. Will it be to implement one of our solutions? Write them in the appropriate boxes on the Planning for Success worksheet.
4. Assign tasks to group members and determine how the group will keep track of tasks as they are completed. Be specific so that everyone knows his/her task as well as the timeline for its completion.
5. Plan your next meeting to assess your progress.



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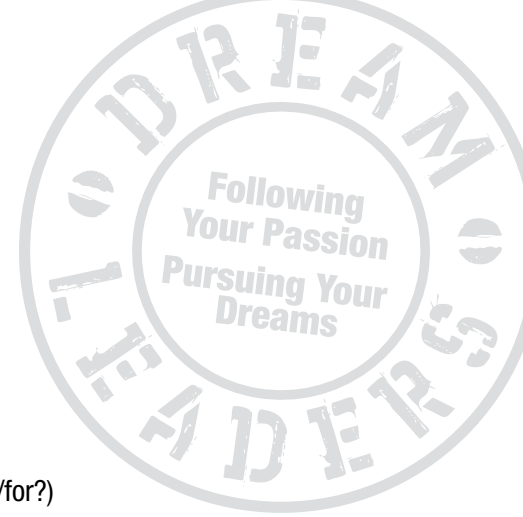
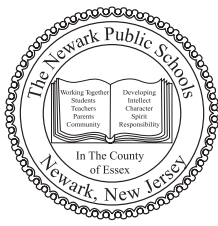


# Dream Leaders Action Plan Forum – Planning for Success

**MONTH** \_\_\_\_\_ **YEAR** \_\_\_\_\_

Goal/s	Solution	Action Step/s	Person/s Responsible	Measure of Success
				





## Step Five: Measuring Success

(WHAT is the measure of success; WHY is it important; WHO is it important to/for?)

Change does not happen overnight. Rather, it happens slowly—sometimes over a number of weeks, months or even a year. Despite the timeframe, we still need to know if our efforts are working—whatever the challenge may be. Have attitudes changed? Can we sense a new atmosphere in school hallways? Do other kids comment on their feelings of increased safety or awareness?

Measuring and understanding our successes—and ongoing challenges—will help our group to adjust the action plan and know when to change or bolster certain activities.

### Purpose and Objective

Group members will work together to define what outcomes will indicate that their initiative is achieving its goals and will set into place techniques to measure and share results and plan future steps.

### Materials

Board/Overhead

Measuring our Success Worksheet

### Discussion/Reflection Questions

Watch Step Five segment of the **Dream Leaders** DVD. To begin this evaluation, facilitators can ask the group to discuss and reflect upon these questions:

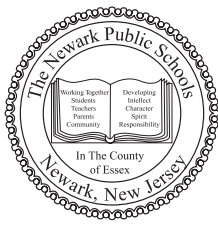
- Why is it important to measure our activities?
- What are the different ways we can access the outcome of our safe school efforts?
- How will we know we've made a difference?
- How can we share our results?
- What will our next steps be?

### Activity

1. Facilitators, begin this task by asking the group: *How do we know if we are successful in any endeavor? What are some of the signs of success we can look out for?* List responses on the board or overhead.
2. Now ask, *How will we know if we have been successful in our safe schools campaign? What do we hope to accomplish? What are the changes we hope to see? What are people saying? Are there already signs of success in our school? What are they?*
3. List the group's anticipated signs of success for the program on the board. Have the group select the top three signs.



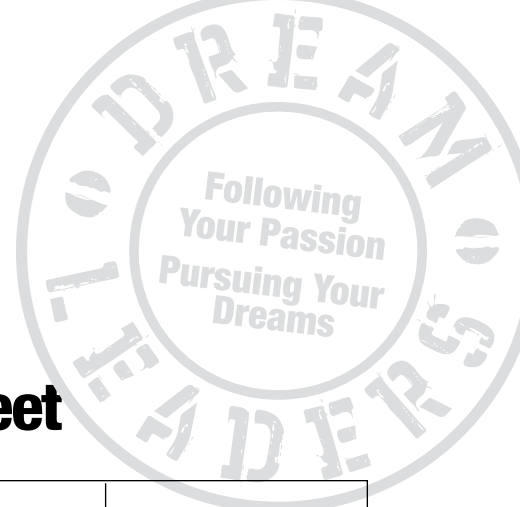
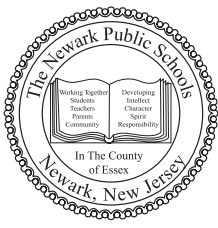
Connect with Kids



## Step Five: Measuring Success *continued*

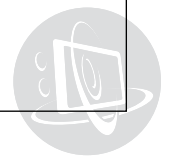
4. Distribute copies of the Measuring our Success worksheet. Have group members list the solutions they implemented in the first row of boxes. If possible, write the dates or time frame when these tasks were completed.
5. Write the group's top three signs of success in the appropriate boxes across the top of the page.
6. Encourage group members to discuss and decide upon the ways they can see and watch for the success of each of the solution steps, writing their observations in the appropriate box.
7. In the fourth column on the worksheet, ask team members to decide whether or not this solution step should be continued.
8. As the group continues to monitor and measure its success, ask: *Have we been successful so far? How do we know? If we have been successful, what are our next steps? If we have not been successful, what are our next steps? How should we share our results?*
9. As a group, write up a summary of their efforts so far to share with the school population, and determine how to proceed in the future. Facilitators, ask the group to consider these questions: *Will this require us to start back at step one or do we create a new plan? Which parts, if any, of our plan will we continue? Which, if any, will we abandon? What will be our legacy for the school?*

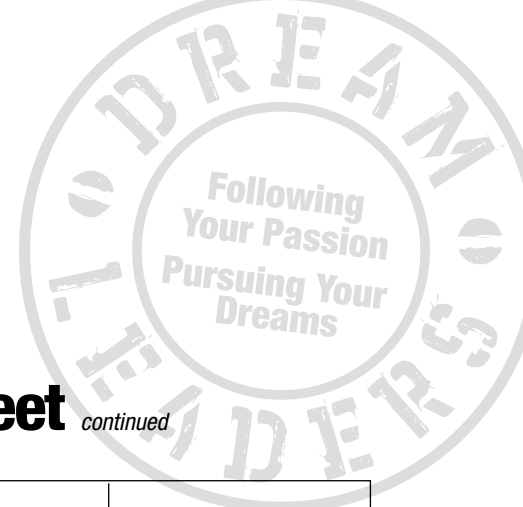
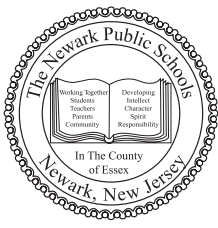




# Dream Leaders: Measuring our Success Worksheet

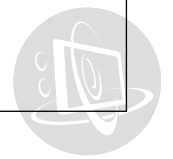
	<b>Sign of Success #1</b>	<b>Sign of Success #2</b>	<b>Sign of Success #3</b>	<b>Should this solution step be continued?</b>
Solution #1				
Solution #2				
Solution #3				
Solution #4				





# Dream Leaders: Measuring our Success Worksheet *continued*

	<b>Sign of Success #1</b>	<b>Sign of Success #2</b>	<b>Sign of Success #3</b>	<b>Should this solution step be continued?</b>
Solution #5				
Solution #6				
Solution #7				
Solution #8				



## For more information



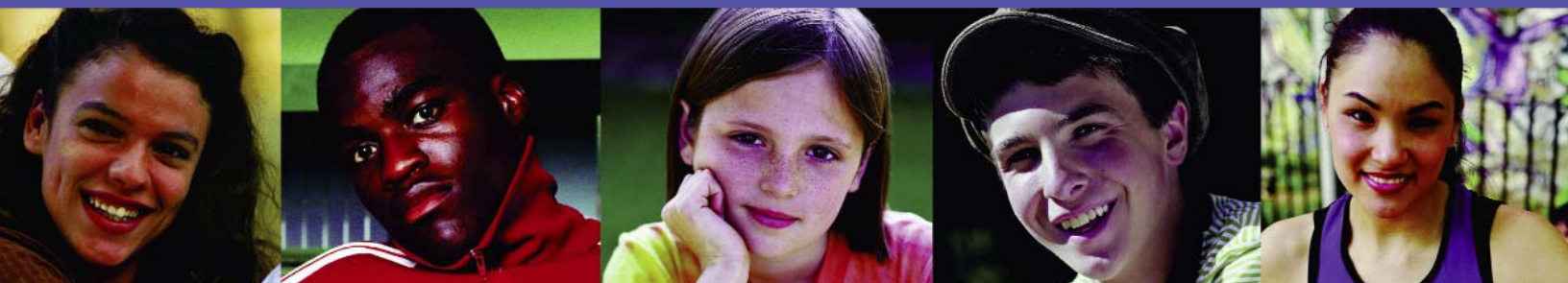
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