

# I-Care Language



**Introduction:** *In the story “The Lunch Box,” Elizabeth and Juan used founs because they didn’t know what else to do. Words can hurt and words can heal. We can change bad habits by using “I Care” language to tell how we feel and what we want.*

**Student Pages 17a, 17b - I Can Speak Up!:** Introduce the four steps.

**Discussion:** *Why is it important to say the person’s name? (gets their attention, shows respect)*

*Why is it important to tell how you feel? (lets the person know how you feel about what happened)*

*Why is it important to say clearly what it is that you don’t like? (the person may not know what is bothering you, focuses on the problem)*

*Why is it important to tell what you want done? (gives the other person the opportunity to take responsibility and save face)*

Practice using “I-Care” language. Have two students demonstrate using the guidelines.

**Discussion:** *How can these guidelines keep the conflict from escalating? (saves face, shows respect, is non-threatening and clear)*


In pairs, have students complete the eight different **I Can Speak Up** situations. Give students time to practice and have volunteers role play for the class. Be sure that all students have a turn.

**Discussion:** *How does “I-Care” language help solve a conflict? (gives people confidence when speaking up for their rights, uses Rules for Fighting Fair without founs)* Share and discuss.

*What is your responsibility when you receive an “I-Care” message?  
(listen to the message and feelings, change behavior if you are causing the problem)*  
*What if you don’t agree with the other person’s perception of the problem?  
(ask questions, tell how you feel, use “I Care” language in return)*

*Remember, “I-Care” language can’t force the other person to change. But, it gives you the courage to speak up for what you know is right. If the other person ignores you, don’t give up. Repeat the statement and give the person time to think it over.*

**Student Page 17c - It Takes Courage:** *What is courage? Which character in the story of The Wizard of Oz didn’t have courage? How did Lion get courage? (It was there all the time, but it was his love for Dorothy that brought it out.) Complete each situation using “I-Care” language. Role play responses. Discuss the effectiveness of the responses. Were any Founs used? Were any feelings hurt?*

 **Journal:** Write about a time when you had the courage to speak up when someone said or did something mean to you. How did you feel?

**Closure:** *“I-Care” language helps us to stand up for our rights while respecting the dignity of others. As peacemakers, we know that “I-Care” language attacks problems not people.*

# I Can Speak Up!

Sometimes we want to speak up for our rights, but we don't know what to say or do. When we are angry or hurt, we want to get even. Here is a way to help you communicate fairly. It is called "I Care" language:

- 1 **Say the person's name** .....Steven,
- 2 **Tell how you feel** .....I feel angry
- 3 **Tell why** .....when you take my pencil without permission.
- 4 **Tell what you want** .....Please ask me first.

## Remember to:

- ◆ Watch your body language. Be sure it is not threatening.
- ◆ Stand straight with your hands at your side.
- ◆ Don't threaten the other person's space by getting too close.
- ◆ Look at the person you are talking to. Speak with a clear, polite voice.
- ◆ If possible, discuss your problem privately.



Practice, Practice, Practice.  
**Remember, practice makes perfect.**

### Situation 1

Joseph knocks your books out of your hands.

**Joseph:** Just kidding. Can't you take a joke?

**You:** Joseph, I feel \_\_\_\_\_

when you \_\_\_\_\_

Please \_\_\_\_\_

### Situation 2

You are picked for Sue's kickball team.

**Sue:** Oh no! We don't want you on our team!

**You:** Sue, I feel \_\_\_\_\_

when you \_\_\_\_\_

Please \_\_\_\_\_