

Sample Ground Rules for a GSA

1. Respect Others: You may hear ideas at GSA meetings that are new or different for you, and opinions that might run counter to your own. As you participate and interact, try to take in new information without judgment and to keep an open mind. Make sure that your words and body language reflect a respectful attitude toward others. Learn by listening to others, and make an effort to be supportive.

2. Speak From the "I": Speak from your own personal experiences and do not judge the thoughts or experiences of others. Use I-statements such as "I feel..." or "In my experience..." Avoid "You should" statements and generalizations or globalizations of any kind.

3. Be Open to New Ideas: New ideas and techniques may be utilized or suggested during GSA meetings. Be open to considering new information and incorporating new practices.

4. Ask Questions: Please feel free to ask any question that comes up for you without fear that it is too silly, stupid or explicit. Make sure to phrase all questions in respectful ways.

5. Respect Confidentiality: Please be sure that everything said in the room stays in the room. When sharing personal anecdotes, avoid using the real names of other people.

6. Step Up, Step Back: Though we encourage you to express your ideas and opinions, we ask that you not monopolize the group's time, and that you help create a safe space in which everyone can speak. No one, however, is obligated to speak. "Passing" is okay.

7. Respect Commitments: While you are encouraged to take care of your personal needs throughout the meeting, please honor your commitment to being here by observing time guidelines during breaks, turning off beepers and phones, and limiting unnecessary interruptions.