



Sandy Hook Promise Conversation Facilitation Guide

Promise Leader Facilitation Guide

Facilitating a conversation can be as simple as having a conversation with your guests – the people you know and care about – on why Sandy Hook Promise’s unique approach to preventing gun violence is important to you. The most critical things to remember is to be yourself and let your passion shine through. This Facilitation Guide contains a sample agenda to lead your conversation. An Overview of Sandy Hook Promise that you can use as talking points or a handout, as well as a sample letter/email that your guests can sign or send to schools and youth organizations in your area is also available at <http://www.sandyhookpromise.org/conversations>.

Promise Leader Conversation Agenda

Welcome and Introductions (5 – 10 minutes)

- Welcome your guests. Thank them for coming. Briefly share why you chose to become a Promise Leader and why you wanted to bring people together today.
- Ask your guests to introduce themselves and why they decided to join the conversation.

Who is Sandy Hook Promise (10 minutes)

- Introduce Sandy Hook Promise’s unique mission and approach to gun violence. Sample talking points include:
 - Share Sandy Hook Promise’s purpose:
 - Sandy Hook Promise (SHP) is a nonprofit organization led by several family members who lost loved ones in the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting on December 14, 2012.
 - The organization’s sole purpose is to prevent gun violence so that no other parent experiences the senseless, horrific loss of their child.
 - Sandy Hook Promise believes gun violence – and all violence – is preventable and that it’s time for a new conversation that brings people together around their common values – protecting our kids and communities from gun violence.
 - Share the collective challenge and opportunity we have to prevent gun violence:
 - There are ~500,000 acts of gun violence each year in the US, with no change since 2004. About 30,000 adults and children die from homicide, suicide or unintentional death annually; 80,000 are wounded and another 390,000 are traumatized victims involved in a gun-related crime each year. Each day, 7 children and teens are killed and 9 are injured.
 - We can do better!
 - Sandy Hook Promise conducted extensive research to better understand why there has been little to no change in the number of gun violence acts despite downward trends in other non-gun related crimes. Here is what they found:
 - Americans are not engaged in the issue of gun violence. They feel hopeless and helpless and are turned off by gun rhetoric.
 - There is too much focus on “the gun” as *the* cause of gun violence. We need to address “the human” holding the gun as well. For example, what are the reasons someone might pick up a firearm to hurt themselves or someone else? How can we identify and intervene before the gun is even in the equation?
 - There is a belief that policy is the only solution to gun violence. There are many seemingly simple, yet powerful things we can do in our community to prevent gun violence today.

- There is minimal support for prevention, even though many individuals give off signs before hurting themselves or others.
- Share Sandy Hook Promise’s approach to preventing gun violence:
 - We can prevent gun violence *BEFORE* it happens by teaching adults and youth how to recognize the signs and signals of individuals who may be at-risk of hurting themselves or others and intervene to get them help. Specifically, Sandy Hook Promise:
 - Educates, engages and mobilizes youth and adults in gun violence awareness and prevention.
 - Partners with schools and youth organizations to deliver – at no cost – their *Know the Signs* prevention programs.
 - Advocates for prevention focused mental health and gun safety policy at the state and federal level.

Sandy Hook Promise ‘Evan’ Video (3 minutes)

- In order to share the video, you will need Wi-Fi or Internet access, a laptop/computer/tablet and the link to the video, available at [Evan Video](#)

Conversations (10 minutes)

- Ask your guests to share their reactions to the video and Sandy Hook Promise’s unique approach to preventing gun violence. Ask them what surprised them? What inspired them? Encourage your guests to share their story.
- Sample questions pertaining directly to the Evan Video
 - 1) What were some of the signs you observed in the video?
 - 2) How do you think Sandy Hook Promise’s Know the Signs programs could help train and empower students to recognize these signs and intervene?
 - 3) What could this look like in a school or youth organization in our community?
 - 4) What can we do about this?
- *OPTIONAL*: Hand out the Sandy Hook Promise Overview to your guests. The overview is available at <http://www.sandyhookpromise.org/conversations>.

The Ask (10 minutes)

- Ask your guests to take one small step to preventing gun violence today. Remind guests that there are many seemingly simple, yet powerful things we can do to prevent gun violence *before* it happens in our community.
- Ask #1: Ask your guests to join the 1.6 million and counting people across the United States – moms, dads, teachers, grandparents, community members like you – who Made the Promise at www.sandyhookpromise.org.
 - 1) Open your computer, laptop or tablet to www.sandyhookpromise.org. Ask your guests to take turns signing up to Make the Promise.
 - 2) As your guests sign up, thank them and give them a Sandy Hook Promise “Make the Promise” wristband.
- Ask #2: Ask your guests to take an additional step to bring Sandy Hook Promise’s no-cost *Know the Signs* programs to a school or youth organization in your community by signing onto a letter or sending an email. This sample letter/email is available at <http://www.sandyhookpromise.org/conversations>.
 - SHP trains youth and adults, *at no cost*, in four research-based “*Know the Signs*” programs.
 - SHP’s Know the Signs programs teach youth and adults how to identify, intervene and get help for individuals *BEFORE* they hurt themselves or others.

- SHP's *Know the Signs* programs include:
 - **Say Something:** Say Something (SS) teaches youth how to recognize signs and signals, especially within social media, of an individual who may be a threat to themselves or others and Say Something to a trusted adult *BEFORE* a tragedy takes place.
 - **Start With Hello:** Start With Hello (SWH) teaches youth how to be more inclusive and connected to one another. SWH works to create connectedness and sustain an inclusive culture/ community, by minimizing social isolation, marginalization and rejection, *BEFORE* an individual chooses to hurt themselves or others.
 - **Safety Assessment & Intervention:** Safety Assessment & Intervention (SAI) teaches adults in schools and youth organizations how to identify, assess and respond to threats of violence or at-risk behavior *BEFORE* a tragedy takes place. SAI not only addresses the threat itself, but also helps identify and treat the underlying problem in that youth's life that led to him/her making the threat.
 - **Signs of Suicide:** Signs of Suicide (SOS) uses an educational curriculum to teach students to recognize the symptoms of depression and suicide, and can be implemented by existing school personnel within once class period. The main teaching tool is a video that shows dramatizations and real life stories of hope about the right and wrong ways to react when a friend exhibits certain behaviors.
 - More information on each of Sandy Hook Promise's *Know the Signs* programs can be found at www.sandyhookpromise.org/prevention_programs.

Conclusion (5 minutes)

- Thank your guests for their time and for taking action today.
- Let your guests know you appreciate them joining you for this important conversation and for learning more about Sandy Hook Promise and how they can help prevent gun violence in their community.
- Encourage them to reach out to you if they have questions or would like to get further involved. Feel free to have your guests email us at promiseleader@sandyhookpromise.org if they are interested in becoming a Promise Leader like you.
- Congratulations! You've just helped your guests break through the helplessness and inspired hope that – together – we can prevent gun violence *before* it takes place.