

# Goal Sandwich

Use this activity to help youth identify a short-term goal and create concrete steps to complete that goal. This short process is great for groups new to goal-setting. Goal sandwich allows youth to practice their **Ways of Doing** by learning the important skills of goal-setting. This activity was contributed by [Project Success](#).

## Why This Matters

- Goal-setting is a crucial social and emotional skill that helps youth plan for their future.
- This activity breaks down the process of goal setting into easy, actionable steps.

## Getting Started

- Materials: Pens/pencils, 4 different colored notecards or paper. You need enough so that each youth has one of each color.
- Time: At least 30 minutes
- Explain the activity using a group example.

## How To Use It

- 1) Explain that the purpose of this activity is to have youth identify a goal and make steps to achieve that goal. Discuss the word, “goal,” and ask youth to think about how it is used in different contexts (e.g., a goal in soccer). Potential questions: What comes to mind when you think of the word “goal”? What are some examples of goals that you have set in the past? Explain that goals are the smaller, practical steps one needs to achieve a dream.
- 2) Tell the group that today they will set goals in the form of a goal sandwich.

- 3) Distribute a packet of index cards to each student, saying that each color represents a different layer of the sandwich.
  - The [name color] card is bread. The bread frames the sandwich. It’s the beginning and the end. Youth fold the yellow card hamburger-style and title the left panel “Present” and the right panel “Future.” On the left, students write a current challenge (i.e. “I am failing biology.”). On the right, they write their goal (i.e., “I want to raise my biology grade to a B.”).
  - The [name color] card is jelly. Jelly gives the sandwich flavor. It is motivation to take a bite, but remind them that they can’t eat it all in one big bite. Bites have to be manageable. Title this card “Steps to My Goal.” Using checkboxes, instruct the students to list at least 3 steps they will have to complete to accomplish the goal.
  - The [name color] card is peanut butter. Peanut butter is tasty, but it is thick and slows eating a sandwich. Title this card “Obstacles.” This is not to say that peanut butter or eating slowly are bad things, but the illustration demonstrates how goals may be slowed. Instruct students to list 2 or 3 obstacles that might prevent accomplishment of the goal.
  - The [name color] card is milk. Milk helps the sandwich-eating experience, allowing the sandwich to be ingested more easily. Title this card “People Who Can Help Me,” those who can help with the “how and why” of goal-setting. On this card, instruct students to list 3 people who will support their completing of the goal.
- 4) Before having students work on their individual goals, explain that you will all work through an example as a group. Pick a concrete and silly example to work through the goal sandwich with the group. Ask youth to help brainstorm each part of the sandwich. Write down the components on a white board or large sheet of paper. Some potential goals to work through are: Organize an end of the year field trip to the zoo, get a summer job, volunteer at the local animal shelter, etc.
- 5) Tell youth that the next step is for them to work on an individual goal. Place some confines on the scope of the goal (i.e. a goal for the beginning of the school

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year, a goal for school, a goal for after-school time, a goal in their family). Give students at least 20 minutes to work on their goal sandwich. Walk around the room to answer questions and help those who might need ideas.

- 6) **Wrap-Up:** Ask students to turn to the person next to them and share their goals with each other. The listener should support the speaker by asking 4 questions:
  - Is the goal attainable?
  - Is the list of steps complete?
  - Will you accomplish the goal?
  - How will you celebrate the accomplishment of this goal?
- 7) Ask the students how it felt when their classmates evaluated their goal. Who might be able to help them set goals in the future?

## Take It Further

- This activity could be used as a process for a group of youth to set goals for a specific project or a period of time.
- The Goal Sandwich could also be used in a one-on-one setting with an individual youth.
- To further reflect on the activity, consider asking the following questions:
  - How did it feel to share your goal with someone else?
  - What other goals would you like to set in the future?
  - What parts of the sandwich were the easiest to come up with? Which parts were the most challenging?