# Communication

**Activity:** Listen Up!
**Audience:** 6th – 8th grades
**Time Required:** 20 – 30 minutes
**Location:** Any location, preferably away from distracting noises

**Objectives:** Participants will:
- Learn to identify sounds
- Learn to use other forms of communication

**Life Skills:** Communication, leadership

**Materials:** Sounds makers: small objects (such as pennies, buttons, or dried beans) and a small jar, various kinds of paper, a baby's rattle, or other noisemakers; pencils, paper, newsprint, markers, etc.

**Overview:** Participants discover the importance of focusing their senses

**Do the Activity:**

1. Have students brainstorm why listening is important.
2. List appropriate answers on newsprint. (Be sure to identify safety as one reason.)
3. Have students close their eyes. Instruct them to keep their eyes closed while you make a sound.
4. Place some pennies in the small jar (a baby food jar is ideal) and shake them up. Conceal the jar.
5. Ask students to open their eyes and write down what they think the sound was.
6. Repeat steps 2 and 3 with all the appropriate sound makers. Other noises can be made by crinkling up some paper, wax paper, or aluminum foil; by snapping some plastic wrap or an old pillow case; by swishing water in a jar; by shaking a baby's rattle; by tapping a pencil against a jar of water. Use your imagination to think of other sources of sounds. Have the students discuss the responses for each.
7. Have the students discuss their overall responses.

**Reflect and Apply**: Discuss the following

1. Did you identify the sound immediately?

2. Did you listen with an expectation about what you would hear?
3. Did you always think you knew what the sound was before you heard it or listened completely?
4. How do sounds sometimes affect the way we feel?
5. Sit with your eyes closed for two minutes and try to identify the sounds that surround you. Can you identify them?

Source: RISE curriculum, University of Connecticut