

# Everyday Heroes

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## Leader's Guide

### Leader Introduction

Say something like:

*Today we are going to discuss everyday heroism — heroes whose courage has not necessarily brought them fame. The goal of this lesson is to discuss the importance of heroes in our lives, how we ourselves are often called on to be heroic, and how we might encourage everyday heroism in our communities.*

Distribute the worksheet *Everyday Heroes in Our Lives* (page 3), and ask participants to complete *Part I: Recollections* only. *Part II: Ourselves as Heroes* will be completed later.

When everyone has finished, invite participants to share what they wrote. (Ask for volunteers only; do not force anyone to share.)

### What is a Hero?

Show the five conditions for heroism poster you prepared in advance.

Say something like:

*Let's look at the five conditions for everyday heroism. As we talk about these ideas, think about the hero you identified on the worksheet.*

#### 1. Recognize the risk or sacrifice

Say something like:

*Real heroes feel afraid because they know they are facing some type of risk to themselves or others or will have to make a sacrifice. Do you agree? Can you think of examples? Did your hero face a risk or sacrifice?*

### Overview

Review MF-2556, *Everyday Heroes* and obtain copies of the publication to distribute to participants. Provide time for participants to read *Everyday Heroes* at the beginning of the session.

Visit the *Ring of Valor* Web site: [www.k-state.edu/wvparent/programs/hero/index.htm](http://www.k-state.edu/wvparent/programs/hero/index.htm) for more information about this program and additional insights about courage and heroism, especially for preteen youth.

Make copies of the worksheet on Page 3 of this publication for each participant.

Make copies of the evaluation form on the last page of this publication and distribute to each participant at the conclusion of the meeting. Collect the evaluation forms and send them to your local extension FACS agent.

If anyone in the group may not know others present, provide name tags for each participant.

On a large sheet of paper or poster write the five conditions for everyday heroism:

1. Recognize the risk or sacrifice.
2. Value all life without reservation.
3. Manage fear.
4. Make smart decisions.
5. Commit oneself fully to a noble goal.

## 2. Value all life without reservation

Say something like:

*Everyday heroes have a conscience and care about themselves and others. Research on rescuers who risked their lives for Jews during WWII showed that they had a reverence for all life, not just for those within a certain group. Did your hero show caring in any way?* (Discuss.)

## 3. Manage fear

Say something like:

*Everyday heroes know they may face a threat. They do not panic mindlessly or react foolishly. They quiet their turbulent emotions so they can respond as effectively as possible. They stay in control. Sometimes retreat is the best choice. Sometimes adversity must be faced courageously. What do you think? Did the hero you selected feel afraid? If so, was the fear held in check?*

*The person lacking courage is controlled by fear. The hero manages fear to act courageously. Fear is an emotion for self-protection.*

## 4. Make smart decisions

Say something like:

*Everyday heroes may be very afraid, but they still use their minds to respond to the threat as effectively as possible. This thinking can be extremely fast and accomplished in just a few seconds. Why is staying alert important? What awareness did your hero demonstrate?* (Discuss.)

## 5. Commit oneself fully to a noble goal

Say something like:

*Everyday heroes are willing to take risks and make sacrifices because of deeply held, priority values. They do not just talk about what is important. They act honorably to achieve a noble goal. What is important enough for you that you would be willing to make a sacrifice or take a risk? Did your hero example have a noble goal?* (Discuss.)

## Ourselves as Heroes

Say something like:

*Let's take a moment to think about ourselves as everyday heroes. Complete "Part II: Ourselves as Heroes" on the worksheet. Because your response to this issue could be personal, we will discuss your responses only if you volunteer to do so.*

If someone wants to share his or her thoughts, provide time for discussion to occur. Do not pressure anyone to reveal what he or she wrote.

## Heroism in Our Community

Say something like:

*Let's take a few minutes to discuss how we might encourage everyday heroism in our communities.* (Discuss.)

Brainstorm ways parents and teachers might nurture courage in children. Encourage participants to visit the *Ring of Valor* Web site at: <http://www.k-state.edu/wvparent/programs/hero/index.htm> for more information about introducing the concept of heroism to students in Grades 4 through 6. You could write the address for all to see, or direct them to the last page of the fact sheet.

## Final Comments

Summarize the discussion in your group. Distribute the *Everyday Heroes Program Evaluation* form. Thank participants for attending the session and collect the forms.



## Worksheet: Everyday Heroes in Our Lives

*Part I: Recollections* (To be shared with the group.)

Think back to your childhood and youth. Can you recall anyone who seemed heroic to you? In the space below, identify the qualities that made that person heroic in your eyes. If you cannot remember anyone who fit your idea of heroism, describe your ideal hero while you were growing up. What character traits are associated with heroism?



*Part II: Ourselves as Heroes* (Your thoughts are your own, unless you wish to share.)

One universal quality of true heroes is that they do not view themselves as heroes. They typically become uncomfortable with any public attention for their deeds. Measure your own heroism by the greatness of the fears you have overcome. Think back to your past. What fears have you faced? How did you respond? Have you ever taken a risk to help someone else or demonstrate personal integrity? Keep in mind that the greatest acts of heroism may never gain public recognition.



## Everyday Heroes Program Evaluation

County \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. How do I rate this program in general?    Excellent    Good    Fair    Poor
  
2. Did the publication *Everyday Heroes* increase your knowledge about courage and heroism?  
 Yes       No
  
3. If your response to question #2 was “yes,” can you describe what you learned?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. As a result of participating in this program, do you think you will do anything different in the future?  
 Yes       No
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. If your response to question #4 was “yes,” can you describe what you will do differently?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Additional comments or suggestions:

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