



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

**PROJECT
CORNERSTONE**
A YMCA of Silicon Valley Initiative

Steps to a *Genuine* Apology

Everybody makes mistakes. Anyone can have a day when their *bucket is empty* and they say something unkind or do something to cause pain or hurt feelings. Let's **practice** how to deliver a *genuine* apology!

TRY THIS:

1. **Do an empathy check.** Recognize and understand your words have hurt someone. Stand in the harmed one's shoes by reading their body language and listen to the tone of the words spoken. Extend an *olive branch phrase*.
2. **Take responsibility for what you did wrong.** Be specific. Use an "I" statement.
 - a. *"Oh No! I spilled your cup of juice all over your shirt!"*
 - b. *"I took your iPod without asking."*
3. **Acknowledge how your mistake impacted the other person.** If you don't know how your mistake made them feel, ask them! Use the words "I am sorry" but then also state what you are sorry for.
 - a. *"I am sorry that I got your shirt all wet. I think I ruined it!"*
 - b. *"I am sorry. I know you thought someone had stolen your iPod. You were worried that you would never see it again."*
4. **Deal with the consequences of your mistake.** Ask the other person, "What can I do to make it right" or offer suggestions on what you might do to make things better.
 - a. *"Let me get some napkins to dry you off. Would you like to wear my sweatshirt for the rest of the day?"*
 - b. *"I will ask you before I borrow anything in the future."*
5. **Commit** to changing your behavior in the future. Use an "I" statement.
 - a. *"Next time, I will be more careful when I find my seat."*
 - b. *"I will ask you before I borrow anything from you in the future."*