

Alternatives to Violence

Adapted from the Anti-Defamation League's A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

Rationale:

This activity gives participants an opportunity to develop and practice strategies and skills for confronting issues that could lead to violence.

Requirements:

Materials: Student Handouts, Scenario Cards, Board or Flip Chart, Marker or Chalk

Time: 45-60 minutes

Age Level: Grades 6-12

Agenda:

- Students complete "Do Now" and Discuss (5-10 minutes)
- Read the AIM
- Prepare for Role Plays (15-25 minutes)
- Presentation & Discussion of Role Plays (20 minutes)
- Answer the AIM (5 minutes)

Directions:

1. Ask students to look at the "Do Now" and answer it. This activity will work whether students are in pairs, groups or individual, so it is up to you to decide. After you give students a few minutes to answer the question, discuss it with the whole class. Answers might include ideas like fear, anger, peer pressure, etc.
2. Ask a student to read the AIM and let students know that the purpose of this lesson is to try to come up with peaceful ways to solve difficult situations.
3. At this point students need to be in groups 4-6. Give each group a different scenario card. Ask the groups to read their scenarios. Explain that they will create a short role play for the scenario as it is written. Then they will come up with a new ending and role play that new ending as well. Tell students that all members of the group must be involved in the role play. Make sure you move around to offer suggestions or ideas where necessary.
4. Reconvene the whole class and have each small group reenact the scenario for everyone. Remember, they should have the original scenario and then an additional ending.
5. After each group has completed its presentation, encourage feedback and alternative responses to the scenario from the whole class. List these ideas on the board or chart paper.
6. Wrap-up by asking students to answer the AIM question. They should reiterate the ideas that came up in role plays. Make sure you let students know that there are no right or wrong answers when facing these difficult situations. When we think about how to respond to situations that make us feel concerned, angry, confused, or afraid, it might help us develop better communication skills and therefore react more peacefully.

Student Handout

Name:

Date:

AIM: What are the different ways you can react peacefully to difficult situations?

DO NOW: Why do you think people use violence? List your ideas below.

Agenda:

- Complete “Do Now” and Discuss
- Read the AIM
- Prepare for Role Plays
- Presentation & Discussion of Role Plays
- Answer the AIM

Role Play Directions - When you get your scenario cards, you need to:

1. Read the card to your whole group.
2. Make sure everyone understands the card.
3. Discuss other, more peaceful ways the situation could have ended. List your ideas in the box below.

4. Develop a role play that everyone in the group can participate in. Create the role play as it was written in the card. Then create a new ending that does not involve violence or discrimination.

Answer the AIM in the box below.

Cut these scenarios and give one to each group.

Scenario 1

During lunch, male students stand along the hallway in front of the cafeteria. As female students walk by, the male students make comments about the girls' appearance, rating the girls on a scale of 1-10. The girls feel angry and embarrassed. After a week of this, one girl finally turned around and threw her food at the boys. The boys got angry and embarrassed and didn't understand why she did it, so one boy stepped forward and pushed the girl. A fight broke out between all the boys and girls.

Scenario 2

A group of friends was watching their school team playing a soccer game. They were so excited when their team won. They started yelling and screaming, cheering for their team. When the players from the other team walked by, these students yelled mean things calling them losers and throwing things at them. The group of friends met up with some of their friends from the team and they walked home. When they turned a corner, they ran into some of the players from the other team. The other players recognized them so they jumped them, asking, "Who is the loser now?"

Scenario 3

A group of boys were sitting at a table having lunch. A new student tried to sit by them, recognizing them from his science class. As the boy sat down, one boy said, "You can't sit here. We don't allow fags." The new student pushed the boy off his chair and kicked him in the stomach before some adults could stop him.

Scenario 4

There were several bomb threats in the school, forcing administrators to evacuate the building. As the students were filing out of the school for the third time that month, a boy overheard a group of students saying, "Hassan's probably the one calling in these bomb threats; it has to be him. Arabs are terrorists, and he's one, isn't he?" The boy told Hassan, and Hassan was so angry that he got some of his friends together and they waited for the boy as he walked home. When they saw him, they beat him up.

Scenario 5

A group of girls kept harassing one girl because she was overweight. Everyday in school they told her she was fat and ugly. One day they cornered her in the bathroom and pinched her fat telling her she was disgusting and why doesn't she just kill herself. This girl was very depressed at having this happen to her everyday. She knew her father had a gun, so she went home and committed suicide.