

Building Healthy Relationships

This program was put together at the request of 2 elementary schools that were having classroom conflicts. This is not evidence based but rather content that we felt best addressed the issues. If you would like more in-depth information, like the full agendas and supporting resources, please contact me directly: Colleen Taylor, taylora@wocrc.ca 613-591-3686 x228

Session1: Relationship Aggression

- Define relationship aggression as a brainstorming activity.
- Activity: Is this relationship aggression? Read out various statements. If the child feels that the statement is relationship aggression, then they stand up. If not, they remain seated. Discussion as needed.
- Brainstorm examples of relationship aggression
- Around the room, post sheets of paper on the walls that have one quality of a good friend written on it. Give each child 5 stickers and have them put their stickers on the five qualities they feel are most important. The top 5 qualities can be left for the teacher/staff to post in the room as a reminder of what the group felt were the most important qualities of a good friend.
- Watch the Sunburst video: Don't pick on me! Part 2: The silent treatment. Have the children discuss key aspects of the video and report back to the larger group.
- Have the children complete their own checklist of what they feel makes a good friend.

Session 2: Empathy Building

- Group discussion of what Empathy means.
- Talk about body language. Play Feelings Charades .
- Talk about the Golden Rule, watch the short YouTube video: and discuss <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kLRMuYfoHEY>
- Introduce the Platinum Rule: treating others the way THEY want to be treated.
- Apple activity: while passing around a fresh apple, have the children say something mean to the apple and drop it to the floor. Once everyone has had a turn, talk about how verbal statements make people feel. That the feelings are inside, not visible to others. Now cut open the apple from stem to bottom. Observe what has happened to the inside of the apple. Discuss. Take a second apple but now you will say something kind to the apple and NOT drop it. Cut open the apple from side to side (across the horizontal middle). Reveal the "star" inside. Each one of use has the ability to be a star friend when we use kind words/actions.
- Discuss some of the qualities that make us empathetic. Do they look like the qualities of a good friend?

Session3: Positive Leadership

- Talk about role models: what are they, what does it mean, where do we find them. Talk about the negative role models (sports, politics, etc.)
- Brainstorm who their role models are. What qualities do they possess?
- Group Activity: The Human Knot. This is an activity that requires the group to work together cooperatively to complete the task. Discuss how it went: were there leaders/ followers? How could you tell? What qualities did they demonstrate?
- Have the children divide into smaller groups. Provide them with scenarios that depict people being positive leaders and negative leaders. Give them discussion questions: how do you think this situation got started? Who was a good leader? What could they have done differently?
- As a take home exercise, have the children watch one of their favourite TV shows. Have them track the number of violent things they see or hear. Did it surprise them? Will they reconsider watching this TV show in the future?

Session 4: Problem Solving and Communication

- Introduce SEAT: stay calm, empathy, assertive and think. (we have made a poster for this).
- Discuss in detail what each step means. For stay calm-you can do the volcano in my tummy activity of vinegar and baking soda; empathy-review; assertive-talk about the 4 conflict styles (aggressive, passive aggressive, assertive and passive), practice using "I" statements; think-talk about Fight Stoppers (and fight starters), look at the problem solving wheel.
- Have the group put together a Friendship First Aid kit: in Ziploc baggies, have each child include an item, with an explanation, that could be used by someone in the event that they are feeling upset by a negative event/experience (here's a Kleenex to help dry your tears, here's a penny for better luck next time, here's a feather to tickle yourself into feeling happier, and so on). Keep the kit readily available to the students. The items aren't generally things that will actually be used, but they could be.
- Have the group sign a pledge in support of creating a positive environment and to being a good friend.