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Bullying & Relational Issues

Dealing with others can be a difficult area of life to navigate. This section helps you lead students to have meaningful discussion and insight into relational dynamics. Issues addressed include bullying, gossiping, friendship, assertiveness, relationship traits, and effective communication/conflict resolution.



Lesson 3: Oops...I Didn't Mean for THAT to Happen

Overview

Students will complete tasks that demonstrate how gossiping can have unintended consequences. Exploration of individual motivation for gossiping will be explored.

Objectives

- Students will discuss and understand the effects of gossip and spreading rumors.
- Students will see a visual example of how spreading gossip and rumors can have unintended consequences.
- Students will see a visual example of how some effects of gossiping and/or spreading rumors are long-term and do not have an easy fix.

Materials

- Small cup or bowl with glitter in it
- A small object to put inside the cup/bowl of glitter (bead, paper clip, tack—just something small)
- Paper
- Copy of **Mouth Motivators** activity sheet for each student
- Tube of toothpaste—any size will work

Procedures

1. Place the small object from the materials list into the cup/bowl with the glitter. Instruct the student(s) to get the object out. Ask them to look at their hands and see what has happened. (At this point, glitter will be on their hands).
2. Ask the students with the glitter on their hands to touch or pick up something else. Discuss what happens.

Lesson 3: Oops...I Didn't Mean for THAT to Happen (CONTINUED)

3. Continue the discussion and make parallels to illustrate how choosing to participate in gossiping/rumor spreading is similar. *Example: Sometimes, we intend on telling one person—and we all know how it goes—it just keeps spreading. Before you know it, it is all over the school or has gotten lots of shares and likes on the internet. The news went much further than you ever intended.*
4. Give the group or student(s) a piece of paper and the tube of toothpaste. Tell them to push the toothpaste out onto the paper.
5. Instruct the students to put the toothpaste back like it was before they started. This is impossible—just like it is impossible to take back some of the destructive effects that gossip/rumors can have on people.
6. Complete the **Mouth Motivators** activity sheet. If done in a group or classroom, please ensure everyone has privacy to encourage honesty.
7. If appropriate for the setting, have a discussion about what came to students' minds as they completed the activity sheets.

Discussion Questions and Prompts

1. What do you gain from gossiping or spreading rumors?

2. Describe how it feels to be the target of gossip or rumor spreading?

3. In today's tech world of internet, social sites, and cell phones—gossip and rumors can spread much faster. What are some long term effects of spreading things electronically? (Make points about future job situations and employers looking at past social media sites, accidentally sending things to the wrong person, etc. If you are working with students and feel it is appropriate, discuss some of the situations in the news media in which students have committed suicide as a result).



Mouth Motivators

.....

Who are you around when you are most likely to gossip?

What feelings do you have while you are gossiping?

What will it take for you to begin making a choice not to participate in gossip?



What action steps can you take to ensure you do not get involved in gossip?
