

Speaker Notes

Title of Presentation: Conflict Resolution for Middle School

Page 1 – Ask the students, “What do you think of when you hear the word ‘conflict?’”

Write their responses on a chalk board or flip chart.

Then move to the “Introduction” on slide 4.

Page 2 – none.

Page 3 – none.

Page 4 – Ask:

What kinds of conflicts/disagreements have you had?

How did you handle the conflict and what were the results?

Did any of these end in a positive way with everyone satisfied? Did any of these end in a negative way?

Example of positive outcome: You are working on a project with a friend. You both have different ideas about how to do the project. After a lot of discussion, you are able to come up with an even better solution that combines parts of both of your ideas.

Example of negative outcome: With the same scenario as above – you continue to argue and attack each other personally (Your idea is stupid!). With this kind of conflict, nothing gets done.

As you can see, one advantage of learning how to resolve conflicts in a positive way, is that it can make us more productive.

Page 5 – Activity:

1. Ask the participants if they can think of examples of some or all of these responses.

You can use the following scenario as an example:

Susan, Mary and Angela are friends. Susan decides they should go to a party where she knows there will be no adult supervision. All of their parents have told them they are not allowed to go. Mary and Angela don't want to go, but Susan says, “You're just wimps. Everyone is going and no one's going to like you if you don't go.” Susan is very popular and Mary looks up to her. She reluctantly agrees to go for fear the other kids will not like her. Angela says to Susan, “I don't care what the other kids think. It's not right to go to the party when our parents have told us not to.”

Who is being aggressive? Submissive? Assertive? Which role would you want to take and why?

2. **Standing Up for Yourself:**

Ask the participants to tell the group about a time when they were being bullied or taken advantage of and stood up for themselves. How did it feel?

Page 6 – **STOP and THINK** before your anger gets the best of you and you say or do things that make the conflict worse.

STAY CALM: Take a deep breath. This will help you calm down.

TALK: Say what you think the problem is and what's causing the disagreement. Ask them what they want.

LISTEN: to what the other person has to say – their ideas and feelings.

THINK AHEAD: Think about what the results and consequences of your words and actions will have.

COME UP WITH SOLUTIONS: Think of solutions that will be agreeable to both of you.

ASK FOR HELP: if the above steps don't work, then ask an adult to help you work it out.

Activity: **Steps for Conflict Resolution:**

Ask participants to describe several conflicts that commonly occur at school. List these on the board.

Discuss how the “Steps for Conflict Resolution” in the presentation could be applied to these situations.

You may want to ask the participants to role play some of these conflict examples.

Page 7 – Good conflict resolution skills require good communication skills.

Reflective Listening: this assures that you are really hearing and understanding what the other person says. Sometimes what we think they are telling us is not really their intention. This can lead to miscommunication and further conflict.

“I” statements: These are constructive messages. With “I” messages you state what is bothering you and why. “I” messages also do not attack or blame the other person.

Example – “When you don’t listen to me, I feel angry and frustrated, because it seems like you don’t value my opinion.”

Example of an attacking or blaming statement: “You’re not listening to me you jerk!”

Non-verbal messages are important too. We can communicate hostility and disapproval just by the facial expressions and body language we use.

Activity: Ask participants to role play positive and negative non-verbal language.

This can be a really fun activity – especially if you have participants who are a little on the dramatic side!

Activities:

Page 8 – When entering into a conversation with someone on an issue that you know will be difficult and could lead to conflict, establishing ground rules at the beginning can help prevent the discussion from escalating into an argument.

Page 9 – none.

Page 10 – none.

Page 11 – Sometimes we may be angry about something that happened earlier in the day that may have put us in a bad mood. When we are having a conflict with someone, we can become more angry than we might normally become, because we are already angry about something else.

Page 12 - none.

Page 13 – none.

Page 14 – none.

Page 15 – none.

Page 16 – none.