



## MIDDLE SCHOOL SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING CURRICULUM©

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**Princeton-Blairstown Center's  
Middle School Social Emotional Learning Curriculum**

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## **Session One: Cooperation: Setting the Stage for Community**

### **Session Objectives:**

- Students will be introduced to the PBC program (Separate meeting about trip to Blairstown)
- Students will be introduced to the Full Value Contract
- Students will begin to use the FVC to establish norms
- Students will learn each other's names
- Students will begin to establish a group relationship
- Students will mix with others in the group and learn about others

**Number of Participants: 8-12**

**Target population: 7<sup>611</sup> grade students**

**Estimated Time of Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

- Chart Paper
- Markers
- Many soft throwable objects such as stuffed animals, Nerf balls, etc.
- Premade bingo cards (see sample handout)
- Pencils or pens for each student
- Sheets of Paper
- Stopwatch

### **Activity One: Greetings Overview and Introduction to the Full Value Contract**

Estimated Time: 10 minutes.

#### **Suggested Procedure:**

- Welcome students to the first PBC group of the new school year by introducing yourself, PBC and the goals for the session.
- In your overview it is important to introduce the concept and language of the Full Value Contract. Some facilitators like to begin their community-building by creating a group Full Value Contract, while others prefer to wait until the group has some history together. In this session I suggest beginning with one that lays a foundation for the beginning of group norms around safety. Later, when students are more willing to share their thoughts with people who are no longer strangers to them, we develop a more extensive FVC that is put in place for the life of the community.
- No matter what your preference as a facilitator is, it is important to have a FVC in place before a group heads into trust issues. In this way, students have established ownership of their class by helping to set up the ground rules. Make sure you also commit to the FVC.
- Once the FVC is established, it is seen as a working document to which everyone has made a commitment. The qualities that are agreed upon provide a structure for the

operation of this particular group/class. During processing sessions, the FVC can be referred to when discussing how group members are interacting. If one or more of the qualities are disregarded, it can be discussed. The qualities that are written are ideals—something to work toward. Every time one is ignored, it is an opportunity to learn.

- One pitfall of the Full Value Contract is that it is sometimes used punitively with a student who does not live up to the community standards. Remember that it is a guide. If the same quality is consistently being violated, then it must be discussed either in the class if it involves everyone or on an individual basis outside of the class.
- Finally, the FVC needs to be re-evaluated periodically in order to keep it up-to-date with the developing class community. With experience, group members may choose to add a quality to the FVC, or they may even choose to remove one if it is no longer relevant.

#### Five Finger FVC Basic Contract

- Teach the class the five-finger contract as described below. The Five Finger FVC Contract should also be written on a piece of chart paper so that the students can follow along visually as the facilitator introduces the concept.

#### Five Finger Contract

Each of these fingers is a reminder to us about points that will make this class a safe and respectful place for everybody:

1. Pinky: *Safety*- It's the smallest and most vulnerable finger.
2. Ring finger: *Commitment*- willingness to let things go (and not hold grudges)
3. Middle finger: *Awareness of put-downs*
4. Pointer finger: *Taking responsibility* instead of pointing blame
5. Thumb: *Agreement to work toward group goals.*

- Discuss each one to agree on what it means to this class at this time.
- Once everyone indicates that they understand the five FVC points ask them to add a thumb print or sign the chart paper to denote agreement.
- Revisit the Five Finger Contract periodically to learn more about what each point means. For example talk about one or more points after an activity or as an evaluation at the end of class. Talk about one or more points before class begins to remind students about creating a safe environment.

#### Sample Processing Questions for Five Finger Contract

- How would you define each of these five points?
- Considering that no one is perfect, and that we are working toward these goals, what should we do when one (or more) of these points is ignored?
- How can we celebrate when adhering to these goals?

## Facilitation Notes

Many times it is difficult to know where to begin when attempting to create a safe and respectful community. The Five Finger Contract is a good place to start. It is important to set the right tone at the beginning of the process, and this can help. After the class has been together for a while, students can move into another phase where they create a Full Value Contract of their own.

### **Activity Two: Memory Circle (Ice Breakers/Acquaintance Activities)**

Estimated Time: 10-15 minutes.

#### Suggested Procedure:

- Clear the desks or tables away and have students stand in a circle. Tell them that this is an activity designed to help people learn names.
- Pass an object around so that people can introduce themselves. Each person who receives the object says her or his name and gives some personal information- such as number of siblings, something that has happened this week, or something else that other group members don't know.
- When the object returns to you, go over throwing etiquette: Make sure the receiver knows the object is coming! This should be accomplished by calling the receiver's name and making eye contact before throwing the item. Model this by calling a group member's name and tossing the item to him or her. That person then continues by calling someone else's name and throwing the item to him, and so on. The object should not be thrown to a participant twice until everyone in the group has had a chance to receive it. Once everyone has received the object explain that it can now be thrown to anyone of their choosing so that participants have the opportunity to interact with as many participants and their names as possible.
- After this has gone on for a while, start throwing an additional object, then another, and another. Pretty soon all the items are being thrown, and the energy and laughter levels have risen exponentially.
- Continue for a while. Then stop the action and see if there is anyone who would like to name everyone in the group.

#### Sample Processing Questions for Memory Circle

- Why might it be important to make an effort to learn the names of people in the class?
- What does it mean to include others? Why might it be important to be inclusive?
- How might we make an effort to include everyone in the class?
- How can each of us make an effort to learn the names of others outside this class?

#### Facilitation Notes:

The element of surprise is effective here. After students get lulled into a sense of ease by having only one item going around, then begin introducing the additional items and increasing frequency. Chaos is bound to reign, which is why the objects must be soft. Note: Tennis balls and other objects with hard surfaces can be hazardous. Do not use them. It is also important to

establish the Full Value Contract guidelines first and begin to introduce this language throughout the activity when needed.

If the students already know each other, try this same activity by having them call out a word or phrase that tells something about themselves, like a favorite story, movie character or song. You can even use characters from a book the class is reading.

Adaptations for Students with Disabilities:

For students with cognitive disabilities Adjective Memory Circle may be beneficial to help memory problems (Adjective Memory Circle uses an adjective with each name (such as Active Annie), and a motion to show active (running in place) instead of throwing objects.

### **Activity Three: Group Bingo (Ice Breakers/Acquaintance Activities)**

Estimated Time: 15 minutes.

Suggested Procedure:

- Each student gets a group bingo card
- The task for students is to get as many different signatures on their card as possible in the amount of time allotted.
- Students must ask each other the questions listed on the card and find someone in the class who can answer the question being asked. If a match is found the student answering the question signs their name or initials to that square on the bingo card. No student can answer twice on one card. This forces the students to mix with at least 4-5 students.

Sample Processing Questions for Group Bingo

- Did you learn anything about others in the class? What?
- Does anyone have a personal story to tell about any of the items on the card?
- What other things do you want to know about others in the class?

Facilitation Notes:

It is important to take some time after the Group Bingo to let students compare notes about class members. Have them find out how many left-handers you have in the room, or how many people have broken a bone. Encourage individuals to share stories so that everyone can learn more about each other.

Rather than using the pre-made bingo card, the class can make their own. Have them split into small groups and come up with three to five things they want to know about others in the class. Then they can make up cards that include these small group questions. Due to limited time this may be best as a follow-up activity to the Group Bingo. For example after playing Group Bingo with the premade cards they can break up into small groups and create questions that the facilitator will then collect and make new Group Bingo cards to be used during the next session.

Adaptations for Students with Disabilities

- Create a simpler card with fewer categories
- Do this in pairs so that those who need help reading are paired with better readers.
- Do this in small groups. Students can see how many of the squares they can fill in with their group members.

#### **Activity Four: Name Tag (Ice Breakers/Acquaintance Activities)**

Estimated time: 5-10 minutes.

Suggested Procedure:

- This is designed to be the closing activity and one which brings the group energy level down and prepares them for the transition back to class. The group returns to sitting in a circle and plays a final name game before restoration and dismissal.
- Have students sit in a circle so that everyone can see everyone else. Tell them that this community-building process begins with easy, nonthreatening activities and is designed to get increasingly more difficult. With that in mind, everyone must remember their own first name.
- Tell the person to your right (or left) that you will say your name, then he will say his, the next person will say hers, and so on, until everyone has said his or her name in order. This will be timed. Try it, then announce the time.
- Do it again moving in the same direction. Announce the time. Then do the activity in the other direction a couple of times.
- Now tell the group, as promised, the task will get more difficult. It will now go in both directions. When you say your name, the people on each side say their names, then on down each half of the circle. Everyone will judge which side finishes first. Of course the two directions will cross in the middle somewhere.
- Try this dual method a few times, each time holding up your hand for the side that finishes first.

Sample Processing Questions for Name Tag

- Who won? Why?
- Were you rooting for one side to answer first? Why or why not?
- How did the people caught in the middle feel? Were your classmates supportive of your difficult situation?

Facilitation Notes: This is an activity that does not necessarily need too much processing. It is enough to hear the names and enjoy the activity. There are times, however, when the people caught in the middle are the objects of some teasing if they have trouble passing the names along. Then this issue can be brought up as a teachable FVC moment to address putting others down instead of supporting each other. For added challenge and fun community building, try having people say their name backwards (Carol would be Lorne, Jim would be Mij etc.)

Adaptions for Students with Disabilities

- Try this first as an untimed activity.



## **Session Two: Cooperation: Setting the Stage for Community**

### **Session Objectives:**

- Students learn more about others
- Students mix with others in the group
- Students learn and practice perspective taking
- Students appreciate diversity in the group
- Students practice active listening

**Number of Participants: 8-12**

**Target population: 6th grade students**

**Estimated Time of Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

None

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes

Review the Five Finger Contract and introduce the activities and goals for the day.

### **Activity Two: Celebration**

Estimated Time: 5-10 minutes

Suggested Procedure:

Divide the group into pairs. Partners create some way to celebrate- high fives, a dance, a cheer, or some other expression. Then, throughout the day, when the facilitator says "Celebrate," each person must find his or her partner and celebrate together.

Sample Processing Questions for Celebration as a Paired Activity

- What was it like to work with a partner?
- Why is it important to be able to work with someone else?
- Is it easy or hard for you to approach someone else?

Facilitation Notes:

This activity is meant to continue to build engagement and cooperation among group members. It is meant to be a fun, nonthreatening thing to do with another person. Depending on the group it may be necessary to help students find initial partners, especially if you are aware of triads or students that are regularly excluded. See Pairing Strategies on page ? for some useful techniques to try.) Once you have done Celebration, initial partners for other activities can be assigned by having each person find their Celebration partner.

Adaptations for Students with Disabilities

- Model different ways to celebrate, and allow students to choose the ones they want to do, if necessary.
- Have a large group celebration rather than partner celebrations.

### **Activity Three: Categories and Lineups (Ice Breakers/Acquaintance Activities)**

Estimated Time: 10 minutes.

Suggested Procedure:

1. Clear away an area so that people can move around with ease.
2. Ask the class to line up according to:
  - Alphabetical order by first name
  - Alphabetical order by last name
  - Shoe size
  - Height (shortest to tallest)
  - Hair Color (darkest to lightest)
  - Thumb size (shortest to longest)
3. Or, have them get into groups according to a certain category:
  - Number of siblings (count step and half-brothers/sisters)
  - Season in which they were born
  - Favorite ice cream
  - Favorite day of the week
  - Eye color
  - Types of pets at home
  - Shirt color
  - Types of holidays they like to celebrate in winter
4. For each set of groupings, have students take the time to notice the diversity in the room. Make and take comments about what people observe. Maybe there are a lot of chocolate ice cream lovers in the room or everyone likes Fridays. Why is that?

Sample Processing Questions:

- What do we seem to have in common in this class?
- What are some of our differences?
- How do you like the idea of this kind of diversity?
- What are some of the other things that make each of us unique?

Facilitation Notes:

This activity can be repeated throughout the year. Each time, the categories and lineups can be used to explore diversity issues on a deeper level. Have students create their own categories and lineups. Then use one as a closure for this session.

Sometimes a student may not know the answer to a question such as Mother's first name. Make sure that students know that Challenge by Choice is in effect; they can choose to observe, use

another family member's name, or join any group they wish. The object is not to be legally correct about such things, but to learn more about others.

#### Adaptations for Students with Disabilities

- Students can sort themselves into groups by physical attributes, such as shirt color.
- Do not time the activity.

#### **Activity Four: Interactive Video (Ice Breakers/Acquaintance Activities)**

Estimated Time: 15 minutes.

#### Suggested Procedure:

1. Ask students to sit in a circle with everyone facing away from the middle.
2. One person stands in the middle and taps another on the shoulder. When the "tapped" person turns around, the person in the middle does a simple visual routine (e.g. hands on hips, tapping toe, with a cheerleading jump at the end).
3. Person #1 then leaves the circle and sits or stands aside. Once someone has done the routine, she or he may watch the progression around the circle but may not comment on it (other than to laugh when appropriate).
4. Person #2 taps the next person in the circle and repeats the routine.
5. Person #3 continues by tapping the next person in the circle, etc.
6. When the routine goes all the way around the circle, the first person and the last person face each other. They count to three and do their respective routines (the first person does his or her original routine, the last person does what he or she saw).

#### Sample Processing Questions

- Did the activity change as it was repeated? What do you think was the cause of the change(s)?
- Do you believe everything you see or hear?
- Have you ever been in a situation where someone has reported seeing another person mishandling your property? Or that they have heard something about someone else? How do you usually react?
- How do you know it's the whole story? What can you do to make sure you are not overreacting?
- How can our own perspectives or abilities allow us to change a message?

#### Facilitation Notes

As you can see, this is a visual form of the game telephone (or Operator). Generally, the routines change by becoming simpler, as it is impossible to keep track of all the details that one is witnessing. There is usually much laughing as the audience sees the changes taking place.

In some cases, especially in the elementary grades, students do not wait for the tapped person to turn around before beginning the routine. Obviously, that person will not have the benefit of

seeing the full routine and will be at a severe disadvantage. This is a good teachable moment to focus on how one must be tuned in to the person one is trying to communicate with.

#### Adaptations for Students with Disabilities

- Make the motions simple- one or two in a row.
- Try playing the game Telephone/Operator first (pass along a short phrase)

#### **Activity Five: Differences and Commonalities (Ice Breakers/Acquaintance Activities)**

Estimated Time: 10 minutes.

#### Suggested Procedure:

1. Take one of the student's suggestions for categories from Activity Three and use it to break the group into smaller groups.
2. Once the groups are formed, give students 30-60 seconds to come up with as many things as possible that they all have in common that they cannot see.
3. Do the same with differences- have them identify at least one person in the group who is different from the others in some way that is not overtly apparent.
4. Have each group report at least one finding each time the category changes.

#### Sample Processing Questions:

- How easy or difficult was it for your group to find things in common?
- When you were the only one who was different how you did feel?
- What can you learn about yourself when comparing yourself to others?
- Was it easier or harder to discover differences as opposed to commonalities? Why?
- Have you ever been in a situation where it seems that you have nothing in common with those around you? Does anyone have a situation like this to share?
- When meeting new people, how may you find out more about them?

#### Facilitation Notes:

Keep this activity moving fairly quickly so that students can experience how easy or difficult it is to discover commonalities or differences. With some groups, it may be necessary to ask that the commonalities and differences be kept "G" rated.

#### Adaptations for Students with Disabilities

- Allow students to use commonalities and differences they can see.
- Do this activity in pairs.

### **Session Three: Full Value Contract**

#### **Session Objectives:**

- Students do a name reminder activity
- Students practice taking a little greater risk taking and developing trust as a group.
- Students will create a Full Value Contract for their group
- Students will identify attributes and vocabulary to be included in the Full Value Contract.

**Number of Participants: 8-12**

**Target population: 6th grade students**

**Estimated Time of Session: 40-45 minutes**

#### **Materials:**

- Flip-chart paper
- Markers
- Crayons
- Pre-cut paper hands (one per student)
- Glue stick and/or scotch tape
- Art supplies to decorate paper hands (glitter, stickers, etc.)
- Pre-written word bank flip-chart
- Individual post-it pads for each student

#### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes

#### **Activity Two: 1,2,3 Mississippi (De-inhibitizer Activities)**

Estimated Time: 10-15 minutes.

After students have relaxed a bit during the first two sessions, learned each other's' names, and shared a little more about themselves, Deinhbitizer activities can be introduced. These activities require a little more risk taking than Ice Breakers. For example, people may be required to hold hands for an activity, they might be put on the spot by being in the middle of the class for a game, or the activity may call for people to act silly. Deinhbitizers are meant to get people laughing and relaxed. Ice Breakers begin to loosen people up and begin to engage with one another and Deinhbitizers complete the job.

These activities also allow a group to begin to explore trust issues. Since many of these activities are silly, ask students in which places they would be willing to play the games. Then discuss why they wish to play here and not in public.

#### **Suggested Procedure:**

1. The group stands in a circle with the facilitator in the middle.

2. Ask students to make sure they know the name of the people to their immediate right and left.
3. Notify them that this game is intended to put people on the spot. Then point to someone and say "right." That person is to say the name of the person on their right.
4. Next point to someone and say "left." He is to say the name of the person on his left.
5. After some practice, tell the class that you are now going to interject something that will mess up their minds or try and confuse them . It is the phrase "1,2,3, Mississippi." Now when you say "right" or "left," you will also say "1,2,3 Mississippi." Whoever is being pointed to must say the correct name before you get to the end of the phrase. If not, that person takes your place in the middle.
6. Practice this a few times before putting anyone in the hot seat.
7. For added challenge, add the commands "2-left" or "2-right." Then whoever is being pointed to must say the correct name of the person two away from him or her in the correct direction.
8. You can also say "you" or "me." If "you" is stated, then whoever is being pointed to must say his or her own name. If "me" is stated, then whoever is being pointed to must say the pointer's name.

#### Sample Processing Questions:

- How did it feel to be put on the spot?
- Did it seem as though people were able to laugh at themselves, or was that too risky? Why do you think this is?
- Why do you think it was so difficult to focus when someone was yelling "1,2,3 Mississippi" at you?
- Are there other situations when it is difficult to focus at school? Does anyone want to share?

#### Facilitation Notes:

Depending on the age of your class, you can use the basic version, or you can add more challenges. It is also possible to start with the basic game and make it harder as you progress through the year. If the class knows each other's names already, try having people assume a persona from your studies, or a favorite book character.

It is important that the class be prepared to be put on the spot, and ready to laugh at themselves and with others. This is generally not a problem, unless there is some active antagonism in the group. If so, this activity should be avoided for the time being. Start with a less threatening Ice Breaker instead such as ?.

If you have a large class, try having more than one person in the middle at a time.

#### Adaptations for Students with Disabilities

- Use only "you" and "me."
- Point first to the person who is calling the name, then to the person you want named.

- Count to 10 instead of saying "1,2,3 Mississippi."
- You stay in the middle throughout the activity.

### **Activity Three: Hands All Around (Full Value Contract Activities)**

Estimated Time: 20-30 minutes.

Suggested Procedure:

1. Break the class into two groups of 6 or more if the class is larger than 12 and you have two facilitators available. If not, keep as one group. This activity is best done around a table. Direct students as follows:
2. Pass out Post-it pads and pens to each student. Brainstorm a list of words or phrases that describe how you want to be treated and write each word or phrase on a separate post-it note. The facilitator should have a word bank written on flip chart paper and hanging in a visible location as a prompt for students. Once all the students have stopped writing collect the notes and arrange them on a piece of flip-chart paper titled "How We Want to Be Treated."
3. Next, direct the students to write down how you want to treat each other- in order to make your class a safe and respectful place to be. This is done on Post-its and collected by the facilitator. The facilitator mounts the post-it's on flip-chart paper titled "How We Want to Treat Others."
4. Ask for student volunteers to read these lists to the group.
5. From these two list, choose 10 that are most important to you as a class.
6. Make sure everyone understands what each of the words means. For example if someone says "cooperation," define it so that everyone agrees on what cooperation means for your group.
7. The facilitator or a volunteer writes the 10 words in the middle of a sheet of flip-chart paper, leaving room for the paper hands to form a frame around them.
8. Next, pass out a pre-cut paper hand to each student and have them decorate their "hand" with the art materials so that it represents them. As the students complete their hands paste or tape them to the flip-chart FVC Contract forming a circle.
9. Once all the hands are placed around the 10 words. Read the words out loud, and decide if you can agree to live by these ideas while in this group.
10. If so, sign your hands. If not, discuss your concerns and modify your words to make it possible for everyone in your group to sign.

Sample Processing Questions

- Did you agree on how to create your product? What worked and did not work for you?
- How did you decide on which words to use? Was it easy to agree?
- Do you understand all the words that are used here?
- Give an example of each word. What do these actions look like, sound like, feel like?

#### Facilitation Notes:

For younger students, the brainstorming can take place as a whole class. Then have each small group pick their top 5 or 10 to put on their group sheet. Older students can have more time in their small groups to discuss what is important to them. It is also possible to be less structured and more creative with older students about what to draw on the paper.

#### Adaptations for Students with Disabilities

- Create and use a bank of words for values, impediments to our goals, etc.
- Deal with one concept at a time.

#### **Activity Four: Closing Debrief**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes.

#### Suggested Procedure:

1. Have the group sit around a table or stand in a circle.
2. Give everyone a chance to say one thing by "whipping" around the circle. For example, you can say, "Say one thing that you saw or did during today's session" or "say one word about how you felt during today's activity." Everyone has a chance to say something or pass.



## **Session Four: Full Value Contract Implementation**

### **Session Objectives:**

- Students practice Challenge by Choice
- Students practice taking a little greater risk taking and developing trust as a group
- Students practice active listening
- Students recognize and participate in perspective taking

**Number of Participants: 8-12**

**Target population: 6th grade students**

**Estimated Time of Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

- Circle of chairs
- Ropes or tape on the floor in three concentric circles

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes.

### **Activity Two: Neighbors (Challenge by Choice)**

Estimated Time: 10 minutes

### **Suggested Procedure:**

1. Arrange the room with a circle of chairs. You take the middle.
2. Each person sits in a chair.
3. The person in the middle (you at this point) asks a question that is already **true for him or her**. For example, I can ask, "Is there anyone here who has a brother?" because I have a brother. But I cannot ask, "Is there anyone here who has been to Hawaii? Because I have not been to Hawaii.
4. Once the question is asked, anyone who can answer "yes" steps forward into the middle of the circle. Then, each of these people should move to find any empty place that is not their own.
5. The person in the middle also finds an empty place- thus leaving someone without a spot, which makes this new person take the middle to ask the next question.
6. Some rules you may wish to interject after the game gets going:
  - No one can move to the place next to him or her; everyone must skip at least one chair.
  - To add another dynamic, you can have anyone who says "no" to a question be allowed to fill an empty spot next to him or her if available.

## Sample Processing Questions

- Would it be possible to not move even if you answered "yes" to the question? How would we know? Would it matter?
- What kind of choices did you make? For example, how did you interpret number of brothers and sisters (if this was asked)? Did you include step or half-siblings? Is one interpretation right or wrong?
- What happened when you were challenged by your interpretation? How did you and the group handle that?
- How should we handle choices that people make even if we don't agree with them? When is it necessary to intervene or challenge a choice that someone is making?

## Facilitation Notes:

This activity provides a non-threatening way to bring up the issue of choice. Sometimes there are disagreements of interpretation about questions. Is one wrong and the other right? Or are they just different? This can lead to a larger discussion about choices, and when to question the choices that a peer or friend is making, especially if it seems to cause harm. Challenge by Choice is also "fuzzy" because people genuinely want others to succeed. Success, in itself, is open to many different interpretations. The only way to come to mutual understanding about these issues is to discuss the varying points of view.

A nice partnership variation to this game is to do it in pairs. Each chair is occupied by two people (suggestion: use markers on the floor and have participants stand) who stay together for the whole activity. Two people are in the middle and must decide on something that is true for **both** of them. In order to move to a new place marker, the question must be true for both people in a pair. They then run together to a different marker.

## Adaptations for Students with Disabilities

- Reiterate rules and provide several examples.
- Create some prompt cards with questions they can read.
- Smaller groups may work better.

## Activity Three: Growth Circles (Challenge by Choice)

Estimated Time: 10-15 minutes

### Suggested Procedure:

1. Outline the growth circles on the floor and discuss their meaning (see facilitation notes).
2. Ask questions like those below, and have people put themselves into the circles they feel most appropriate.

How do you feel about?

- Spiders?
- Speaking in front of a large group?
- Singing solo in front of a large group?

- Singing in a choir?
  - Telling a family member you love him or her?
  - Heights?
  - Confronting a friend about something he or she did or said?
  - Snakes?
  - Taking a math test?
  - Introducing yourself to someone new?
  - Camping out in the woods?
3. After each question is asked and people have moved into position, give the students a chance to comment on why they put themselves in their particular spots. Is there a story to share? Who is sharing a point of view?
  4. After a few of your questions, allow students to ask any questions they have for the class.

#### Sample Processing Questions:

- Were you surprised at where you ended up compared with others?
- How can we support the choices each of us makes?
- How can we encourage you to step into your growth zone without putting too much pressure on you? What kind of encouragement is useful to you?
- What can we do to respectfully tell people when the encouragement they are giving is too much?

#### Facilitation Notes:

When considering the idea of Challenge by Choice, it is helpful to talk about the idea of challenge as well as choice. The Growth Circles game allows this. When we are in our comfort zones each of us is in a place that is safe and secure. By choosing to step out of the comfort zone to the growth zone, we are open to new ideas and new experiences. We are in essence breaking new ground. Although not always comfortable this is a place for optimum learning.

What we try to avoid is going beyond the growth zone into the panic zone. The panic zone is a place where learning cannot take place because the threat is too great.

Challenge by Choice affords the opportunity for students and teachers to make the decisions that are right for them. It is a delicate balancing act for each individual- how to take advantage of challenging opportunities without going over the edge.

This activity helps the class to explore these issues. Through the discussion, boundaries can begin to be established about how much to encourage people to push themselves, and how to support the choices each person makes.

#### Adaptations for Students with Disabilities

- Focus on one area at a time (comfort zone first, then growth zone, then panic zone), so that students can more easily distinguish their feelings.

### **Activity Five: Song Tag (Challenge by Choice)**

Estimated Time: 10 minutes

Suggested Procedure:

1. Clear an area and have students stand in a circle. You stand in the middle.
2. Tell the class that you will start singing a song.
3. When someone thinks of a song that connects with your song in any way, then that person steps in and starts singing that song.
4. You will then take that person's place in the circle.
5. This continues for a while; people choose to step into the middle and sing, but not everyone is expected to take a turn. In fact some people will take more than one turn.

Processing Questions:

- Why did you choose to either step into the middle and sing or stay back and observe for the whole time?
- Was it possible to participate in the activity without taking a turn in the middle? How?
- What does Challenge by Choice mean to you?

Facilitation Notes

This activity can be highly threatening for some people. Others can't wait to get in the middle and sing. It is a good way to explore the issues of choice, because all participants feel involved in the activity even if they are observers. It is also possible to branch off into a discussion of individual strengths. Some love to sing, others to dance, read, participate in athletics, and communicate, and so on.

Adaptations for Students with Disabilities

- Brainstorm a list of songs in advance on a given topic. Practice them all first, then try the activity.

### **Activity Six: Closing Debrief**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes

Collect a variety of postcards or pictures from magazines that students can choose to represent how they felt, what they thought about, or how they experienced the activity.

Gather the group around a table with everyone seated. Spread the pictures out on the table and have each student pick one. Go around the circle and have each student describe why his or her picture represents the session.

## **Session Five: Full Value Community**

### **Session Objectives:**

Students will demonstrate an understanding of each of the core FVC's ( ).

Students will understand the difference between safe and risky or harmful behaviors in relationships.

Students will be able to describe how one's choices and decisions impact the achievement of goals.

Students will be able to describe or demonstrate the benefits of positive and challenging goals.

Students will be able to demonstrate ability to notice what gets in our way when setting goals.

**Number of Participants: 8-12**

**Target population: 6th grade students**

**Estimated Time of Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

Stepping Stones Kit

Boundary markers

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes.

### **Activity Two: Secret Agent**

Estimated Time: 15 minutes

### **Suggested Procedure:**

1. Clear a large open space for the activity to take place.
2. Ask each student to look around the circle and select a guardian angel without letting anyone else know who that person is. They are not to show or tell anyone, including their selected guardian angel.
3. Secondly, ask each student to select a secret agent, using the same guidelines as above.
4. The object of the activity is for each student to keep his or her guardian angel physically between him or herself and his or her secret agent! Give a physical demonstration of what that looks like.
5. Activity starts, the entire group is maneuvering about simultaneously attempting to be in this configuration.
6. At the end of each round, have students thank their guardian angels and secret agents.
7. Play another or multiple rounds asking students to choose new guardian angels and secret agents for each round.

8. Tip-This is a good activity in which to introduce the concept of "Freeze." You or a student can yell "Freeze" whenever an activity feels unsafe. Everyone should stop the action and circle up and discuss the problem and make a plan.

#### Sample Processing Questions:

- How did you stay safe in this activity? Can anyone share an example of how you kept yourself or others safe?
- What will this group need to do to stay safe during class or group activities?
- Think about a person in your life who acts as your guardian angel. Who is that person who makes you feel safe? Does anyone want to share how that person makes you feel safe with the group?
- Think of a person in your life who acts as a secret agent. How does that person make you feel unsafe?
- Was anyone surprised at how they felt about the guardian angel or the secret agent even though those people hadn't really done anything to make them feel safe or unsafe?
- Did knowing you could freeze the action help you feel safer?

#### Facilitation Notes:

Framing the activity: "People can sometimes make us feel safe or unsafe. What are the reasons for that? Is it the role they have? Is it something they do? This is a great place to give an example of how you saw students keeping each other safe. Did they give each other verbal heads up, etc. Sometimes you will ask a question and no one will want to talk. That is OK. Be comfortable with silence and give your students time to think. Let their body language tell you when they're ready for the next question. Bumpers up may not be needed, but remind your students to be aware of each other and keep one another safe. You may want to require that students walk during the first round.

#### **Activity Three: Stepping Stones**

Estimated Time: 30-40 minutes

#### Setup:

1. Create a distance that your students must travel across. It should be a large rectangular area. Place boundary markers at each corner and tape across the floor at either end to mark a start and a finish line.
2. Randomly, not in a straight row, place stepping stones (rubber dots) between the start and finish lines. The stones will be a path which your students will traverse from the start line to the finish line. The stepping stones should be no further than three feet apart. Some can be placed nearer to one another and therefore easier to traverse and others placed further apart and therefore harder.

### Suggested Framing:

Another value that keeps us growing is the ability to Let Go and Move On. This requires that we first identify what we need to let go of ourselves as well as helping others identify what they need to let go of. Think about behaviors you have- we all have them- that are slowing you down or stopping you from moving forward and achieving your goals. Those are behaviors you want to let go of, right? Once your entire team has arrived at the other side, you can share what you are letting go of.

### Suggested Procedure:

1. Every student must cross the marked line from start to finish.
2. No one may touch the ground; students may only stand on the stepping stones.
3. Players must remain in contact with the stones at all times, once original contact has been made. If a stone is left unattended (no one touching it), it is lost. That means that if the leader sees a stone that is not touched at any time, you should take it out of the crossing area so students can't use it.
4. If any student touches the ground for any reason, the entire class must go back to the start. You can put the lost stones back or not or put some back as fits the level of challenge for your group.
5. Before the students start the activity they leave an index card with one or two things they are letting go of and leave them at the start or with the Facilitator. Keep these index cards and return to them during the reflection piece. This will help to increase the concreteness of this activity. Once all of the students make it across the finish line ask them to take turns sharing what they are letting go of.

### Sample Processing Questions:

- As a team, how do you feel about how you worked together to accomplish this task?
- Were there times when you lost focus and lost a stepping stone?
- Did you feel like you really let your team down?
- You were asked to identify something you need to let go of? Share what you are letting go of?
- So, is that a goal of yours, to let (whatever they identified in their previous answer) go? How can we help you? What do you need to achieve your goal?

### Facilitation Notes:

Make sure you spot your students and ask them to spot one another. Review spotting with them. Students who have already crossed or not yet begun to cross can help spot as well. The distances between the stepping stones are recommendations. If your group is able to focus and willing to take care of each other, you can make it more challenging. If your group is not ready for this, make it easier. This activity should not be challenging but doable.

You should ask questions if you feel that behavior they have identified as something they'd like to let go of is inappropriate and /or not complementing your program goals. Discussing their resources can help students develop means for self-management.

Variations- Make it more challenging:

- Blindfold some or all students
- No verbal communication
- Give the students the stones and have them problem solve how to place them.

Variations- Make it less challenging

- Only the student who touches the ground, not the whole group, goes back to the end of the line.



## **Session Six: Trust**

### **Session Objectives:**

Students develop physical and emotional trust, trustworthiness , empathy and risk taking.  
Students develop their spotting skills

### **Number of Participants: 8-12**

### **Target population: 6th grade students**

### **Estimated Time of Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

Blindfolds  
Maracas

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes

### **Activity Two: Shakers (Trust)**

Estimated Time: 10-15 minutes

### **Suggested Procedure:**

1. Clear desks away and have students form a circle.
2. Ask for one volunteer to be "the bat" and another to be "the moth." These two stand in the middle of the circle. Everyone else is a spotter.
3. The bat and the moth each get a noisemaker and are blindfolded.
4. The object is for the bat to tag the moth using echolocation. To do this, the bat shakes her noisemaker. At this point, the moth must respond by shaking the noisemaker.
5. The facilitator should allow a certain amount of time for this activity so that the bat is actually able to escape the moth sometimes.

### **Sample Processing Questions**

- Did you have to think about your own safety, or did you feel comfortable with your spotters? Why or why not?
- When you were the bat, what strategies did you use to find the moth?
- When you were the moth, what strategies did you use to stay away from the bat?
- What did you do when you were spotting to keep the players safe?

### **Facilitation Notes:**

This is a good starting activity for younger students. It is very controlled, and it offers the opportunity to try out moving without sight. It also puts the rest of the class in a position to act as spotters. Caution people to move slowly. The spotters should put their hands up to keep the players from straying outside the circle.

### **Activity Three: Hog Call (Trust)**

Estimated Time: 10-15 minutes

Suggested Procedure:

1. Play in a large open area.
2. Have the students get into pairs.
3. Assign each pair an animal.
4. Tell students that they will be split up, and that they must all find their partners without using their sense of sight. They can only call using the call of the animal they were assigned.
5. Split each pair up so that one person from each pair is lined up on one side of the large space and the other person from each pair is lined up on the other side.
6. Explain that everyone will be blindfolded, and that your job is to make sure no one runs into the wall or barrier.
7. Remind everyone to move slowly with bumpers (hands up).
8. Everyone puts on a blindfold.
9. On a signal from the facilitator, they start calling their partner's name.
10. Continue until all partners are reunited.

Sample Processing Questions

- Was it necessary to trust everyone around you? Why or why not?
- Did you feel at risk during the activity? How?
- What strategies did you use to find your partner? Did you plan in advance?
- What did you do to keep yourself safe?
- What did you do to keep those around you safe?

Facilitation Notes

Hog Call is a nice, albeit less structured, way to begin looking at issues of trust. It is less intimate than having one person lead another, offering a more game like atmosphere. Students must be cautioned about moving too fast. A more challenging version of Hog Call is to have people spread out around the designated area, instead of lining up in straight lines.

### **Activity Four: Drive My Car (Trust)**

Estimated Time: 10-15 minutes

Suggested Procedure:

1. Have your students get into pairs, either by choice or by a random method.
2. Describe the activity. The partner who is guiding can only give non-verbal instructions.
3. The person who is blindfolded is the "car," and the guide is the "driver." Since we do not talk to our cars when we drive them, the same applies here. The "car" stands in bumpers-up position, and the driver stands behind him or her. The signals go like this:
  - Hands on shoulders: stop

- Hands off shoulders: go
  - Hands on right shoulder: tum right
  - Hands on left shoulder: tum left
  - Two taps on shoulder: reverse
4. Caution-Speed is an issue here since the driver's hands are off the shoulders when the car is moving. It is important that the car not outrun the driver. Also remind drivers not to wait until the last minute before avoiding a collision, and to look behind them when reversing.
  5. If someone does not wish to be touched at all, offer the option of having the driver give verbal directions.
  6. Go over all safety guidelines : speed, making sure both people can fit through a space, looking up for obstacles, giving one's partner as much information as possible, making sure people know what is around them before asking them to bend down, etc.
  7. Teach the "bumpers up" position: hands out in front.
  8. At any time either person in the partnership can stop the activity if she or he feels too much discomfort. This must, of course, be communicated to the partner before stopping.
  9. Set up boundaries.
  10. Allow enough time for each person to have a tum guiding and being led.

#### Sample Processing Questions

- What did your guide do to gain your trust? Be specific.
- Did you feel your guide took care of your safety? Why or why not?
- Did your guide do anything to make you nervous? What?
- Were you more comfortable being led or being the guide?
- When you were guiding, did you feel responsible for your partner? Why or why not?
- Did you feel the need to peek? What caused you to choose to look?
- How risky was this for you? What would have made it more/less risky?

## **Session Seven: Emotional Trust**

### **Session Objectives:**

- Students develop feelings literacy
- Students practice active listening
- Students practice communicating feelings

### **Number of Participants: 8-12**

### **Target population: 6<sup>th</sup> grade students**

### **Estimated Time Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

- Feelings cards- homemade or commercially made.
- Rope or tape to make a large circle on the floor.

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated time: 5 minutes.

### **Activity Two: Emotion Motion (Emotional Self Awareness)**

Estimated Time: 15-20 minutes.

### **Suggested Procedure:**

1. Have students sit in a circle.
2. Start by showing- through motions- only an emotion (hitting your hand in your fist, for example, to show frustration). Then have everyone practice it.
3. The person next to you shows another feeling using motions only. For example, he may represent "pride" by crossing his arms and sitting tall. The next person may signify "bored" by placing her chin in her hands and sighing. This continues until everyone has a unique motion and everyone has practiced them.
4. The game is now ready to begin. You start by showing your motion (fist in hand), then showing another one (say "pride" - crossing your arms and sitting tall.) You have just passed to the person who is "Pride".
5. "Pride" now does his own motion, crossing arms and sitting tall. Then he puts his chin in his hands and sighs, thus passing to "bored" . This continues until someone makes a mistake (by taking too long, forgetting a motion, doing a motion incorrectly, etc).
6. That person then becomes your motion ("frustration") and takes your spot. Everyone else moves over one spot until the empty spot is filled. Many times this means that only part of the group moves, while the other stays put.
7. The catch is that the feeling motion stays in the same spot; it does not move with the person. So , those who have just moved have to take on a new motion.

### **Sample Processing Questions:**

- What are some nonverbal signals that show how someone might be feeling?
- How might you treat someone differently depending on the nonverbal signals he or she is sending out?
- What are some actions you can take when you are feeling mad, sad, anxious, etc., to help your situation?

Facilitation Notes:

This activity helps open the door to talk about nonverbal communication and body language. You can then transition the discussion into what to do when feeling depressed, angry and so on. Encourage students to talk to others and seek out help when they are feeling hurt, angry, frustrated or depressed. Creating different strategies for these situations helps students become more aware of their feelings and how to take appropriate actions.

Before trying this activity, it is important to make sure that students feel okay about being put on the spot, and that it is okay to make mistakes in this class.

### **Activity Three: Crossing the Feelings Line**

Estimated Time: 15-20 minutes.

Suggested Procedure:

1. Clear an area. Place the rope or tape in a large circle so that everyone can stand around it.
2. Tell the class that each person is going to cross the line *differently* than anyone else.
3. Each person is to cross the line by showing either a. a different feeling or b. the same feeling as someone else, but exhibited in a different way.
4. Demonstrate by stepping over the line with hands clenched and a scowl on your face, then step back.
5. Either have each student tell the class what the emotion is when it is being shown, or have the class try to guess.
6. After everyone has had a turn, have students pair up.
7. This time, each pair is to cross the line differently than any other pair. Give them 30 seconds or so to plan.
8. After pairs, go in groups of four, and so on until the entire class is crossing the line together.

Sample Processing Questions:

- Were you concerned about running out of feelings to share? Did that happen? Why or why not?
- How was it working with other people on this? Were the ideas easier or more difficult to come by?
- Which feelings do you see as "positive" and which do you see as "negative"? Why?
- What ways did you use it to express each feeling? What are other ways you could have used?

- What are the feelings that seem to be the most commonly mentioned? What are some other feelings that we have?
- How might it be risky to express your feelings to others? What can we do to reduce the risk so that people feel comfortable sharing their feelings here?

Facilitation Notes:

Generally, as the groups get bigger in this activity , the students have an easier time coming up with ideas. With the addition of people, options are expanded. The first time around, it may be necessary to help individual students come up with ideas toward the end of the activity, so make sure you have a few feelings ideas available. For example suggest the following: "concerned," "shy," or "hysterical." These are feelings that are usually forgotten in favor of more common "mad," "sad," "glad."

**Activity Four: Feelings Cards: Stories**

Estimated Time: 10 minutes.

Suggested Procedure:

1. Divide the class into pairs.
2. Give each pair three feelings cards.
3. Ask them to create a short story (one paragraph) using the feelings words.
4. Have each pair read and/or act out their story.
5. Make sure everyone knows what each feeling is before starting. Give assistance as needed.

Sample Processing Questions:

- What feelings were easier to write about? Why do you think they were easier?
- Which ones were more difficult? Why do you think they were more difficult?
- What are different ways to express how you feel? Writing is one way.

## **Session Eight: Emotional Trust**

### **Session Objectives:**

- Students increase emotional vocabulary
- Students learn to express their feelings verbally
- Students learn the subtle cues that people use to express their emotions
- Students demonstrate an ability to appropriately express one's needs and emotions.

### **Number of Participants: 8-12**

### **Target population: 6<sup>th</sup> grade students**

### **Estimated Time Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

- Markers or pens
- At least 20 index/note cards
- A piece of flip chart paper or two with each letter of the alphabet labeling an area
- Tape
- Optional - a list of questions provided in the procedure that follows
- 24 index/note cards that have 12 pairs of feelings words written on them (12 words written twice - one word per card)
- Stopwatch

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes

### **Activity Two: Creating a Feelings Chart**

Estimated Time: 15-20 minutes

### **Suggested Procedure:**

1. Prepare a piece of flip chart paper or two by labeling different areas of the paper with each letter of the alphabet. Your students will be taping index cards with a feelings word on them under the corresponding first letter to alphabetize the words.
2. Tell the students "It can be hard to tell people what you are feeling. Sometimes we just don't have the words. Together we are going to start a chart to help us find the right words."
3. Ask your students to brainstorm words that describe feelings.
4. Ask for a volunteer to write each word on an index/note card.
5. When they have at least 10 words, ask them to tape each index/note card under the appropriate letter on the flip chart paper so they alphabetize the words.
6. Expand the chart by reading the following sentences for the students to finish. New words should be written on an index/ note card.
  - When I make a mistake, I feel \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

- When I do a good job, I feel \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
- When I help someone and they say, "Thanks," I feel \_ \_ \_ \_
- When someone calls me a name, I feel \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
- When my friend gets a brand new iPhone and I don't have one, I feel \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
- When someone won't share with me, I feel \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
- When I help someone else, I feel \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
- When someone smiles at me, I feel \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

7. Again ask your students to alphabetize these words

### **Activity Three: Feeling Chart Reflection Activity**

Estimated Time: 10 minutes.

Suggested Procedure:

1. Separate your students into three equal or roughly equal groups.
2. Give each small group one or more starting letters for which your students currently have no words.
3. Challenge each group to come up with three or more new words using one or more of their starting letters. Let them know that they need to be words that describe a feeling and that they need to be prepared to define this word and use it in a sentence.
4. You could turn up the competition in the reflection activity by giving new words that start with a certain letter point value. So, an A word might have three points and a Z word might have ten. The challenge for each group will then be to get the most points.
5. Turn the reflection activity into a challenge for the whole group by asking them to come up with feelings words for each letter of the alphabet.
6. As groups report out, they should post new words on the flip chart paper.
7. Hang the Feelings Chart prominently. Add to it throughout the program. Encourage students to use the Chart to find words to express their emotions.

### **Activity Four: Feelings Memory Game**

Estimated Time: 10-15 minutes

Suggested Setup:

1. Turn the cards face down on a table that is accessible on all sides.
2. Lay down a rope or tape that will separate your students from the table with the cards.
3. Gather your students in a group on the side of the rope/tape without the table.

Suggested Framing:

Tell your students "This is an opportunity to explore feelings. Laid out before you are 24 face-down cards that have some, but certainly not all, feelings written on them. Your job as a group is



to find matching pairs; each word has an identical partner. This is a timed activity. Take a moment or two to plan."

Suggested Procedure:

1. Explain the rules to your students . They are:
  - Students cross the line to the table and turn over two cards.
  - If the words are a match, the students should leave the cards face up.
  - If the words do not match, the students should turn the cards back over.
  - All cards must remain on the table.
  - The round is over when all cards have been matched- all cards have been turned over.
  - Time starts when a participant crosses the line.
  - The game starts when you say, "Go!"
2. Say "Go!" and start the game. Begin timing students when they cross the line.
3. Tell the group their time.
4. If there is time, have a second round with the group setting a goal regarding how fast they can accomplish the task beforehand. Remember to shuffle the cards.

## **Session Nine: Emotional Trust**

### **Session Objectives:**

- Students increase emotional vocabulary
- Students learn to express their feelings verbally
- Students exhibit an ability to collaborate as part of a team including leading and following
- Students understand the emotions underlying conflict

### **Number of Participants: 8-12**

### **Target population: 6<sup>th</sup> grade students**

### **Estimated Time Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

- Balloons one per student
- Masking tape, activity ropes or boundary markers to make a curvy path
- Markers or pens
- Tape

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes

### **Activity Two: Balloon Trolleys**

Estimated Time: 50 minutes.

### **Suggested Setup:**

Setup a curvy path throughout your space. Make the turns challenging but not too tight as students will have to pass through the path while connected to one another. You can outline this path with masking tape, activity ropes or boundary markers.

### **Suggested Framing:**

Begin by asking the students "Do you ever have emotions about another person that you don't share with them? If so, do those emotions get in the way of your relationship with that person? Maybe you have expressed those emotions to the other person, but they still get in the way. Think of what those emotions may be, but don't share them with us yet."

### **Suggested Procedure:**

1. Pass one balloon to each student. Ask them to label the balloon with an emotion they have had that has gotten in the way of a relationship. Remind them that they won't need to share the relationship or incident, but they will need to share the emotion.

2. Ask the students to form a line with group members (more people means more challenge), standing front to back like a trolley. Have each student place a balloon between his or her self and the person in front of them.
3. The person at the front of the line will simply hold his or her balloon out in front.
4. Explain that they can only use each other's pressure to support the balloons- no hands, arms or legs.
5. Explain that the challenge is to move the entire group through the path while staying connected to one another and not allowing any of the balloons to hit the floor.
6. Have students place their hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them.
7. If a balloon hits the floor, the group should stop, retrieve the balloon, and the student who was in the front of the line moves to the end, putting his or her balloon between him or herself and the person in front of them. The group can continue on from where they lost the balloon.
8. Have all your students form one large circle at the end.

Reflection:

1. Ask each student to share the emotion they wrote on their balloons.
2. Ask them why they think it got in the way. Remind them that they don't have to share the specifics. For example: "I wrote down Anger because being angry caused me to be mean." Is perfect.
3. Finally, ask them if expressing their emotions would have prevented them from getting in the way of their relationship.
4. Let them express their emotions by popping their balloons with their partners. They can do this back-to-back, but they can use their hands and feet.

Additional Thoughts :

Keep an eye out for emotional responses and comments regarding appropriate touching.

## **Session Ten: Emotional Trust**

### **Session Objectives:**

Students demonstrate self-awareness through the expression of thoughts and feelings.  
Students describe the skills needed to set healthy personal and/or group goals.  
Students are able to describe a positive future for one's self.

**Number of Participants: 8-12**

**Target population: 6<sup>th</sup> grade students**

**Estimated Time Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

One sheet of poster board per student  
Materials for drawing, painting or creating collages.

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes

### **Activity Two: Pictures of Me**

Suggested Framing:

Begin by telling the students "This activity is a great way to develop an appreciation for your own and your friends' emotions. In it, you will think about how you handled your emotions when you were a child, now and how you'd like to handle them going forward. In this activity, we are going to explore your handling of emotions through creative imagery. If you choose, you can draw an actual portrait of yourself or use images from magazines, nature etc.

Suggested Procedure:

1. Give students one sheet of poster board each and supplies to share and two additional sheets of white paper for the written bridge responses (#5 and #7).
2. Ask students to fold the paper into three sections with the longest edge on the top and then open the paper so that there are three panels to work on.
3. Explain to students that they are going to be creating separate representations in each panel. In the first panel, have students create a representation of how they remember themselves handling their emotions as children. The description can be written, drawn, a collage, etc. or a combination of these.
4. In the middle panel, have students describe how they handle their emotions now.
5. Between the first and second panels they will create a bridge or connection by citing three messages received from others that influenced how they handle their emotions now (e.g. My father told me it is OK for boys to cry), and three messages students gave themselves that shaped how they handle their emotions now (e.g., I don't like to hold my anger in). The bridge will consist of six messages total.

6. Finally, in the third panel, ask students to illustrate how they would like to handle their emotions in the future.
7. Have students create another bridge or connection between the second and third panels stating three changes students can make that will help them achieve the emotion expression they desire (e.g., I can vent to my friends when I am angry at my teacher), and three messages students would like to give themselves as they progress toward their vision (e.g., it is normal to be angry at people even if you love them). Again, the bridge should consist of six messages total.

**Suggested Reflection:**

Ask students to pair up with the person to their right. In their pairs, they should share the stories of their pictures.

## **Session Eleven: Trust and Behavioral Goal Setting**

### **Session Objectives:**

Students work on personal goal setting  
Students practice risk taking  
Students explore physical/emotional trust

**Number of Participants: 8-12**

**Target population: 6<sup>th</sup> grade students**

**Estimated Time Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

Two long ropes or tape for boundaries  
Lots of "stuff" to put inside the boundaries (wadded up pieces of paper, stuffed animals, shoes, etc.),  
a sticky note and writing utensils for each student  
Blindfolds (optional)  
Paper and pens for each student

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes

Suggested Setup:

The Trust phase of the sequence is a great time to begin looking at personal goal setting. Goals are better achieved when people have help and encouragement from the outside. It is risky to entrust others with the contents of a personal goal that is near and dear to one's heart. These trust activities give people experiences with the art of goal setting, and strategies to use in order to try to meet those goals.

A behavioral goal has to do with just that: behavior. Ask students to assess their own behavior in class. What might they want to change or reinforce? What personal goals do they have in regard to trusting other students and being trustworthy? Have them first write up a goal that can be accomplished in a very short period of time- maybe even one that can be accomplished in an hour or less. After processing what worked and did not work with that goal, try another goal-setting exercise that requires a longer period of time.

### **Activity Two: The River of Life**

Estimated Time: 20-25 minutes

Suggested Procedure:

1. Clear out the middle of the room or find a large area like a gym or all-purpose room.

2. Place the two ropes on the ground parallel to each other, about 10-15 feet apart. Make them wavy to simulate a river.
3. Distribute the stuff randomly inside the river boundaries.
4. After presenting the concept of SMART goals (see below), ask each student to think about a personal goal- something to work toward in this class. For example, maybe someone is very quiet in a large group and wishes to be more vocal. That person may set a goal to contribute to a group discussion at least once a day. Another student may have trouble getting her homework in on time. Her goal may be to finish all her homework, and hand it in, at least 27 of the next 30 school days.
5. Have them write their goals on their sticky notes.
6. Divide the class into pairs and have them stand around the "river of life."
7. Explain that the river of life is filled with accomplishments and frustrations. One way to navigate through the river of life is to set goals for oneself. This helps to provide direction. Many times, though, there are obstacles to achieving goals- some external, some self-imposed. For example, if a goal is to get one's homework in on time, some obstacles would be: procrastinating by choosing first to do other things (like playing games or watching TV), other responsibilities at home or leaving it at school by mistake. The obstacles are represented by the "stuff" that is strewn about.
8. Have each pair choose someone to be the goal-getters first. The other is the guide. The goal-getters place their goals in the river of life. The object is to get to the goal, pick it up, and get out on the other side of the river while touching as few obstacles as possible.
9. Goal-getters then don blindfolds or close their eyes. The guides then verbally direct the goal-getters to their goals. If the goal-getters touch an obstacle, then they must tell their guides about an obstacle that might be encountered when trying to achieve this particular goal.
10. After goal-getters get out on the other side, they switch roles with the guides.

SMART goals: A SMART goal is:

- Specific: The goal should focus on one behavior that a person wants to increase, decrease or change in some way.
- Measurable: In order to know if a goal has been achieved, it must be measurable according to quantity and time.
- Achievable: A goal needs to be realistic. If we continually make goals that cannot be accomplished, it is more an exercise in frustration than goal setting.
- Relevant: This refers to the larger group. The goal must offer an overall positive outcome within the context of the group. Although the goal may carry over into a person's life outside the group, it cannot be damaging or harmful to the person, group or society as a whole.
- Track able: It must be possible to see if you are heading toward your goal at any particular time. If half of the time has expired to your stated goal, you should be able to see how far you have come, and what else you need to do to achieve the goal.

### Sample Processing Questions:

- What did your guide do to help you achieve your goal?
- What are some resources that can help you achieve your goal? (Things or people).
- What are some obstacles you are likely to encounter when achieving your goal? What can you do to deal with the obstacles so that they don't prevent you from achieving your goal?
- How will you know when you have achieved your goal? How will you keep track? Is there anyone who can help you track your goal?

### Facilitation Notes:

Make sure you have done some blindfold activities before this one so that students are already used to the concept of being guided by someone else. Also, remind goal-getters to keep their hands in the bumpers-up position.

This activity can get load and confusing for the students. Some teachers prefer to have the guides stay on the outside of the boundaries, while others pennit the guides to accompany the goal-getters into the river. This decision will be based upon the maturity and experience of the students. Also, the amount of "stuff" in the river should be detennined by the ability of each class. The more items the more difficult the activity.

After the activity, create a way for the students to report on how they are doing with their goals. Maybe have them check in with their partner every day, or have them chart their progress. When someone achieves a goal, have a celebration. Then have the student create a new goal. If someone is not progressing with his or her goal, have a private conference to ascertain the issues. Revisit the SMART goals checklist to make sure that the goal is appropriate; help the student decide on strategies to either re-create or make progress on the given goal.

### **Activity Three: Three-Person Trust Walk**

Estimated Time: 20 minutes.

#### Suggested Procedure:

1. After discussing SMART goals have each person create a personal goal.
2. Find a large open area.
3. Have students get into groups of three.
4. Tell them that each person will have a tum to led (blindfolded or with eyes closed) by the two other students in the group, who are the guides and will keep their eyes open. The person being led will be in the middle. Each group should discuss how the person in the middle wishes to be led (holding hands, walking next to each other, holding onto the guides' elbows. . .)
5. State the boundaries. Give each group at least three minutes. During that time, the person being led is the center of attention for the guides. The one being led should share his or her goal and discuss with the guides how he or she expects to accomplish it, what obstacles may occur, how to celebrate achieving the goal, and what to do ifit



turns out the goal is unrealistic. All during this time the guides are leading the student inside the stated boundaries.

6. After three minutes give a signal for students to switch. Do this a third time to make sure everyone in the group gets a turn.
7. Have students write and post their goals in the classroom.

Sample Processing Questions:

- How did it feel to be led by two people?
- What did your partners do to keep you safe and prove that they were trustworthy?
- As guides, how did it feel to both lead and listen to your teammates? How did you deal with the safety aspect of this situation?
- How did it feel being the center of attention?
- What were some things you shared with your group about your goal?
- What will you do if you find that your goal is unrealistic?

## **Session Twelve: Personal Goals and Behavioral Change**

### **Session Objectives:**

- Students describe the skills needed to set healthy personal and/or group goals.
- Students demonstrate an ability to evaluate and revise personal and/or group goals.
- Students describe or demonstrate the benefits of positive and challenging goals.
- Students practice describing a positive future for one's self.

**Number of Participants: 8-12**

**Target population: 6<sup>th</sup> grade students**

**Estimated Time Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

- Paper and pens for each student
- Tape
- 10 note/index cards
- Target Practice Worksheet

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes

### **Activity Two: Target Practice**

Estimated Time: 20 minutes.

Suggested Setup: Each student needs a copy of the Target Practice Worksheet.

Suggested Framing:

Tell students "We have been talking about how important it is to set goals. Let's get really specific about how we do that, so we can."

Suggested Procedure:

1. Before handing out the worksheets, give the students the following examples of how to be specific with their goals. Include: The task or goal you want to accomplish; How it will be measured- what will it look like when it is done (standard); How long it will take to accomplish (time span).

Example: I will \_\_\_\_\_(task) with \_\_\_\_\_  
(standard) by \_\_\_\_\_(time span).

2. Assist students in streamlining their goals and relating them to individual treatment plans.

Questions for Discussion:

- Who wants to share their goal?
- How hard was it to be specific with the standard and time span?
- How can we help each other to accomplish these goals?
- What will we do when we accomplish these goals?

### **Activity Three: Visioning Path**

Estimated Time: 25 minutes.

Suggested Framing:

"Think about where you want to be in six months, a positive way your life could be. We are going to describe that and then think about some steps that will get us there."

Suggested Procedure:

1. Give each student a piece of drawing paper and ask them to draw their life right now (using words or pictures).
2. When they are finished, give them a second piece of paper and ask them to draw how they would like their life to be in six months.
3. When they are finished, tape the first drawing (life right now) on one side of the room. It will have more visual impact if you tape/ have your students tape these pictures on the same wall. Then ask your students to physically place themselves and their second picture (my positive life in six months) as far away as the goal seems from how their life is now.
4. Then give the students index cards. On each index card, ask students to write one behavior they can begin that could bring them closer to their goals.
5. Using their index cards, ask students to make a path from their life as it is now to their goal life. Your students should, one at a time, make their paths by 1. Reading an index card aloud, 2. Placing it on the floor to represent the path to their goal life and 3. Moving forward and repeating 1 and 2 until all the index cards are used and they have reached their goal life.

Suggested Reflection:

1. What behavioral words did we come up with to get to our goals?
2. Are there similarities or differences among students in the group? Describe.
3. How can we help each other with these goals?
4. How far away is the beginning drawing from your goal life drawing? Does this seem realistic? What are the identifiable steps in between?
5. What are some ways you can remind yourself of your goals daily, weekly or monthly?

## **Session Thirteen: Revisit Full Value Contract**

### **Session Objectives:**

Students demonstrate an understanding of each of the core Full Values.

Students understand and describe how the Full Value Contract can be an asset to their community.

Students describe and demonstrate what it means to be a contributing member of a Full Value community.

### **Number of Participants: 8-12**

### **Target population: 6<sup>th</sup> grade students**

### **Estimated Time Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

Large piece of paper

Markers

Construction paper

Glitter

Feathers

Glue

Cut-out shapes

Scissors

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes

### **Activity Two: Circle of Strength**

Estimated Time: 40 minutes

#### **Suggested Framing:**

Tell the students "We know that creating a classroom environment that is safe and challenging will help us practice and learn about being safe in the real world. We have been doing a great job of. ...(site behaviors from previous activities, i.e. listening to each other, cheering each other on, making sure everyone participates, etc.) Let's strengthen our commitment to those behaviors by creating a circle of strength with our hands and identify specific goals for each of us to work on this semester."

#### **Suggested Procedure:**

##### **STEP ONE: (20 Minutes)**

1. Have each student trace their hand on a piece of paper, cut it out, and decorate it in a way that represents who they are and what goal they have for the class and for the new year.

2. If time allows, have students connect their hands into a large circle and tape or glue them to the large sheet of paper.
3. Divide the circle into six equal sections and write each of the core Full Values (Be Here, Be Safe, Be Honest, Set Goals, Care for Self and Others and Let Go and Move On) in each section.

STEP TWO: (20 minutes)

1. Gather all the students around the circle of hands and ask them to reflect on what behaviors and attitudes have been helpful to the class. In the middle of the circle of hands, have students write words describing the behaviors and attitudes in the appropriate Full Value sections.
2. Have the students write the words or draw pictures that express these positive behaviors and attitudes inside the outline of the hands.
3. Have students write words describing behaviors they don't want to see in their classroom/program community outside the circle.
4. Have students explain what they mean by the words they have chosen. Even if the words are the same, the meanings may be different for different people.
5. Ask the class if they think they can agree to use this Circle of Strength as a set of guidelines for their behaviors during their own time in your program/school. Once everyone has agreed, have each person sign the Circle of Strength/Full Value Contract on their hand and post it in a place where it can be readily referenced for check-ins and debriefing and at any other time.

Suggested Reflection:

1. How was it to come up with these behaviors and attitudes?
2. What do you notice about the words inside the Circle of Strength?
3. In what ways are these attitudes and qualities important to taking care of yourself and others?
4. How do put downs affect our ability to achieve our goals?
5. How can positive messages help us to achieve our personal and group behavioral goals?
6. What should we notice when things are going well in our class?
7. When things are not going well, how can the FVC help us?

Reminder: These need not be exhaustive; you're going to be continuously checking in on your FVC/Circle of Strength.

## **Session Fourteen: Revisit Full Value Contract**

### **Session Objectives:**

- Students demonstrate an understanding of each of the core Full Values.
- Students describe the importance of rules and/ or norms of behavior in a Full Value Community.
- Students describe and demonstrate what it means to be a contributing member of a Full Value community.
- Students learn to express one's feelings verbally.
- Students manage one's behavior in accordance with the Full Value Contract
- Students define and identify ways of caring for and helping self and others.
- Students demonstrate an ability to evaluate and revise personal and/or group goals.
- Students explain how mistakes can be learning experiences and used to help achieve one's goals.
- Students describe a positive future for one's self.

**Number of Participants: 8-12**

**Target population: 6<sup>th</sup> grade students**

**Estimated Time Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

- 1 Rules? What Rules? worksheet for each student
- The Circle of Strength you made in the previous session
- 50-100 9-12 inch balloons
- Masking tape
- Markers
- 1 Quality Control worksheet for each student

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes

### **Activity Two: Rules? What Rules?**

Estimated Time: 20 minutes

#### **Suggested Setup:**

Give each student a worksheet.

#### **Suggested Framing:**

Begin by sharing with students, "Today we are further creating our community by listing the details of our Full Value Contract/ Circle of strength. Use the worksheet to write down what each of the Values we have discussed means to you personally. Once you have finished, find another person who is done and begin to write down some specific things you can both agree to do (or

not do) in order to be a part of this community. After all of our small teams are finished, we will share the ideas for each value."

Suggested Procedure:

1. Students write on the worksheet (see attached) their personal ideas for each Full Value.
2. Once students have completed their worksheets, they should share their ideas with another student.
3. These pairs present their ideas to the whole group.

Suggested Reflection:

1. Now that we have thoughts about each value, look back on your personal worksheet; is there anything we need to add to our Circle of Strength?
2. Is there anything we need to remove from our Circle of Strength?
3. How was it to express your ideas in the big group?

Additional Thoughts:

Even though the reflection lists only three questions, it should be a directed, in-depth conversation about the Full Values and the behaviors that support them. You will want to explore each addition and subtraction with the whole group and make decisions about adding or subtracting.

### **Activity Three: Tower of Power**

Estimated Time: 25 minutes

Suggested setup:

Clear a relatively large space in your classroom.

Suggested Framing:

Begin by sharing with students, "Nourishing communities, the kinds that help you be your best, are founded upon strong friendships and respectful relationships. This activity explores what we need from others to build the kinds of connections that promote nourishing communities."

Suggested Procedure:

1. Separate your students into six equal (or as equal as possible) groups, representing each of the Full Values (Be Here, Be Safe, Be Honest, Set Goals, Care for Self and Others and Let Go and Move On).
2. Give each group several balloons and markers.
3. Have masking tape available.
4. Explain to the class that they are going to record the thoughts from the Rules? What Rules? Activity on the balloons. Each group should focus on their assigned value using the thoughts from Rules? What Rules? As a beginning but they can expand as they see fit.

5. Tell each group to blow up the balloons, tie them off and write only one idea that captures their Full Value per balloon. They have five minutes to complete this activity.
6. Have the class come together and share what is written on the balloons. Ask if anything is missing and then add balloons if needed. At this time, you should add anything that is missing on your Circle of Strength that your students have not put in- any norm that you feel needs to be there.
7. Explain to the class that the next challenge is to take all of the balloons using only masking tape as an additional prop, and build the tallest, free-standing tower possible.
8. Tell students that the finished structure represents the group's "Tower of Power" for building and maintaining positive relationships in their healthy learning community.

**Suggested Reflection:**

1. Did you demonstrate some of the qualities/behaviors you wrote on your balloons as you built the Tower of Power? What were the specific qualities you demonstrated?
2. For each student: Tell us about one thing you can do that will continue to improve your relationships with the people around you.
3. Are there any other behaviors we need to add to our Circle of Strength?

**Variations:**

- Limit one idea to each balloon but use as many balloons as there are ideas.
- You can keep the groups divided and have them each build a separate Tower of Power. Then bring the groups together to connect the six individual Towers into one for the entire class.

**Activity Four: Quality Control**

Estimated Time: 10-15 minutes

**Suggested Framing:** Tell the students "You are working toward becoming empowered; not relying on teachers to tell you how to act, but following the Full Value Contract on your own. What are some of the ways you can do that?"

Give them time to answer and write on flip chart paper.

"One of the ways to become empowered is to honestly understand how you behave right now and figure out how to improve that. Today we are going to start using a worksheet to help us figure out how we are behaving."

**Suggested Procedure:**

1. Ask students to complete the quality control worksheet.
2. Circulate through the room to answer questions and challenge self-assessments that seem either too positive or negative.

**Suggested Reflection:**

1. What are some of the areas that need your attention?



2. What steps do you need to take in order to raise your score?
3. Who can help you to achieve these steps?
4. Let's keep these in a folder. We will be completing quality control worksheets at least once a week.
5. Keep each week's assessment and compile the scores over a month's time to use with treatment plans or as a general measurement of progress.

## **Session Fifteen: Problem-Solving**

### **Session Objectives:**

- Students demonstrate group goal setting
- Students practice decision making
- Students describe a positive future for one's self
- Students describe how one's choices and decisions impact the achievement of goals.
- Students explain how mistakes can be learning experiences and used to help achieve goals.

### **Number of Participants: 8-12**

### **Target population: 6<sup>th</sup> grade students**

### **Estimated Time Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

- One soft throwable object (fleece ball, nerfball, wadded-up paper etc.)
- Stopwatch.
- 30 spot markers
- Drawing markers
- Masking tape
- Optional: graph paper

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes

### **Activity Two: Warp Speed**

Estimated Time: 10 minutes

### **Suggested Framing:**

**Problem-Solving Initiatives:** Initiatives implies ingenuity, motivation and taking the first step. Therefore, the rules for the following activities are kept to a minimum to allow for creativity. Most of these activities have open-ended solutions. The problem-solving initiatives in the next several sessions require few or no props, and many can take place right in the classroom.

**Thinking "Outside the Box":** Problem-Solving initiatives give us an opportunity to play with solving problems creatively. As teachers/facilitators we often see students locking themselves into one way of viewing a problem because of the assumptions they make. Even if a rule is stated, past experience dictates how they will view the activity, and a rule is somehow conjured up in one or more minds. Encourage your students to think "outside the box" and address their problems with creativity and imagination. The community you have created is a safe space in which to experiment. Many of the ideas will not work, but some will. Future challenges the students face in life will then be addressed with open minds, making the chances for success that much greater.

### Suggested Procedure:

1. Clear the desk or tables away. Have students stand in a circle.
2. Ask everyone to raise one hand to show that they have not had the object yet.
3. Call someone's name and throw the object to her. She puts her hand down to show she's had the object. Then she calls the name of someone whose hand is up and throws him the object. This continues until everyone has had the object and it is returned to you.
4. Figure out who is the youngest person in the class. Give the person the object.
5. Tell the class this is a timed activity. They must send the object to the same person they threw it to before. The activity must begin and end with the person who starts it (in this case, the youngest person in the group). Try this and get a baseline time.
6. Now reiterate the rules. Then give them time to discuss strategies.
7. Try the activity multiple times to arrive at a mutual solution.

### Sample Processing Questions:

- What was the group goal for this? Did you know what you all wanted to accomplish together?
- How did you decide which idea to try?
- How did your solution change each time? Were you willing to learn from each attempt?
- Do you feel you took a leadership role in this activity? How?

### Facilitation Notes:

It is fair to say that Warp Speed has an almost limitless number of solutions, which is what makes the activity so popular. It can also be accomplished in a relatively short amount of time.

Many groups decide to stand next to each other rather than stay in their original configuration. Other groups stay put and play with different ways to get the object around without moving themselves.

### Adaptations for Students with Disabilities:

- Do not require a crisscross pattern; allow students to hand the ball to the person next to them if necessary.
- Have the students roll the ball instead of throwing it.
- Use larger balls.
- De-emphasize the ball drops.

### **Activity Three: Pathway to the Life I Want**

Estimated Time: 40 minutes

### Suggested Setup:

1. Prepare the spot markers by putting an X, using the masking tape, on the numbered side of each spot marker that is not on the pathway. Either leave the appropriate numbers (if

using spot markers from your Keypunch set) on your spot markers or use masking tape to number them- as in the diagram below.

1	2	x	16	17	18
x	3	4	15	14	x
x	6	5	x	13	x
x	7	x	11	12	x
x	8	9	10	x	x

- You will need to create the "Pathway to the Life I Want" that your students will follow. To help you create this pathway, map it out on a piece of paper (graph paper works well) and devise a route that will use 30 spots and begin at the entrance side of the area and end at the exit side. Don't share this with your students!
- Lay your spots out, numbered or Xed side down, in a 5 by 6 grid.
- Solutions can involve forward, side or backward movements. Diagonal moves or moves that skip rows are not allowed.
- The more moves you create in your solution, the more difficult the activity will be. If you want a challenging Pathway you could use only 5 X spots and 25 numbered spots.

#### Suggested Framing:

Share with your students that "Living the life we want involves, in part, accessing quality information. Creating a plan for the life we want involves making and implementing positive choices and setting and achieving goals. This activity will help us to understand the consequences of making bad choices and identify skills we need to lead the life we want."

Ask for a real life example of achievement of a goal. Map out the steps on a flip chart or white board. Identify where learning from mistakes occurred along the way.

#### Suggested Procedure:

- Tell the group that the challenge for this activity is to find the Pathway to Life I Want. This is accomplished by discovering the correct sequence of steps to get one person from the entrance to the exit.
- To do this they will select a spot, turn it over and read the number to determine if it is a positive choice. If it is a positive choice (as represented only by the next number- if four was the last overturned and correct number, only five would be a positive choice), step on the spot and repeat the process with another spot within range. If they have made a bad choice, they must exit the Pathway exactly the way they entered.
- Only a positive choice spot would remain turned over, students must turn their bad choices back with number/X side down before exiting the Pathway.
- One person at a time is allowed to enter the Pathway. If they make positive choices, they may continue.
- People on the Pathway may only move forward, backward or sideways. Diagonal moves or moves that skip a row are not allowed.

6. After the framing, group members may position themselves anywhere around the Pathway to assist the person on the Pathway and to observe. No verbal or written communication is allowed with the person on the Pathway. Nonverbal communication is allowed.
7. The person on the Pathway should not be touched.
8. The group will rotate turns so that no one person enters the grid for a second time until everyone has entered once.
9. Remind the group that they need to be careful not to duplicate bad choices.
10. The activity ends when the group is able to get one person through the pathway.

#### Suggested Reflection:

1. What were the steps you took to find the pathway to the life you want?
2. How did you feel about trying to find the path even though you were set back by bad choices?
3. So, you reached your goal despite mistakes. How does that relate to your own life?
4. Did anyone have a small goal when they took their turn, for example, a goal of turning over one or two positive choices? If so, do you feel like that helped you and/or your team? How?
5. How do you think making choices relates to achieving goals?
6. What skills did you use to stay on the path?
7. How can you use these skills to maintain your own plan for graduating this program? Improving grades? Getting a job?

#### Variations and Tips:

- Give your students time to talk. If they come up with a powerful discussion thread, explore it! The activity will be more powerful than if you just stay with the questions here.
- Have the only "map" of the pathway be your diagram. Students have to commit to memory the right and wrong steps through the pathway (don't turn the positive choice steps over). You can also add that everyone has to make it through but they can use verbal communication and coach a teammate through the pathway.
- Have a student create the pathway for the group.

## **Session Sixteen: Problem Solving**

### **Session Objectives:**

- Students describe or demonstrate the benefits of positive and challenging goals.
- Students support each other in achieving goals and making decisions .
- Students learn from whom and how to get assistance.

### **Number of Participants: 8-12**

### **Target population: 6<sup>th</sup> grade students**

### **Estimated Time Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

- Several beach ball
- 2 balloons per person
- Stopwatch.
- 3 x 3 All Aboard piece of plywood
- Extra carpet squares or spot markers as needed

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes

### **Activity Two: Moon Ball**

Estimated Time: 20 minutes

### **Suggested Setup:**

Ask students to stand in a circle and have one or two large inflatable beach balls available.

### **Suggested Framing:**

Moon Ball is an activity that sets the stage for students to practice setting and achieving goals while having fun. Share with students "What are some goals you have set or achieved? We all have hopes or dreams . Goals are those little steps we need to take to make our dreams happen. Let's practice setting goals so we can make our dreams happen. As a team, we want to set a goal for how many consecutive hits we can make to keep this moon ball up in the air, with no one hitting the ball twice in a row. We know that goals have to be reasonable but not too easy. What do you think our goal should be for the number of times we can hit the moon ball up in the air as a group?"

Try to be non-judgmental about the goals. Your student's will likely figure out on their own that an easy goal is not something they will feel good about achieving or that too ambitious a goal is frustrating. If not, help them come to that conclusion during your reflection discussion. Bottom line: They will learn more through experience.

### **Suggested Procedure:**

1. First give your students the opportunity for a little experimentation. Let them toss the ball in the air while counting the number of consecutive hits- with-out someone hitting it twice in a row. Let them get a feel for how they will do before they set a goal.
2. Then your students need to set a goal of how many hits they can keep the ball in the air for without it being hit twice in a row by someone or hitting the ground.
3. Once the ball is in the air- the students should start hitting and the group and you should start counting.
4. Each time the ball hits the ground or someone hits it twice in a row, pick up the ball and ask the students if they want to change their goal. After they have agreed to keep their goal or have changed their goal, start the ball again.
5. The second level of Moon Ball is to ask the students to do as many consecutive hits in a row, with no one hitting the ball a second time until everyone has hit the ball at least once.
6. This is an activity students like to play repeatedly, so let them if you have time!
7. You can increase the level of challenge by having two balls in play at the same time.

Suggested Reflection:

1. Do you feel our goal was too easy or too hard? Explain.
2. Do you think it was important to reevaluate your goals? If so, why?
3. What did it feel like when we had to start over because the ball hit the ground?
4. How did we help each other reach our group goal?
5. What happens when you set an individual goal but don't make it?
6. Who can help you reach your program/school goals?
7. What are some strategies we can use to help each other reach our goals? (capture these on flip chart paper to display in your classroom.)

**Activity Three: Balloon Frantic**

Estimated Time: 20 minutes

Suggested Procedure:

1. Clear the desks or tables away. Have students stand in a circle.
2. Give everyone two balloons to blow up and tie off or provide already blown up balloons. Each person keeps one balloon; the others are put in a pile near you.
3. Tell the class that this is a timed activity. On a signal, they are to hit their balloons into the air (they must be hit in the air- not held or stuck anywhere with static electricity!) **Every five seconds you will add another balloon from the pile.**
4. The time starts when a signal is given. Time stops when the group has amassed six penalties. A penalty is called when a balloon touches the ground (desk, table, etc.) or is stopped. Students have five seconds to get the balloon back in play, or another penalty is called on the same balloon.
5. Upon the sixth penalty, the time stops and the round is over. Students get five rounds to get their "best" time (however, they define it).
6. They can strategize between rounds for the next round.

### Sample Processing Questions:

- Did you discuss a group goal for this activity? What were the goals?
- Describe how you feel you improved (or did not improve) your strategies for solving this problem.
- How were decisions made? Did you feel you had input into the decisions?
- What leadership roles were taken, and by whom?

### Facilitation Notes:

This is a favorite indoor initiative. There are so many elements to consider that it is impossible to predict how it will go. Some people focus on the time element, others on the reduction of mistakes. Some believe that the class should split up and handle the balloons individually, while others think they should join hands, pile them up, and keep the balloons moving like a popcorn popper.

Without a stated goal, students will generally head in a variety of directions, causing greater conflict and frustration. Deciding on a group goal can help them along. Many times a group goal is related to time or mistakes. Some classes, however, have decided that their goal should be nothing to do with time or mistakes; they all want to try hitting the balloons as creatively as possible. They have had fun and learned much about goal setting in the process. We have already said that different types of goals are appropriate for different situations. For example, a creativity goal would work for a computer software designer, but not be as effective for someone working on the line creating computers.

With younger students modify the initiative; have them work in smaller groups to see how long they can bounce a balloon without hitting the ground. Give them each a stopwatch to monitor themselves. Once they are proficient, have them add just one more balloon. It makes a huge difference.



## **Session Seventeen: Problem Solving**

### **Session Objectives:**

Students demonstrate an ability to appropriately express one's needs and emotions.

Students increase one's emotional vocabulary.

Students define and identify ways of caring for and helping self and others.

Students demonstrate social awareness through empathetic and caring statements and/or behavior.

### **Number of Participants: 8-12**

### **Target population: 6<sup>th</sup> grade students**

### **Estimated Time Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

A soft throwable object for each person

3 x 3 All Aboard piece of plywood

Extra carpet squares or spot markers as needed

Assorted pictures from magazines for debrief reflection. Two for each student.

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes

### **Activity Two: All Toss**

Estimated Time: 15-20 minutes

### **Suggested Procedure:**

1. Clear the desks or tables away. Have students stand in a circle.
2. Give each person an object. Ask students to put their objects at their feet.
3. Tell students that the object of this activity is to see how many items can be thrown and caught all at the same time. All objects must be thrown at the same time. They cannot be thrown to oneself or to the person on either side of the thrower.
4. Start with one object. Count to three, and throw your object into the air. If no one catches it, then try again until someone does.
5. Ask someone else to pick up his or her object. Now there are two items in play. Then count to three and both people should throw their objects simultaneously. If both objects are caught, have a third person pick up an object to throw along with the other two.
6. Whenever an object is dropped, it is taken out for the next round. Whatever is caught is thrown again. For example, if five objects are thrown and two dropped, the next round involves the three that remained in play. If those are caught, then a fourth one is picked up for the round after that.
7. As the task becomes more difficult, allow time for the students to create strategies.

8. If time is running low, or if frustration or boredom begin to set in, ask the class to set a goal for how many attempts they have to throw all of the items at the same time.

Sample Processing Questions:

- When did you decide to really begin to communicate?
- Why did your strategies change?
- What did you need to do to make this work?

Facilitation Notes:

At first, most group's do little planning when attempting this task. As more items are added, however, and items begin to hit each other, the need arises to communicate and collaborate more closely. Although this is unstated, many groups decide to stay in a circle to complete the task. Some groups, though decide to get into two lines and throw across from each other, especially when items begin to hit each other in the middle of the circle.

Some of the more interesting conversations after this activity surround goal-related issues: Is it more important to be organized or to have fun? Can one be organized or have fun?

With a large class , try dividing into two groups for this activity. Once both groups have had a chance to try, then combine the two into one large group for more challenge. For an even bigger challenge, add the rule that every time an item hits the floor, students must totally start over.

### **Activity Three: All Aboard**

Estimated Time: 20 minutes

Suggested Setup:

1. Place the piece of wood in the middle of a large open space.
2. There should be one platform for 10-12 students.
3. The area should be small enough to present a challenge for everyone to get on board, but large enough so that it is possible to get everyone on board.

Suggested Framing:

This problem-solving activity asks students to collaborate with the added stressor of being in one another's physical space.

Share with students, "We have made an agreement to build a safe learning environment. Our environment is represented by the platform. Your task is to support one another by getting everyone safely on board into this environment we have built. Before you start, think of emotional reactions you may have in this activity where you will be working together in tight quarters?" Give your students a minute to think and ask them to share the emotions they are comfortable sharing.

Suggested Procedure:

1. The object is simply to get your group on a platform at one time without touching the floor or ground.
2. In order to be counted as "on the platform," each person needs to have both feet off the ground.
3. The group's challenge is to hold a balanced position for at least eight seconds, i.e., no one touches the ground for eight measured seconds .
4. Proper spotting must be monitored by you and any method that appears to be unsafe (stacking people on top of each other, etc.) should not be allowed. If you feel you can't spot this or any activity properly- don't do it!

Suggested Reflection:

1. Spread pictures you have selected from magazines on the table or floor.
2. Ask each student to pick up two pictures. One should reflect how they thought they were going to feel about doing the activity and the second should reflect how they actually felt.
3. When they are ready, go around the group and ask each student to show everyone the pictures they chose and the feelings they think they reflect.
4. Ask your students if anyone found a big difference between how they thought they would feel and how they actually did feel. If so, ask them if they wouldn't mind sharing the differences and why they thought they had them.
5. Ask your students if anyone had emotions they shared with the group before or during the activity. If so, ask them if expressing their emotions helped to manage them better.

## **Session Eighteen: Problem Solving**

### **Session Objectives:**

Students demonstrate an ability to make group decisions.

Students practice tum taking.

Students demonstrate ability to set and accomplish group goals.

**Number of Participants: 8-12**

**Target population: 6<sup>th</sup> grade students**

**Estimated Time Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

A tarp for every 8-12 people.

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes

### **Activity Two: Turn Over a New Leaf**

Estimated Time: 20 minutes

### **Suggested Procedure:**

1. Clear the desks away. Have the group of 8-12 stand on an open tarp.
2. Tell them that the object is to tum the entire tarp over without anyone stepping off the tarp.

### **Sample Processing Questions:**

- How did you decide who was going to move and when? Was this important?
- Why did you choose to do the task in that way? Are there other ways?
- Did you find this task easier or harder than you first thought? What made it easier or harder?

### **Facilitation Notes:**

This activity is more difficult then it seems. At first, students think they can simply step to one side and tum the tarp over. Quickly they realize it is more complicated than that, necessitating the movement of people from one place to another and possibly back again. Not everyone can be moving at once. Some groups fold the tarp diagonally, others twist it. Still others roll and shuffle. No one way is the best way. The smaller the tarp, the more difficult the task. Once students have accomplished it one way, challenge them to find an alternative solution.

### **Activity Three: Setting the Table**

Estimated Time: 20 minutes

### Suggested Procedure:

1. Clear the desks or tables away. Have students stand in a circle around an open tarp.
2. Ask students to think about what they "bring to the table" when working with others in a group. What are their strengths and skills? Have each person say a strength/skill out loud and step onto the tarp ("table").
3. Tell them that once they are on the tarp, even when everything is pulled out from under them, their strengths and skills keep them standing.
4. To test this, they are to choose two "magicians" from the group. These two should step on the tarp.
5. The rest can rearrange themselves on the tarp in preparation for the "magicians" to pull the "tablecloth" out from under them. Their task is to end up in the same place in which they are standing, but with the "tablecloth" gone. This means that they cannot jump away from the tarp while it is being pulled.

### Sample Processing Questions:

- How did you decide who would be the magicians? Do you think this was a fair way to decide?
- Did this activity turn out to be easier or more difficult than you had thought?
- What strategies did you use to accomplish this task? How did you decide on which strategy to use?

### Facilitation Notes:

Setting the Table has a higher perceived risk than actual risk; therefore, people tend to over analyze the situation. Generally, the group will decide to jump at the same time, while the "magicians" pull quickly. Sometimes they will choose to have everyone jump continuously while the tarp is pulled slowly.

## **Session Nineteen: Problem Solving**

### **Session Objectives:**

- Students demonstrate an ability to make group decisions.
- Students practice turn taking.
- Students demonstrate ability to set and accomplish group goals.

### **Number of Participants: 8-12**

### **Target population: 6<sup>th</sup> grade students**

### **Estimated Time Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

- Legos.
- Blindfolds (optional)
- A large rope for every 6-8 people (cotton clothesline works well)
- Cards with the words of different shapes on them (square, triangle, etc.)

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes

### **Activity Two: Puzzles**

Estimated Time: 25 minutes.

### **Suggested Procedure:**

1. Divide the class into groups of 4-5. Have each group sit around a table.
2. Give each group a handful of Legos. Student groups are to create a sculpture using no fewer than 15 pieces and no more than 20 pieces. Give them 10-15 minutes to create their sculpture.
3. When everyone is done, tell them that they will have 5-10 minutes to create a plan to put the sculpture back together with their eyes closed (or wearing a blindfold which is better to prevent peeking). During the planning session, they may not take the sculpture apart.
4. When the time is up, groups should take their sculptures apart, mix up the pieces, then close (or blindfold) their eyes.
5. Give them 10-15 minutes to put their sculptures back together.
6. When done, give each group an opportunity to share their sculpture with the class. They should talk about some of the successes and challenges they had with the task.

### **Sample Processing Questions:**

- What plan did your group come up with to re-create your sculptures? Did it work for you? Why or why not?
- What roles did you take on? Were you in there putting things together, or did you wait until your pieces were needed?

- How did you communicate when your eyes were closed? What strategies did you use?
- Which was easier for you: creating the sculpture or re-creating it? What made it easier or harder for you?

Facilitation Notes:

This is a nice activity to use when exploring the idea of creating a common vision or group goals. People often think that re-creating the sculpture will be easy, then quickly learn otherwise. Your discussion can transition to the idea that creating a goal or vision is really the easy part; making it happen is where people usually get bogged down.

### **Activity Three: Blind Polygon**

Estimated Time: 20 minutes.

Suggested Procedure:

1. Break the class into small groups of 6-8.
2. Give each group a rope tied in a circle. Have everyone stand around their rope, holding on with at least one hand.
3. Ask them to put on blindfolds.
4. The task is to create different shapes with the ropes. Everyone must keep at least one hand on the rope at all times. When a group thinks they have it, they can look.
5. Start with a circle for everybody, just to get the idea. Then hand out cards to each group. Groups are to create the shapes, one at a time, at their own pace.

Sample Processing Questions:

- How did you communicate while doing this? What worked?
- Did anyone stand silent and just do as instructed? Was this a useful strategy? Why or why not?
- With people talking and not being able to see, how did you make decisions? How did you take turns talking?
- What kind of leadership qualities helped in this activity?

Facilitation Notes:

The creation of these shapes vary in difficulty on the number in the group and how picky the small group members are about the correctness of the shape. For example a square is easy to make with a group of four, but difficult with a group of five. If students want to make an exact rhombus, then each side must be the same length. Some groups struggle with one shape, while some groups speed through them all.

## **Session Twenty: Problem Solving**

### **Session Objectives:**

- Students demonstrate an ability to make group decisions.
- Students practice tum taking.
- Students demonstrate ability to set and accomplish group goals.
- Students will practice group collaboration.

### **Number of Participants: 8-12**

### **Target population: 6<sup>th</sup> grade students**

### **Estimated Time Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

- A number sheet for each person
- A Hula Hoop
- Stopwatch

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes

### **Activity Two: Numbers**

Estimated Time: 15 minutes.

### **Suggested Procedure:**

1. Give each person a number sheet. Tell students to tum the sheets face down. They may not write on or tear them.
2. Tell students that when you give the signal, they are to tum their papers over and touch the numbers in order from lowest to highest. They will have 60 seconds to get to the highest number possible.
3. After the minute is up, they are to tum their papers face down again.
4. Try this a few times.
5. Now tell students they may work with as many people as they wish, but they cannot work alone.
6. Together, using one number sheet, they are to do the same task- on a signal, tum the paper over and touch as many numbers as possible, in 60 seconds, in order from lowest to highest.
7. After one round with the groups, give them a minute to create a strategy.
8. Try this a few times.
9. Give the groups a few minutes to compare results between working alone and working in groups.



### Sample Processing Questions:

- Did you prefer working alone or working with at least one other person? What made it preferable for you?
- How were your results? Were they the same or different when working alone versus with a group? If different, what do you think made the difference?
- What tasks work best for you when collaborating? What tasks work best for you when working alone?

### Facilitation Notes:

This is a great activity that takes very little time and has a big message: On certain tasks, working together creates synergy- a cooperative effort where the group result is greater than the individual parts. Generally, the groups get much further than the individuals on this task- especially if the small groups work out a strategy where each person is responsible for a small section of the whole paper of numbers. This focus allows each person to be more efficient. Many groups choose to fold the paper to delineate between the areas of focus for each individual.

By the way, experience shows that having four people in the small group generally produces the best results.

### **Activity Three: Don't Touch Me**

Estimated Time: 15-20 minutes

### Suggested Procedure:

1. Have students stand in a circle. Place the Hula Hoop on the floor in the middle of the circle.
2. Ask everyone to identify a partner across the circle. Have students point to the feet of their partners; they should be pointing to each other's feet.
3. The object of this initiative is to trade places with partners without touching anyone else. At some point in the switch, each person must put his or her foot in the Hula Hoop. This can be done simultaneously or alone; it is up to the students.
4. This is a timed activity. The time will start when the first person moves from his or her spot. The time will stop when the last person has assumed his or her place on the other side of the circle.
5. Students should have "bumpers up" (hands out with fingers pointing to the ceiling) when moving across the circle.
6. Try this a number of times, allowing for some strategizing between attempts.

### Sample Processing Questions:

- Did you set a group goal for this activity? What was it?
- How did you arrive at this goal?
- Can you think of other solutions for this task?

### Facilitation Notes:

As with many of these initiatives, there are a variety of ways to accomplish the task. Some groups remain in the circle formation, while others rearrange themselves to improve their efficiency. Most groups will choose to set a goal to lower their time, but a few have chosen to see how many different solutions they can find.

## **Session Twenty-One: Problem-Solving**

### **Session Objectives:**

- Students identify the effects of leadership on teamwork and team members.
- Students know and practice strategies for resisting negative peer pressure.
- Students understand what it is to focus on/pay attention to another.
- Students exhibit an ability to collaborate as part of a team including leading and following.
- Students demonstrate an ability to appropriately express one's needs and emotions.
- Students describe or demonstrate the benefits of positive and challenging goals.
- Students learn to work together to achieve a common goal or task.

### **Number of Participants: 8-12**

### **Target population: 6<sup>th</sup> grade students**

### **Estimated Time Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

- Pipeline Kit
- Several lengths of rope
- Masking tape
- Markers
- Tin can
- Assorted pictures for debriefing reflection

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes

### **Activity Two: Hi Lo Yo**

Estimated Time: 10 minutes.

### **Suggested Framing:**

Tell students, "Sometimes you can just be having fun with your team and someone else can make it hard to do that. Sometimes I will have something on my mind which is distracting me from being a good contributor to my team. Sometimes my actions get in the way of me being successful and sometimes how I act leads directly to success. Let's see how that plays out in this activity."

### **Suggested Procedure:**

1. Gather your students into circle.
2. Tell them that, for this game, there are three words each accompanied by a hand motion. These need to be in order:

- "Hi" is signaled by raising your hand over your head and pointing at the person to your left or right.
  - "Lo" is signaled by lowering your hand as low as you can go without bending and pointing at the person to your left or right.
  - "Yo" is signaled by making a two-handed slicing motion toward anyone in the circle (it needs to be really clear who is being signaled).
3. Let them know that the student being pointed at needs to say the next word and do the next motion.
  4. Run a practice round for a minute or two and let them get a feel for the rules and the flow.
  5. Let your students know that in the 'for real' game, there will be distractions. When someone goofs up on the Hi, Lo, Yo order or motion, they become distractors. Distractors stand outside the circle. Remaining students form a tighter circle. Distractors act goofy, make loud noises and generally try to distract those remaining in the circle. Of course, distractors cannot touch people in the circle and need to keep their language, etc. appropriate.
  6. The round ends when there are three students remaining in the middle or the distractors are becoming bored.
  7. Play another round if there is interest.

#### Suggested Reflection:

1. What are some of the things that distract you from being a strong member of your team? (Point out when some of those have nothing to do with the team.)
2. Do you think there are times when you unintentionally (or maybe intentionally) distract your team mates? Can you share some examples with us?
3. Do you think there are times when you help your team mates be more focused, less distracted? Can you share some examples with us?
4. Ask questions two and three again, but ask them to think about others.
5. Remember, a really important way that students learn about how they are in a group is by hearing it from others- not just through introspection.

### **Activity Three: Pipeline**

Estimated Time: 40 minutes

#### Suggested Setup:

1. Create a long, curvy path with the ropes that will create boundaries for the group to stay within. Any shape that works for your space is fine.
2. Place mesh bag or container with Pipeline Kit (PVC pipe pieces) at the far end of the pathway.
3. Prep the Pipeline pipe pieces by lining the bottom (underside) of each with a length of masking tape.
4. Have three balls from your kit handy (varying sizes are great).

### Suggested Framing:

Tell your students , "When we work as a team, we use many skills to get the job done. You will be amazed. Pay attention to the skills you and others use as you complete this challenging activity."

### Suggested Procedure:

1. Ask students to gather in a circle at the entrance to your Pipeline pathway.
2. Pass a piece of prepped Pipeline to each student.
3. Pass a marker to each student.
4. Ask students to brainstorm skills they use to accomplish goals on a team. Discuss them briefly and select three (some examples might be: listening, sharing ideas, following through, etc.) If you have marbles of varying sizes, use the largest marble to represent the skill that is the least challenging to use, the second largest to represent the next most challenging skill and the smallest, the most challenging skill. It is fine if you don't have varying ball sizes. It furthers your metaphor to align the most challenging ball with the most challenging skill, but it is not necessary. Other items to try can include ping pong balls, golf balls, and even raw eggs.
5. Have students identify the possible sources of support available to them in those situations by writing a different one on the masking tape in each piece of Pipeline (Some examples of support are: sharing concerns, asking for help, offering help, etc.)
6. The class's goal is to successfully travel through the pathway, from entrance to safe home, using their skills (as represented by the marbles) while carrying them only by their support (as represented by the Pipeline pieces).
7. Once the students have gotten one marble into the can, try increasing the challenge by adding more marbles. Ask them to set a goal for how many they think they will get into the can.
8. Pipeline pieces cannot touch each other. The marbles can only travel forward and not stop.
9. Only one marble can travel at a time.
10. If a marble falls to the floor or rolls backward or stops, it begins again back to the start.
11. Once past the starting line, students cannot touch the marbles .
12. When a student has the marble in his or her Pipeline, they may not walk.
13. Pipes may not be made into tunnels by putting two Pipeline pieces together on top of the other.
14. Each student must remain in position of his or her own Pipeline piece.
15. Variation: Vary the rules to decrease the frustration factor- allow them one drop per ball, allow no stopping of the ball- only forward movement etc. You can also make this activity more or less challenging by the complexity of the pathway.

### Suggested Reflection :

1. Separate your students into three small groups.
2. Lay out assorted pictures you have cut from magazines.

3. Assign each group one of the three skills represented by each of the three marbles.
4. Ask each group to tell the story of each skill's experience in pipeline. They are going to present this story to the whole group and can use one to three of the pictures to tell it.
5. Give them five to ten minutes to prepare their stories.
6. Have them present their stories.

#### Facilitation Notes:

This task is harder than it appears, and a group must have the capacity for patience. It is common for the marbles to fall more than once, with the group having to start over many times. The frustration level can get very high. That is usually when communication breaks down and people stop working together. If this happens, it provides good fodder for discussion with a focus on how to recognize the need for, and provide structure for, a group when facing a difficult problem.

If you choose to "raise the stakes" by introducing raw eggs (best done outside), the processing can turn into a discussion about how students reacted to the increased challenge. Did people find themselves focusing more or less? When have the stakes been raised for them at school? How have they reacted?

Sometimes it is helpful to try this activity in small groups first; then combine the groups for a "grand finale" attempt when everyone has had the opportunity to practice.

## **Session Twenty-Two: Reassessing the Full Value Contract**

### **Session Objectives:**

Students describe and demonstrate what it means to be a contributing member of a Full Value community.

Students demonstrate social awareness through empathetic and caring statements and/or behaviors.

Students exhibit an ability to collaborate as part of a team including, leading and following.

Students understand and describe how the Full Value Contract can be an asset to their community.

### **Number of Participants: 8-12**

### **Target population: 6<sup>th</sup> grade students**

### **Estimated Time Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

2 Hula hoops

Different types of 3-D art supplies- examples include: pipe cleaners, masking tape, cardboard rolls, foam shapes, cardboard.

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes.

### **Activity Two: Circle the Circle**

Estimated Time: 15 minutes.

### **Suggested Framing:**

This activity focuses on students working together to solve a problem while trying to care for themselves and others.

"We have established behavioral goals for our group- our Full Value Contract (Circle of Strength). Life can move quickly, but even so, it is important to remember to care for ourselves and others. Let' s remind ourselves of how we do it!"

### **Suggested Procedure:**

1. Ask the students to hold hands with the person next to them and to form a big circle.
2. Place one Hula hoop between two students (resting on their grasped hands).
3. Explain to the students that they are to try to get the hoop around the circle as quickly as possible without letting go of hands.

4. Next, increase the challenge by adding the second hoop. The hoops will move in opposite directions around the circle (over the students), eventually crossing over each other and returning to the starting point.

Suggested Reflection :

1. Give each person a 5 x 7 index card. Have them rank from one to five (five is excellent and one is poor)- first how well the group helped solve the problem of getting the hoop(s) around the circle and secondly how well the group cared for themselves and one another, physically, while passing the hoop. They can spread out to do this. Give them a few minutes.
2. Come together as a large group and ask individuals to explain what criteria they used to determine their ranking.
3. Finally, ask each student to complete a sentence on their card. The sentence is: In regard to respecting myself and others, today I learned ....

### **Activity Three: Metaphor Creation**

Estimated Time: 30 minutes

Suggested setup:

Be sure to have your Full Value Contract prominently on the wall in the room in which you're working.

Suggested Framing:

Metaphor Creation is an activity in which students will create a three-dimensional representation of their Full Value Contract. (Note how we have provided ways for multiple learning styles to learn about and explore the Full Value.)

Begin by sharing with students that "Our Full Value Contract is a living document. It changes, grows and develops as we do in our community. It allows us to add and subtract those items that we feel will be most helpful to us in achieving our individual and group goals. In this activity, we want to continue to develop and refine what the Full Value Contract means to us. We will be creating a sculpture or three-dimensional object that represents the behaviors we are working toward so that we continue as a community.

Suggested Procedure:

1. Instruct the students to come up with a tangible 3-D item that could represent their group and their Full Value Contract.
2. Once the item is agreed upon, bring out the art supplies and instruct the students to create it in a form that can be carried along to other classrooms (sturdy and reasonable size).
3. The last stage is for everyone to sign the item so they understand that they are re-committing to their group and their values.



- When you get angry or upset, what are some de-escalators that help you calm down so that you can deal with the conflict? Write each one on a *Post-it* note.
4. Post your de-escalators (*Post-it* notes) on a sheet of paper. Create and label categories so that similar ideas are together.

Sample Processing Questions:

- What are some causes of conflict?
- Why do you think conflicts tend to escalate?
- What are some strategies we can use in this class to de-escalate conflicts?
- Once a conflict is de-escalated, what are some strategies to resolve the conflict?
- How can we help each other de-escalate a conflict so that it can be resolved?

Facilitation Notes:

The Butter Battle Book can be used with students of all ages. It is a perfect allegory for the idea of escalating conflict. There are many other ways to use children's literature to teach conflict-resolution concepts. This is just one example.

It is important to give students an opportunity to explore how to deal with conflicts at a time when they are not involved in a conflict. Later, when a conflict inevitably occurs they will have heightened skills to deal with it. De-escalation is important, because conflicts cannot be resolved when people are thinking and acting in an enraged state.

As a facilitator, it is important for you to float between the pairs or small groups to help guide discussion about de-escalators. Some students may have difficulty identifying personal de-escalators because they have little experience with even trying to de-escalate a conflict.

## **Session Twenty-Four: Conflict Resolution**

### **Session Objectives:**

Students learn about conflict resolution.

Students brainstorm solutions to conflict resolution.

Students learn how to use the "ABCD Conflict Resolution" Model.

### **Number of Participants: 8-12**

### **Target population: 6<sup>th</sup> grade students**

### **Estimated Time Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

An ordinary household or classroom item for each group.

Paper and pencils

Copies of the ABCD Conflict Resolution Model

3 x 5 notecards

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes

### **Activity Two: Brainstorming**

Estimated Time: 20 minutes.

### **Suggested Procedure:**

1. Divide the class into groups of 4-5.
2. Tell them that you are going to be doing a brainstorming activity. The following rules are in place when brainstorming:
  - Every idea is accepted. No matter how outlandish the idea. It is written down.
  - Ideas are not evaluated. Even if you think an idea won't work, it is written down.
  - Go for as many ideas as possible- quality is important. Choosing the appropriate ideas comes later.
3. Give each group an ordinary item. Have them brainstorm as many uses for it as possible in three minutes.
4. Ask each group to circle the following categories from their list:
  - The three most likely uses for the object
  - The three most unusual uses of the object
5. Have groups share their objects and circled words with the class.
6. Present the group with the following conflict (or one you select/create) to test their brainstorming skills:

*Tirana was unhappy with the look of her backyard. She had been looking at those bushes for way too long, and they needed to be cut. Although the bushes were in the neighbor's*

*yard they were hanging over into hers. One day she went out and started cutting off the top three feet of the bushes. When she was about half done, the neighbors on the other side of the yard came running out the door yelling, "What are you doing? We need our privacy here!"*

*Tirana replied, "What do you care? This isn't even on your side of the yard!" This was Tirana's first meeting with this neighbor, and it didn't appear to be a pleasant introduction.*

7. Have each group brainstorm lists of possible solutions to conflict. Keep the list handy for further discussion.

Sample Processing Questions:

- How does brainstorming solutions help in a conflict situation?
- If two people are arguing about who gets to use a ball at recess, what are some solutions to this conflict?
- How might you choose a solution from the list for this conflict?
- Why do you think it is important to accept all ideas when brainstorming? What difference does it make?

Facilitation Notes:

Brainstorming is an important skill when working through conflicts. If people are to look for possible solutions, they must be able to arrive at a variety of options. After the list is made, then an appropriate course of action can be chosen.

### **Activity Three: Conflicts-The Real. ..the Imagined**

Estimated Time: 20 minutes.

#### **ABCD Conflict Resolution Model**

- A**     **Ask: What is the problem?**
- B**     **Brainstorm** possible solutions.
- C**     **Choose** one.
- D**     **Do it.**

Suggested Procedure:

1. Have students get into groups of 4-5.
2. Continue your discussion about the concept of conflict. Have students share some examples- they can be major or minor.
3. Give each group some index cards. Have students write down a description of a conflict on each card. Collect all the cards.
4. Introduce the ABCD problem-solving model.

5. Get some volunteers to role-play a conflict. First have them pick a card, then role-play how the conflict might go **without** using the ABCD model.
6. Have them replay the conflict using the ABCD model. Make any necessary classifications about the model to the class.
7. Pass out the card to each group. Have each group role-play without and with the ABCD model.

Sample Processing Questions:

- What was the difference between the two role-plays for your group?
- What are some instances when using this model would be helpful?
- When it is difficult to use this model?
- Does solving a conflict using this model have to take a long time? Why or why not?

Facilitation Notes:

Again, this activity provides practice in using a conflict-resolution skill when students are not involved in the conflict. The more practice they have with the model, the more they will be able to use it when the need really arises. Keep the conflict cards on hand for times when you have a few moments at the end of group. Pick one out and have volunteers role-play the conflict to the class. Then have the class brainstorm solutions.

## **Session Twenty-Five: Conflict Resolution**

### **Session Objectives:**

- Students solve problems by analyzing causes and potential solutions.
- Students display an ability to make decisions that support community norms and pro-social behaviors.
- Students understand the emotions underlying conflict.
- Students develop skills needed for peacefully resolving conflicts in socially acceptable ways.
- Students practice reaching win-win solutions and consensus.

### **Number of Participants: 8-12**

### **Target population: 6<sup>th</sup> grade students**

### **Estimated Time Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

- Numerous treats or healthy snacks or other incentives your group enjoys
- Flip-chart paper
- Markers
- 11 x 17 piece of paper for each group of 3-4 students
- Paper pieces representing room furniture
- Scissors
- Glue or tape

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes.

### **Activity Two: Let's Win!!**

Estimated Time: 15 minutes.

### **Suggested Framing:**

Let's Win is a low-key activity in which students empower each other by finding win-win solutions.

Ask the class, "What does it look like when we are empowered, able to make decisions for ourselves? Think about some positive behaviors we use when we are empowered. Let's list them."

As your students come up with behaviors that they think demonstrate empowerment (taking responsibility, making decisions), list them. This list needn't be all inclusive, but you should challenge anything inappropriate. "One behavior that I think shows empowerment is finding solutions to problems that are win-win. Let's practice."

### Suggested Procedure:

1. Generate a list of behaviors that demonstrate empowerment and post it so that it is visible to the entire class.
2. Have students partner up with someone they want to thumb wrestle with for healthy snacks/treats.
3. Students may sit at desks or on the floor as long as there is an even space between partners.
4. Tell the students that each partnership is going to try to win as many treats as possible in 30 seconds. Every time the partner's thumb touches the other person's hand, they win a treat.
5. Review that a win-win situation means that the solution worked for both people versus a win-lose situation where someone misses out.
6. Time a couple of rounds and keep track of the progress, passing out treats as you go.
7. Try one more final round to see if the partnerships grasp that if they cooperate versus compete they both are winners, therefore both people win!

The win-win approach shifts the conflict resolution approach from one person being right and the other wrong to "I want to win and I want you to win too!" This changes the disagreements from "right and wrong" situations to cooperative agreements. This approach works because both parties get more of what they want and are committed to the solution.

### Suggested Reflection:

1. Ask pairs to rate their performance in terms of practicing some of the behaviors generated on your list on a scale of zero to five by showing the corresponding number of fingers on one hand. No fingers is awful/ no behaviors and five fingers is awesome/ a lot of behaviors.
2. Acknowledge the range and highlight positive responders.
3. Explain the win-win approach to conflict resolution and demonstrate with a thumb wrestling partner. (Students voluntarily put both thumbs down and get a treat.)
4. How does win-win relate to empowerment? (You may need to prod with: Are both students and teachers winning when students help each other follow the Full Value Contract/Circle of Strength?)

### **Activity Two: Rearrange the Classroom**

Estimated Time: 20 minutes.

#### Suggested Procedure :

1. Divide the class into groups of 3-4.
2. Tell the students that you want them to create a way to rearrange the classroom using the following guidelines:
  - Have defined areas for individual quiet space, group work space, and group social space.

- Make sure that windows, bulletin boards, doors and chalkboards are unblocked.
  - Keep things that go together, together- for example, the teacher's desk and file cabinets should be near each other. If there is a pet in the room, the pet supplies should be near the cage, etc.
  - Add one new thing to the classroom to make it a more comfortable place for learning.
3. Go over the concept of win-win decisions, and introduce the idea of five-finger consensus. See below section on Five-Finger Consensus Decision Making.
  4. Give each group a set of materials.
  5. When everyone is done, have each group present their concept of the rearranged classroom.

#### Five-Finger Consensus Decision Making:

Consensus is an inclusive- albeit sometimes time consuming- alternative to majority vote decision making. One myth of consensus decision making is that it is an either/ or situation. A strategy that can easily be taught is "five-finger consensus." When a decision is to be made, it should be articulated so that everyone understands what they are deciding. Then everyone holds up the appropriate number of fingers to show agreement:

- Five fingers = This is the best thing since sliced bread.
- Four fingers= It's really great.
- Three fingers= It's an ok thing to do.
- Two fingers = I'll go along with it.
- One finger= I won't block it.
- A fist = Block.

Using this method, there are five ways to agree with a decision and one way to block it. If even one person blocks it, the students must discuss alternatives in order to meet the objections of that one person.

It is important to learn why a decision is being blocked, because it cannot be resolved otherwise. Part of the Full Value Contract is that people will work toward class goals. If someone is blocking a decision for a self-serving purpose that cannot be addressed by the students no matter how hard they try, then a block can be overruled. If, however, the blocker articulates principled, well thought-out objections, the block stays in place, and the class must find another way to meet their challenge together.

Five-finger consensus can also be used to determine the quality of a decision. If everyone holds up only one finger, then it is probably best to re-evaluate the decision. (If everyone holds up their middle finger, you have another issue to deal with.)

#### Sample Processing Questions:

- What were the easy parts of this task? What were the more difficult ones?

- Did you disagree on any part of your vision for the room? What was it? How did you resolve any disagreements?
- Did you look for win-win solutions? What were they? How could they have been win-lose, or lose-lose solutions?
- What are some skills you need in order to arrive at win-win solutions?
- Does compromising always mean that everyone wins?

Facilitation Notes:

This activity can take some time because the students are basically starting from scratch. Each individual must first have a vision of the room, and then they must find ways to blend their visions into something each can appreciate. It is amazing how tenacious of their own ideas people can be, even when the consequences are imaginary. Practice in looking for win-win solutions can help students learn a skill that is extremely useful when the consequences are real.



## **Session Twenty-Six: Conflict Resolution**

### **Session Objectives:**

- Students understand the emotions underlying conflict.
- Students practice reaching win-win solutions and consensus.
- Students demonstrate an ability to appropriately express one's needs and emotions.
- Students define and/or demonstrate the ability to compromise.
- Students understand conflict and reactions to conflict.
- Students know and appreciate one's peers.

### **Number of Participants: 8-12**

### **Target population: 6<sup>th</sup> grade students**

### **Estimated Time Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

- Play dough
- Colored straws
- Popsicle sticks
- Pipe cleaners
- Enough sculpting material to make certain that each partnership has identical materials.
- A list of household items like the one shown below.

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes.

### **Activity Two: Back Talk**

Estimated Time: 20 minutes.

#### **Suggested Setup:**

Divide materials into identical piles, one for each group.

#### **Suggested Framing:**

In this low-key activity, students explore the role of communication in the Full Values and conflict resolution .

Share with students, "Have you ever explained something to someone and felt certain that they understood exactly what you meant only to discover later that they completely misunderstood your original intention? Being supportive involves the accurate transfer of thoughts and feelings, but sometimes that is difficult to achieve. Let's see how we do... "

#### **Suggested Procedure:**

1. Ask the students to each find a partner or assign partners.

2. Divide the materials into identical groups for each pair.
3. Each partner receives identical materials. Have partners sit back to back.
4. Instruct the partnerships to create a sculpture that represents letting go and moving on.
5. Be very clear that each person in the partnership is creating the same sculpture as their partner simultaneously, coming up with an image of what letting go and moving on "looks like."
6. Partners must verbally describe their co-creations during the process but may not turn around or show one another what they are doing.
7. The goal is for each partnership to create identical sculptures without looking at each other's creation until both agree that the task is complete.
8. After both agree, partners should turn around and show their sculptures to one another.

**Suggested Reflection:**

1. Remember that the objective was for each partner to create an identical structure while sitting back to back. What surprised you most when you turned around?
2. How did you and your partner decide what to create? Where was the leadership?
3. How did you describe/ communicate with each other?
4. What types of conflict and compromise occurred during this process?
5. How did you prevent conflict from occurring or manage conflict when it did occur?
6. What is one thing you appreciate about your partner?

**Activity Three: Batten Down the Hatches**

Estimated Time: 20 minutes.

**Suggested Procedure:**

1. Tell the class that they are living in Southern Florida, and that there has just been news of a large hurricane heading their way. The evacuation notice has just gone out. They have 15 minutes to gather up everything they need before leaving. Due to limited space, they can only take 15 items with them, not including people and pets. The family consists of two kids, parents, and the family dog, Juno.
2. Give each person a list of supplies. Have student's rank-order their top 15 items.

**List of Supplies for Batten Down the Hatches Activity**

- Matches
- 5 gallons of gasoline
- Tent with stakes and poles
- Case of dog food
- Raincoat for each person
- 10 pound bag of oranges
- Charcoal grill

- Charcoal
  - Package of toilet paper
  - Car keys
  - Flashlight with new batteries
  - Suitcase with a change of clothes for each person
  - 5 boxes of Pop Tarts
  - 1 gallon of milk
  - Weather radio
  - 3 pounds of cheese
  - Family photo album
  - Video game
  - Road atlas of the United States
  - 5 gallons of water
  - Jackknife
  - Box of 10 candles
  - Cell phone
  - Emergency flares
3. Divide students into groups of 4-6.
  4. Review the idea of win-win solutions and reaching consensus.
  5. Ask each group to reach consensus and to list at least their top five items. If they get that far, then have them continue to rank-order the other 10.
  6. Have each group report their top 5-15 to the class.

#### Sample Processing Questions:

- Which items were easy to agree on? What were some of your disagreements about?
- How did you reach consensus on the items? What strategies did you use?
- Did you feel that you arrived at win-win solutions? Why or why not?

#### Facilitation Notes:

Consensus activities like this can really be a struggle for some people. It is often relatively easy to choose the 15 items to keep; the interesting part is attempting to rank-order those items. Here are a few hints that might make reaching consensus a little easier:

1. Avoid arguing. Try to present ideas logically.
2. Listen to others. They may just convince you to change your mind.
3. It isn't necessary to win or lose. If agreement stalls, look for the next best alternative.
4. Don't just agree to avoid conflict. Yield only if other sides make sense.
5. Avoid conflict-avoiding tactics. Don't flip a coin to decide. Look for the win-win through compromise.
6. Disagreements are healthy. Everyone has a different opinion. Work through disagreements and, possibly, you'll find a great solution.

## **Session Twenty-Seven: Teambuilding**

### **Session Objectives:**

Students learn to work together to achieve a common goal or task.

Students learn to express one's feelings verbally.

Students demonstrate an ability to evaluate and revise personal and/or group goals.

Students demonstrate social awareness through empathetic and caring statements and/or behavior.

### **Number of Participants: 8-12**

### **Target population: 6<sup>th</sup> grade students**

### **Estimated Time Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

20 straws per group

36 inches of tape per group

1 egg per group

Garbage bag, paper towels and a trash can for cleanup

Flip chart paper

Markers

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes.

### **Activity Two: Egg Protector**

Estimated Time: 40 minutes

### **Suggested Setup:**

1. Open the garbage bag and tape it to the floor on the far side of the open space. (Your students will be dropping their protected eggs from six feet high onto this spread out bag).
2. You can place a chair near or on the bag for students to stand on and drop their egg from, if these feels safe. If not, your students can simply drop their eggs from as high as they can reach when they are standing.

### **Suggested Framing:**

In this team initiative, students further explore goal setting.

"Life is challenging. Some of the things we experience can be very positive and help us grow and mature. Other experiences can be very hurtful. It is important that we learn to help support each other."

### **Suggested Procedure:**

1. Separate the group into teams of 4-6 people.
2. Give each team an egg, 36 inches of tape, 20 straws, flip chart paper and markers.
3. Explain to the students that the challenge of this activity is to construct a container for their eggs that will prevent them from breaking when dropped from a height of six feet. The egg represents a student (no one in particular). The straw and tape of the container represents constructive feedback. The six-foot drop represents a giant put-down.
4. Tell the students that the egg must be inside the container/network somehow (the straws cannot be used as a nest on the floor that the egg drops into) and should be able to withstand a drop from six feet.
5. Also explain that the second part of the challenge is to create a name and a commercial for their support container that lets everyone know why theirs is the best, most protective, most efficient support system known to human kind. They can make posters for their commercials and/or act them out for the whole group - whichever they choose.
6. Tell the teams that they have 20-30 minutes to develop their support containers/network and commercial. Each team will present their commercial just before dropping their eggs.
7. After 20-30 minutes, gather everyone in a large group. Have students sit on the floor of the room in a horseshoe shape so that there is sort of a stage in the middle for the egg drops.
8. Ask for volunteers to start the presentation process and have the first team present their commercial and drop the egg. Each team should have a representative drop the team's egg from the height of six feet or just have him/her reach up as high as he or she can drop it from there.
9. Save the posters from the commercials to post in the classroom.
10. This is a great time to have students join you in celebrating- even if the team you're celebrating breaks an egg.

Suggested Reflection:

1. What are some common themes in effective support networks?
2. What were you surprised by during this activity and why?
3. What feelings were you experiencing as you (or your team member) let go of the egg?
4. How can you transfer those same feelings of letting go with our community?
5. Occasionally an egg will break. Use this as an opportunity to discuss what happens when people can't accept constructive feedback or have challenges creating effective support networks.

## **Session Twenty-Eight: Teambuilding**

### **Session Objectives:**

- Students analyze potential consequences when confronted with a behavior choice.
- Students define and identify ways of caring for and helping self and others.
- Students demonstrate self-awareness through the expression of thoughts and feelings.
- Students describe the importance of rules and/ or norms of behavior to a team.
- Students describe and demonstrate what it means to be a contributing member of a team.
- Students manage one's behavior in accordance with the Full Value Contract.

### **Number of Participants: 8-12**

### **Target population: 6<sup>th</sup> grade students**

### **Estimated Time Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

- 1 Hula hoop per student
- A Group GRAB worksheet for each student

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes.

### **Activity Two: Natural Disasters**

Estimated Time: 20 minutes.

### **Suggested Framing:**

Begin by telling the students, "Each of us is unique; we have our own place in the world. Place your hoop on the floor and stand inside of it. Make sure your feet are all the way inside your hoop. Don't get too comfortable though; there is lots of flooding in this land and we have to work together to keep ourselves and each other safe."

### **Suggested Procedure:**

1. Explain that people are safe only when they have both feet inside a hoop and that the hoops cannot be moved to make larger hoops or safe spaces.
2. Before any movement takes place, do a quick check-in with the class, having each student take a moment to identify one of the things that keeps him or her safe.
3. Tell students that when they hear the words "Rain's coming," they must move to a new hoop. Remind them that to be safe, they must have both of their feet within the perimeter of the hoop.
4. Explain to students that they can take as much time as needed to find a new space and they can walk on the floor spaces between hoops to get to a new place.

5. After two or three changes, acknowledge safe behaviors and increase the challenge by removing one or more of the hoops. This will force someone to share his/her hoop. Repeat this several times until many students are sharing hoops with one another.
6. Keep removing hoops.
7. The final goal is to include everyone inside one hoop.
8. One solution is for all of the students to sit on the floor with their feet within the hoop. They only have to have their feet in the hoop.

Suggested Reflection:

1. What were the initial challenges of this activity?
2. How did the challenge change as the activity progressed?
3. How did you take care of peers within your group?
4. Are your patterns in this activity the same as in the classroom (for example: me first, just save my friends, look for ways to help)?
5. What sacrifices did you make to save your peers?
6. What do you do in the classroom to help your peers?

### **Activity Three: The Group Grab**

Estimated Time: 15 minutes.

Suggested Framing:

In this worksheet driven activity, students evaluate their group using GRAB.

"Let's figure out what we need to do to be a more valuing team using GRAB."

Suggested Procedure:

1. Handout the worksheets while explaining that the students will be assessing their current group and commenting with examples.
2. Circulate, answering questions and clarifying as needed. Give students the time they need to complete the worksheet.
3. As the students finish, total the numbers for each of the categories and post the average score for each category in a place where everyone can see them.
4. Have the class share examples of why any score is extremely high or extremely low on the 1-10 scale.

Suggested Reflection:

1. What are the areas that need your personal or the group's attention?
2. How can the group gain points for next week?
3. What area should we, as a group focus on?
4. What are our strategies to keep that focus?
5. If you do this activity earlier in the school year, do an assessment every month and post the comparative scores in order to show growth or change in group development.

## **Session Twenty-Nine: Teambuilding**

### **Session Objectives:**

Students define and/or demonstrate the ability to compromise.

Students solve problems by analyzing causes and potential solutions.

Students display an ability to make decisions that support community norms and pro-social behaviors.

Students exhibit an ability to collaborate as part of a team including leading and following.

### **Number of Participants: 8-12**

### **Target population: 6<sup>th</sup> grade students**

### **Estimated Time Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

16 balloons

16 plastic cups

16 pieces of paper

16 straws

8 balloons

4 rolls of tape

4 index cards with "new language" on each

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes.

### **Activity Two: Bridge-It**

Estimated Time: 45 minutes.

### **Suggested Setup:**

1. Create four separate spaces within your area. Try to find or create spaces in which students from other groups will not see each other.
2. Place four balls, four plastic cups, four straws, four pieces of paper, two balloons and a roll of tape in each space.
3. Each group also gets a card with their "language" on it. (See sample language cards at the end of this activity.) The challenge is for the group to use the language on the card when communicating with other groups. They can use common language when in their smaller groups.



### Suggested Framing:

Tell students, "Sometimes we are in control. Sometimes we need to rely on other people to be in control so that we stay safe, or honest, or see the situation from a different perspective. Let's experience what it is like to rely on others to see the big picture."

### Suggested Procedure:

1. Ask students to divide themselves into four equal groups and move to one of the four locations. You can also assign the groups.
2. Explain that the objective is for each small group to build a bridge that looks as much like the other bridges as possible and that is able to connect with the other bridges.
3. The sequence begins with a five-minute meeting with a chosen representative from each small group. Refer to communication rules below.

### Communication Rules:

- A new representative from each small group should be chosen each time a negotiating session is held.
  - The groups work independently of each other, but are allowed three planning/ negotiating meetings together as an entire group.
  - During the planning/ negotiation sessions, only one spokesperson from each small group can talk.
  - Communication among groups is guided by the language cards (each small group has a separate language card).
4. There is a seven-minute discussion and building back at the site in their small group.
  5. Another five-minute planning/negotiating session (new representatives from each group) is held.
  6. This is followed by a five-minute discussion and building time back at site in the small group.
  7. Another five minute planning/ negotiating session (new representatives from each group) is held.
  8. Then a five minute building time in the small group.
  9. Finally, the "unveiling" takes place with each small group bringing their bridge to the center of the room to see how the bridges match and compare. You can also have students rotate through each construction site and come together in one large group for the reflection.

### Suggested Reflection:

1. What was it like to try to communicate with the other groups?
2. What were the differences between what it was like in the large group meetings versus the small group meetings?
3. Were there times you gave up control and empowered others to take control or be in charge?

4. Were you more in control in one role than the other?
5. How did trying to control what your small group did feel?
6. Do you think it is easier to control yourself or control others?
7. How do you think this experience relates to control to empowerment?

## **Session Thirty: Teambuilding**

### **Session Objectives:**

Students demonstrate self-control and the ability to cope with both success and failure. Students display an ability to make decisions that support community norms and pro-social behaviors.

Students demonstrate an ability to appropriately express one's needs and emotions.

Students exhibit an ability to collaborate as part of a team including leading and following.

Students demonstrate an ability to ask questions, negotiate, and support team decisions.

**Number of Participants: 8-12**

**Target population: 6<sup>th</sup> grade students**

**Estimated Time Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

- 8 Hula hoops.
- 1 can of play dough or clay per two students.
- Stop watch.

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes.

### **Activity Two: Helium Hoop**

Estimated Time: 30 minutes (time can vary widely on this activity).

#### **Suggested Framing:**

Begin by telling the students, "Sometimes something seems that it should be easy and it is not and surprisingly we find ourselves in very difficult situations. We may feel stuck, overwhelmed, frustrated and want to blame someone else for what is happening. When we ground ourselves by managing our own thoughts, feelings and behaviors, we can get through stressful situations and not be distracted by negativity. The first step to being able to do that is to be aware of your thoughts, feelings and behaviors- as you do this activity, pay attention to yourself."

#### **Suggested Procedure:**

1. Separate into groups of ten and ask each group of students to stand in a small circle with their index and middle fingers of one hand extended in front of them.
2. Explain to the group that their challenge is to lower the hoop as much as possible with everyone maintaining contact with the hoop at all times. No one may lose contact with the hoop.
3. Place the hoop in the center of the circle and ask students to rest it on the front pads of their index and middle fingers only! Do this after you explain the challenge,

because, as you know, as soon as you put it down, the "helium" takes effect and they will not hear the rest of the infonation!

4. If anyone loses contact with the hoop, simply stop the process, return the hoop to waist height and try again.
5. Ask students to be aware of their communication and focus while participating in this activity.

**Suggested Reflection:**

1. Was it as easy to do as you thought it would be when I gave you the directions? Explain?
2. How did you respond to the difficulty?
3. Was anyone angry?
4. How do you know you were angry? Did you act differently toward your team members?
5. If you found yourself becoming angry, were you surprised by how you felt and acted?

**Additional Thoughts:**

- Because this activity is more difficult than it sounds, it can elicit frustration very quickly. This is often evidenced by blame language. Address feelings as needed .
- Groups will move with the hoop horizontally as well as vertically.
- The activity can also be finished very quickly. If so, have students switch spots in the circle and use their other hand and try again.

**Activity Three: Hoop Relay**

Estimated Time: 15 minutes.

**Suggested Framing:**

This moderate activity helps students focus on how they contribute to a team.

Tell students, "Sometimes when we work together, each individual needs to contribute in the same way. We don't get the chance to choose who can do something based on how good they are at it. We all just have to pitch in and do the same work together to get the job done. However, we can still be really strong team members."

**Suggested Procedure:**

1. Separate your group into two teams. Each team should select someone to start the hoops. The hoop starter will be joining the action after all of the hoops have been started.
2. Have the teams form lines. The team members should hold hands except for the hoop starter. The hoop starter faces their team.
3. Explain that each team will need to pass the hoops along their line until the person at the front is back at the front. These are the rules:
  - People in the line must hold hands.

- Upon your "Go" the hoop starter will start a hoop by placing it over the head of the first person in line.
  - When the first hoop is on the fourth person, the next will start until each team has started both or all three of the hoops.
  - When all of the hoops are started, the hoop starter should join the line at the front.
  - When a hoop reaches the last person, the last person should run to the front and start that hoop again. Remember to continue to hold hands.
  - Each team is finished when the original first person is back to the front of the line again.
4. Giving each team their hoops. You'll give them two or three depending on how challenging you want the activity to be or how large the group is. Three hoops is a bigger challenge for a smaller group and will keep a larger group more engaged.
  5. Start the action.

Variation:

- Don't separate your students into teams. Circle up instead. Time them so they can compete against the clock.

Suggested Reflection:

1. Everyone should find a partner from the other team. A group of three is fine.
2. Give each partnership a can of Play Dough, lump of clay or the like.
3. Ask the partnerships to create a sculpture that represents one way they contributed to their team and one issue they think they struggled with and maybe slowed the team down or didn't support their team members as much as they would have liked. This is one sculpture representing a contribution and a challenge they both had.
4. Each partnership will present this sculpture to the larger group explaining the shared contribution and challenge it represents.
5. You are, essentially asking the partnerships to debrief each other. So, you really want them to talk about what happened and find out what they share. This is a good time for you to circulate and communicate your observations.
6. The reflection here doesn't explore competition, but you could. You didn't tell the two teams they were competing, but were they?

## **Session Thirty-One: Teambuilding**

### **Session Objectives:**

- Students support each other in achieving goals and making decisions.
- Students learn to work together to achieve a common goal or task.
- Students demonstrate self-control and the ability to cope with both success and failure.

### **Number of Participants: 8-12**

### **Target population: 6<sup>th</sup> grade students**

### **Estimated Time Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

- A variety of brainteasers of your choosing- at least four, but feel free to use more (see below for ideas).
- At least one piece of paper per pair of students.
- 1 pen/marker/pencil per student.
- 2 pieces of activity rope to mark a start and finish line.

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes.

### **Activity Two: Mastermind Relay**

Estimated Time: 45 minutes.

### **Suggested Setup:**

1. Make stations for each brainteaser and label each station with one of the GRAB components- Goals, Readiness, Affect and Behavior. The stations could be on desks or the like. Allow room for students to circulate. Or give each team a list with materials to work through on their own to minimize sharing information across teams.
2. Mark a start and finish line.

### **Suggested Framing:**

Share with students, "When we solve problems, we are doing something that gives us the opportunity to learn about ourselves- especially when we pay attention. Think about GRAB (Goals, Readiness, Affect & Behavior) and use it to assess yourself and your partner. Let's do something and learn about ourselves along the way."

### **Suggested Procedure:**

1. Divide your group into teams of pairs.
2. Tell students that this relay requires them to solve the puzzle at each station. Each station is also labeled with one of the GRAB components. Along with solving the

- puzzle, students should write down concrete examples of how they are doing, as a team of two, on that component. For example, when they reach Readiness they might write: "We are ready to rule or rock the house today." Or "We can get along to set goals that are similar for each other." Or "We are struggling to keep up with the activity because we are arguing." They move to a new station once you've checked their solution (or you can use the honor system if it is appropriate for your group).
3. They don't need to move in any sequence.
  4. Tell them they finish the relay when they cross the finish line.
  5. Line them up at the start line and signal "Go!"
  6. You may want to ask for fast walking only during this activity.

**Suggested Reflection:**

1. Ask students to start in small teams and discuss:
  - Did thinking about the GRAB components help you to perform this activity?
  - Give each other some examples of how you think some or any of the GRAB components changed for you individually throughout this activity.

**Brainteasers:**

- A station of Sudoku puzzles torn or copied from a puzzle book - one per team.
- Rearrange six match sticks to make nothing (Suggest using popsicle sticks). The match sticks may not be bent, broken or placed over one another. Answer: rearrange the matchsticks into a zero. Remember to scatter them once your answer has been checked.
- If today is Monday, what is the day after the day before the day before tomorrow?  
Answer: Monday.
- Write the number 10 using only nines. Think math! Answer:  $9 + (9 \text{ divided by } 9) = 10$ .
- Why are 1980 pennies worth more than 1979 pennies? One thousand nine hundred and eighty one cent coins are worth one penny more than one thousand nine hundred and seventy-nine one cent coins.
- Drawing only two straight lines make a box out of the number below: 301 becomes "Box". Answer: (add vertical line to 3 to make a Band and a diagonal to the 1 to make an "X").
- Excluding this question, how many Fs are in the following sentence?  
FEATURE FILMS ARE THE RESULT OF YEARS OF SCIENTIFIC STUDY  
COMBINED WITH YEARS OF EXPERIENCE. (Answer: 6).
- Do an internet search for more brainteasers.

## **Session Thirty-Two: Teambuilding**

### **Session Objectives:**

- Students demonstrate responsible and healthy decision making.
- Students solve problems by analyzing causes and potential solutions.
- Students describe what constitutes a healthy choice.
- Students display an ability to make decisions that support community norms and pro-social behaviors.
- Students demonstrate an ability to evaluate and revise personal and/or group goals.
- Students support each other in achieving goals and making decisions.

### **Number of Participants: 8-12**

### **Target population: 6<sup>th</sup> grade students**

### **Estimated Time Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

- Tossables, at least one per student
- Masking Tape
- Markers
- 5 Hula hoops
- 30 or more small balls (tennis or fleece)
- A game rope, cones or other boundary markers.

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes.

### **Activity Two: Decision Dilemma**

20 minutes

#### **Suggested Setup:**

You will need a small, open play space for this activity.

#### **Suggested Framing (Part 1):**

This activity explores the process of making and following through on a good decision.

Tell students "Sometimes you make good decisions, sometimes we make bad ones. All of us do. How do we know we've made a good or bad decision because they all seem good or at least fun when we make them? Give your students time to answer. You're looking for the outcome or what happens next. If needed, prod with, an authentic example of a bad decision. "Do you think that was a good or bad decision? Why?"

#### **Suggested Procedure (Part 1):**



1. Ask your students to form a circle.
2. Ask them to think of some healthy or positive decisions. Then, discuss what the positive outcomes were. Have your students discuss them and challenge inappropriate outcomes. (Flip chart the healthy positive choices that students identified. Keep them posted.)
3. Ask each student to pick one outcome. Give them a piece of masking tape and a marker and have them write their chosen outcome on their piece of tape.
4. Hand each student a tossable (stuffed animal or ball) and have them stick their tape on it.

#### Suggested Framing (Part 2):

"Now we have all these healthy outcomes. Let's see what can happen when you try to make lots of healthy things happen at once."

#### Suggested Procedure :

1. Have students remain in the circle and ask for a volunteer to come into the middle. This person is the decider.
2. Explain that the decider yells, "One, two, three, go." On "Go" all the students throw their 'outcomes' in the air in the direction of the decider.
3. The decider tries to catch as many outcomes as he or she can. He or she should then read the 'caught' outcomes out loud followed by the outcomes that he or she missed.
4. Give everyone who wants one a turn in the middle.

#### Suggested Reflection

1. Did anyone not catch an outcome at all? Why do you think that was?
2. Did anyone miss the outcomes they really wanted? Why do you think that was?
3. What do you think would have happened if you'd just paid attention to the outcomes you really wanted?
4. What steps are involved in making decisions that help you to achieve desired outcomes?

### **Activity Three: Rules of the Game**

20 minutes

#### Suggested Setup:

1. Label each ball with a letter as in Scrabble, but skip some of the really hard letters like Q, Z, or X. So you might have 4Es, 3 As, 3 Is, 2 Os, 2 Ns, 2 Rs, 3Ts, 1 L, 2 Ss, 1 U, 2 Ds, 1 G, 1 B, 1 C, 1 M, 1 P, 1 F, 1 H and 1 Y. This combination will yield 31 letters.
2. Set up the hoops with one in the middle and the remaining four on the outside forming a square. This formation will look like the five on a die. Place the hoops further apart to enable more running.

3. Designate a home area for each team, using game rope or tape, inside which the team and their hoop can fit.
4. Put all the labeled balls in the middlehoop.

Suggested Framing:

"Sometimes we are all working towards the same goal. Let's see how things change when our goals change. I bet our roles and the decisions we make will change as our goals change."

Suggested Procedure:

1. Divide your students into four small groups.
2. Each small group should circle up in and around one hoop.
3. On "Go," one student will run to the middle and get one ball/letter and place it in his or her home hoop. Once the ball/letter is in the hoop and the returning student has high-fived another member of his or her team, another student can leave to get another letter.
4. Only one student at a time may be out of the home area getting a letter. All students should go at least once before a student goes twice.
5. Students may get letters from another team's hoop. Student's may not defend their hoop.
6. The goal is for them to get letters to spell a five-letter word. The team can have more than five balls in their hoop.
7. Give your students time to plan before commencing each round.

## ROUND TWO

8. The same rules apply. But you will whisper, or say in a way that the other group can't overhear , a new goal for each team. New goals are:
  - Team 1: Get five vowels.
  - Team 2: Get five consonants.
  - Team 3: Get five letters in alphabetical sequence (i.e. a,b,c,d,e).
  - Team 4: Spell a five letter word again.
9. Give your students time to plan.
10. Stop the action at random times to ask students to make observations about how they are working together.

Reflection:

1. When all four teams had the same goal, did you really have the same goal?
2. Did your team have a strategy?
3. How did you make decisions that helped you to achieve your goals and implement your strategy?
4. What decisions would you change? (Go to other team's hoop instead of the middle to get balls?)

5. How did you contribute to your team's decision-making process? (Go around the group and ask your students to give examples of their own and others' helpfulness. You should also give examples.)
6. When it came time to execute your strategy, how did you decide who would do what? Or, was your strategy developed by what you felt your team members were good at? (For example, "Jessica is a really fast runner. If she were on my team, I would have suggested she get all the letters.")
7. In our classroom, are there goals or areas where we could be making better decisions?

Variation:

- Have your students spell specific words. Adjust your balls/letters to what is needed to make those words. Don't make it too easy!

## **Session Thirty-Three: Teambuilding**

### **Session Objectives:**

- Students identify the characteristics of leadership and teamwork.
- Students demonstrate an ability to ask questions, negotiate, and support team decisions.
- Students learn to express one's feelings verbally.
- Students define and/or demonstrate the ability to compromise.
- Students demonstrate social awareness through empathetic and caring statements/ or behavior.

### **Number of Participants: 8-12**

### **Target population: 6<sup>th</sup> grade students**

### **Estimated Time Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

- Change Up cards (set of cards numbered from 1-24)
- A stopwatch
- 1 Hula hoop per three students
- A CD player, radio or the like
- 1 index/ note card per student
- 1 pen, pencil or marker per student
- 1 hat, bucket, bowl or the like

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes.

### **Activity Two: Change Up**

Estimated Time: 30 minutes

### **Suggested Framing:**

In this moderate activity, students support the group in attaining goals and begin to understand how they do that.

Tell students "Your group will be given a series of challenges. After each challenge is identified, your group will have several opportunities to plan and find solutions. The team goal is to execute the solution as efficiently as possible. You will decide on a good goal for efficiency- you'll tell me what you think a good time is. Once you have had a chance to improve on your solution, a new challenge will be presented. Each time a change occurs, the group will attempt to develop a plan that will help them to accomplish the team goal."

### **Suggested procedure:**

1. Tell your students that you are going to hand out

### **Activity Three: Hoop Delight**

Estimated Time: 10 minutes

Suggested Framing:

This variation on musical chairs explores what students have in common.

Ask students "Have you ever played musical chairs? Well Hoop Delight is very much like that with a slight twist- we will get to know one another a little better and no one is Out."

Suggested Procedure:

1. Tell your students that the hoops are like the chairs in musical chairs. You are going to play music and when it stops they need to find a hoop to stand in.
2. There can be no more than three students in a hoop.
3. There must be at least one new student in the group each time they get to a new hoop.
4. When your students get to a new hoop, give them a minute or so to find one thing they have in common. Keep the music stopped while they discuss their commonalities.
5. Start the music and start the activity- have them find their first hoop.
6. Stop playing when everyone has had at least one turn with each of the other students. However, feel free to keep going if your students are still engaged! You will need to either give them a fresh start or keep going, but eliminate the new student rule (number 3 above).

Suggested Reflection:

1. Give each student an index/note card and a pencil, pen or marker.
2. Have them write their name on it and throw it into a hat, bucket, bowl or the like.
3. Mix up the cards and have each student draw one, making sure that they do not get their own name.
4. When each student has an index card, have them share one thing that they have in common with the student on their card.

Questions for Discussion:

- Why do you think it is important to know the people on your team?
- Is it easier to set and accomplish team goals when you know each other? If, so, why?

## **Session Thirty-Four: Leadership**

### **Session Objectives:**

Students identify the effects of leadership and teamwork and team members.  
Students demonstrate teamwork skills in activities.  
Students exhibit an ability to collaborate as part of a team including leading and following.

**Number of Participants: 8-12**

**Target population: 6<sup>th</sup> grade students**

**Estimated Time Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

A variety of reproductions of art work (could be cut from magazines, catalogs, postcards, etc.) enough for each group of three to have one.  
A pencil/pen and piece of paper for each student.

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes.

### **Activity Two: A picture is worth 1000 words**

Estimated Time: 45 minutes

#### **Suggested Setup:**

Create workspaces where students can spread out materials and work in teams of three.

#### **Suggested Framing:**

This team activity explores the role of leadership in a team. Share with students "Art can inspire us. What types of art inspire you? Images strike people in different ways. Let's see if we can work as a team to convey the story that we see in a picture."

#### **Suggested Procedure:**

1. Have your group form teams of three.
2. Give each team a selection of art pieces, a large piece of paper and pens for everyone.
3. Ask them to select a picture that inspires them.
4. They will write a story inspired by the picture they selected. The story should relate to the concept of leadership.
5. Remind them that they are creating one story per team of three. Give them an appropriate time limit based on their ability to complete a task. (Approximately 15 minutes).

### Suggested Reflection:

Have each team read their story and show the pictures that inspired them to think about leadership. They should describe the inspiration.

### Questions for Discussion:

1. How did you work as a team to write your story? (For example: Did one student transcribe while another student wrote or did they each write a part, etc?)
2. What do you think your major contribution to your team was?
3. What skill do you think you need to work on so that you can contribute more effectively to your team?
4. Who took a leadership role in your group? What did it look like and sound like?
5. Are there any skills your team members need to work on to become more active leaders? Can you give them feedback on that?

## **Session Thirty-Five: Leadership**

### **Session Objectives:**

Students identify the characteristics of leadership and teamwork.

Students exhibit an ability to collaborate as part of a team including leading and following.

### **Number of Participants: 8-12**

### **Target population: 6<sup>th</sup> grade students**

### **Estimated Time Session: 40-45 minutes**

### **Materials:**

Art materials- enough for everyone to do collage and picture making

Pieces of large paper - enough for everyone to have one

Paper fasteners -five for each group

Hole punch- one per group or you can simply share

Examples of Leadership costumes from magazines, history books etc.

### **Activity One: Greetings and Overview**

Estimated Time: 5 minutes.

### **Activity Two: Dressed to Lead**

Estimated time: 45 minutes.

#### **Suggested Setup:**

Create workspaces where students can spread out materials and work in teams of three. Consider having examples for students to look at of positive leaders in a variety of costumes or dress (tribal leader, head coach, military leader, football quarterback, school principal, president, lead singer of a music group or band, etc.). Choose a variety of roles, ethnicities and genders that will be familiar yet challenge students' thinking.

#### **Suggested Framing:**

Teams of students explore the characteristics of leadership through creativity.

Begin by telling students, "We all know how we like our leaders to act. If you don't know off the top of your head, just think about it. You have leaders in your family, right? Often this is mom and/or dad. How do you like to be treated by the leader of your family? What is important for the leader of your family to do? Today we are going to work in teams to create costumes that positive leaders might wear."

#### **Suggested Procedure:**

1. Separate your group into teams of four students.



2. Give each team five to ten minutes to discuss the qualities they believe a leader should and does possess.
3. Have each member of the team decide on which body part, -head, torso, legs, and arms, of the leader they will represent. (If your group numbers are such that you have some groups of five, people can share a body part.)
4. "So your team has decided on the qualities your leader will possess. Keeping that in mind, what type of costumes would you put on that body?"
5. Have teams scatter so that one member can't see the others' work.
6. Give them 15-20 minutes to work on their body parts. Remind them to be as creative as they'd like.
7. Finally, have teams come back together and assemble their leaders using the hole punch and paper fasteners. Have them discuss how they think their art work reflects the characteristics they talked about earlier. They should also identify some people who have leadership qualities. They should be prepared to talk about this with the group. Give them as much time as they need.

Suggested Reflection:

1. Ask each team to share their creation and describe the qualities that they thought were important.
2. Have the presenter describe their creation.
3. What qualities are included in the costume?
4. Encourage conversation and dialogue about leadership qualities and what they look like in the students' worlds?
5. Are there any specific leaders you had in mind or used as reference when you created the various aspects of your leaders?

## **Activities List**

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Balloon Frantic	p.55	Problem-Solving
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