

Climbing Out

11. Puppet Play

Spatial Requirements: Classroom with moderate space required

Activity Type: Object lesson

Grades: K-12

Group Size: 2 or more

Time: 20-30 minutes

Introduction: This activity helps students envision and role play situations that involve peer pressure, or getting pulled into the pot. It leads into a discussion about friendship and what makes someone a good friend.

Materials:

- 2 puppets or more, or materials to make your own puppets (sticks, paper sacks, old socks, glue, etc.)

Activity:

Option 1:

Use two puppets to act out some situations involving peer pressure. In at least one of these situations, have one puppet become persuaded by another to do something wrong, and another situation where one puppet resists doing something wrong.

Example: Puppet 1 tells Puppet 2 that he stole a CD and wants Puppet 2 to listen to it with him. Have Puppet 2 resist, but then let Puppet 1 convince him to listen. Or have Puppet 1 call Puppet 2 a mean name, and have Puppet 2 explain in a calm voice that Puppet 1 is hurting her feelings and she would like her to stop. When Puppet 1 continues to call her a mean name, have her walk away.

Discuss with students what it means to be a good friend, and that friends who try to hurt you or persuade you to do bad things are not true friends. Have the class brainstorm and make a class list or chart of things that friends don't do. For example, "Friends don't call each other names," etc.

Option 2:

Identify an issue that students are facing in your school or class to address using the puppets.

Option 3:

Have the students come up with situations they may be facing and perform them for the class.

You may wish to have students make a puppet of their own with paper and sticks, paper sacks, old socks, or other supplies you have on hand, and allow them to come up and role play a scenario in small groups. Give as many students as you can a chance to role play.

Situations may include:

1. Someone cuts in front of you in the lunch line.
2. You don't get invited to a friend's party.
3. Another student calls you a name.
4. Someone asks you to give them the answers to a test question. When you don't, they make fun of you.
5. Two classmates want you to play a mean trick on another student.

Processing the Experience:

- Have you ever wanted to say no to something but you didn't?

- What are some reasons people do things that are wrong?
- Why do you think some people try to get other people to do something that is wrong?
- What are some things that can help you to say no to someone who is trying to get you do something wrong?
- What are some positive things you can do if someone is being mean or not being a good friend? (This also ties in to "Defense Mechanisms.")