

Get Plugged In

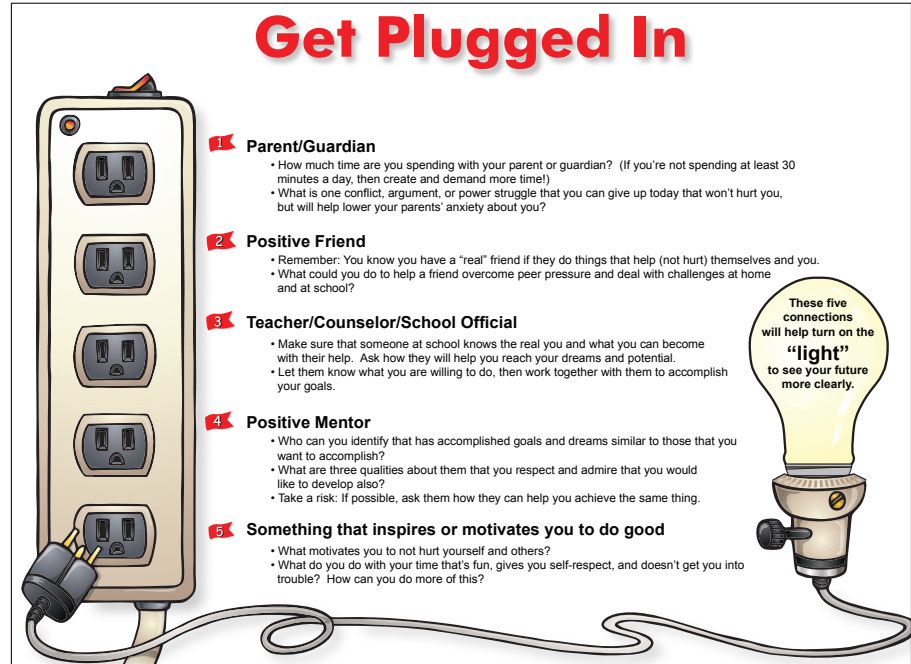
Introduction

Key Concept:

Getting help is not a weakness, it is a strength! Challenges become easier when you have a positive support system to help you overcome them. YOU have the power to create a support system if you don't have one. YOU have the power to strengthen a support system if yours is weak.

Vocabulary

- Support system
- Teamwork
- Role model
- Hero
- Resources
- Inspire
- Connections
- Mentor



Get Plugged In

- 1 Parent/Guardian**
 - How much time are you spending with your parent or guardian? (If you're not spending at least 30 minutes a day, then create and demand more time!)
 - What is one conflict, argument, or power struggle that you can give up today that won't hurt you, but will help lower your parents' anxiety about you?
- 2 Positive Friend**
 - Remember: You know you have a "real" friend if they do things that help (not hurt) themselves and you.
 - What could you do to help a friend overcome peer pressure and deal with challenges at home and at school?
- 3 Teacher/Counselor/School Official**
 - Make sure that someone at school knows the real you and what you can become with their help. Ask how they will help you reach your dreams and potential.
 - Let them know what you are willing to do, then work together with them to accomplish your goals.
- 4 Positive Mentor**
 - Who can you identify that has accomplished goals and dreams similar to those that you want to accomplish?
 - What are three qualities about them that you respect and admire that you would like to develop also?
 - Take a risk: If possible, ask them how they can help you achieve the same thing.
- 5 Something that inspires or motivates you to do good**
 - What motivates you to not hurt yourself and others?
 - What do you do with your time that's fun, gives you self-respect, and doesn't get you into trouble? How can you do more of this?

These five connections will help turn on the "light" to see your future more clearly.

Secondary Concepts:

- Your success and happiness in life are almost completely dependent on your ability to create and maintain positive relationships.
- Identifying and tapping into the five connections above will help you see your future more clearly.
- Getting help from others is a strength, not a weakness.

Personalize your Lesson:

- How important have support systems been for you when you had difficult challenges in your life?
- Can you think of any examples where others (friends, family, teachers, etc.) have helped you during difficult times?
- What can you do more of to show your students you are one of their support systems?

Activity:

To introduce this lesson, complete the attention activity "Rabbit, Moose, Walrus." (See the "Learning Activities" section under "Get Plugged In.")

Get Plugged In

Lesson Plan: Introducing Get Plugged In

This picture gives youth insight on the types of support systems available. "Get Plugged In" focuses only on five support systems, but there are many more. The youth will see that many supports are available, but often they must put effort into getting plugged in. Often, the greater a person's support system, the greater that person's chances of dealing with

and overcoming challenges and reaching goals. Remember to be sensitive as you teach these five support systems, especially with the first connection of parent or caregiver, because youth come from a wide variety of circumstances and situations. Emphasize to the youth that even if they can't connect to all five of these support systems, they should try to connect with as

many as they can. In a positive support system, they are never abused emotionally, physically, or sexually. Stress that a good support system doesn't always happen immediately; often they will have to put effort into creating a positive support system. The following steps will enable the youth to create a support system to help them deal with their challenges.

Get Plugged In

Lesson Plan: Visual Analogy Walkthrough

Discussion Point 1: Parent/Caregiver

Question

How much time each day do you spend with your parents or caregiver? Tell them that if they aren't spending at least 30 minutes a day, they should create more time. You may want the youth to answer this question to themselves.

What is one conflict, argument, or power struggle that you can give up today that won't hurt you, but will help lower your parents' anxiety about you?

Discussion

The first support system we have in life is our parents. We should put effort into this support system because it's our

1 Parent/Guardian

- How much time are you spending with minutes a day, then create and demand
- What is one conflict, argument, or power struggle that you can give up today that won't hurt you, but will help lower your parents' anxiety about you?

first - and often our longest-lasting - support system. Often we take our frustrations out on family, especially on parents. We do this because we know that they love us and they will stick by us during tough times. Caution the youth to be careful not to burn bridges with parents or caregivers because they are usually in our lives long after friends have come and gone. One of the best ways to improve relationships with parents or caregivers is to spend time with them daily, if possible.

Brainstorm with the youth creative things they could do to spend more time with their parents. These include eating dinner with them, playing a game, finding out what kind of music they listened to when they were young, and so forth. Encourage them to do activities with their parents and grandparents that help them get to know their parents and grandparents better. Ask them the following questions as examples: Why did your parent choose a certain career? What were some of your parent's challenges when they were your age? Who was the first boy or girl that they kissed? What is a positive attribute that your grandparents have? Try to incorporate it in your life. For example, if your grandparents gave blankets to

the homeless in the winter, you can keep the tradition going.

Explain that they can learn more about themselves by learning about their ancestors. If the youth have siblings, encourage them to do at least one fun activity with their siblings a week. Encourage the youth to notice the sacrifices that their parents or caregiver make for them. Just like their parents are sometimes patient and forgiving with their mistakes, it is important that they forgive their parents when they aren't perfect. Being patient with family members' flaws is an important part of keeping these relationships strong. Encourage the youth to be respectful of their

parents' time and stresses, but be creative in looking for ways to spend more positive time with them.

To help the youth answer the second question about lowering their parents' anxiety, suggest that they give up a conflict and do something that their parents want them to do. Explain that at times, they may look at the world differently than their parents, but if they compromise and work together, they will experience at least some of the following benefits:

- Your parents will trust you more.
- Because your parents will feel less anxiety about you,

you may get more freedom.

- Your relationship may improve.
- Communication may improve. If you listen to your parents and work with them, they may return the favor in the future.
- You will feel more self-respect.
- Fighting and arguing at home may decrease.
- You will show your love and respect for your parents.
- You may find that your parents' advice helps you.

Challenge

Challenge the youth to do at least one activity with their parents this week.

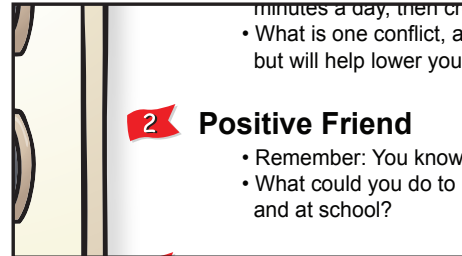
Point 2: Positive Friend

Question

When you are with your friends, do you often feel fear or pressure to do things you don't want to do, or things that take away some of your opportunity, freedom, and self-respect? (You may want the youth to answer this question to themselves.)

Discussion

Tell the youth that if the answer to the above question is "yes," they are probably not plugged in to positive friends. If they feel fear, pressure, or lack of respect when they are with a friend, that friend is probably not a positive one. If they feel in control and better about themselves when with a friend, they



have a positive friend. Emphasize that they can know they have a REAL friend when that friend does things that help, not hurt them. (If needed, review with the youth Chapter 4: "Climbing Out.")

Remind the youth that one negative friend can have a negative impact on their future. On the other hand, plugging in to a positive friend can help them reach their goals. Challenge the youth to discover one of their friend's future goals and help that friend obtain that goal.

Also challenge the youth to ask a friend to remind them to work hard to reach their goal. For example, if they want to go to college but are frustrated with school, they can ask a friend to help make sure they go to school everyday.

Discuss with the youth the importance of having many friends. They can learn a lot from having friends of different backgrounds, races, and ethnicities. Emphasize that respecting and befriending a variety of people makes them well-rounded. As they get older, they will very likely work with a wide variety of people. The more types of people they can get along with, the greater their opportunities. Tell the youth that relationships with others will be very important

in almost every job. They can prepare now by having a wide variety of positive friends. One of the best ways to get more positive friends is by being a positive friend.

Challenge

Have the youth identify one be-

havior they need to stop in order to be a more positive friend. Challenge the youth to pay attention to how they feel when they are with their peers. Challenge them to spend more time with peers who don't pressure them, but instead show them respect and encouragement

when they do positive things. Also invite them to think of ways they can help a friend overcome peer pressure and deal with challenges at home and at school.

Point 3: Teacher/Counselor/School Official

Question

Make sure that someone at school knows the real you and what you can become with their help. How will that person help you reach your dreams and potential? What are three things you're willing to do to reach your goals? Let that person know that you are willing to pay the price to reach your goals.

Discussion

School is a great place to get plugged in, not only with peers but also with school officials. There are various ways to get plugged in at school, such as joining a club, playing a sport, or attending activities. Remind the youth that they do not have

• Remember: You know you have a "real" friend
• What could you do to help a friend overcome and at school?

3 Teacher/Counselor/School Official

• Make sure that someone at school knows the with their help. Ask how they will help you reach your goals.
• Let them know what you are willing to do, then your goals.

to have a problem in order to talk to a school counselor. They can make an appointment with the school counselor to discuss future hopes and dreams, and to get help and direction on how to accomplish goals. They can also talk to a teacher of a subject that really interests them, and ask the teacher how to apply this subject professionally.

Tell the youth it's OK if they don't know what they want to do with the rest of their lives; the important thing is that they graduate. Feeling frustrated

with school is normal, but if they get someone to help them deal with the frustrations, they won't be as likely to give up. If needed, brainstorm about school officials that could help them not drop out.

Point out the importance of letting someone know the "real me" (If needed, review Chapter 2 "Tearing Off Your Label"). Help them understand what they can become with others' help. Emphasize that although others can help them, the reality is they must work hard themselves and make things happen. Emphasize that people are much more willing to help them if they work hard.

Challenge

Challenge the youth to identify one person at school who could help them with their future.

Point 4: Positive Mentor

Question

Who can you identify that has accomplished goals and dreams similar to those that you want to accomplish?

What are qualities about this person that you respect and admire and that you would like

4 Positive Mentor

• Who can you identify that want to accomplish?
• What are three qualities like to develop also?
• Take a risk: If possible

to develop?

Discussion

Explain what a mentor is and

how a mentor could help them. A mentor can be someone who assists us in achieving our goals. Often a mentor has already achieved a goal that we have, and because of their experience, can help us do the same. Give the youth the following example: If you have always wanted to be a firefighter, but you aren't exactly sure how

to become one, you could contact your local fire station and ask if someone could help you learn the steps to become a firefighter.

A mentor can also help with things other than a career. A mentor can help you stay out of trouble. Give the youth an example: if you have a big temper and get into fights a lot, you can identify someone you respect, who doesn't lose their temper, and ask them to help you do the same. A mentor can help us with a hobby, show us how to pass a class, or help us go to college.

There are various ways to get plugged in to a mentor. Discuss with the youth the following ways to find a mentor: A mentor could be a family member who has accomplished something they would also like to accomplish. A mentor could possibly be a counselor or teacher at school. A mentor might be someone they meet on a job. The important thing is that they keep their eyes open for someone who can help them be successful. If they have a difficult time finding a mentor to help them reach a certain goal, they can go to the library and read about someone who accomplished what they want to

achieve. The youth could also ask friends and family members if they know someone who has done what they would like to accomplish. Finding a good mentor can take time, so tell the youth to be patient and constantly on the lookout!

Once they identify a mentor, instruct the youth to pay close attention to the positive qualities that helped their mentors achieve their goals: Did they work hard? Are they really honest? How do they treat other people? How much education do they have? What were the sacrifices they made to achieve their goals?

NOTE:

Emphasize and remind the youth that it is important that their parents approve of their mentor. A positive mentor would never hurt them in any way.

Point 5: Something that inspires or motivates me to do good

Question

What motivates you to not hurt yourself or others?

What do you do with your time that's fun, gives you self-respect and doesn't get you into trouble? How can you do more of this?

Discussion

Encourage the youth to figure out what motivates them to do good. They could be motivated to do good by their self-respect

• What are three qualities about them that you respect and like to develop also?
• Take a risk: If possible, ask them how they can help you a

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• What motivates you to not hurt yourself and others?
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or because they care about others. Maybe they realize that doing bad things and hurting others takes them farther from their goal. Be sensitive, because what inspires them could be really personal. Encourage them to identify things or people that inspire them to do good. Their inspiration could be a good friend, or respect for their parents or a teacher.

Brainstorm with them about people they know who have done positive things. Discuss what motivates people to be nice to others or to help others. Discuss with the youth how they feel when they do positive things.

Help the youth identify as many fun activities as they can that don't get them into trouble. Some examples might be sports, hiking, fishing, hanging out with positive friends, hobbies, service, and so forth. The reality is, if they want lasting fun, they must identify what motivates them to do good. Do-

ing negative things may give them a short-term rush, but a lasting rush will come by doing good! (If needed, review Chapter 1 "Reality Ride.") Stress that

to stay on the track to opportunity, freedom, and self-respect, they must plug into what motivates them to do good.

Challenge

Challenge the youth to identify one positive thing they could do to help their parents or caregiver.

