

**thesevenproject**

SUPPLEMENTAL CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

LIFE 24/7

SUPPLEMENTAL CLASSROOM DISCUSSION TABLE OF CONTENTS

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The Seven Project is a multimedia, speaker-driven school assembly. The Seven Project Assemblies entertain and captivate audiences all across the United States. Seven addresses real-life issues and situations students face every day. The Seven Project Discussion Guides culminate the Seven Project experience by creating intensified discussions about student life.

The activities and discussions in these guides are designed for use in single classroom settings or as entire school or community-wide campaigns. The Seven Project offers these guides as tools for use at the discretion of local school educators and administrators in part or entirety. The Seven Project and your school: *building students' hope...one issue at a time.*

ABSTINENCE

For Grades 6-12. Students will combine a study of facts about teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases and teen sexual activity with classroom discussion. Through increased student awareness, students will learn the dangers of premarital sexual activity, the importance of abstinence, and how to commit to abstinence.

Objectives:

- Understand the realities of sexually transmitted diseases and teen pregnancy.
- Understand the power of abstinence.

Materials Needed:

- Copies of *Stating Your Rating and Abstinence.*

Discussion:

- 1) What issues/messages from The Seven Project School Assembly stood out to you the most? Why?
*Transition: *"In our classroom time today, (principal's name) and I felt it was important that we follow-up on one of the topics: abstinence, since this is something we deal with at our school."* Distribute ***Stating Your Rating.***
- 2) Which pick-up lines are the funniest? Which could actually work?
*Insert *Extensions and Adaptations* activity here, if desired.
- 3) What do you fear most about having sex? Rate responses numerically.
- 4) Do you think the majority of students in our school are having sex?
- 5) Who could contract a sexually transmitted disease or become pregnant?
- 6) What are effective ways to combat STDs? How effective are the following: abstinence, monogamous marriage, condoms? Abstinence is 100% effective.
- 7) What does this statement mean: *They don't make a condom for the heart?*
- 8) How can we help you and your friends abstain from sexual activity?

Extensions and Adaptations:

- TV Time. Divide students into groups. Have each group pick a tv show and role-play as its characters, creating a short skit based on one of the pick-up lines from *Stating Your Rating.* Have a competition and reward the winning team.

**Online Resources:**

American Social Health Association
www.iwannaknow.org

National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy
www.teenpregnancy.org

Network for Family Life Education
www.sxetc.org

Relevant National Standards

McREL establishes the following National Standards at www.mcrel.org

Health

- Knows how to maintain and promote personal health
- Understands the fundamental concepts of growth and development

Thinking and Reasoning

- Understands and applies basic principles of logic and reasoning
- Applies basic trouble-shooting and problem-solving techniques
- Applies decision making techniques

Life Skills

- Self Regulation: Considers Risks
- Working with others: Contributes to the overall effort of a group
- Working with others: Displays effective interpersonal communications skills

Language Arts – Listening and Speaking

- Demonstrates competence in speaking and listening as tools
- Students will use descriptive language that clarifies and enhances ideas
- Students will use a variety of sentence structure to express expanded ideas



Stating Your Rating

Here are some of the best (*and worst*) pick-up lines we've ever heard.

Rate them on a scale of 1-15, 1 the best, 15 the worst:

- *Hey baby, are you a parking ticket? Because you got "fine" written all over you!*
- *Can I have a band-aid? 'Cause I cut my knee when I fell for you!*
- *Are you from Tennessee? Because ten is all I see!*
- *Bond. James Bond.*
- *Hi, You'll do.*
- *Are your legs tired? Because you've been running through my mind all day!*
- *I'm wearing Revlon Colorstay lipstick, want to help me test the claim it won't kiss-off?*
- *Do you have a map? Because I'm totally lost in your eyes?*
- *Can I borrow your library card? I wanna check you out!*
- *Well, here I am. What were your other two wishes?*
- *I bet you 20 bucks you're gonna turn me down.*
- *Hi, I suffer from amnesia. Do I come here often?*
- *Stand still so I can pick you up!*
- *I lost my telephone number. Can I have yours?*
- *WOW!!!*

Are you afraid?

What about having sex scares you? Rate the following fears on a scale of 1-8, 1 most feared, 8 least feared:

- ___ Pregnancy
- ___ Reputation
- ___ Losing your parents' respect
- ___ Letting your parents/friends down
- ___ Societal pressures
- ___ Sexually Transmitted Diseases
- ___ Losing self-respect
- ___ Other



Abstinence

Decide now.

It will be very difficult when emotions are flying everywhere

Be accountable.

Talk with friends and adults about your standards and invite them to ask periodically how well you're sticking to them.

Choose wisely.

Don't date just anybody. Make sure they have the same values as you.

Set goals.

Focus on building a relationship with the person you're dating.

Make definite plans for each date.

Avoid dating alone.

Date with groups. Doing things with others will reduce "temptation times."

Avoid imagery.

Don't fill your mind with sexually explicit pictures, videos, or music. Your dominant thoughts will become your dominant actions. You become what you think.

Be available.

Let your friends know they can talk with you.

Be a listener.

Your friends want someone who will listen; not necessarily give advice.

Don't make light of your friends' feelings.



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ALCOHOL

For Grades 6-12. Students will combine a study of facts and myths about alcohol use and abuse. Through increased student awareness, students will learn the dangers of alcohol and the messages the alcohol advertisers and media try to portray.

Objectives:

- Understand facts and myths about alcohol.
- Gain an understanding of the realities of alcohol abuse.
- Understand “why” and “how” alcohol advertisers pursue young people.

Materials Needed:

- Copies of the *Myths About Alcohol, Did You Know? And Getting (and staying) Alcohol-Free* for every student.
- Examples of various print and/or television alcohol advertising
- 5-6 sheets of poster board.
- TV/VCR (Optional).

Discussion:

**Prior to discussion, have students bring in at least 3-4 alcohol print ads.*

- 1) What issues/messages from The Seven Project School Assembly stood out to you the most? Why?
 - *Transition: “In our classroom time today, (principal’s name) and I felt it was important that we follow-up on one of the topics: alcohol, since this is something we deal with at our school.”*
- 2) Which TV, radio or print alcohol advertising campaign do you remember the best? Why do you remember it so well?
 - *Have students tape their copies of the print ads onto the poster board.*
- 3) What are the repeating themes and images you see in the advertising? what is being associated with the product?
- 4) Why do alcohol advertisers seek to attract young people?
- 5) What is it that makes you desire to buy and use the product?
 - *Pass out copies of the **Myths About Alcohol and Did You Know?** sheets.*
- 6) What statistic or myth surprises you most? What are some ways you can limit and stop the effects of alcohol in your life?
 - *Divide students into groups. Give each group a poster board full of ad images. Ask each group to develop a poster and ad slogan against alcohol, using the same themes that sell alcohol. Display the finished poster in your classroom. Close with the **Getting (and staying) Alcohol-Free** sheet.*

**Extensions and Adaptations:**

- During an Alcohol Awareness Week, student group posters could be displayed throughout the school and even throughout the community.
- Have a poster contest. A panel of teachers could judge the posters and choose the best posters to be represented and displayed throughout the community.

Online Resources:

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD)

www.madd.org/under21

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcohol

www.niaaa.nih.gov

National Clearinghouse of Alcohol and Drug Information

www.health.org

Relevant National Standards

McREL establishes the following National Standards at www.mcrel.org

Health

- Knows essential concepts about the prevention and control of disease
- Understands aspects of substance use and abuse

Thinking and Reasoning

- Understands and applies basic principles of logic and reasoning
- Applies basic trouble-shooting and problem-solving techniques
- Applies decision making techniques

Life Skills

- Self Regulation: Considers Risks
- Working with others: Contributes to the overall effort of a group
- Working with others: Displays effective interpersonal communications skills

Language Arts – Listening and Speaking

- Demonstrates competence in speaking and listening as tools
- Students will use descriptive language that clarifies and enhances ideas



Myths About Alcohol

Adapted from Mothers Against Drunk Drivers (MADD)

It's time to confront some of the most whacked-out lies about alcohol. You've probably heard them all. Why waste our time trying to debunk a bunch of harmless myths? Because they can be pretty fierce...

Myth: *Alcohol gives you energy.*

Nope. It's a depressant. It slows down your ability to think, speak, move and all that other stuff you like to do.

Myth: *Switching between beer, wine and liquor will make you more drunk than sticking to one type of alcohol.*

Whatever! Your blood alcohol content (BAC - the percent of alcohol in your blood) is what determines how drunk you are. Not the flavors you selected. Alcohol is alcohol.

Myth: *You'll get drunk a lot quicker with hard liquor than with a beer or wine cooler.*

Did we mention that alcohol is alcohol?

Myth: *Everybody reacts the same to alcohol.*

Not hardly. There are dozens of factors that affect reactions to alcohol - body weight, time of day, how you feel mentally, body chemistry, your expectations, and the list goes on and on.

Myth: *A cold shower or a cup of coffee will sober someone up.*

Not on your life. Nothing sobers you up but time. With coffee, you're simply a wide-awake drunk!

Myth: *It's just beer. It can't permanently damage you.*

Large amounts of alcohol can do major damage to your digestive system. You can hurt your heart, liver, stomach, and several other critical organs as well as losing years from your life.

Myth: *It's none of my business if a friend is drinking too much.*

If you are a real friend, it is your business. You can't make someone change but you can be honest. Maybe they'll listen. You might even talk them into getting help.^{1/2}

Myth: *The worst thing that can happen is a raging hangover.*

Sorry. If you drink enough alcohol, fast enough, you can get an amount in your body that can kill you in only a few hours.

Myth: *Drugs are a bigger problem than alcohol.*

Alcohol kills 6 1/2 times the number of people killed by cocaine, heroin, and every other illegal drug combined. Ten million Americans are addicted to alcohol. Alcohol is the #1 drug problem of today's youth.

Myth: *Alcohol makes you more sexy.*

The more you drink, the less you think. Alcohol may loosen you up and make someone more interested in sex, but it interferes with the body's ability to perform. And then there's pregnancy, AIDS, sexual assault, car crashes and worse, to worry about. Not sexy at all.

Myth: *People who drink too much only hurt themselves.*

Every person who drinks has a mother, grandfather, sister, aunt, best friend, boyfriend or girlfriend who worries about them. Each of the 12 million problem drinkers in this country affects four other people.



Did You Know?

Adapted from Mothers Against Drunk Drivers (MADD)

High school students who drank before the age of 13 years were highest for African Americans at 35.2 percent, followed by Hispanics at 35.1 percent. The lowest percentage was for Caucasian Americans at 29.9 percent. ([CDC, 1999](#))

In a recent survey, 14.6 percent of Caucasian high school students drive after drinking alcohol, compared to 12.7 percent for Hispanic and 7.9 percent for African Americans. ([CDC, 1999](#))

In a recent survey, Hispanic students (39.5 percent) were significantly more likely than Caucasian students (32.4 percent) to have ridden with a driver who had been drinking alcohol. ([CDC, 1999](#))

Parents' drinking behavior and favorable attitudes about drinking have been positively associated with adolescents' initiating and continuing drinking. ([NIAAA, 1997](#))

Youth who drink before age 15 are four times more likely to develop alcohol dependence than those who begin drinking at age 21. ([NIAAA, 1997](#))

Research continues to show that young drivers are more often involved in alcohol-related crashes than any other comparable age group. Alcohol-crash involvement rates, share of the alcohol-crash problem and alcohol-crash risk all reach their peaks with young drivers, with the peaks for fatal crashes occurring at age 21. ([NHTSA, 2001](#))

Sixty-nine percent of young drivers (15-20 years old) of passenger vehicles involved in fatal crashes who had been drinking were unrestrained. Of the young drivers who had been drinking and were killed, 80 percent were unrestrained. ([NHTSA, 2000](#))

One in ten Americans aged 12 and older in 2000 (22.3 million persons) drove under the influence of alcohol at least once in the 12 months prior to an interview for a nationwide survey. ([SAMHSA, 2000](#))

Each year, college students spend approximately \$5.5 billion on alcohol- more than they spend on soft drinks, milk, juice, tea, coffee and books combined. ([Drug Strategies, 1999](#))

Teenagers are not well informed about alcohol's effects. Nearly one-third of the teens responding to a 1998 American Academy of Pediatrics survey mistakenly believed that a 12-ounce can of beer contains less alcohol than a standard shot of distilled spirits. ([Drug Strategies, 1999](#))

Approximately one-fifth (20.6 percent) of persons aged 12 years and older (46 million people) participated in binge drinking at least once in 30 days prior to an alcohol use survey in 2000. This represents approximately 4 percent of all current drinkers. ([SAMHSA, 2000](#))

Approximately one-fifth (20.6 percent) of persons aged 12 years and older (46 million people) participated in binge drinking at least once in 30 days prior to an alcohol use survey in 2000. This represents approximately 4 percent of all current drinkers. ([SAMHSA, 2000](#))

About 9.7 million persons aged 12 to 20 reported drinking alcohol in the month prior to a nationwide survey in 2000. Of these, 6.6 million were binge drinkers and 2.1 million were heavy drinkers. ([SAMHSA, 2000](#))



Getting (and staying) Alcohol-Free

Talk to an adult.

Teachers, guidance counselors, clergy, parents will have some beginning wisdom on how to deal with this issue. School counselors and social workers are especially trained to deal with this.

Get as much information as you can.

Obtain a lot of information about this issue. The following links are groups that offer help to those struggling with this issue.

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD)

www.madd.org/under21

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcohol

www.niaaa.nih.gov

National Clearinghouse of Alcohol and Drug Information

www.health.org

The Seven Project

www.thesevenproject.com/m_teencrisis.html

Be willing to risk.

Talking to your friend about this issue could be very touchy. What you have to say may not be what your friend wants to hear. You stand a real likelihood of making your friend mad because you are making their business your business. Let your friend know that the only reason you are saying anything is because you care.

Lay out the facts.

Share with them the dangers of alcohol.

Remind them you are always available.

You can't force your friend to find help; however, you can let them know you will help find someone who can help them when they want it.

Be involved with your friend in healthy activities.

You can help you and your friend by simply not being bored. Join a school campus club, learn to play a musical instrument, learn to skateboard, go sledding, etc.

Chose your friends wisely.

If your friend starts getting involved with wrong behavior, do everything to help, but do not let them influence you in joining them. Your first responsibility begins with YOU.

**You can't accomplish much when the other person feels on the defensive.
Communicate with them; don't accuse.**



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ANTI-VIOLENCE

For Grades 6-12. Students will learn how to control their own anger and resolve conflict with others.

Objectives:

- Enable students to describe anger and its impact on them.
- Enable students with ability to deal with the anger emotion and respond with appropriate behavior.
- Equip students with skills to resolve differences and conflicts with others.

Materials Needed:

- Copies of the *Did You Know? And Solving Conflicts Without Violence* for every student.

Discussion:

- 1) What did you like best about The Seven Project School Assembly today?
- 2) What issues/messages from The Seven Project School Assembly stood out to you the most? Why?
 - *Transition: *"In our classroom time today, (principal's name) and I felt it was important that we follow-up on one of the topics: anti-violence, since this is something we deal with at our school."*
- 3) Is violence an issue at our school? Why?
 - *If possible, share a situation that has occurred recently. Distribute **Did You Know?** sheet.
- 4) What statistic stands out to you the most? Why?
- 5) Do any of these statistics represent what is happening in our school? How?
- 6) What are some of the reasons or causes for the violent acts that occur in our school and between students?
 - *List on board.
- 7) How could some of these be prevented?
- 8) What, if any, programs has our school implemented to help prevent violence?
 - *If your school has programs, ask: *How effective are they? Why? Can you think of any incidents that were affected by these programs?*
 - *If your school has no programs, ask: *What types of programs or ideas could we do to help our school in this area?*
- 9) Anger is part of the root to many of the violent incidents in and out of school. How do you define anger? Is it wrong to feel angry?
- 10) What makes you angry? What is one specific situation in which you became angry? What did you do?
- 11) Do guys deal with anger differently than girls? If so, how?
- 12) Is it easier to get angry with your family or your friends?
 - *Close with some tips on helping students avoid violence, anger, and resolve conflict. Use the **Solving Conflicts Without Violence Sheet**.



Extensions and Adaptations:

- School violence and anger management involves a longer process than one class. *In The Mix*, a PBS show, has great programs and in class discussion guides on these issues that could help you go deeper on these issues.
- Have class create a video showing correct and incorrect responses and solutions to know how to communicate when angry and how to control anger and feelings.
- Invite someone who has spent time in jail or juvenile detention because of their failure to control anger or resolve conflicts correctly to speak to your class.

Online Resources:

PBS *In The Mix*

www.pbs.org/inthemix

Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence

www.colorado.edu/cspy

North Carolina Center for the Prevention of Violence

www.ncsu.edu/cpsv

Relevant National Standards

McREL establishes the following National Standards at www.mcrel.org

Health

- Knows how to maintain mental and emotional health

Thinking and Reasoning

- Applies basic trouble-shooting and problem-solving techniques
- Applies decision making techniques

Life Skills

- Working with others: Contributes to the overall effort of a group
- Working with others: Displays effective interpersonal communications skills

Language Arts – Listening and Speaking

- Demonstrates competence in speaking and listening as tools
- Students will use descriptive language that clarifies and enhances ideas



Did You Know?

33% of adolescents were in a serious physical fight in the past year – *Todd Franke, Adolescent and Family Health, 2000.*

About every 10 days, a mass random, public shooting occurs in the US – *Houston Chronicle, "Real Story Behind School Shootings Going Untold," Mike Males, 3/12/01.*

12.4 % of students have carried a weapon to school in the past month – *University of Minnesota, Division of General Pediatrics and Adolescent Health.*

Many teens do not expect to live to be a 21 year old – *USA Today, 4/11/98*

21% of high school boys (15% of middle school) took a weapon to school at least once last year – *Josephson Institute of Ethics, "The Ethics of American Youth," 2000.*

39% of middle schoolers and 36% of high schoolers feel safe at school - *Josephson Institute of Ethics, "The Ethics of American Youth," 2000.*

Nationwide, there were 11,000 public school fights in which weapons were used, 4,000 rapes and other sexual assaults, and 7,000 robberies – *AP News Service, March 2002.*

70% of middle schoolers and 68% of high schoolers say they hit a person in the past year because they were angry - *Josephson Institute of Ethics, "The Ethics of American Youth," 2000.*

27% of middle schoolers and 31% of high schoolers say it is OK to hit or threaten a person who makes them angry - *Josephson Institute of Ethics, "The Ethics of American Youth," 2000.*

43% of public schools reported zero crimes.

"Violence is the last refuge of the incompetent."

- Isaac Asimov



Solving Conflicts Without Violence

Resolving a Conflict:

- 1) *What is happening in the situation at the moment to cause the conflict and/or anger?*
- 2) *What is the actual problem? Don't deal with symptoms but the actual problem.*
Ask the person with the source of conflict how you may have wronged them.
- 3) *Talk calmly with the person angry with you. Don't be afraid to come back and talk to them later when you or both have cooled emotions down a little.*
- 4) *Begin to see and understand what the person is feeling and why they could feel this way.*
- 5) *Take turns talking, each one sharing opinions and views.*
- 6) *Restate what you think you just heard. Sounds weird. Do it anyway.*
- 7) *Work together to find a mutually acceptable solution.*
- 8) *If you made a mistake, own up to it. Ask forgiveness and ask how you can make things right.*
- 9) *Take advantage of adults around you. Talk to them and let them be a support, an encourager and a source of advice for you.*

Anger Management Ideas:

- Go into your bedroom and listen to music.
- Separate yourself to a quiet place.
- Is your anger related to lack of sleep, or lack of food?
- Talk to friend or adult.
- Go for a walk.
- Play some type of sport.
- Talk to your pet.
- Talk in a calm way to the person we are frustrated and angry with.

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Communicate with them; don't accuse.**



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CHARACTER

For Grades 6-12. Students will begin to define good and bad character and the importance of having good character and learn skills on how to develop character in their lives.

Objectives:

- Define good and bad character in general terms.
- Understand the importance of character in life.
- Learn life skills for students to develop good character.

Materials Needed:

- Copies of the *Does Character Really Matter?* and *Developing Character* for every student.

Discussion:

- 1) What issues/messages from The Seven Project School Assembly stood out to you the most? Why?
 - *Transition: *"In our classroom time today, (principal's name) and I felt it was important that we follow-up on one of the topics: character, since this is something we deal with at our school."*
 - *Distribute ***Does Character Really Matter***. Have students read the statistics.
- 2) Do these statistics represent your thoughts about character? Why? What IS character?
- 3) Is character really important? Is character only important for a select few; leaders, politicians, government, or is it important for everyone?
- 4) Why is character so important?
- 5) What are some examples of good and bad character?
- 6) What causes people to develop bad character? How would having bad character affect you?
- 7) How would having good character affect you?
- 8) How would our school be different if we focused on developing good character?
 - *Reference ***Does Character Really Matter***.
- 9) Do you agree with these being some of the top character traits you should develop? Are there any character qualities not listed that you believe should be? What are they?
- 10) What are some things we can do to develop good character in our lives?
 - *Distribute ***Developing Character***.



Extensions and Adaptations:

- Have students sign pledge cards as commitments to striving to become better students and better people by focusing on developing good character. The cards could be displayed for others to see; classroom, school hallway, library, city hall.
- In specified classes, students could learn character development curriculum. *Character Counts* has a number of outstanding resources (www.charactercounts.com).

Online Resources:

Character Counts
www.charactercounts.com

Good Character.com
www.goodcharacter.com

Relevant National Standards

McREL establishes the following National Standards at www.mcrel.org

Thinking and Reasoning

- Understands and applies basic principles of logic and reasoning
- Applies basic trouble-shooting and problem-solving techniques
- Applies decision making techniques

Life Skills

- Working with others: Contributes to the overall effort of a group
- Working with others: Displays effective interpersonal communications skills

Language Arts – Listening and Speaking

- Demonstrates competence in speaking and listening as tools

Does Character Really Matter?

- 97% of middle and high school students think it's important for them to be people with good character: *Josephson Institute of Ethics, "The Ethics of American Youth," 2000*
- 76% of middle schoolers and 65% of high schoolers say their teachers set a good ethical example: *Josephson Institute of Ethics, "The Ethics of American Youth," 2000*
- 28% of middle schoolers and 41% of high schoolers are willing to lie if it would help them get a good job: *Josephson Institute of Ethics, "The Ethics of American Youth," 2000*
- 95% of middle schoolers and 94% of high schoolers feel it is important for people to trust them: *Josephson Institute of Ethics, "The Ethics of American Youth," 2000*
- 98% of middle schoolers and 69% of high schoolers are satisfied with the ethics and character of their generation: *Josephson Institute of Ethics, "The Ethics of American Youth," 2000*



The Importance of Character

"There is no substitute for character. You can buy brains, but you cannot buy character." – Robert A. Cook

Character will set you apart from others. *People will take notice when you exhibit good character. When someone turns in a lost wallet or purse with money, people are surprised.*

Character builds trust. *Deep relationships function on trust. People can trust you when you choose integrity over image, truth over convenience, honor over personal gain.*

Character raises your standards. *Character gives you a measuring stick to know right from wrong, good from bad.*

Character gives strength in tough, difficult times. *When the tough times come, character has the unique ability to carry the person through.*

Character improves your influence in others' lives. *People will not blindly continue to place their confidence in people they cannot trust. Character gives others the ability to trust you.*

6 Character Qualities Worth Developing

*These are the six foundational qualities from **Character Counts***

Trustworthiness - Be honest • Don't deceive, cheat or steal • Be reliable — *do what you say you'll do* • Have the courage to do the right thing • Build a good reputation • Be loyal — *stand by your family, friends and country*

Respect - Treat others with respect; follow the Golden Rule • Be tolerant of differences • Use good manners, not bad language • Be considerate of the feelings of others • Don't threaten, hit or hurt anyone • Deal peacefully with anger, insults and disagreements

Responsibility - Do what you are supposed to do • Persevere: keep on trying! • Always do your best • Use self-control • Be self-disciplined • Think before you act — *consider the consequences* • Be accountable for your choices

Fairness - Play by the rules • Take turns and share • Be open-minded; listen to others • Don't take advantage of others • Don't blame others carelessly

Caring - Be kind • Be compassionate and show you care • Express gratitude • Forgive others • Help people in need

Citizenship - Do your share to make your school and community better • Cooperate • Stay informed; vote • Be a good neighbor • Obey laws and rules • Respect authority • Protect the environment



Developing Character

Make a commitment to develop good character.

Begin to know your values.

Talk issues and beliefs over with parents, clergy or other trusted adults. Why do you believe in those values? What makes them right or wrong?

What you do.

Your character will be defined by what you do, not just what you say or believe. The secret to developing good character is in your daily routine and actions. Who you are in private determines who you are in public.

Dream.

Set goals and dreams for your life.

Where are you right now on the following character traits? 1=poor, 10=strong:

<i>Trustworthiness</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>Respect</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>Responsibility</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>Fairness</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>Caring</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>Citizenship</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

What is one thing you can start right now to improve each of the traits?

Trustworthiness
Respect
Responsibility
Fairness
Caring
Citizenship

Find good friends.

Develop friendships with others who have the same passion and values as you. Encourage and hold each other accountable to keep growing and developing.

Yearn to learn.

Read biographies about great historical leaders. Often you will see their character come through the situations they faced.

Admit mistakes.

- Come clean and admit it.
- Ask forgiveness and apologize.
- Accept responsibility; no excuses, no blaming others.
- Face the consequences; avoiding them only makes you weak.
- Start again and move on!



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CHOICES

For Grades 6-12. Major and minor decisions can be tackled with similar strategies. Students will be equipped with decision-making skills and the knowledge that their choices shape not only today but the future, as well.

Objectives:

- Develop awareness of the importance of choices and decision-making.
- Empower students with decision-making life skills.

Materials Needed:

- Copies of the *Making the Choice* and *Making Right Choices* for every student.

Discussion:

- 1) What did you like best about The Seven Project School Assembly today?
- 2) What issues/messages from The Seven Project School Assembly stood out to you the most? Why?
 - *Transition: *"In our classroom time today, (principal's name) and I felt it was important that we follow-up on one of the topics: choices, since this is something we deal with at our school."*
- 3) Do you remember the video, Choices Gone Wild, from the assembly? What blooper stands out in your mind?
 - *Distribute **Making the Choice**. Have students read the list of decisions and statistics under "FYI."
- 4) Does anything about these statistics surprise you? Would they be higher or lower for our school?
 - *Have students take the **Making the Choice** quiz. Display the total "yes" and "no" answers.
- 5) Did any of the results surprise you? Which question surprised you least? Why? Which question surprised you most? Why?
- 6) Do your choices today impact your future? How?
- 7) What are some examples of good and bad everyday choices?
- 8) What causes people to make wrong or poor choices?
- 9) How do we know when a choice is right or wrong?
- 10) What has helped you make some decisions in the past?
 - *Distribute **Making Right Choices**.

**Extensions and Adaptations:**

- Role Playing: have students offer everyday scenarios in when a choice must be made. Divide students into groups. Have students pick a favorite movie and act out the scenario as the movie characters.

Online Resources:

Health Teacher
www.healthteacher.com

Virtual Salt
www.virtualsalt.com

Relevant National Standards

McREL establishes the following National Standards at www.mcrel.org

Thinking and Reasoning

- Understands and applies basic principles of logic and reasoning.
- Applies basic trouble-shooting and problem-solving techniques
- Applies decision making techniques

Life Skills

- Working with others: Contributes to the overall effort of a group
- Working with others: Displays effective interpersonal communications skills

Language Arts – Listening and Speaking

- Demonstrates competence in speaking and listening as tools
- Students will use descriptive language that clarifies and enhances ideas
- Students will use a variety of sentence structure to express expanded ideas



Making the Choice

"One's philosophy is not best expressed in words. It is expressed in the choices one makes. In the long run, we shape our lives and we shape ourselves. The process never ends until we die. And the choices we make are ultimately our responsibility." —Eleanor Roosevelt

Every day is filled with choices:

What you wear	What you eat
How you talk	What kind of friends you have
Who you date	Where you hang out
Whether or not to respect authority	Whether or not to break the law
Whether or not to drink or do drugs	What kind of friend you are
Your work ethic	Whether or not your word is good

FYI...For Your Information

54% of middle schoolers and 70% of high schoolers have cheated on a test in school at least once: *Josephson Institute of Ethics, "The Ethics of American Youth," 2000.*

24% of middle schoolers and 31 % of high schoolers have stolen something from a parent at least once: *Josephson Institute of Ethics, "The Ethics of American Youth," 2000.*

31% of middle schoolers and 47% of high schoolers have stolen something from a store at least once: *Josephson Institute of Ethics, "The Ethics of American Youth," 2000.*

31% of middle schoolers and 45% of high schoolers say a person has to lie or cheat in order to succeed: *Josephson Institute of Ethics, "The Ethics of American Youth," 2000.*

Do not put your name on this paper. Take this quiz. Answer each question.

1. Have you ever cheated on a test?	Yes	No
2. Have you ever stolen from a parent?	Yes	No
3. Have you ever stolen from a store?	Yes	No
4. Have you lied or not told the truth in the last month?	Yes	No
5. Have you made fun of someone in the past month?	Yes	No
6. Have you blamed others for your shortcomings or mistakes?	Yes	No
7. Have you lost your temper in the last week?	Yes	No
8. Have you ever tried alcohol?	Yes	No
9. Have you ever used illegal drugs?	Yes	No
10. Have you ever just quit on a project?	Yes	No



Making Right Choices

Make good choices:

Make a commitment to making good choices

Know your values.

Talk issues and beliefs over with parents, your clergy, a teacher, or other trusted adults. What makes those values right or wrong? Set goals and dreams.

- What do you want to do or become?
- What is required to get there?
- Set a plan for reaching your goal
- Reward yourself when you accomplish steps toward your goal
- Keep watching your progress
- Evaluate. How are you progressing? Change your plan, if necessary.

Clearly understand the problem or choice you are facing.

Include the facts of a situation as well as the feelings of those directly involved. *How does this choice relate to the goals and dreams for your life? How does this choice fit with your values and beliefs?*

Develop at least 3 possible choices.

There can be numerous ways to solve the problems we face. Take time get all the information you can, including talking with others (parents and other trusted adults) and getting their input.

Think about the positive and negative consequences of each option.

Ask yourself: *What are my responsibilities to my parents? What are my feelings about each option? Which one scares me? What are the short-term and long-term consequences?*

List how each option affects others.

Describe your emotions, feelings and how your values and beliefs fit into each option.

Make the call.

After looking over your options you must make a choice.

Make a plan to carry out your decision.

Example: *Jeff has decided not to be involved with alcohol and drugs. He wants to be the best student and athlete he can be. Jeff is invited to a party where drugs and alcohol might be present. Jeff can decide in advance to politely not accept the invitation politely or ask several other friends with similar values, beliefs and commitments to go the party together to keep each other accountable.*

Review your choice.

How did it work out? Was there anything that happened you did not think about before? What would you do differently?



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DREAMS

For Grades 6-12. Students will study the lives of historical figures who inspired generations by accomplishing their individual dreams. Students will begin to think about making dreams become reality.

Objectives:

- Be inspired by others who accomplished their dreams.
- Identify dreams and strategize how to make each dream part of a life plan.

Materials Needed:

- Copies of the *Dreams*, *What About Dreams?* and *Dreams Essay* for each student.

Discussion:

- 1) What issues/messages from The Seven Project School Assembly stood out to you the most? Why?
 - *Transition: *"In our classroom time today, (principal's name) and I felt it was important that we follow-up on one of the topics: dreams, since this is something we deal with at our school."*
- 2) Is having a life dream important?
- 3) How can having a life dream shape your life?
- 4) What are some life dreams in this class? Why does your dream interest you?
 - Where did it begin?
- 5) What are reasons some people reach their dreams and others do not?
- 6) How can we avoid some of those obstacles?
 - *Distribute *Dreams*, allowing students time to read each story.
- 7) Which person's story inspired you most? Why?
- 8) Why didn't that person quit?
- 9) How can having a life dream help us?
- 10) What can you do now to start living your dream?

**Extensions and Adaptations:**

- Dream Essay. Have students write a 2 or 3-page essay on the dream they want to achieve. A list of essay guideline questions is provided.
- Make a dream come true. Select some of the essays, and bring a professional from those dream fields to speak to the class. Allow the chosen essay writers one-on-one time with the speaker.

Relevant National Standards

McREL establishes the following National Standards at www.mcrel.org

Thinking and Reasoning

- Understands and applies basic principles of logic and reasoning
- Applies basic trouble-shooting and problem-solving techniques
- Applies decision making techniques

Life Skills

- Working with others: Contributes to the overall effort of a group
- Working with others: Displays effective interpersonal communications skills

Language Arts – Listening and Speaking

- Demonstrates competence in speaking and listening as tools
- Students will use descriptive language that clarifies and enhances ideas
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Dreams

John F. Kennedy

In 1943, his PT boat was rammed and sunk by a Japanese destroyer. Despite serious injury, JFK led the survivors through perilous waters to safety. JFK was the first Roman Catholic President of the United States. As such, he often faced harsh criticism and bigotry. Following a failed attempted overthrow of Fidel Castro in Cuba, Kennedy and the United States was brought to the brink of World War III; the Cuban missile crisis. Before his presidency was cut short by an assassin's bullet, JFK made a statement in a speech that summarized his DREAM; for civil rights, peaceful diplomacy, space exploration and America as a whole: *"Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country."*

Mother Teresa of Calcutta

She was a teacher at St. Mary's High School in Calcutta, India, and loved her work. Outside the convent, however, she glimpsed the extreme poverty of India. She was trained as a teacher, and had no funds to help the poverty-stricken. India was packed full with people; dirty, smelly, sick, destitute, diseased people. There was barely room to breathe. Caring for these people seemed impossible. Nevertheless, she continued to DREAM of devoting her life to caring for and improving the life of such people. Volunteers signed up. Financial support began to appear. Today, thanks to Mother Teresa's DREAM; there are relief operations of her order in India, Africa, Asia, Latin America, Italy, Great Britain, Ireland, and the U.S. She dreamed of helping people. She did it.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

He was born in Atlanta, Georgia and grew up in the segregated south. Through his education, he developed strong convictions and equally strong public speaking skills. He felt the weight of responsibility when it came to fighting racism in the southern U.S. Everywhere African-Americans went, they were treated as less than people; separate restrooms, separate drinking fountains, separate seating...often, African-Americans were banned from public buildings because their skin was brown. The Ku Klux Klan was a powerful force to be reckoned with, as was the deep-seeded hatred of African-Americans at the time. His home was bombed. Even so, MLK organized and led peaceful demonstrations, "Whites-only" city bus boycotts, marches and other peaceful protests; some of which were met with attack dogs and high-pressure water hoses. His DREAM endured. His DREAM, that his *"...four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character"* began to become a reality in 1964, when he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for helping to pass the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Neil Armstrong

Following the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in 1963, America's space exploration program was in great jeopardy. That didn't stop test pilot and navy combat pilot, Neil Armstrong. He had flown as a pilot in the Korean War. The U.S. and Soviet Union were locked in a cold war of words. Each nation was racing the clock (and each other) to be the first to land on the moon. Armstrong was one of two civilians trained as astronauts by NASA; the other, test pilot Elliot See, was killed in a plane crash while training for the Gemini 9 mission. A short circuit in Armstrong's Gemini 8 mission forced he and his crew to make an emergency re-entry. None of those chaotic events stopped Armstrong's DREAM. At 10:56 p.m. Eastern Time on July 20, 1969, the feet of mission Commander Neil Armstrong became the first to walk on the dust of the moon's surface. His DREAM allowed him to become the first person ever to walk on another world. At that moment, he verbalized his DREAM: *"That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."*



What About Dreams?

Why Dreams are Important...

- Dreams help bring value and meaning to your life.
- Dreams bring purpose to everything you do.
- Dreams motivate us to do what we can with what we have in order to achieve them.

How Do Dreams Begin?

Your interests.

What are your personal likes and dislikes?

Your values.

What do you care deeply about?

The right stuff.

What qualifications are necessary to achieve the dream?

Get skills.

What are your strengths and weaknesses? What about you needs improvement?

The brains.

What education is necessary for your dream?

Sacrifice.

How much are you willing to give up for your dream?

Be the expert.

Become more and more knowledgeable about your dream.

Boxed in.

Surround yourself with people who will support and encourage you.

For better, for worse.

Commit yourself to make it through tough times.

Destiny.

Remember your life is not accident; it has purpose.



Dreams Essay

In a two to three-page paper, write about the dream you want to achieve. Use the following questions to help build your paper:

- *What is your dream? Explain it as if no one has ever heard of it before; go into detail.*
- *Has anyone else done this before? If so, what is some of its history?*
- *Who/what experience/event inspired you?*
- *What qualifications are necessary to achieve this dream?*
- *What are your strengths and weaknesses? What about you needs improvement?*
- *How much are you willing to give up for your dream?*
- *What are the first steps you can take to make your dream reality?*



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DRUGS

For Grades 6-12. Students will study facts about drug abuse. Students will learn the dangers of drug use and abuse.

Objectives:

- Understand the realities of drug abuse.
- Understand why and how drug abuse starts.

Materials Needed:

- Copies of the *Why Do People—Even SMART People—Try Drugs?* and *Drug Free*.

Discussion:

- 1) What issues/messages from The Seven Project School Assembly stood out to you the most? Why?
 - *Transition: *"In our classroom time today, (principal's name) and I felt it was important that we follow-up on one of the topics: drug abuse, since this is something we deal with at our school."*
- 2) Do you think there is a drug use/abuse problem in our school or community? Why?
- 3) Do you hear about students using and/or abusing drugs?
- 4) How is drug abuse portrayed in media? What message about drug use is being conveyed? Is this message influential?
 - *Distribute *Why Do People—Even SMART People—Try Drugs?* sheet.
- 5) Do these reasons sound correct? Why do you think some of your classmates, friends or family start using and/or abusing drugs?
- 6) Have you ever been approached and offered drugs? What did you say/do?
- 7) What are possible responses we could give when refusing drugs, without offending our friends?
- 8) Do you know and understand the kinds of things drugs can do to your mind and body?
- 9) Do you have any questions about the rumors you have heard about drug use and abuse?
- 10) What are your feelings toward others who use drugs?
- 11) How can we help those who might want to quit?
 - * Close with the *Drug Free* sheet.

**Extensions and Adaptations:**

- Use information from the websites below. Discuss the many types of drugs that are prevalent today, their dangers and side-effects.
- Have the class create a survey that could be used throughout the school. Make sure the survey allows anonymity, but includes race, gender, age, grade. Include questions regarding the ifs, whens and hows of trying/habitually using drugs. Compile the results.

Online Resources:

National Institute on Drug Abuse
www.drugabuse.gov www.nida.nih.gov

Freevibe
www.freevibe.com

National Drug Control Policy
www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov

National Clearinghouse of Alcohol and Drug Information
www.health.org

Relevant National Standards

McREL establishes the following National Standards at www.mcrel.org

Health

- Knows essential concepts about the prevention and control of disease
- Understands aspects of substance use and abuse

Thinking and Reasoning

- Understands and applies basic principles of logic and reasoning
- Applies basic trouble-shooting and problem-solving techniques
- Applies decision making techniques

Life Skills

- Working with others: Contributes to the overall effort of a group
- Working with others: Displays effective interpersonal communications skills
- Self-Regulation: Considers risks

Language Arts – Listening and Speaking

- Demonstrates competence in speaking and listening as tools
- Students will use descriptive language that clarifies and enhances ideas



Why Do People—even SMART people—try drugs?

Adapted from Freevibe (www.freevibe.com)

One reason often heard from people using drugs is to feel good. This can be considered *recreational* use. Some might light up a cigarette at a party. They might not consider themselves a “smoker,” but they do it to feel good. Someone might smoke pot at a friend’s house because he/she thinks it could be fun. **The problem?** *Drugs don’t care what the reason is.* The same effects can occur whether you’re drinking to have fun or drinking to forget a problem, whether you’re doing drugs to see how they feel or doing them to fit in.

People often want to change their situation. If they’re depressed, they want to become happy. If they are stressed or nervous, they want to relax, and so on. By taking drugs, people often think they can be the people they want to be. **The problem?** *It isn’t real.* They haven’t changed the situation; they’ve only distorted it for a little while. Following are some of the reasons people say they do drugs to feel good or change the situation:

They want to fit in.

No one wants to be the only one not participating. No one wants to be left out, so sometimes they make bad decisions, like taking drugs, to cover-up their insecurities. They don’t think about how drugs can isolate them from friends and family. They forget to look past that one party to see how things could turn out. Or maybe they just don’t see the people around them who aren’t using drugs.

They want to escape or relax.

You’ll hear a lot of people saying things like “I’m so stressed, I need to get messed up!” or “Drugs help me relax” or whatever. What they’re really saying is “Drinking or doing drugs is just easier than dealing with my problems or reaching out for help.” The thing is, *the problems are still there when they come down—and not only do they still have to deal with it, they have to deal with it when they’re not 100% and feeling guilty or even worse when they’re not thinking straight.*

They’re bored.

Lots of people turn to drugs for a little excitement because they say there’s nothing else to do but watch the same *Simpsons* rerun for the tenth time or hang out at the Burger King. But people who make these kinds of decisions usually find out that drugs are ultimately really a waste and painful. Drugs don’t change the situation, and they just might make it worse.

The media say it’s cool.

Even though there’s an anti-drug every minute and more rock stars and ball players than you can shake a stick at tell you to stay away from drugs, the truth is the entertainment world still manages to make drugs appear very attractive—kind of like how it encourages people to be really skinny even when it says anorexia is bad, or when it says you should be super muscular but steroids are bad. But if you’re wise, you’ll understand that the entertainment world is not the real world, and basing your life on these messages is superficial.

They think it makes them seem grown-up.

This is one of the weirdest reasons. Think about it...why would an adult want to use drugs? Probably for many of the same reasons you would consider. The reality is that the most grown-up people out there aren’t users. They’re too busy living their lives to bother with stuff, like drugs, that will interfere. Do you have a parent or adult family member who uses drugs?

**They want to rebel.**

Sometimes people turn to drugs not so much for themselves, but to make a statement against someone else, such as their families or society in general. Somehow taking drugs makes them out-laws or more individual. The problem is taking drugs, ultimately, robs these people of their ability to be independent, because it makes them dependent—on drugs and their drug connections.

They want to experiment.

It's human nature to want to experiment. Trying things out helps you decide if they're right for you. But it's also human nature to avoid things that are obviously bad for you. You wouldn't experiment with jumping off the Brooklyn Bridge. The point is, there are a zillion better things to experiment with sports, music, dying your hair, seeing bad movies, eating spicy food...

Are drugs always bad?

Illegal drugs are always bad. There's no good use for sniffing glue or snorting heroin. But many drugs were developed as medications by doctors to help treat patients with very specific medical conditions. And for those people, drugs make sense. Unfortunately, many of these drugs are used by people who don't need them. Which, if you think about it, is kind of like going for chemotherapy when you don't have cancer. In other words, really dumb.

Why do people keep taking drugs?

Many people don't become addicted to drugs, but may continue to do drugs for the same reasons they started: because they want to fit in, because they want to escape, because they're bored, whatever. These are people who have issues with insecurity, and are scared or unwilling to deal with problems in a straight-up, intelligent way—like talking to friends, counselors, even parents!

For other people, once they've started taking drugs, they become physically or mentally addicted. They want more—in fact, they feel like they *need* more. Eventually, trying to get drugs becomes the most important thing in their lives, using up all their time, money, and energy, and really hurting people they're close to.



Drug-Free

Get advice.

Talk with parents, teachers, clergy or counselors.

What you know.

Learn as much as you can about the harmful effects of drug use. These resources will help:

- National Institute on Drug Abuse www.drugabuse.gov/students.html
- Freevibe www.freevibe.com
- National Clearinghouse of Alcohol and Drug Information www.health.org
- The Seven Project Teens In Crisis www.thesevenproject.com/m_teencrisis.html

Be risky.

If a friend of yours has a problem with drugs that you'd like to address, be sure you let her/him know the reason you're bringing it up: you care.

Just the facts.

Share with your friend the dangers of drug use.

Be there.

You can't force your friend to find help; however, you can let him/her know you *want* to help when he/she is ready.

Get involved.

You can help your friend (and YOU) by keeping busy. Join a club. Get a hobby. Don't be bored.

Choose wisely.

If your friend starts behaving wrongly, do what you can to help, but do not let him/her influence you to join that behavior.



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PEER PRESSURE

For Grades 6-12. Students will gain the understanding that peer pressure is very powerful and subtle. They will begin to be able to identify positive and negative influences.

Objectives:

- Understand the influence that students have over other students
- Understand the realities of peer pressure
- Realize peer pressure can be utilized positively to enhance themselves and others

Materials Needed:

- Copies of *Overcoming Peer Pressure*

Discussion:

- 1) What issues/messages from The Seven Project School Assembly stood out to you the most? Why?
 - *Transition: *"In our classroom time today, (principal's name) and I felt it was important that we follow-up on one of the topics: peer pressure, since this is something we deal with at our school."*
- 2) What is your definition of "peer pressure?"
- 3) Is peer pressure a big issue in our school and in your life?
- 4) What are some general pressures students face? What are some behaviors into which students are pressured by peers?
- 5) Do you ever feel pressure to make fun of someone else or be mean to someone because of your friends?
- 6) Peer pressure can be positive or negative. Who are some "positive" people who may pressure you? What are some messages they "pressure" you with?
- 7) Who are the people you most want to impress or be like? Why?
- 8) What are some typical arguments peers use to pressure others? What are some responses to each one?
- 9) How recently did you consciously experience peer pressure? What did you do?
- 10) Think about a situation in which you caved to negative pressure. What warning signs did you ignore? What happened?
- 11) Negative pressure often makes us feel regret. What does regret feel like? What does it do to you?
- 12) We all want to be a real person, not someone who lives one way to please their friends and acts like someone completely different at home. What are some keys to being a "real" person consistently?
 - *Close with *Overcoming Peer Pressure*.

**Extensions and Adaptations:**

Have students write responses they can use when in situations they feel pressured. Develop a theme like, "Live Differently," or involve the school mascot, "Raider Pride." List the theme and condense the list of overcoming peer pressure responses and list them on a t-shirt students can wear to remember ways to live, think and react.

Have a school-wide competition by grade or by classes to create the theme and t-shirt for the above extension idea. A school-wide rally would be held to present the winning class or grade and reward them with a party to be held during class time as a reward.

Online Resources:

Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission
www.aadac.com

Parenting Teenagers/Parents of Teens
www.parentingteens.about.com

Adolescent Crisis Team
www.adolescentcrisisteam.com

Relevant National Standards

McREL establishes the following National Standards at www.mcrel.org

Health

- Knows how to maintain mental and emotional health
- Knows how to maintain and promote personal health

Thinking and Reasoning

- Understands and applies basic principles of logic and reasoning
- Applies basic trouble-shooting and problem-solving techniques
- Applies decision making techniques

Life Skills

- Working with others: Contributes to the overall effort of a group
- Working with others: Displays effective interpersonal communications skills

Language Arts – Listening and Speaking

- Demonstrates competence in speaking and listening as tools
- Students will use descriptive language that clarifies and enhances ideas



Overcoming Peer Pressure

Be available.

Let your friends know they can talk with you.

Be a listener.

Your friends need to pour out what is inside, without necessarily hearing advice.

Ask questions.

What do you do (or don't do) because of peer pressure?

Know your values and beliefs.

What do you think is right and wrong?

Know some tips.

- "Why do you drink this stuff?" "Why do you like having ashtray breath and yellow teeth?"
- Say NO like you mean it.
- Practice saying NO like you mean it.
- Get away from the "pressure zone."
- Find a friend who can get your back.
- Think about what could happen if you cave.
- Everyone is NOT doing it.

Take advantage.

Learn from the adults around you: parents, teachers, counselors, etc.

Dream.

Choose friends and activities that support your dreams and goals.

You might blow it.

If you do, identify where things went wrong and do things differently next time.

Lead.

And others will follow. Set the tone and standards.



thesevenproject

SUPPLEMENTAL CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

LIFE 24/7

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SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT

For Grades 6-12. Students will learn the importance of scholastic achievement as it relates to dreams and desires. They will learn how to be better students through discussion, studying, note- and exam-taking skills.

Objectives:

- Understand the importance of scholastic achievement in life.
- Recognize and develop discussion, studying, note- and exam-taking skills.

Materials Needed:

- Copies of the *Stating Your Rating* and *Becoming a Better Student*

Discussion:

- 1) What issues/messages from The Seven Project School Assembly stood out to you the most? Why?

Transition: "In our classroom time today, (principal's name) and I felt it was important that we follow-up on one of the topics: scholastic achievement, since this is something we deal with at our school." Distribute and complete the **Stating Your Rating exercise.*

- 2) Which of these excuses did you like best?
- 3) What are some of the best excuses you have heard for not turning in homework?
- 4) Do teachers truly believe the excuses?
- 5) Why do we make excuses? Why not tell the truth?
- 6) Do you give 100% in the subjects you enjoy?
- 7) How much effort do you make in the subjects you do not enjoy?
- 8) Do you study a little at a time or do you cram at the last minute?
- 9) Do you think taking good notes is important?
- 10) Do you take good notes or copy other peoples' notes?
- 11) What signs tell you "You'd better write this down?" What are some tips you could share with someone about taking good notes?
- 12) How much time do you spend studying for tests?
- 13) What helps you study? What are some tips you could share with someone about good studying habits?
- 14) How much time do you spend preparing papers and written homework?
- 15) Do you feel that too much of your time is spent doing outside work for school?

Close with the **Becoming a Better Student sheet.*

**Extensions and Adaptations:**

- Have groups of students search for online note-taking and studying tips.

Online Resources:

University of Virginia

wsrv.clas.virginia.edu/~rjh9u/howstudy.html

University of North Carolina

caps.unc.edu/TenTraps.html

University of St. Thomas

www.iss.stthomas.edu/studyguides

How To Study.com

www.howtostudy.com

Virginia Teach

www.ucc.vt.edu/stdysk/stdyhlp.html

Relevant National Standards

McREL establishes the following National Standards at www.mcrel.org

Thinking and Reasoning

- Understands and applies basic principles of logic and reasoning
- Applies basic trouble-shooting and problem-solving techniques
- Applies decision making techniques

Life Skills

- Working with others: Contributes to the overall effort of a group
- Working with others: Displays effective interpersonal communications skills

Language Arts – Listening and Speaking

- Demonstrates competence in speaking and listening as tools
- Students will use descriptive language that clarifies and enhances ideas
- Students will use a variety of sentence structure to express expanded ideas



Stating Your Rating

Rate the following homework excuses on a scale of 1-10, 1=*Completely Lame*, 10=*Love It! I'll Use It...But Not In This Class!*

- My little sister ate it.
- My pet doodied on it...
- We ran out of toilet paper.
- Our furnace broke down and we need to keep warm.
- I had to use it to fill a hole in my shoe...hey, it was raining!
- I gave it to a friend and his house burned down.
- My mom threw it away by mistake.
- I did it...but I left it next to my dear, sick mom when I helped her this morning.
- Grandma died. Yes, again.
- I couldn't find anyone to copy it from.
- The report hasn't arrived yet. I blame FedEx.
- I finished it...I just need to write it down.
- I've given up homework for Lent.
- It spontaneously combusted.
- Homeland Security confiscated it as a weapon of terrorism.
- I spent the evening thinking up excuses for not turning in homework...



Becoming a Better Student

Make a system.

Develop a note-taking system, like the “5 R’s” from Cornell University:

- **Record**—take notes in large area. Identify main points and main ideas. Use outlines, pictures or graphs to get information down quickly.
- **Reduce**—after class. Utilizing the left-hand column of your paper, reduce the information with key words, phrases, dates and questions. Also put sources to your textbook and assigned readings.
- **Recite**—talk aloud. Review from memory what you learned. Using the left-hand column, talk through key words and questions and illustrate concepts.
- **Reflect**—think over. How does this relate to what you knew before? Note items teacher may mention will be on test.
- **Review**—summarize material at bottom of pages.

Study in a place with limited distractions.

Get comfy.

Work in a place that is comfortable where you can work for long periods and not get tired.

Get your stuff.

Make sure you have all the materials you need; pencils, paper, notes, tests, books, etc.

Take five.

Take breaks periodically to refresh yourself. Play a short video game or listen to a couple of songs.

If you always wait until the last minute...

- Keep a checklist of what you must get done for the assignment, and reward yourself.
- Do the least favorite subject first and the most favorite thing last...gives you something to look forward to.
- Set deadlines for other projects a few days ahead.

For tests:

- 1) *What will the exam cover?*
- 2) *What type of test will it be: objective, essay, or combination?*
- 3) *Spend several nights before the test reviewing your notes.*
- 4) *Study points emphasized in textbooks.*
- 5) *Study areas emphasized by the teacher.*
- 6) *Study questions on study guides and past quizzes.*
- 7) *Study with other students. Ask questions back and forth.*



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The activities and discussions in these guides are designed for use in single classroom settings or as entire school or community-wide campaigns. The Seven Project offers these guides as tools for use at the discretion of local school educators and administrators in part or entirety. The Seven Project and your school: *building students' hope...one issue at a time.*

SELF-ESTEEM

For Grades 6-12. Students will discuss the essential value to having and developing a healthy self-esteem. Students will also identify negative areas that seek to strip self-worth. Students will be empowered with skills to build a healthy self-image and self-esteem

Objectives:

- Define and understand the significance of having a healthy self-esteem.
- Equip students with tools to build self-esteem.
- Identify areas that strip self-worth.

Materials Needed:

- Copies of *Developing a Healthy Self-Esteem*.

Discussion:

- 1) What issues/messages from The Seven Project School Assembly stood out to you the most? Why?
 - *Transition: *"In our classroom time today, (principal's name) and I felt it was important that we follow-up on one of the topics: self-esteem, since this is something we deal with at our school."*
- 2) What is self-esteem?
- 3) Do you feel good when you accomplish something? Why?
- 4) How do the following affect how you feel about yourself: *good grades, having a boy/girlfriend, making a team, having latest clothes/video games, home problems, conflicts with friends, weight/appearance?*
- 5) Why do we get our self-esteem from the things that happen to us?
- 6) How do you feel when your friends put themselves down? Why do they do that?
- 7) Have you ever put yourself down? Why?
- 8) When self-esteem is low, people tend to do negative things. An example is drinking alcohol. What other behaviors stem from low self-esteem? Why?
- 9) Have you ever had a pity party? How did you bring yourself out of it?
- 10) Is your self-esteem affected by loneliness?
- 11) What advice would you give someone who is lonely and has low self-esteem?



Extensions and Adaptations:

- **Be Positive!** challenge. Challenge the students to a one-week effort to be not only positive in their comments, but to also look for ways to encourage and help others. Students could be encouraged to help other students through tutoring and helping other students with homework and household chores. Students could also connect with local help agencies and help serve others in their community. Students could report their actions daily. On poster board, list all students in the class and place an indicator by each student's name as he/she is caught by others doing something positive. Students who perform x number of positive actions will be entitled to attend an all-school bash with food, drinks and games. The school could set the exact number of actions needed.
- **Journals.** Have students keep a journal for several days of their activities and anything to do with forms of media. Have students focus on how their feelings fit into their enjoyment of daily events. Did any media affect his/her day? At the end of the time period, have students share their journals.

Relevant National Standards

McREL establishes the following National Standards at www.mcrel.org

Health

- Knows essential concepts about the prevention and control of disease
- Understands aspects of substance use and abuse

Thinking and Reasoning

- Understands and applies basic principles of logic and reasoning
- Applies basic trouble-shooting and problem-solving techniques
- Applies decision making techniques

Life Skills

- Working with others: Contributes to the overall effort of a group
- Working with others: Displays effective interpersonal communications skills

Language Arts – Listening and Speaking

- Demonstrates competence in speaking and listening as tools
- Students will use descriptive language that clarifies and enhances ideas
- Students will use a variety of sentence structure to express expanded ideas



Developing Healthy Self-Esteem

Do not compare yourself to others.

Everyone is different and unique. There is no other person exactly like you.

Don't put yourself down.

You will become what you say and think you are.

Admit mistakes.

Refuse to keep beating yourself up over them. You are your own worst critic. Don't keep tearing yourself down.

Be kind.

To you and to other people.

Think positive.

Don't dwell on others' negative comments.

Be involved.

Hang out with people who are positive, who like being with you and enjoy life.

Learn to laugh.

Even at yourself—experience the humor in life.

Encourage, accept and respect.

Help others accept themselves.

Be positive.

How long can you go without saying something negative?

Guard media.

Messages in what you hear, watch and read should encourage and build you up.



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SUICIDE

For Grades 6-12. Students will discuss and gain an understanding of the danger signs of those who are contemplating suicide. Students will learn practical ways to help their friends find help.

Objectives:

- Understand potential signs of students who are at risk for suicide.
- Gain an understanding of how to reach out to their peers who are struggling with suicide.
- Implement ways of changing their classroom or school environment to help their suicidal, at-risk friends.

Materials Needed:

- Copies of *Suicide Warning/Watch Signs* and *Overcoming Suicide* for every student.
- Optional: 1-2 sheets of poster board and index cards (one per student)

Discussion:

- 1) What issues/messages from The Seven Project School Assembly stood out to you the most? Why?
 - *Transition: *"In our classroom time today, (principal's name) and I felt it was important that we follow-up on one of the topics: suicide, since this is something we deal with at our school."*
- 2) (Show of hands) Who knows someone who has talked about, attempted or committed suicide?
- 3) Do you think people want others to know when they are hurting? Why?
- 4) Do you think someone gives "warning signs" when thinking about suicide?
 - If so, what are they?
 - *Pass out copies of the ***Suicide Warning/Watch Signs***.
 - Do any of these warning signs stand out to you?
- 5) Do many in our school think about suicide?
- 6) If someone you knew began talking about suicide would you take it seriously?
 - What should be your response, even if they might be joking about it?
 - *Pass out ***Overcoming Suicide*** sheet.
 - What are more ideas not on this list?

**Extensions and Adaptations:**

- Develop a *Why Live* campaign for your school or class. Have each student in your class bring a picture that represents life. Place them on a piece of poster board as a collage. Have students write on index cards one reason to live. Place the card by that student's collage image.

Online Resources:

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
www.afsp.org

Knowledge Exchange Network
www.mentalhealth.org/suicideprevention

National Mental Health Association
www.nmha.org

Suicide Crisis Center
www.suicidecrisiscenter.com

Relevant National Standards

McREL establishes the following National Standards at www.mcrel.org

Thinking and Reasoning

- Understands and applies basic principles of logic and reasoning

Life Skills

- Self Regulation: Considers Risks
- Working with others: Contributes to the overall effort of a group
- Working with others: Displays effective interpersonal communications skills

Language Arts – Listening and Speaking

- Demonstrates competence in speaking and listening as tools



Suicide Warning/Watch List

Depression warning/watch signs

- Sadness, low moods
- Low feeling of self-worth; feeling no one cares
- Lack of pleasure or happiness in anything at all
- Declining schoolwork
- Drastically-changed eating habits
- Sleeping problems
- Tiredness, lack of energy
- Withdrawal from others
- Hopelessness

Common events that trigger suicidal thoughts

- Family crisis; problems with parents or other family members
- Problems in relationship with the opposite sex
- School failure
- Police or court involvement
- Death or divorce of parents
- Unwanted pregnancy
- Illness or injury

Motives for suicide

- Grief; hurtful loss
- Abandonment
- Final cry for help
- Revenge on survivors
- Avoid punishment
- Seek better conditions
- Gain attention
- Experience excitement; suicidal games

CRITICAL warning signs

- Schoolwork slides massively
- Increased alcohol/drug use
- Neglecting personal hygiene
- Anti-social, wanting to be alone



Overcoming Suicide

Know the warning/watch signs.

Be available.

Your friends need to know they can talk to you.

Be a listener.

Your friends need an outlet to pour out what is inside. They want someone who will listen. Ask a few questions so you can gain a clear picture of what they are facing.

When it is time to speak, say:

- "I'm here to help in any way I can. What can I do for you?"
- "Sometimes there are no easy answers, and it feels like nobody could ever understand—and maybe they can't—but there are people who care about you and want to help you. I'll help you find them."

Don't say:

- "I know how you feel."
- "Be happy for what you have. It could be worse."

Don't make light of your friend's feelings.

Encourage them...

...to be actively involved in activities and relationships. Try to reduce the amount of "alone" time your friend has.

Get help

- Suicide Crisis Center (www.suicidecrisiscenter.com) 1.800.784.2433
- Hope Line Network (www.metanoia.org) 1.800.SUICIDE
- Suicide Prevention (www.nmha.org) 1.888.7.WE.HELP
- Teen Help (www.teenhelp.org)
- National Adolescent Suicide Hotline 1.800.621.4000
- Distress/Suicide Helpline (Canada) 1.800.232.7288

Realize you can approach your school guidance counselor, teacher, parents, clergy or any other respected adult for help.



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TOBACCO

For Grades 6-12. Students will study tobacco-related facts and discuss their friends' attitudes and experiences to develop an awareness of the dangers of tobacco use.

Objectives:

- Understand the facts about smoking and tobacco.
- Understand the health risks associated with tobacco use.

Materials Needed:

- Copies of the *Tobacco Questionnaire* and *Tobacco Free*.

Discussion:

- 1) What issues/messages from The Seven Project School Assembly stood out to you the most? Why?
**Transition: "In our classroom time today, (principal's name) and I felt it was important that we follow-up on one of the topics: tobacco, since this is something we deal with at our school." Distribute Tobacco Questionnaire and allow students time to complete, then discuss the correct answers. Read some of the additional statistics aloud.*
- 2) Which answers or statistics surprise you the most? Why?
- 3) Is tobacco use a problem in our school? What percentage of students in our school use tobacco regularly?
- 4) How is tobacco use portrayed in media? What messages do those portrayals send the viewers?
- 5) What have you learned about tobacco from your friends and classmates?
- 6) Have you ever been offered tobacco? What did you say or do?
- 7) What are your feelings about young people who use tobacco?
- 8) How can we help those who use tobacco and might want to quit?
In the remainder of class time, divide students into groups and ask them to write a 30-second radio commercial against tobacco use. Have each group present its commercial in class. Close with the **Tobacco Free sheet.*



Extensions and Adaptations:

- During a tobacco awareness week, have a class competition to develop the best anti-tobacco use commercial. Each class submits one entry. The winning commercial is presented by students over the school's intercom system.
- Sponsor a community tobacco awareness week. Have other schools submit winning entries to be played on local radio stations during the week. Contact a local radio station manager for information.

Online Resources:

The Truth
www.thetruth.com

Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids
www.tobaccofreekids.org

American Cancer Society—Smokeout
www.cancer.org

Get Outraged
www.getoutraged.com

CDC Tobacco, Information and Prevention Source
www.cdc.gov/tobacco/

National Clearinghouse of Alcohol and Drug Information
www.health.org

Relevant National Standards

McREL establishes the following National Standards at www.mcrel.org

Health

- Knows essential concepts about the prevention and control of disease
- Understands aspects of substance use and abuse

Thinking and Reasoning

- Understands and applies basic principles of logic and reasoning

Life Skills

- Working with others: Contributes to the overall effort of a group
- Working with others: Displays effective interpersonal communications skills
- Self-Regulation: Considers risks

Language Arts – Listening and Speaking

- Demonstrates competence in speaking and listening as tools
- Students will use descriptive language that clarifies and enhances ideas
- Students will use a variety of sentence structures to express expanded ideas



Tobacco Questionnaire

Adapted from National Center for Disease and Control website: www.cdc.gov/tobacco/

Circle the correct answer for each question.

- Smoking is harmful only if you smoke for a long time; 20-30 years or more.
True *False*
- If you smoke a pack a day for one year, it will cost you about:
\$50 *\$1,000* *\$1,500* *\$3,000*
- Nicotine in tobacco is highly addictive.
True *False*
- Spit tobacco is a safe and non-addictive alternative to cigarettes.
True *False*
- Which of the following chemicals are found in cigarette smoke?
Ammonia (used to clean toilets) *Cyanide (used to kill rats)*
Formaldehyde (used to preserve corpses) *All of the above*
- More than 80% of smokers start smoking before they turn:
18 *21* *25* *40*
- How many young people become new smokers each day?
1,000 *2,000* *2,500* *3,000*
- Tobacco kills more people each year than which of the following causes of death?
Illegal drugs *Car accidents*
AIDS *All of the above*
- Within two days of quitting smoking, your sense of taste and smell are greatly improved.
True *False*
- What is the number one source of pollution on California beaches?
Oil slicks *Hospital waste*
Seagull feces *Cigarette butts*



Tobacco Questionnaire Answer Key

(Adapted from National Center for Disease and Control website: www.cdc.gov/tobacco/)

1. False. The physical damage from smoking sets in almost immediately — even within a year after you start. Teen smokers cough and wheeze more. They produce more phlegm (yuck!). They have lungs that are damaged and actually smaller. They have weaker hearts. They perform worse in physical fitness tests and competitive sports. And they get sick and miss school more often.

2. \$1000. It will cost you about \$1000 in one year if you smoke a pack of cigarettes each day. Think of what you could do with all that dough: Play 2,000 video-arcade games; or talk on the phone to your friend in another state for more than 100 hours! It's boring, we know, but if you put \$1000 every year in a bank account earning 5 percent interest, you'd have \$34,719.25 after 20 years. That's some serious cash!

3. True. Nicotine in cigarettes has been shown to be highly addictive. About two-thirds of young smokers say they want to quit smoking, and seven in 10 say they regret having started. Three out of four teens who are daily smokers say they keep smoking because it's really hard to quit. When they do try to quit, they suffer the same withdrawal symptoms ("the crazies") as adults who try to quit. And nicotine addiction can fool you: Only 5 percent of teen smokers think they will definitely be smoking in 5 years, but close to 75 percent end up still smoking 7-9 years later.

4. False. Spit tobacco (snuff and chewing tobacco) is not a safe and non-addictive alternative to cigarettes. Using spit tobacco can cause cracked lips, bleeding gums, and sores of the mouth that never heal. It can stain your teeth a yellowish-brown color and give you bad breath. Worst of all, use of spit tobacco can cause mouth cancer and other kinds of cancer. It also may play a role in heart disease and stroke. Like cigarettes, smokeless tobacco contains nicotine, and nicotine is addictive. One "dip" of smokeless tobacco can deliver as much nicotine as several cigarettes.

5. All of the above. Scientists estimate that there are more than 4,000 known chemical compounds in cigarette smoke. More than 40 of these are known to cause cancer in people or animals. Spit tobacco, even though it is not smoked, contains high concentrations of cancer-causing chemicals called nitrosamines, plus at least a half dozen other chemicals that cause cancer.

6. 18 years old. More than 80% of adult smokers started before they turned 18, and by that time more than half of them were already smoking daily. Among high school seniors who use spit tobacco, about three in four had tried it by grade 9. Hardly anyone starts using tobacco as an adult. So if you make it through your teens tobacco-free, chances are great you'll be tobacco-free for life.

7. 3,000. Each day 6,000 young people will take their first puff on a cigarette and 3,000 will become regular smokers. That's more than a million new smokers each year. One out of three of them will die from a disease caused by their smoking. Unless we do something to stop this trend, 5 million young people who are alive today will die from using tobacco.

8. All of the above. Each year smoking kills more people than AIDS, alcohol, drug abuse, car crashes, murders, suicides, and fires — combined! More than 400,000 people die from smoking each year — one out of every five deaths in the U.S. That's the same as three fully loaded jumbo jets crashing each day with no survivors!

9. True. Within two days of quitting smoking, your sense of taste and smell can be greatly improved. There are other immediate benefits of quitting. The levels of carbon monoxide and nicotine in your body go down quickly. Your heart and lungs will begin to repair the damage done by smoking. You'll begin to breathe easier. Your smoker's cough will begin to disappear. And you'll soon notice a boost in your energy and stamina.

10. Cigarette butts. Littering beaches and the countryside is only one way that cigarettes harm the environment. Nearly 12.5 million acres of forest — more than 10 Grand Canyons — are destroyed each year to provide trees to cure tobacco. That's about a tree every two weeks for the average smoker. Secondhand smoke is another environmental menace. It fills the air with many of the same poisons found in the air around toxic waste dumps. And it's deadly: Secondhand smoke kills about 3,000 non-smokers each year from lung cancer.



Did You Know?

Every day in the United States, more than 3,000 young people become regular smokers—that's more than one million new smokers a year.¹

After years of remaining steady, teen smoking rates have increased each year since 1992. In 1996, 22.2% of high school seniors smoked daily—up from 17.2% in 1992. Between 1991 and 1996, past-month smoking increased from 14.3% to 21.0% among eighth graders and from 20.8% to 30.4% among tenth graders.²

More than 5 million young people under the age of 18 who are currently alive will die prematurely from a smoking-related disease.³

In adults, cigarette smoking causes heart disease and stroke. Studies have shown that early signs of the blood vessel damage present in these diseases can be found in adolescents who smoke.⁴

Starting smoking at an early age greatly increases the risk of lung cancer. A person's risk for most other smoking-related cancers also rises with the length of time that a person smokes.⁵

Teenage smokers suffer from shortness of breath almost three times as often as teens that don't smoke and produce phlegm more than twice as often as teens who don't smoke.⁶

Smokeless tobacco use among youth is a continuing problem. Data from recent school-based surveys indicate that about one in every five male students in 9th through 12th grades uses smokeless tobacco.⁷ Smokeless tobacco can cause gum disease and cancer of the mouth, pharynx, and esophagus.⁸ It may also increase the risk of heart disease and stroke.⁹

In 1991, teenage cigarette smokers consumed an average of 28.3 million cigarettes per day (516 million packs per year). During this same period, an estimated 225 million packs of cigarettes were sold illegally to young people under the age of 18. The tobacco industry generated approximately \$190 million in profit from the illegal sale of cigarettes to minors in 1991.¹⁰

In 1995, approximately 57% of students in grades 9 - 12 who currently smoked usually bought their cigarettes from a retail store, from a vending machine, or through another person who purchased cigarettes for them.⁷

Several studies have found nicotine to be addictive in ways similar to those of heroin, cocaine, and alcohol.¹¹ Among young smokers, the transition from experimentation to dependence occurs just as frequently as it does among users of cocaine and heroin.¹²

Among adolescents aged 10 - 18, about three-fourths of daily cigarette smokers and daily smokeless tobacco users report that they continue to use tobacco because it is really hard for them to quit. About 93% of daily cigarette smokers and daily smokeless tobacco users who previously tried to quit report at least one symptom of nicotine withdrawal. Young people who try to quit smoking suffer the same withdrawal symptoms as adults who try to quit.^{13,14}

Cigarette products are among the most heavily advertised and promoted products in the United States. In 1994, tobacco companies spent an estimated \$5 billion—or more than \$13 million a day—to advertise and promote cigarettes.¹⁵

In 1991, about 82% of smokers who had ever smoked daily began smoking before age 18, and by that age, 53% had become daily smokers.¹⁶

A national survey found that about 86% of adolescent smokers who bought their own cigarettes preferred Marlboro, Camel, or Newport cigarettes—the most heavily advertised brands. In contrast, only 35% of adults chose these brands.¹⁷

Teen smoking is often an early warning sign of future problems. Teens who smoke are three times as likely as non-smokers to use alcohol, eight times as likely to use marijuana, and 22 times as likely to use cocaine. Smoking is also associated with numerous other high-risk behaviors, including fighting and having unprotected sex.¹⁸



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Tobacco-Free

Get advice.

Talk with parents, teachers, clergy or counselors.

What you know.

Learn as much as you can about the harmful effects of tobacco. These resources will help:

- The Truth www.thetruth.com
- Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids www.tobaccofreekids.org
- American Cancer Society—Smokeout www.cancer.org
- Get Outraged www.getoutraged.com
- CDC Tobacco, Information and Prevention Source www.cdc.gov/tobacco/
- National Clearinghouse of Alcohol and Drug Information www.health.org

Be risky.

If a friend of yours has a problem with tobacco that you'd like to address, be sure you let her/him know the reason you're bringing it up: you care.

Just the facts.

Share with your friend the dangers of tobacco use.

Be there.

You can't force your friend to find help; however, you can let him/her know you *want* to help when he/she is ready.

Get involved.

You can help your friend (and YOU) by keeping busy. Join a club. Get a hobby. Don't be bored.

Choose wisely.

If your friend starts behaving wrongly, do what you can to help, but do not let him/her influence you to join that behavior.