

Chapter 1: The Voice

Objectives

Cognitive: Your child will understand that there is a voice or conscience within each person that tells him or her right from wrong. He/she will understand the concepts of guilt and restitution.

Affective: Your child will want to listen to their consciences and experience peace and happiness. He/she will want to take care of guilt quickly by making amends.

Behavioral: Your child will state the Golden Rule as a measure of whether behavior is right or wrong. He/she will define the conscience and describe how it makes a person feel, according to the rightness of his or her actions.

Session 1

For this first session, read the “Dear Reader” and “The Voice” together.

When you are finished, ask him/her what he/she thought of the story. Did he/she think Brian was strange for hearing voices? Did he/she think he sounded like a “goody-goody”? Did he sound like he’d be a good person to have as a friend, classmate, brother, or teammate?

Mention that many scientists and important people have recognized that human beings have a “voice inside,” or an inner sense of right and wrong. Mention that we as parents teach us a lot about right and wrong, and it is very important to listen to us. Yet we also have this voice inside that can help us when we aren’t with us—which occurs more and more as you get older and more independent.

Explain that our conscience isn’t involved in such unimportant decisions as what kind of candy bar to buy. Our taste buds tell us what is right for us in that case! The conscience talks to us when we have to make a choice between doing something right and doing something wrong. Sometimes it talks to us again after we have done something right or wrong—congratulating us and making us feel “high” and joyful when we’ve done something right, and casting us down and making us feel guilty and shameful after we’ve done something bad.

Make the point that the conscience’s voice is like a muscle. If we don’t use it, we lose it! Like Brian, we sometimes listen too much to the crowd and can’t hear our conscience very well. If we disobey our conscience enough, its voice gets softer and softer, just as in Brian’s case. Then we can get in big trouble.

Explain that if our conscience doesn’t tell us what is right and wrong, we need to help it along by asking ourselves some questions about what we are thinking of doing. Mention

that the Golden Rule is a good way to measure an act. We can ask ourselves: Would we like it if someone else did the same thing to us? Ask your child, “In Brian’s case, if he had thought of the Golden Rule, would he have broken into the lockers of other kids? Probably not, because he would realize he would not like someone else to do that to him.”

Write the Golden Rule on a paper: “Do to others as you would have them do to you.”

Mention that another way Brian could have strengthened the voice of his conscience was to think what his parents would say about what he was going to do. If he had thought about that, he might not have done it.

In the end, Brian’s parents tell him that they are going to have to take away some of his privileges and independence until he learns to listen to them and to the voice of his conscience more. Ask your child to find the words in the story that tell how Brian’s parents feel about what he did.

Ask your child how they personally tell right from wrong. Write his/her suggestions on a paper and discuss them. Suggest that you use some of these suggestions the next time you have to make a decision between right and wrong, because sometimes making such decisions can be hard, especially if older, stronger kids or people want you to do the wrong thing—and especially if you want to prove to them that you are cool or fit in with them by doing whatever they say.

Ask your child to look at the Exercise in his/her student book.

Exercise

Think about the following situations, and see if you can tell what your inner “Voice” says is right to do.

You find a wallet in the grass. It has a name and address in it—the owner lives a block away from you. There’s money in it. What should you do?

You see some boys shoplifting CDs in the store. The manager has his back turned. What should you do?

You knocked over the vase on the teacher’s desk, breaking it. The teacher thinks Cindy did it. The teacher starts scolding Cindy. What should you do?

Discuss the right thing to do. If you can gather a couple more people, ask them to role-play the following scenarios:

Scenario 1, the found wallet: the finder, the owner, perhaps a friend who thinks the money should be kept.

Scenario 2, witnessing some shoplifting: the witness, the shoplifting boys, the manager.

Scenario 3, the wrong person is blamed: the person who knocked over the vase, the teacher, Cindy, others in the class who might have seen.

Session 2

Ask your child to summarize the story of “The Voice”. Clarify or fill in important points left out.

Explain that when we feel *guilt* over something we have done, it is our conscience, or our inner voice, warning us that we have done something wrong. Guilt over doing something wrong can keep us up at night when we should be sleeping, or make us unable to enjoy that game or snack we’ve been looking forward to, or that money we found. Guilt isn’t always a bad thing, but it can be unhealthy if we walk around feeling guilty all the time. Guilt can make us sick.

Ask your child if he/she has ever felt guilty. Assure him/her that he/she doesn’t have to tell what he/she did to make him/herself feel that way. Affirm that everyone has felt guilty at some point or other in their lives, because we all make mistakes. Ask if guilt is a comfortable, happy feeling. Affirm that it is not. Ask your child what he/she does when he/she feels guilty.

Encourage your child to understand that one good way to stop feeling guilty is simply to apologize to whoever was harmed by our mistakes. Mention that the words “I’m sorry” are some of the most important words in any language. Ask your child for different ways to say “I’m sorry,” such as, “That was my fault,” “I am to blame for that,” “I shouldn’t have done that,” “I regret that I did that.”

Mention that once a person has apologized, guilt changes from something negative that feels bad into something positive that feels good. Then we are ready to do something that will make everything even better. We are ready to make up for what we did wrong.

Explain that a big word for making up for what we did wrong is “restitution.” Explain that making up for what we did or restitution means that we feel sorry for what we did, and we are ready to try to make things better for the person we hurt. We are ready to be forgiven, and we are also determined not to do the bad thing or things again. We feel stronger and better inside, because we are on the road to recovery from wrongdoing! Our conscience begins to feel peaceful again.

Ask your child for ways to make up for or make restitution for wrongdoing. What if you stepped on someone’s toe? What if you told your friend’s secrets to the crowd? What if you broke something nice that belonged to someone else? How do they suggest a person make up for those kinds of things?

Explain that sometimes when people feel guilty, they try to explain away the feeling by saying things like, “Since I didn’t get caught, it’s okay this time,” or “The other kids did it too. Everybody does it,” instead of taking responsibility for what they have done wrong and trying to make up for it. Explain that these kinds of thoughts may buy a temporary peace with the conscience, but they do not make a wrong right, nor do they make the person feel better for long. Perhaps every time the situation comes up in conversation, the person will feel a little shaky or sweaty or will blush, even if no one knows what he or she did. Or maybe he or she will find that the crowd is no longer fun to be with. They all do bad things, and it just doesn’t feel right anymore—it leaves a bad taste in the mouth, as the saying goes.

Explain that these feelings are the voice of the conscience at work too. Mention that the conscience doesn’t care if we get caught or not—the conscience only cares about what is right and wrong to do.

Point out that when a person makes a good choice and does something good, the conscience explodes with joy and overflows with good feeling. That is the voice of the conscience saying, “Good job!”

Emphasize that the conscience is a very important tool in living a good life, because it helps us make the choices that lead to happiness. Say, “Our conscience is our friend. We should listen to it!”

Discuss the Questions in his/her student book.

Questions

1. When is the last time your conscience—or an inner voice—helped you make the right decision?
2. What feelings did you have, knowing that you made the right decision?
3. Did you ever feel guilty for not following your conscience?
4. What did you do to overcome those guilt feelings?
5. Have you ever been in the position of not knowing whether something was right or wrong, good or bad? How did that feel? How did that situation work out?

Chapter 2: An Attitude of Gratitude

Objectives

Cognitive: Your child will understand that there is a lot to be grateful for in life, even in a difficult situation.

Affective: Your child will experience gratitude in his/her heart and have a fresh perspective on ordinary life and its possibilities for joy.

Behavioral: Your child will express gratitude to a person in his/her life. He/she will express gratitude for his/her body. He/she will express gratitude for nature.

Session 1

Materials Needed

Poster board
Colored markers

Read the story together.

Ask your child to summarize the story of “An Attitude of Gratitude.” Fill in or supply any important points left out.

Ask your child to skim over the story and pick out things Karen could have been grateful for. List the things on a paper as your child says them. When and if he/she runs out of things, point out things in the very first paragraph, like the fact that Karen had breakfast every day, that her mother had work and was not unemployed, that Karen had a home and a bed to sleep in. Karen had many things that many children in the world do not have.

Explain that, with gratitude, you almost always notice that you have a lot. Gratitude is like a cushion for the bumps of life! Ask your child to name things they are grateful for. List these things on the poster board, using colored markers to make a nice display. Mount the poster board on display and suggest that your child look at it frequently.

Ask your child: What did Karen *not* have that made her family’s life more difficult? Affirm that Karen did not have a father present in her life; the text says that he had left all of them long ago. Acknowledge that this is a difficult situation to be in, especially for Karen’s mother, who had to do the work of both a mother and a father. Karen’s mother was so busy that her children felt neglected.

Ask: “In spite of the difficult situation of not having her father, was Karen without any parental love in her life?” Affirm that she was not, and that was something Karen could be grateful for too: she was not an orphan. She had one parent.

Explain that people have to look for things to be grateful for. An attitude of gratitude is something a person has to work at. It’s a way of looking at things. Say, “For instance,

suppose you walked a long way and your feet got sore. What is there to be grateful for? That you have feet! That you can walk! If you are very tired at night, be grateful that you have enough work and play in your life to make you tired. If you have a bellyache, be thankful that you have enough food that you sometimes eat a little too much and make your tummy sore! Or be grateful that your body is trying to get rid of a sickness by cramping up to get it out!”

Explain that gratitude makes a bad situation better, and it also makes a not-so-bad situation—like Karen’s—show up as having many wonderful things about it in spite of it not being perfect.

Discuss the Questions in his/her student book.

Questions

1. If you were in Karen’s position, would you feel the same way she did about her mom?
2. Were there signs of love and care from her mother that Karen was choosing to ignore? What were they?
3. Was Karen right that her mother didn’t love her or care about her?
4. Do you think Karen and her mother will get along better now?
5. By the end of the story, what is the main emotion Karen is feeling toward her mother?
6. When was the last time someone was grateful to you? What did it feel like? What were they grateful about?
7. Is showing gratitude to others a sign of weakness or a sign of strength?
8. Would you consider yourself a grateful person? How has gratitude affected your feelings and outlook on life? Would you recommend it to others?
9. If you continued to do favors for someone and they never even said, “Thank you,” how would that make you feel? Would you insist that they be grateful to you, or would you continue helping them without their thanks, or would you stop helping them altogether?

Session 2

Explain to Your child that you are going to spend some time practicing gratitude. Ask your child if he/she knows how many people there are in the world. (About 6 billion.) Mention that, since they can read, they are more fortunate than one third of the people of the world—2 billion people—who cannot read. Show with a pie chart on a paper what one third means. Ask: “So, are you part of the world that has been given the bigger piece of the pie? Yes, you are. So you can be grateful.”

To give your child a taste of gratitude, ask him/her to remember the last time he/she “the new kid” in a neighborhood or at school or maybe at a party where he/she hardly knew anyone at all. How did it feel when someone came up who was friendly and kind and who helped them fit in? That warm glow in the heart is gratitude! Ask them to concentrate on that feeling.

Now ask him/her to think of a person he/she is grateful toward. It will likely be his/her mother or father, but tell him/her it is all right to think of other people too. Maybe another child taught him/her how to tie his/her shoelaces when he/she was small. That is someone to be grateful to, because he/she will use that skill all their lives. Maybe someone taught him/her how to swim. That may save his/her life one day, should he/she fall into some deep water! Maybe a doctor pulled him/her through a serious illness through his care, kindness, and good medicine. Maybe one person stood up for him/her when others were being mean. That is something to be grateful for. Sometimes a stranger earns our gratitude by telling us the right directions when we don't know where we are going. We all owe gratitude to the kindness of such strangers.

Ask your child to write down

- a) who is the person he/she is grateful to
- b) what the person did for him/her
- c) how he/she feels when he/she thinks about what the person did for him/her
- d) what he/she would like to do to show that person how thankful he/she is

Encourage your child that, if he/she knows the person and the person is still in his/her life, he/she might want to take the time to mention to him or her how grateful he/she is for that helpful act or to send a little note. Suggest that he/she might want to send the page they just wrote about the person.

Now ask your to think about his/her body. Are they grateful for their eyes? Ask: What do our eyes do for us? Noses? Mouths? Ears? Throats? Shoulders? Stomachs? Hands? Feet? Legs? What do all these parts of the body do for us each day? Yet how often do take the time to be grateful? Lead them in a chorus and exercise of touching the part of the body named and saying, "Thank you!"

"Thank you, Eyes!"

"Thank you, Nose!"

"Thank you, Mouth!"

"Thank you, Ears!"

"Thank you, Throat!"

"Thank you, Stomach!"

"Thank you, Hands!"

"Thank you, Feet!"

"Thank you, Legs!"

By this time, he/she should be laughing and feeling quite joyous. Direct his/her attention to something he/she probably thinks is so ordinary, they don't think about it at all! It is water. Ask him/her to name the many uses of water. Mention how good a glass of cool, icy water feels going down the throat on a hot, dusty day. Mention how wonderful it feels to jump into a pool of cool water on a broiling day. Ask him/her to imagine how good it feels to be clean, to lie down in clean pajamas, on a clean bed. All because of water! Lead them in a chorus of "Thank you, Water!" and encourage him/her to be grateful whenever he/she uses water in a day.

Explain that, like the words, “I’m sorry,” the words “Thank you” are important in any language, and every language has such words.

Print these words for gratitude and let your child practice saying them:

Arabic—Sukran
Chinese—Shay-shay
English—Thank you
French—Merci
German—Danke
Greek—Efharisto
Hebrew—Toda
Indonesian—Terima kasih
Italian—Grazie
Japanese—Arigato
Korean—Gamsa hamnida
Palauan—Soolong (Republic of Palau)
Punjabi—Bhala Hove
Qatar —Shakkran
Russian—Spasibo
Samoan—Talofa
Spanish—Gracias
Swahili—Ahsante

Ask your child to read and encourage him/her to do the Exercise in his/her student book.

Exercise

Thank each of your family members for something they do that you are grateful for.

Chapter 3: Getting off My High Horse

Objectives

Cognitive: Your child will understand that boasting, being prideful, and being self-centered make other people not like him/her.

Affective: Your child will feel that Jonesy got what he deserved, and he/she will like the new, reformed Jonesy. He/she will feel determined to think about others rather than him/herself in order to enjoy more friendships.

Behavioral: Your child will distinguish between a good attitude and a bad attitude. He/she will describe a bad attitude as being self-centered. He/she will state the maxim: “You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than

you can in two years trying to get other people interested in you.” He/she will practice good listening in class and apply it outside of class.

Session 1

Read the story together.

Ask your child to summarize the story of “Getting off My High Horse.” Ask your child if he/she likes Jonesy, the person who is telling the story. Ask him/her if he/she thinks he was a “braggart,” especially at the beginning of the story. Solicit definitions of bragging or boasting from your child. Affirm that most people do not like braggarts. Ask your child why he/she thinks this is so.

Explain that everyone has a right to be proud of his or her accomplishments, but that does not mean bragging or being boastful. Mention that people are usually happy to honor and praise someone who has really accomplished something. Perhaps you have seen an awards ceremony on television to honor those who have attained outstanding achievements. Most people are happy to receive an award or recognition, and most people are happy to give it when it is deserved.

Explain that the best way to receive an award or praise is with humility. Humility means that a person understands that, in spite of his or her accomplishments, many other people achieve great things and that he or she had a lot of help and support and did not do everything by him- or herself. Point out that most acceptance speeches (an example your child might know of is the Academy Awards or the Oscars) include thanking helpers and supporters, and a bow, which is a sign of humility. The bow may be replaced by a simple head-nodding or head bow nowadays, which serves the same purpose of showing humility. Point out that no one would like even a movie star who got up and said, “I know I’m great. This award just shows what I already knew.”

Ask your child if he/she remembers winning any awards. If so and he/she wants to share about it, ask him/her to do so. Then give him/her a round of applause and encourage the award-winner to bow and say a humble “Thank you.”

Explain that bragging can get people in trouble, too. Tell your child that two teenagers in the United States thought they were very clever. They were setting fires around their town, but nobody had caught them. However, they started bragging on a public website about their fire adventures. This led to the boys being caught by the police and getting in a lot of trouble.

Explain that there is an old saying, “Pride goes before a fall.” Ask your child what he/she thinks this means. Ask him/her to close their eyes and imagine a very conceited young girl on horseback. She is showing off a lot for the crowd, tossing her head and making pretty faces. She is to make a difficult jump in order to win the jumping contest. She spurs her horse on, but she is so busy smiling at nearby photographers, she does not really pay attention to what she is doing. As a result, she loses her balance and falls down into

the mud. The admiring crowd is now laughing at her, and she has lost the jumping contest. This is pride going before a fall!

Explain that a person who brags is full of pride. This is not a good kind of pride, like a person feels when they really do something well. This is pride that is all blown-up, pride that puts itself up in order to put others down.

Ask: “What kind of pride does Jonesy in the story have? Good pride or bad pride?” Affirm that Jonesy in the story has bad pride, but in the end, he meets someone just like him—only better. Ask your child to name things Frederick was better at than Jonesy.

Note that Jonesy thought people would like him if he was the best at everything. He thought the more he told people about how great he was, the more they would admire him. The exact opposite happened; people liked him less and less. He lost a lot of friends. Why? Affirm that it was because he was only interested in himself.

Write this famous saying by Dale Carnegie on a paper:

“You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years of trying to get people interested in you.”

Ask your child if he/she think this is true. Explain that this saying is a very good way to make more friends. Point out that Jonesy learned this the hard way. In whom was Jonesy most interested in the story? Affirm that he was most interested in himself. Encourage him/her to learn this saying and make new friends the easy way—by learning from Jonesy!

Discuss the Questions in his/her student book.

Questions

1. How much did Jonesy change when Frederick came to town?
2. Do you think Jonesy’s change in attitude was sincere, or did he just do it out of pressure from Frederick’s bullying?
3. Is there a way to change your attitude without having to go through everything that Jonesy did? What is it?
4. Why is attitude so important in our daily lives?
5. How would you describe your attitude?
6. Do you know people with good attitudes? Bad attitudes? How do you feel when you are around them?

Session 2

Remind your child of the story of “Getting off My High Horse.” Ask your child what he/she thinks a good attitude is like. Write his/her responses on a paper. Now ask him/her

what he/she thinks a bad attitude is like. Write these responses on a paper, too. You might want to use a T diagram to make it clear to your child.

Attitudes	
A Good Attitude	A Bad Attitude

Ask your child if he/she prefers to be around people who have good attitudes or people who have bad attitudes.

Discuss the Exercise in his/her student book.

Exercise

1. Think of a world where everyone has a bad attitude. Describe what it is like. How would you like to live there?
2. Now, think of a world where everyone has a good attitude. Describe what it is like. How would you like to live there?

Point out that most parts of a bad attitude can be traced to a person thinking more about him- or herself than about other people.

Ask your child to improve his/her attitudes by really listening the next time someone talks to him/her. Have your child talk for five minutes about his or her life and interests. Ask your child if, after being listened to by someone else, he/she feels good.

Explain that people need to be listened to. It is the secret of good friends—they listen to one another. Explain that becoming a good listener is a very good way to avoid boasting and bragging and to become more interested in others than in him or herself — paving the way for making more friends.

Chapter 4: Tommy the Tortoise

Objectives

Cognitive: Your child will understand that hard work, sacrifice, and effort are necessary both to maintain talents and to develop them.

Affective: Your child will be inwardly cheering for Tommy and his ability to achieve seemingly impossible goals through application and hard work.

Behavioral: Your child will state the maxim: “Slow and steady wins the race.” He/she will describe times when he/she was beaten by a “tortoise” or times when he/she beat the “hare” through steady hard work.

Session 1

Read the story together.

Ask your child to summarize the story of “Tommy the Tortoise”. Fill in important points that might have been left out.

Ask your child if he/she is familiar with the folktale “The Tortoise and the Hare.” Here is a retelling of this folktale from Aesop:

The Tortoise and the Hare

The animals were enjoying a bright, sunny day in the meadow. A hare was talking loudly to the others, bragging about how fast he could run.

“I am the fastest animal in the meadow,” he bragged. “I’m faster than any of you! I could beat all of you in a race!”

Meanwhile a tortoise was plodding along the path. When the hare saw the tortoise, he began to tease him.

“You’re so slow! You’re the slowest animal in the meadow. Ha! Ha! How do you *EVER* get to where you want to go?”

The tortoise replied calmly, “I bet if we raced each other, I would win.”

The hare burst into laughter. “Are you kidding?”

The tortoise said, “No, I’m not. Let’s have a race from this tree to the river.”

Well, the river was about two miles down the path. How could the tortoise ever think he could win this race? The two animals agreed to race, and as they stood side by side, the owl hooted three times. The race began!

Of course, the hare quickly hopped out of sight down the path while the tortoise slowly crawled along. Soon the hare came to a grassy hill.

"I'm far ahead," he thought to himself. "I think I'll rest awhile on this hill. That tortoise is so slow! He'll never beat me." The hare plopped himself down on the soft grass and took a nap.

The tortoise did not stop along the way. He just kept plodding along while the hare slept comfortably under the tree. Who do you think made it to the river first? The tortoise! The hare woke up just as the tortoise climbed up on the riverbank.

"Oh, no, I lost the race!" he screamed in disbelief. The animals in the meadow never, ever forgot this day and the race between the tortoise and the hare!

The moral of this story is: Slow and steady wins the race.

Ask your child how Tommy is like the tortoise.

Ask your child what is his or her special talent. Encourage him/her not to be shy or modest about this but not to brag about it either. Then say:

"The hare in the story was very talented. He was naturally fast. When you are talented at something, it is sometimes called a gift, because you just seem to have it given to you for free. However, there are people who waste their talents, because talents have to be worked on in order to get better and better. If a gifted person doesn't work hard, sooner or later, he or she will fall behind, just like the hare did. Then someone who is not naturally talented—like the slow tortoise or Tommy—can catch up and even beat the person with talent. The most important thing, in the end, is how much effort and hard work you are willing to put into something. The hardest worker is usually the winner—talented or not!"

Ask your child to write a one-page short story about two people in a tortoise-and-hare situation in which the steady hard worker wins out in the end, even over someone who is talented. Ask him/her to illustrate their stories as well.

Encourage your child to read and apply the Exercise in his/her student book.

Exercise

Is there anything in your life you would like to accomplish, but that you just don't think you are good enough at? In general, if you work at something you will improve a great deal. Why not take your favorite dream and work toward achieving it? If it really isn't right for you, that will show in time. But you never know till you try! The only way to certainly fail at something is never to try it.

Session 2

Briefly recount the story of “Tommy the Tortoise.” Now ask your child to think whether he/she has ever had the experience of being very good at something—so good he/she had a lot of people beaten at it—but they neglected to practice enough or try hard enough or work hard enough and, sure enough, someone overtook them and beat him/her.

Nearly everyone has had one while they were growing up! Next, ask him/her to share if he/she has ever beaten a “hare” by working hard at something and becoming better and better at it until he/she was the winner.

Ask your child to describe how he/she felt to have been beaten by a “tortoise.” Did he/she then resolve to try to beat the tortoise the next time? Did he/she ever regain the ground they had lost?

How do they think Christa felt during the awards ceremony? Point out that, fortunately, Christa didn’t seem to think she had absolutely won the position of the top student in the class. Ask your child to point out something in the text that might show that Christa was at least somewhat prepared for the fact that she might not win the top student place. Ask your child if he/she thinks it was easier for Christa to accept Tommy’s winning because she did not seem to be very conceited about being certain to win.

Discuss the Questions in his/her student book.

Questions

1. What was there about Tommy’s method of studying that made it possible for him to get good grades?
2. Do you think all the sacrifices Tommy made were worth it?
3. Can you tell what kind of person Tommy is from how he studies?
4. Do you think that Tommy had fewer friends than the other students in his class? Why or why not?
5. Do you think that studying so hard the way Tommy does builds character, or makes someone a better person? Please explain your answer.
6. Is Tommy the kind of person you would want for a friend? Why or why not?

Chapter 5: Finding My Real Value

Objectives

Cognitive: Your child will understand that a person's ultimate value does not come from what he or she does, achieves, looks like, or how popular he or she is. He/she will understand that true value comes from those who love a person for who he or she is—the members of one's family.

Affective: Your child will sympathize with Cassandra, yet will appreciate the fact that she found deeper and better relationships with her family through her accident.

Behavioral: Your child will serve the less fortunate through preparing letters or cards. He/she will distinguish between a person's inner value and a person's external situation and know that they are not one and the same.

Session 1

Materials Needed

Photos from the Internet of Christopher Reeve as Superman and Christopher Reeve in a wheelchair

(Biography with Pictures: <http://www.chrisreevehomepage.com/biography.html>)

Read the story together.

Ask your child to summarize the story "Finding My Real Value." Fill in important details that may have been left out.

Ask your child if he/she has heard of "Superman." Mention that a very handsome and fit actor, Christopher Reeve, played Superman in several movies. You can show the picture of Christopher Reeve as Superman. If not, Ask your child to imagine what Superman looks like—how tall, handsome, strong, and unbeatable he seems. Mention that Christopher Reeve, the actor, seemed like Superman in real life too. His features and physique were perfect, and he was a very successful stage and screen actor. He was married and had a family and seemed to be on top of the world. He could (and did) fly airplanes by himself. He was learning to compete in horse jumping too. Then a riding accident permanently paralyzed him. He spent the rest of his life in a wheelchair, barely able to move. "Superman" was suddenly an invalid. Show more pictures of Christopher Reeve in a wheelchair and with his family. If your child is interested, read over his biography.

Explain that, at one point, he wondered what he had to live for anymore. However, his wife's support and the support of family and friends convinced him that he had a lot to live for. In fact, once he began working on it, it is said that he did more to raise money and awareness of the need for research into spinal injuries than any person in the whole world.

Ask: "Did Christopher Reeve's life become something of no value because of his accident?" Affirm that it did not. In fact, some people might say his life had more value after his accident, because he began to do things for the sake of others and for the sake of health and science instead of just being a big movie star. Mention that many people who

experience tragedy in their lives turn it into an opportunity to help others facing similar tragedies—and they find rich new meaning in their lives.

Point out that in the story, Cassandra has an accident. Cassandra was the “movie star” of her school. Everyone admired her and wanted to be like her. She was active, popular, pretty—the kind of girl lots of boys and girls like and look up to.

Ask your child: “What did Cassandra find out was really worthwhile in life? Was it her beauty, her popularity, all her achievements? What lasted past a bad accident?” Affirm that it was her family relationships.

Mention that most people don’t go through such big tragedies like Cassandra or Christopher Reeve, but it is good to understand that a person’s value is affirmed by those who truly love him or her—no matter how he or she looks, what he or she does or doesn’t accomplish, what other people think of him or her, etc. Those who truly love a person are usually the members of a person’s family. They will be there through thick and thin, in sickness and in health, for richer or for poorer, for better or for worse. Mention that this is like the wedding vows a couple takes to make them into a new family, because this is the way it is with family members—they are there for one another, no matter what.

Encourage your child to try this family-building exercise at home. Tonight, at dinner or whenever their family is gathered together, the child should pay a sincere compliment to each member of the family, or give him or her some sincere appreciation for a particularly good job on something or for a particularly fine quality. Mention that your child should then see more smiles around the table than usual, and perhaps experience a happier family atmosphere that night. Encourage your child to keep praising and complimenting and thanking family members. Explain that this will be doing his or her part to build a strong family that can weather the many storms of life.

Tell your child that he/she can practice this now. Share sincere compliments with each other.

Ask your child to look over and think carefully about the Exercise in his/her student book.

Exercise

Imagine someone you admire very much. It can be a classmate, schoolmate, or a movie or singing star. Imagine him or her at the very top of beauty, accomplishment, and power.

Now imagine the person in Cassandra’s situation—accidentally injured, in a wheelchair, probably having to be helped to go to the bathroom, and unable to do all the things you used to admire about him or her. What do you feel toward the person now? Do you think you would soon forget about the person? Do you think the person is still the same inside as they were before the accident? Do you feel he or she still has the same value as before the accident?

Session 2

Materials Needed

Paper, pencils, markers, colored pens or pencils

This would be a good story to use to launch a service project. At the very least, perhaps your child could make cards to send to a home for elderly people, a hospital ward, an orphanage, or home for handicapped children. Ask him/her first to think about how Cassandra might feel—to imagine a lovely young girl his/her own age going through what she went through. To help this process of empathy, discuss the Questions in his/her student book and then make cards or letters or messages for the people in a facility that you have selected beforehand.

Questions

1. Why do people feel “special” when they receive as much attention as Cassandra did?”
2. What makes you feel special? Is it one thing, or many things?
3. How long does that special feeling last? What makes it stop?
4. If you were in an accident like Cassandra, what would your reaction to it be?
5. Do you think Cassandra went back to her old way of thinking about her accomplishments once she healed from her injury? Why, or why not?
6. If you were visiting Cassandra at home when she was injured, what would you tell her to cheer her up?

Chapter 6: Getting Along with Others

Objectives

Cognitive: Your child will understand that a selfish, “me and my way first” attitude is not helpful in getting along with others.

Affective: Your child will not like the way Maria acts and will not want to be like her.

Behavioral: Your child will create, practice, and display diplomatic ways of dealing with people whose opinions, desires, and wishes may differ from theirs.

Session 1

Read the story together.

Ask your child to summarize the story of “Getting Along with Others.” Fill in any important details or points that might have been left out.

Ask your child if he/she understands why Maria's friends didn't want to be friends with her anymore. Ask, "Does anyone like someone who always has to be boss and always has to get his or her way?" Affirm that they do not. To be a good friend, a person has to be willing to let other people have their ways at least some of the time. No one likes someone who is always saying "Me first!" or "My way or the highway!" with actions and attitude.

Write this on a paper:

Ways to Change a "Me and My Way First" attitude

Ask your child for ways to counteract a "My and My Way" attitude. Write his/her suggestions down on a paper. Some might include:

Sharing

Taking turns

Letting others go first

Waiting for others to finish before taking over

Asking others what he/she thinks about something

Asking others what they would like to do

Sometimes giving in

Encourage your child to share stories about "Me and My Way First" people he/she has seen in action. Ask him/her to think about things that happened last year, or that happened in the neighborhood or family or at a local recreation location or event.

Explain that a "Me and My Way First" attitude is a selfish one. Ask him/her if this isn't so. Affirm that a person with this kind of attitude is not thinking of others, but only of him- or herself. Mention that selfish people usually end up feeling unhappy, like Maria. At first, Maria felt like she was on top. She was pretty and active and a leader. She had a lot of friends in the beginning. At the end, though, she realized that she had lost her friends and she also knew why. Point out the sentences "There was one thing, for all her maneuvering, she had not been able to control—other people's hearts. Hearts had to be won."

Ask your child how friends' hearts can be won. Listen to his/her answers. Then point to the paper and ask if doing these things might win friends' hearts.

Discuss the Exercise in his/her student book. Ask your child to particularly think about ways he/she has put others before him/herself and ways he/she could, from now on, put others before him/herself even more.

Exercise

What have you done to create and keep harmony in your relationships? Think about such relationships as those in your family, at school, and in your neighborhood.

Session 2

Briefly remind your child of the story “Getting Along with Others.” Mention that today you are going to talk about how not to “step on” other people’s feelings, opinions, and ideas with a “Me and My Way First” attitude. Explain that this is a way people show respect for one another.

Mention Ben Franklin, a great United States statesman, who made many people fond of him both in America and overseas because he was so nice. Ben Franklin did not start out that way. He started out like a “Know-It-All.” Ask if anyone likes a “Know-It-All.” Affirm that they do not. Ben Franklin was such a “Know-It-All” that one of his friends told him that when he talked, it felt like a slap in the face to the other person. This friend told Ben Franklin, “Your friends find they enjoy themselves better when you are not around.” Point out that this is similar to the way Maria’s friends felt about her being a “Know-It-All,” too.

Ask: “How did such a Know-It-All, who was even losing his own friends, go on to win lots of friends for his country from all over the world?”

Explain: “He changed. He understood that he was losing friends, so he changed his ways. Ben Franklin decided he would never tell anyone that he or she was wrong again and he would not press his own opinions strongly at all. Instead of saying words like ‘Certainly,’ ‘Absolutely,’ or ‘Without a doubt,’ when giving his opinions, he would say things like, ‘It seems to me,’ or ‘Things appear to me at this moment to be this way,’ or ‘I think things are this way.’ Also, if he disagreed with someone, he would start off by saying, ‘I think you would be right in most cases. This case, though, I think is a little different...’ After a time, he said, it became very natural and easy to treat people with respect. Also, he found that he got his own way more, not less!”

Explain that if even a great statesman had to stop acting like a Know-It-All to gain friends, the rest of us must do the same.

Ask your child to make up and present role-plays of scenarios together acting as two people who disagree on something, demonstrating a right way and a wrong way to disagree.

This might be a sample topic:

Baseball

The wrong way:

Tony: The Yankees are the greatest baseball team ever.

Tommy: You’re nuts! The Cardinals are better than the Yankees any day.

Tony: Anyone who likes the Cardinals must be an idiot.

Tommy: Anyone who likes the Yankees is stupid!

The right way:

Tony: I like the Yankees a lot.

Tommy: I can see why. They're a great team. Personally, I like the Cardinals better, though.

Tony: Really? What do you like about them?

Tommy: Their pitchers are so strong.

Tony: The Cardinals' pitchers are strong. You're right. I just have a soft spot for the Yankees and their history.

Other ideas might be:

How you like the president

Any political current event

What you think about aspects of education

How much time should be spent on studying each day

How long should the summer and winter breaks from school be

What responsibilities a child should have

What privileges a child should have

How parents should discipline their children

Any "hot" topic in your family

Discuss the Questions in his/her student book.

Questions

1. How could it be that Maria had no idea that she was being so selfish? Couldn't she see its effect on her friends? Do people sometimes not know how much they are offending others?
2. Why is it important to take other people's ideas into account when you are making a decision?
3. Do you have any friends (don't mention names) who act like Maria? How do you react to them? Do you try to change them in any way?
4. Do you see any of Maria's behavior in yourself? What is it, and how does it make you feel?
5. How can selfishness affect a person, besides losing friends?
6. If a person thinks he or she might be "selfish," what can he or she do to stop being so?
7. What is the best way to make and keep friends? Which of these things have you tried yourself and how did it work out?

Chapter 7: Mr. “Perfect”

Objectives

Cognitive: Your child will understand the concept of perfectionism and how it can lead to frustration, anger, and feelings of low self-worth.

Affective: Your child will want to relax any perfectionist tendencies he/she might feel; he/she will forgive themselves for mistakes; he/she will be willing to strive for excellence if perfectionism has been holding them back out of fear.

Behavioral: Your child will identify perfectionist behavior. He/she will use tools to counteract the stress of perfectionism and anger.

Session 1

Read the story together.

Ask your child to summarize the story of “Mr. ‘Perfect’.” Ask your child to pick out parts of the text that show that Robert was a “perfectionist.” Explain that means that he wanted everything he did and said—and everything about him—to be perfect. He got upset if it wasn’t.

Ask your child to look at the Exercise in his/her student book. Ask him/her to mark True or False to the statements and then to reflect about them. The more “True” answers children mark, the more they probably tend to have perfectionist thinking.

Exercise

Are you a perfectionist? Mark the following statements true or false about yourself.

1. I can’t trust anyone else to do it as well as I can, so I’d better do all the work myself.
2. If I made a mistake in the morning, I am likely to think about it several times during the day, feeling upset with myself about it.
3. I’m afraid to perform in front of others because I might make a mistake.
4. It’s hard for me to ask for or accept anyone’s help. I should be able to do things myself.
5. I look down on others who do not have the same high standards I have.

The more “True” answers you marked, the more of a perfectionist you are. Maybe you need to be kinder to yourself! Remember: everyone makes mistakes. Everyone needs others’ help and advice sometimes. Everyone falls short of their goals at times.

Point out that a student like Robert, who has to have his desk perfectly arranged, his coat perfectly hung, and his papers without a mark on them is a perfectionist. Explain that

while it is good to want to do things well, even with excellence, perfectionism is not very healthy.

Explain that a mistake, or a flaw, isn't the end of the world. It is often the way we learn. Perfectionists need to learn to forgive themselves for mistakes and to relax a little bit. A person can always try again. Everything doesn't have to be done perfectly the first time and every time.

Explain that students who are perfectionists sometimes are the people who get the highest grades, but sometimes they get the lowest grades too. They are afraid to try their hardest for fear that they will make a mistake or fail. So being a perfectionist doesn't mean that you get everything done. Sometimes perfectionists cannot do a thing!

Explain that perfectionists experience a lot of stress and strain because they are trying to achieve the impossible—absolute, total perfection in everything they do.

Lead your child in a de-stressing exercise. Ask him/her to close his/her eyes and, as you count, slowly take in a deep breath, and then, as you count, slowly release it. You might want to count to “five” for this exercise—five to take in air and five to let it out.

After you have taken some deep breaths, ask your child if he/she feels relaxed. Explain that this is a good way to let go of stress. If he/she finds themselves scared to try for fear of making a mistake, or all upset about achieving something to perfection, encourage him/her to use this technique to relax.

Another technique is to picture a lovely, warm, embracing, relaxed setting—like a warm day on a beach, when he/she is on vacation and there is nothing to do. Ask him/her to imagine the soft lapping of the waves, the warmth of the sand on his/her feet and skin, the shine of the water, and the joy of a beautiful day. When he/she is going too fast from trying too hard or afraid to try at all for fear of not being perfect, he/she can imagine he/she is in this setting and will probably do just fine because he/she is in a more relaxed frame of mind.

Session 2

Briefly recount the story “Mr. ‘Perfect.’” Explain that, because he is a perfectionist and is reaching for the impossible—to be perfect in every way—Robert is experiencing a lot of frustration in his life and this comes out in the form of anger. Ask your child to point out places in the text where it talks about how angry Robert is getting all the time.

Point out that the last sentence of the story illustrates another feeling inside of Robert—fear. Ask your child what he/she thinks Robert might be afraid of. Affirm that he may think that others won't like him or that he is no good if he is not perfect. But, by trying to be perfect, he is making others dislike him, and he is scaring other people away.

Ask your child if he/she ever get angry. What do they do when they feel angry? Shout? Curse? Stamp their feet? Hit? Explain that none of these are good ways to handle anger, and that together you will practice better ways to handle anger than that. Ask your child to tell you what he/she does to handle his/her anger well.

Explain that one way to handle anger is to count to ten, or even to one hundred. Explain that when we are angry, we sometimes go over and over in our minds the mean thing someone did or said and we just get angrier and angrier. Counting takes our mind off it and gives us a chance to cool down.

Ask your child what happens to people's bodies when they are angry. Do they breathe harder? Do they tremble? Do they feel "flooded" with emotion, with blood rushing through their veins, maybe turning red in the face? Explain that when we are angry, the body releases chemicals into our blood called "adrenaline." It can make us shake; it gives us big bursts of energy that we don't know what to do with. All the symptoms described above are because adrenaline is rushing through us.

It takes a while for adrenaline to settle down. The purpose of adrenaline is to help us in a dangerous situation. It helps us fight back or run away from an attacker, for instance. It gives us extra strength. But in most situations, we don't really need this physical chemical in our blood when we are angry. What we need is to cool down and then seek to understand the situation with the other person, so that we don't say things that hurt the friendship or relationship.

We can't talk things out when adrenaline is flowing, though; we're too upset. Explain that counting to ten or to one hundred helps settle us down; taking deep breaths like in the last session can help; going on a fast walk around the block can help; so can doing push-ups or other exercises or scrubbing a floor, or listening to soft music. Once the adrenaline has settled down, we may find we are not nearly as angry as before. Now, maybe we can talk things over with the other person and get to the bottom of why the situation made us so angry.

Explain that it is best to tell another person about our feelings—not accusing them or calling them names. Instead of saying, "You idiot, you really made me mad back there!", it is better to say, "When you told my secret in front of the crowd, I felt really angry and hurt. I felt like I couldn't trust you anymore." At this point, the other person should apologize. Or he or she might say something too, like, "When you told my secret last week, I thought I would get back at you. This looked like my chance. I was really hurt too. I wanted to get even."

Now maybe both need to apologize to one another. But the important thing is, they are talking about their own feelings. They are not saying, "You did this, you did that..." They are saying, "I feel this way, I feel that way." That is usually a much better way to get an argument resolved.

Discuss the Questions in his/her student book.

Questions

1. Is there ever any good reason to become angry, or does it always mean we are out of control?
2. Is there anything that Robert could have done to prevent himself from getting so angry?
3. When you get angry, how do you act verbally and physically? Describe one such situation.
4. Do you know someone who is angry a lot? Can you talk reasonably with them when they are angry? Why, or why not?
5. Does being angry help you to accomplish more or less? Explain your answer.
6. Do you think that underneath your anger or other people's anger, there might be hurt—or fear?
7. With all his perfectionism, what does Robert seem to fear?
8. Do you think that Robert thinks he is good enough—flaws and mistakes included—or is he afraid he's really no good inside?

Chapter 8: Respect Me!

Objectives

Cognitive: Your child will understand that the roots of conflict are people treating one another disrespectfully. He/she will gain tools to resolve conflict. He/she will understand respectful behavior.

Affective: Your child will want to be respected and to treat others with respect. He/she will feel increased respect for and from one another.

Behavioral: Your child will define respect and disrespect. He/she will distinguish respectful from disrespectful behavior.

Session 1

Read the story together.

Ask your child to summarize the story of “Respect Me!” Fill in important details or points left out.

Do the Exercise with your child in order to get them thinking about real life conflicts and their resolutions.

Exercise

Describe to one another a conflict you have had in the past week. Conflicts can be arguments, disputes, fights, or misunderstandings that involve your family, friends, neighbors, and other people. (Please do not mention names.) Explain the type of conflict, what started it, something about the other person/people involved, and what happened during the conflict (angry words, actions, etc). Tell whether the conflict was finally resolved, and if so, how. Finally, tell whether, looking back, you might have been able to resolve the conflict faster or even avoid it entirely.

When you are finished sharing, mention that many conflicts boil down to respect or disrespect. Write on a paper:

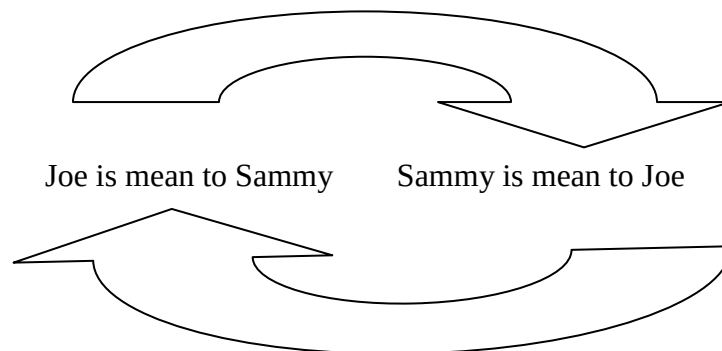
Respect = treating someone or something as having value

Disrespect = treating someone or something as not having any value

Ask your child to look at the way Joe and Sammy treated each other. Point out that they pushed and shoved each other and slammed each other into lockers. They stole or switched each other's lunches and called each other names. They played nasty tricks on each other. Ask: "Did they treat each other as if each was a valuable human being?" Affirm that they did not.

Ask your child how he/she feels when someone calls him/her a name. Write a list of all the names children commonly call one another on a paper—words like "idiot," "retard," "loser," "nerd," and others. Your child probably has plenty of his/her own special names for one another! Ask your child if calling someone a name like this makes that person feel as if they are valuable. Ask your child how he/she feels inside after he/she has called someone a name like that. Does he/she feel better or does he/she feel worse?

Explain that the problem is, once one person has shown disrespect for another person, that person usually retaliates or gets back by also showing a lack of respect. Then it becomes a cycle. Draw a cycle on a paper and say that this is what has happened between Joe and Sammy. Point to how one's bad behavior led to the other's bad behavior, which led to more bad behavior.



Explain that a cycle like this never ends unless someone interrupts it. It usually doesn't help to find out "who started it." In fact, both might feel the other "started it." What is important is who is willing to end it. Since it is hard for the people caught up in the cycle to interrupt it, a third person—sometimes called a mediator—needs to step in. Ask your child who the mediator in the story was. Affirm that it was Ms. Lewis.

Ask your child to role-play Ms. Lewis, first with the two boys fighting and then in her office. Ask your child to come up with things Ms. Lewis might suggest, and see how he/she does at mediating. If you can gather another person or two, have them (or another person and you) take the roles of the boys. If he/she is drawing a blank, suggest that Ms. Lewis have them apologize to one another, use "I feel" messages as in the last chapter, stop using "You did this! You did that!" accusing language, etc. She may also suggest that they count to ten or to one hundred to cool down before they talk. Your child may also use suggestions from the Exercise you did together.

Session 2

Briefly retell the story of Joe and Sammy. Write the Respect definition on a paper again:

Respect = treating someone or something as having value

Disrespect = treating someone or something as not having any value

Tell your child you will read aloud some sentences and you want him/her to say "R" if the person being respectful and "D" if the person is being disrespectful. Ask him/her to apply the definitions of respect and disrespect.

1. "Sorry the door slammed in your face, but you shouldn't have been standing there like an idiot."
2. "So I stepped on your foot. So what? Why do you stick your long stupid legs out in the aisle?"
3. "Would you like to go first in line at the drinking fountain? You look hot and thirsty."
4. "Good morning, Teacher."
5. "Teacher said to be quiet. I'll just make sure she doesn't catch me whispering."
6. "The principal is strict with us, but he is fair."
7. "My parents don't want me to watch that kind of movie. They're pretty smart, so I don't think it's a good one to watch."
8. "Carmen thinks she's so pretty with her long hair. I'd like to put bubblegum in it."

Repeat again that most conflicts start out by people showing disrespect for one another. Ask your child how he/she can treat others with respect. Mention that a good way to know this is to think of how he/she would like to be treated. You might want to draw up a list of their suggestions for respectful treatment and post it “How We Show Each Other Respect.” Remind your child of it when he/she treats others disrespectfully.

Discuss the Questions in his/her student book.

Questions

1. What is a “conflict” and how does it happen?
2. What are some ways to avoid a conflict? Is it possible to avoid a conflict before it even starts? How?
3. Can anything good come out of a conflict? If so, what is it?
4. What are some ways to show respect for others? What are some ways to show disrespect?
5. How can you tell if you are creating a conflict yourself? Can you create a conflict and not even know it?

Chapter 9: The Cramers Get It Right

Objectives

Cognitive: Your child will understand that doing chores without complaining adds to a family’s peace and happiness.

Affective: Your child will be more willing to do chores at home and at school.

Behavioral: Your child will describe the feelings of a mother and daughter during a “chore” battle. He/she will describe ways to help out more at home. He/she will identify whining, complaining behavior when asked to do chores and will try to eliminate it.

Session 1

Read the story together.

Ask your child to summarize the story of “The Cramers Get It Right.” Fill in important points or details that were left out.

Ask your child to look at the picture in his/her student book (If you have the print copy of the book.) Ask him/her how he/she thinks the woman who is vacuuming feels toward the girl who is sitting on the couch and enjoying a TV program. Do they think the woman vacuuming—Mrs. Cramer—might appreciate a little help? Ask him/her to imagine the girl jumping up and saying, “Mom! Why don’t I help you? You do half the room and I’ll do the other half, and we’ll both get a little time to relax!” Ask him/her to imagine if this would bring a smile to the mother’s face.

Now ask him/her to imagine how the girl sitting on the couch feels about her mother right now. Does your child think the girl is thinking about her mother at all? Does the girl feel a little bit guilty, perhaps? Does she feel superior to her mother because her mother has to work and she doesn't? How does the girl feel about herself? How would she feel if she jumped up and helped her mother?

Now ask him/her to imagine the mother asking the girl to get up and help, and the girl refusing or complaining. How does that make the mother feel? How does that make the daughter feel?

Explain that we usually feel a glow inside when we help out, and we feel happier than if we don't help. It takes a little extra effort, yes, and it means we may have to give up some fun for a short while. Yet we feel better inside. Often we have even more fun afterwards because we feel good about ourselves.

Point out that the story creates a situation where the Cramers decide to share the household chores with more fairness. Point out that Samantha's friends can't come out right away because they are expected to help around the house. Mention that this shows that it is normal for parents to expect their children to help out some with chores around the house. Mention that Bob and Al seem excited about mowing the lawn with their father and learning a new skill—running the lawnmower. Point out that this is a nice thing about chores—they build new skills and a sense of competence.

Ask your child what skills they have learned from doing chores—cooking, running a vacuum cleaner, using a hammer to fix a fence, etc.

Ask your child if he/she thinks the Cramers were happier at the end of this Saturday than they would have been if the parents had been tired, exhausted, and angry that the children didn't help—and the children were also feeling guilty or feeling tired of so much TV, videos, and entertainment. Would everyone in the family feel as if he/she were being treated as if he/she were valuable? Would they feel that they had been respected—or that they respected themselves?

Point out the pictures of the Cramer mother and father in their student book (if you have the printed book.) Because the children agreed to pitch in and help, the parents are very happy, and they have a little time to relax too. They look like they feel respected—valued—don't they? So, there will probably be less family conflict.

Ask your child to read the Exercise in his/her student book. Ask him/her to think about chores he/she could do and to make a list of suggestions for how he/she could help out, then to consult you about making a master list of chores.

Exercise

Scientists have proven that children who do chores in their family home and yard are healthier, happier, have better relationships and more friends, as well as more financial success later in life than children who never had to help their families.

Make a list of chores, with your parents' help, that you could start doing on a regular basis. Your parents will be happy, and you will be making a better future for yourself!

Session 2

Briefly remind your child of the story “The Cramers Get it Right.” Have a chore session, and then rest and relax. Say that a nice, neat room that a person has invested something in becomes a much better place for relaxing in.

Ask your child if he/she would rather have a child like Stan or a child like Stephen in the following scenario.

Parent: Stan, please pick up all those games you left on the living room floor.

Stan: Okay. Sorry. I forgot I left them there.

Parent: Stephen, please pick up all those games you left on the living room floor.

Stephen: Why should I have to do it? Timmy left some of them there too, and you don't yell at him!

Ask your child if he/she thinks you would rather have a child like Susan or a child like Sophie in the following scenario.

Parent: Susan, please clean up the bathroom sink once you're done with your hair gel. It leaves a sticky mess.

Susan: It's Mom's job to clean the sink.

Parent: Sophie, please clean up the bathroom sink once you're done with your hair gel. It leaves a sticky mess.

Sophie: Okay. I'll do it now.

Explain that sometimes when children whine and complain, the parents go ahead and do the chore themselves, because whining and complaining are so unpleasant to hear, but then the parents are angry at the children. Ask your child to name some common complaints and excuses he/she might make when ask them to do something.

Ask your child to make a zipping motion across their mouths. Tell them that this means “Don't complain.” Urge them to “zip their mouths” whenever you ask him/her to do a

chore around the house and do the chore without complaint. Explain that complaining is work too, and it makes everyone—whoever does it and whoever has to listen to it—feel bad.

Discuss the Questions in his/her student book.

Questions

1. How much time do you think that children should have to spend on household chores during the school week and on weekends?
2. Do you think that children spend too much time on entertainment like video games, computers, and movies? If so, what kind of limits would you place on your child if you were a parent?
3. Do you think that parents should have the final say in planning meetings about household chores? Why, or why not?
4. Is it possible for a child to take on too much responsibility? Give an example.

Chapter 10: What's Precious to Me

Objectives

Cognitive: Your child will understand the concept of responsibility as relating to people and things.

Affective: Your child will respect Naji's responsibility for his dictionary and want to take better care of his/her things.

Behavioral: Your child will define responsibility as taking care of people, things, or his or her actions. Your child will distinguish responsible from irresponsible behavior. He/she will list responsible ways to care for people, pets, and things.

Session 1

Materials Needed

Valuable or delicate object

Read the story together.

Ask your child to summarize the story of "What's Precious to Me." Fill in details or points left out.

Mention that Naji's *Webster's Dictionary* is precious to him. Ask your child why this is so. What does the dictionary mean to Naji? Affirm that it means education, an escape from despair, escape from poverty, and a better future. It means self-respect and pride—and perhaps the ability someday to help others too.

Ask your child if there are any objects in their lives that are as important to them as Naji's dictionary is to him. It would be good to lead off yourself by telling about an object that is precious to you and why, in order to give him/her an idea of what types of things they might want to share about.

Ask your child what he/she thinks being responsible means. Affirm that being responsible means taking care of someone or something. Naji is very responsible for his dictionary. He is not only taking care of it, he is trying to take care of his future too, and he is also honoring his past by remembering that his mother worked extra hard to give the dictionary to him. He is taking care of her hard work and sacrifice.

Mention that caring for something means treating it well. Point out that caring for something—or being responsible for it—is related to respect, because it means treating something with care.

Bring out the valuable or delicate object you have chosen. Explain that you want your child to responsibly and respectfully hold the item. Congratulate them on behaving responsibly and respectfully.

Ask your child what might be involved in taking good care of or being responsible for the following things:

1. A pet hamster or gerbil
2. A pet dog
3. A pet bird
4. A silk scarf
5. A silk necktie
6. A brand new soccer ball
7. A baby brother or sister

Ask him/her who he/she could ask or how he/she could find out how to take care of these things.

Discuss the Exercise in his/her student book.

Exercise

Think about a time when you were responsible for an item. Describe the item and why it was important for you to take care of it. Now think about a time when you were irresponsible with an item someone trusted you with. What was the outcome? How did you feel afterwards?

Session 2

Briefly recount the story and the discussion of "What's Precious to Me." Remind your child that being responsible means taking care of things, pets, or people. Explain further

that being responsible means that we take care of our actions too. When we make a mistake, we try to take care of it. We take responsibility by admitting the mistake and doing something to make up for it.

Ask your child which children in the following scenarios are taking responsibility for their actions.

- When kids line up at the pencil sharpener or drinking fountain, big Joey uses his size to push them out of line and put himself first. Some kids get mad at Joey for doing this and tell him they don't like him anymore. Joey goes to the teacher and says others are being mean to him. Is Joey taking responsibility for his actions?
- Robert is older, stronger, and faster than most of the other kids on the playground. This means he wins almost all the games. When the little kids complain to the teacher that Robert isn't being fair, Robert says, "Hey, if he/she can't keep up with me, it's not my problem." Is Robert taking responsibility for his actions?
- Wanda has been whispering to her friend Amelia most of the morning. When the teacher says, "Wanda, will you stop whispering?" Wanda says, "Sorry." The teacher says, "You're going to have to stay after school, Wanda, so you can learn to behave better in class." Wanda says, "I will." Is Wanda taking responsibility for her actions?
- Brad calls Tommy names all the time and urges other kids to be mean to Tommy. Tommy comes home one day almost crying. Tommy's mother calls Brad's father and tells him that Brad is not respecting Tommy at school and making Tommy's life miserable. When Brad's dad talks to him, Brad says, "I have been being mean to Tommy. I don't want the other kids to like him more than they like me, like they did last year. I'll stop, though." Is Brad taking responsibility for his actions?

Role-play the above scenarios, demonstrating what irresponsibility would look like in the ones where the children are acting responsibly, and what responsibility would look like in the ones where the children are acting irresponsibly.

Discuss the Questions in his/her student book.

Questions

1. Do you think Naji is a responsible person? Explain your answer.
2. Do you think he will make his dream come true? Why?
3. How does Naji feel about himself? Is he a happy, confident person?
4. Would there be any reasons you might not want to be considered a "responsible" person? If so, why?
5. List and name some of the rewards you have received for being a responsible student/person.

6. In what ways can being an irresponsible or responsible student affect your self-esteem?
7. Do you consider it important for your family and friends to be responsible? In what ways?

Chapter 11: My Role in the Family

Objectives

Cognitive: Your child will understand that children around the world have similarities and differences in their lives and roles in the family.

Affective: Your child will appreciate how lucky he/she is to be in school.

Behavioral: Your child will describe the differences and similarities between life for a girl in Africa and life for a girl in a developed country.

Session 1

Materials Needed

Two buckets

Water source

Read the story together.

Ask your child to summarize the story of “My Role in the Family.” Fill in any important details or parts left out.

Ask your child what one big difference is between the two girls. Affirm that one is an orphan and the other is not. Ask your child if this would make a big difference in a girl’s life. Does it sound like Molongi and her family have to work harder than Penny and her family? Does it sound like Molongi does not have as many material things as Penny?

Explain that these girls live very far away from each other, in very different countries. Still, it seems like they have a lot in common. Ask your child to name the things the two girls have in common.

Note that the girls talk a lot about the work they have to do—schoolwork and chores at home. Ask your child if both girls sound like responsible girls.

Note that Molongi speaks of bringing water from the well. Explain that in many countries around the world, people have to carry water from a well, or from a river or lake. They do not have running water through pipes going into their homes. Sometimes that means the water isn’t very clean, and it always means a lot of work!

If you are able to, gather a few kids for this next exercise. Otherwise, instead of doing a relay, carry water a certain distance and back. This will be a “water relay” or “bucket

brigade.” The children are to pass a half-filled bucket of water to one another and see which team can pass it the fastest all the way to the end of the line. However, if anyone spills or splashes any water out of the bucket—even a drop—the line must start over at the beginning. This should ensure that children do this relay without a lot of mess. Run several relays.

Mention that while this may be fun to do as a group, like a contest, it isn’t so much fun to have to do it every day with a full bucket, carrying it many times, trying not to spill the precious water.

Explain that both Molongi and Penny are fortunate to be going to school. Molongi lives in Africa, she is an orphan, and she has younger siblings and an older brother. In most cases, she would not go to the school, but her older brother might. She would have to do too much work to go to school, and in many places in the world, people cannot understand why a girl needs much education.

Ask your child to think of reasons why it might be good for girls to be educated in a community, society, or nation.

Explain that many children in the world work so much they cannot go to school at all. In the year 2004, it was estimated by the United Nations that 218 million children were engaged in child labor, not counting children who do domestic labor (maids and servants). Child labor does not mean chores around the house, a small after school job, helping your parents, etc. Child labor means working many hours at a job, to the point where it interferes with health and education. Child labor might mean that a child works in a factory or mine under dangerous conditions and stands a good chance of getting injured. 126 million children between the ages of five years old and seventeen years old are working at something that is dangerous. 5.7 million children are being forced to work.

Many of these children would love to go to school and would consider themselves lucky to sit in a classroom during the day and learn things. Most things that child laborers do are very dull. You do the same thing over and over and over again. Or they are very hard. You have to work very long hours or lift heavy things. When you grow up, because you don’t have any education, you have to keep doing the same kinds of things. When you get old, and you can’t work anymore, and you are poor, maybe your own children then have to start working. It is a very sad cycle.

Molongi is very smart. She wants to stay in school so that she can do something besides the backbreaking labor of working in the fields like her relatives do. Ask your child if he/she thinks Molongi sounds smart and motivated with a good vision for her future.

Session 2

Remind your child of the story “My Role in the Family.” Remind him/her that you were talking about child labor the other day. Mention that some child laborers work at least thirteen hours a day.

Ask your child to tally up their days. How many hours are spent actually doing labor—like chores at home? How many are spent sitting at learning or studying? How many are spent eating snacks? How many are spent playing video games, watching TV, playing sports, or doing other recreational things? How do their lives compare to the life of a child laborer? When he/she works at home at chores, does he/she do it because they have no choice, like a child laborer might, or do they do it to help out those they love and to be part of a family? Do they have any choice as to what chores they do and when? If so, they are much better off than the many children in the world who are child laborers.

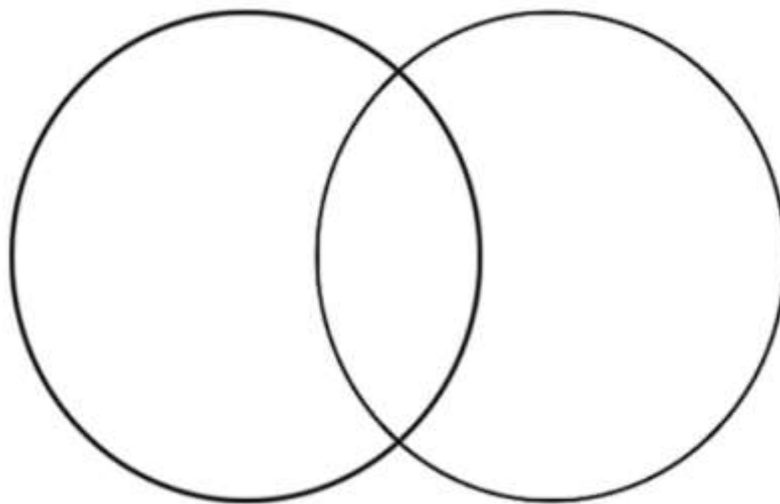
Ask your child to read the exercise in his/her student book and to write the letter.

Exercise

Write a letter to an imaginary pen pal, describing your family and how you see your relationships with other members of your family. Include things like your responsibilities, your duties, and things that you do for your family out of love for them. Draw a picture of your family.

Ask your child to read over Molongi's and Penny's letters again and to draw up a list of similarities between the two girls and differences, using a Venn diagram they draw on their papers. The left circle can be distinctive features of Molongi's life; the right circle can be distinctive features of Penny's life; and the middle intersection is features of life they share in common. Explain that this will help him/her answer some of the Questions.

Molongi ----Molongi and Penny----Penny



Next, Discuss the Questions in his/her student book.

Questions

1. How do you think the girls felt when they read each other's letters?

Molongi

Penny

2. In what ways were the girls' roles in the family similar, and in what ways were they different?

Similarities

Differences

3. What was it that Penny loved about her brother, Jason? What brotherly qualities do you think he displayed toward Penny?
4. Molongi does not seem quite as close to her brother as Penny is to hers. What does Molongi say about her brother? Does he sound nice, like Jason, but a little busier?

Chapter 12: My Best Friend?

Objectives

Cognitive: Your child will understand that cheating is wrong, even if his/her friend wants him/her to do it as a favor. He/she will understand that true friends don't ask friends to do things that are wrong.

Affective: Your child will feel anger at cheating. He/she will feel anger at false friends. He/she will want true friends and to be true friends themselves.

Behavioral: Your child will identify true and false friends. He/she will describe different forms of cheating. He/she will interpret a situation where a form of cheating has occurred as being unfair to those who have worked for a reward.

Session 1

Read the story together.

Ask your child to summarize the story of "My Best Friend?" Fill in any important details about the story.

Explain that this story is about cheating and also about friendship. You might mention that the next chapter is about friendship too, for friendships are very important. Ask your child if friendship is very important to him/her.

Point out that this chapter has the title “My Best Friend?” but that the title has a question mark after it, showing that the person telling the story isn’t so sure about her best friend any more.

Introduce the subject of cheating by writing the following dialogue on a paper:

Teacher: What’s that?

Student: A cheat sheet with the test answers on it.

Teacher: Don’t you know it’s wrong to cheat?

Student: It’s only wrong if you get caught.

Ask your child if there is something wrong with the content of this dialogue. Is the student right—is something bad only if you get caught doing it? Is it “okay” if you can get away with it? Affirm that getting caught or not doesn’t decide whether something is right or wrong.

Mention that cheating is an important school problem you are sure he/she has or will run into at times. Perhaps he/she has wanted to or has cheated him-herself. Perhaps he/she has seen someone else cheat or talk about cheating. Perhaps someone has cheated off his/her papers or tests or copied their homework. Point out that cheating is wrong. Even among good friends, cheating is always wrong.

Ask him/her if people would agree that cheating is always wrong. If he/she says some people disagree, hear the reasons and bring up points to refute them or respond to the reasoning.

Mention that most people agree that cheating is wrong. Still, many of these same people say they might do these things if they were sure they would not get caught. Ask once again: is it only wrong if you don’t get caught?

Clarify that cheating includes such things as copying writing word for word from the Internet, from a book, or from another student, copying another person’s test or homework answers, or bringing a “cheat sheet” to a test. It is also cheating to try to look in the teacher’s papers to find out what will be on the test. Ask your child to name other ways people can cheat.

Explain that, first of all, cheating is unfair. Everyone doesn’t have the cheater’s advantage, so children who worked hard and studied might get the same grade the cheater did; in fact, the cheater might get a higher grade. This is unfair to children who really did do the work. Cheating throws the grading system off in a class because it is producing false results. It breaks the teacher’s trust in children and students’ trust in each other. If your child thinks other students are all cheating, he/she might think they have to cheat

him or herself in order to compete. Cheating ruins the whole atmosphere of the classroom or course.

Point out that a cheater doesn't feel right. He or she knows that a higher grade was not earned. Real pride comes from real accomplishment. There is always something sneaky and bad-feeling about cheating. A cheated grade still feels sort of like a popped balloon—there doesn't seem to be anything inside it, and it doesn't make the person feel “up” or happy.

Ask your child if he/she believes that stealing is wrong. Explain that cheating is a form of stealing. Cheating is taking something without earning it, taking something that is not yours, and it is often taken from someone else. As in the story, Susan wanted to take Melodie's earned knowledge and pass it off as her own. That is a form of stealing, because Susan wanted the reward without working for it. This is like wanting to be paid at a job but not being willing to do any work!

Ask your child to think of other ways that cheating is bad. List them on a paper.

Add that if a person cheats now, while in school, he or she may very well cheat in life later on. He or she might think it is okay to cheat on the job, or to cheat in marriage by flirting with someone else who is not your husband or wife.

Ask your child to think of it this way: Would he/she be happy going to a doctor who cheated on his medical exams and didn't really know what he was doing? How about a surgeon? Would he/she want a surgeon to operate on him/her if that surgeon had cheated on her tests to become a surgeon and didn't really understand what she was doing? How about a car mechanic who cheated in getting his car mechanic certification and cheated on his training? Can you trust him to fix your brakes? What happens if your parents are driving down a steep hill and their brakes were worked on by a mechanic who didn't really know what he was doing because he cheated instead of gaining the knowledge he needed? What if the brakes gave out because he, in his ignorance, made a mistake? People could be killed in a car wreck.

Point out that cheaters hurt other people as well as themselves.

Ask your child how he/she likes it if someone cheats in sports. Doesn't it make him/her angry? He/she knows it is unfair when someone cheats, breaks the rules, and does not get caught. It makes the whole game unfair, and sometimes the cheaters win the game and act like they are the best when the honest players know they were not. Affirm that cheating in school is the same thing.

Discuss the Questions in his/her student book.

Questions

1. Has anyone ever asked you to help him or her cheat? What was your response?

2. Have you ever had the experience that, through hard work, you could be successful at something you had never succeeded at before?
3. Do you think Melodie is a good friend to Susan? In what ways?
4. Do you think Melodie did the right thing? Why?
5. If you had been in Melodie's place, would you have let Susan cheat?
6. Now that Susan has asked Melodie to let her cheat, do you think Melodie will trust Susan quite as much as she did before? Will Susan's acceptance of Melodie's answer and her hard work help Melodie trust her again?

Session 2

Remind your child of the story "My Best Friend?" Mention that it was a story about cheating, but it was also a story that raised issues about friendship—what friendship is and isn't.

Admit that some people might think Melodie was not a good friend to Susan because she wouldn't let her cheat. Explain that sometimes people ask us to do things that are wrong by talking about our friendship with them. Sometimes our friends want us to do something that could get us in trouble, and if we say we don't want to, they say, "I thought we were friends." When children are older, they may hear someone of the opposite sex saying, "You'd do it if you loved me," trying to play on the couple's friendship to get the other one to do something wrong.

Ask your child: Is it really being a good friend to try to get your friend to do bad things? What would have happened if Melodie had gotten caught letting Susan copy off her test? Does your child think Melodie would have been in trouble? Yet Susan, her supposed friend, didn't think about that. Susan only thought about herself. Good, true friends think of what will be good for the other person, not just themselves.

Ask your child if he/she has ever been in a situation in which a friend asked him/her to do something wrong. Encourage your child to share such incidents without naming any names. Help them name their feelings about it—angry, fearful, not wanting to lose the friendship by refusing, etc. Then ask him/her if he/she thinks that a person who tries to get him/her to do bad things is a true friend or a false friend.

Tell him/her you are going to give him/her a little "Friendship Quiz." It is a True or False quiz. For each situation you read aloud, he/she is to say "True" or "False" depending on whether the person is a true or false friend.

1. Tricia got a hold of some matches. She's afraid to light them herself, so she asks Kelly to light them. Is Tricia a true friend to Kelly?
2. Felix stole a colored pencil from the teacher's desk. He uses it, then slips it into his friend Carl's desk. Is Felix a true friend to Carl?

3. Clive found a half-smoked cigarette on the street. He says, “Shall we try smoking it?” to Peter. Peter says, “No, I don’t want to, and you shouldn’t either. Just throw it away.” Is Peter a true friend to Clive?

Explain that in the story, “My Best Friend?” Melodie is a good friend to Susan. Ask your child if she would have been a better friend if she had let Susan cheat. Why or why not? Point out that Melodie really wanted to help Susan. Ask him/her to notice in his/her student texts that Melodie is excited about helping Susan study for the test. She gets up early on a Saturday morning to lay out their math books, worksheets, scratch paper, and pencils. Her family is going to provide lunch and some play time. Melodie is doing everything she can to help her friend and to help her have a good time as well as study well for the exam.

So we know that Melodie is a good friend to Susan. Yet Melodie gets tough with Susan when Susan asks her if, instead of working on studying, she can just cheat off Melodie’s paper. Susan thinks that because they are best friends, Melodie should let her cheat.

But Melodie is a better friend than Susan thinks she is. Melodie won’t let Susan cheat and use her to cheat off of. Melodie is also a good friend to herself. She thinks, “Why should I give my work away? It wasn’t fair to me...”

Melodie says that a true friend doesn’t ask the other to be dishonest. Maybe because Melodie is such a willing friend and does so much for Susan, Susan isn’t mad that she won’t let her cheat.

Ask your child if he/she has ever heard of the expression “tough love.” Acknowledge that we don’t usually think of love as being tough—we think of it as being soft, kind, gentle, warm, sweet, etc. But sometimes, to love someone, you have to be a little tough on them—a little strict. That is because love means helping others to be the best that they can be—it doesn’t mean letting them do whatever they want, especially when they want to do something bad.

Ask your child, “What grade did Susan get on the test? That’s a good grade, isn’t it, especially for someone who has a hard time in math. Do you think Susan felt proud of that test grade? Do you think she felt proud of her hard work? Do you think the next time she has to do something that is hard for her, she will remember getting this good grade and believe in herself that she can be successful?”

Repeat that cheating is a form of stealing, because it is taking someone else’s work and passing it off as our own. Ask your child to look at the Exercise in his/her student book.

Exercise

Imagine the following scene:

You and a friend volunteered to paint a fence in the back of the school. You've worked hard, gotten sweaty, told other friends you couldn't play with them, and even postponed lunch in order to finish. The fence looks great! A third friend of yours comes up and stays with you a while, not working but just talking.

Now the principal comes out of the school building. He is very happy with the painted fence. He praises and praises you.

Then he says, "As a special reward, here's some ice cream."

Your third friend, who didn't do any of the work, has been smiling at all the praise and gladly takes an ice cream cone.

He didn't do any of the work, but he's willing to take the rewards. It's a little like cheating.

What should you do in this situation? Discuss it.

Some students will think the friend should get the ice cream cone anyway, and that the three friends should just enjoy the ice cream together. Others will say the third friend does not deserve the reward. When the discussion has come to an end, say:

"Let's think of it a little differently now. Pretend the principal does not have ice cream cones; he has a bowl of ice cream. There is really only enough for two people, but because there are three people there, the principal thinks he should divide the ice cream in three parts. Remember, the principal doesn't know the third person didn't do any work. What should the two who really did the work do in this situation? Should they still let their third friend have part of the ice cream and get less ice cream themselves? Should they speak up to the principal or should they speak up to their friend? What should they say?"

Let your child debate this scenario with you as well. This might be a good topic to bring up on an online forum. Some should change their minds in this case. Ask them if, in this case, because the reward is only enough for two people, it is really unfair or a little like cheating if the person who didn't do any work takes some ice cream.

Ask him/her to imagine that the third friend speaks up and says, "Oh, since there isn't enough, I won't have any. I really didn't do any work. My friends deserve it more." Ask what kind of feelings this would bring up in the two friends. Ask how the principal might feel about the third friend then. Affirm that everyone would feel more respect and liking toward the third friend for being so fair and honest.

Chapter 13: Far Away Friend

Objectives

Cognitive: Your child will think about the qualities of friendship.

Affective: Your child will form new friendships through questions; he/she will want to have virtuous friends and be virtuous friends him or herself.

Behavioral: Your child will distinguish what makes a good friend. He/she will describe his or her ideal friend.

Session 1

Read the story together.

Ask your child to summarize the story of “Far Away Friend.” Fill in any important details or points that were left out. Ask your child if he/she liked the story or not, and what he/she liked or didn’t like about it.

Question: Do you have any friends they have not met in person? Mention that many children have “pen pals” that they write to through their church, club, or school organization. Molongi and Penny were “pen pals” in the story a few chapters ago—they had never met, yet they were trying to be friends and to understand and care about each other.

Lead a discussion in which your child tells you what country in the world he/she would like to have a pen pal from and why. Would he/she like to visit those countries some day? What about those countries interests them?

Mention that in the computer era, some people can communicate with people from other countries or places in their own country where they have never visited. Ask your child how he/she would feel meeting someone they were pen pals or e-mail pals with, in person for the first time. A little nervous? Excited? Happy? Maybe, like Timothy, they would be happily surprised. Ask your child to find the paragraph where Timothy meets Javier face-to-face. What is Timothy’s impression of Javier? Are the two friends shy with each other, finding nothing to say? Affirm that the friends are both excited and happy to meet and that Javier seems to Timothy to be “as cool as he seemed in his letters” and as if “I’d known him a long time.”

Ask your child to think of someone he/she has not seen in person for a while but to whom he/she could write. Ask him/her to take time now to write a letter to that person. When he/she is finished, encourage him/her to send the letter and really make contact with the person. There! Doesn’t he/she feel closer to that person now that he/she taken some time to think about him or her and communicate by letter?

Explain that, of course, it is nicest to be together in person, but it is possible to have a relationship with someone you can’t always be with. Does he/she think Javier and

Timothy will stop being friends now that he/she has to part? Point out that, it seems by the end of the story that Javier and Timothy will be better friends than ever now. Does your child think Javier will visit Timothy in Montana if he ever gets the chance?

Ask your child to think about Javier and Timothy and their friendship. Then have him/her do the Exercise in his/her student book.

Exercise

Write a newspaper ad for a friend: “Friend Wanted.” What kind of person do you like as a friend? Would you like to be friends with Javier, or with the boy who is telling the story, or both? Why? What qualities of character do they show? Write these into your ad for a friend!

FRIEND WANTED!

MUST HAVE THE FOLLOWING QUALIFICATIONS:

After this exercise, you might want to have a talk about internet safety. Here are some games addressing this issue for kids:

<http://www.onguardonline.gov/games/friend-finder.aspx>

<http://pbskids.org/webonauts/>

Online Safety Information:

<http://www.netismartz.org/Parents>

Session 2

Materials Needed

Poster board or large piece of paper

Pencils, pens, colored markers, crayons

Remind your child of the story “Far Away Friend.” Ask your child to share, voluntarily, some of the qualifications for a friend he/she wrote up in their ads for a Friend Wanted in the last session. Draw the outline of a human being on the poster board or paper and write the title, “Portrait of a Friend.” Write these qualities inside the outline of the person and mount the poster on the wall.

Discuss the Questions in his/her student book.

Questions

1. What are some of the qualities you look for in a friend?
2. Are your friends in middle school more important to you than the ones you had in elementary school?

3. What is the difference between a friend and an acquaintance?
4. Can you be popular and not be a good friend? What is more important to you—being popular or being a good friend?
5. Have you ever not been included in a group? How did that make you feel? What did you learn from that experience?
6. What are the benefits of having friends that are different from you—who come from a different country, for instance?

Next, tell him/her that you are going to do a “New Friend” exercise. If possible, pair your child up with someone they usually do not hang around with, or someone who is from a different background, who has a different accent, religion, skin color, etc. If possible, do this exercise in person but if not, find a trusted family you know online who has children. Ask your child to find out the following:

1. How many members are in your family?
2. Do you have a pet?
3. What music do you like?
4. What is your favorite TV show or movie?
5. What is your favorite book?
6. What is your favorite sport (to watch or play)?
7. If you could be an animal, what kind of animal would you want to be and why?
8. If you could be a car, what kind of car would you want to be and why?
9. If you could be a famous person, who would you be and why?
10. What do you want to be when you grow up?

Chapter 14: Handling a Hurricane!

Objectives

Cognitive: Your child will understand basic stress-producing situations, stress-reducing techniques, and the importance of having a network of support of family and friends.

Affective: Your child will want to be interdependent, expanding the circles of people he/she relates to.

Behavioral: Your child will describe stressful situations and stress-reducing techniques that he/she uses. He/she will help to compose a diagram showing a person’s social support network.

Session 1

Read the story together.

Ask your child to summarize the story of “Handling a Hurricane!” Fill in any details or important points that were left out.

If you ask your child if he/she has ever been in a “natural disaster” like a flood, hurricane, tornado, or mudslide, ask him/her to share a little bit about his/her experiences.

Request that your child speculates on how it must have felt to Tyrel to be in the hurricane, especially with his family up on the roof of the house with their aged grandmother, who was in a wheel chair. Ask him/her to imagine what it must have been like to wonder whether they would make it out alive, whether they would be able to eat, whether they would be rescued in time.

Ask your child if he/she has moved in the last few years. Mention that finding a new home, leaving an old home, starting out in a new neighborhood and new school before you have made any friends can be very difficult. It is exciting, but it is difficult. To add to the difficulty of this new situation, Tyrel had lost many possessions and even friends in Hurricane Katrina. Ask your child if he/she thinks Tyrel’s phrase “Hurricane Katrina really stressed me out” was an understatement. Living through a hurricane and relocating as a refugee is more than stressful!

Fortunately for Tyrel, he has some of the greatest stress-busters in the world available—family members! He and his family are all in this together. They support and love each other. Ask your child if he/she thinks Tyrel’s mother and father are “stressed out” having to find jobs, having lost all their possessions, having to find a doctor for the grandmother, and settle into a new town. Point out that, even under all these stresses, both Tyrel’s mother and his father talk encouragingly to him, and their love helps him have the courage to face his new challenges.

What else helps Tyrel? Hint that it is what the last couple of chapters have been about—friends! As soon as he gets on the bus, the captain of the soccer team invites him to sit with him. A lot of the other kids call Tyrel a “hero” for living through Hurricane Katrina and tell him that their town and school have been trying to help Katrina survivors by donating clothing, money, and canned goods. Right away, Tyrel is surrounded by supportive people who care about what happened to him—friends!

Explain that with family and friends, we can get through a lot of life’s difficulties and stresses.

Ask your child what kinds of things “stress him/her out.” Write a list on a paper. It may look something like this:

Tests

Too much homework

Being teased or made fun of

Having to give a speech or oral presentation

The thought of a parent's death

Missing the last goal in soccer or failing to block the opposing team's winning goal

The opposite sex

Having to write a long paper

Bullies

Ask your child to describe the signs of stress to you. What happens? He/she should list things like: more rapid heartbeat or heavier breathing, stomachache, furrowed brow, muscles feel all tight, or blushing. Explain that these are the body's ways of handling stress. When the body feels threatened, it sends out chemicals inside itself to prepare the person to fight hard or run hard with greater strength than usual. But if the problem is a test, fighting hard and running hard aren't going to work. So it is important to learn how to reduce stress.

Ask your child what he/she does to reduce stress in their lives. Some things he/she might say or that you might add to the list you write on a paper are:

Watch TV, listen to music, or do something that takes the mind off the stressful problem

Exercise

Play with a pet

Take a walk to a natural place and breathe the freshness in

Yell

Talk to a friend

Ask your child to read the Exercise in his/her student book.

Exercise

One of the best things to reduce stress is to exercise! If you can't do a few exercises when you are under stress (you are in class, for instance), take twenty deep, deep breaths.

Try this now. Count them. Twenty. Concentrate on the tension of holding air in and the release of letting it out. After twenty deep breaths, you should feel less stressed.

Friends and family are also great ways to reduce stress. They say that just telling someone about your problems cuts your problems in half! Appreciate your friends and family as supports for your life.

Session 2

Discuss the Questions in his/her student book.

Questions

1. Tyrel was pretty stressed about all he had gone through in Hurricane Katrina. What was he stressed out about after his family settled into his new home?
2. Did he need to worry about that?
3. Do you think his parents were more stressed out than he was? Why or why not?
4. What is the most stressful time you have ever gone through?
5. Did friends and family members help, as in Tyrel's case?

When your child is finished with the questions, write on a paper the words "Dependent," "Independent," and "Interdependent." Ask your child if he/she knows what these words mean.

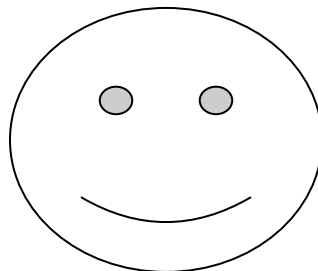
Explain that children are "dependent" on their parents for a long time—they need their parents to provide for them. Ask your child to name the things parents provide for children.

Point out that part of being an adult is being "independent" in the sense that an adult can provide for him- or herself and even provide for a family at the same time. Ask your child to name the things adults can do and provide for themselves. But wait! Mention that even an adult needs other people to help him or her. Ask your child to name the ways adults need one another. The fact that adults need one another means they are "interdependent."

Explain that it is important to be interdependent. Ask if Tyrel would have been happy if only his parents had been kind to him after Hurricane Katrina. Then ask if he would have been happy if only the children on the bus were kind to him after Hurricane Katrina. Explain that we need to receive and give support to family, friends, and other groups of people we might belong to.

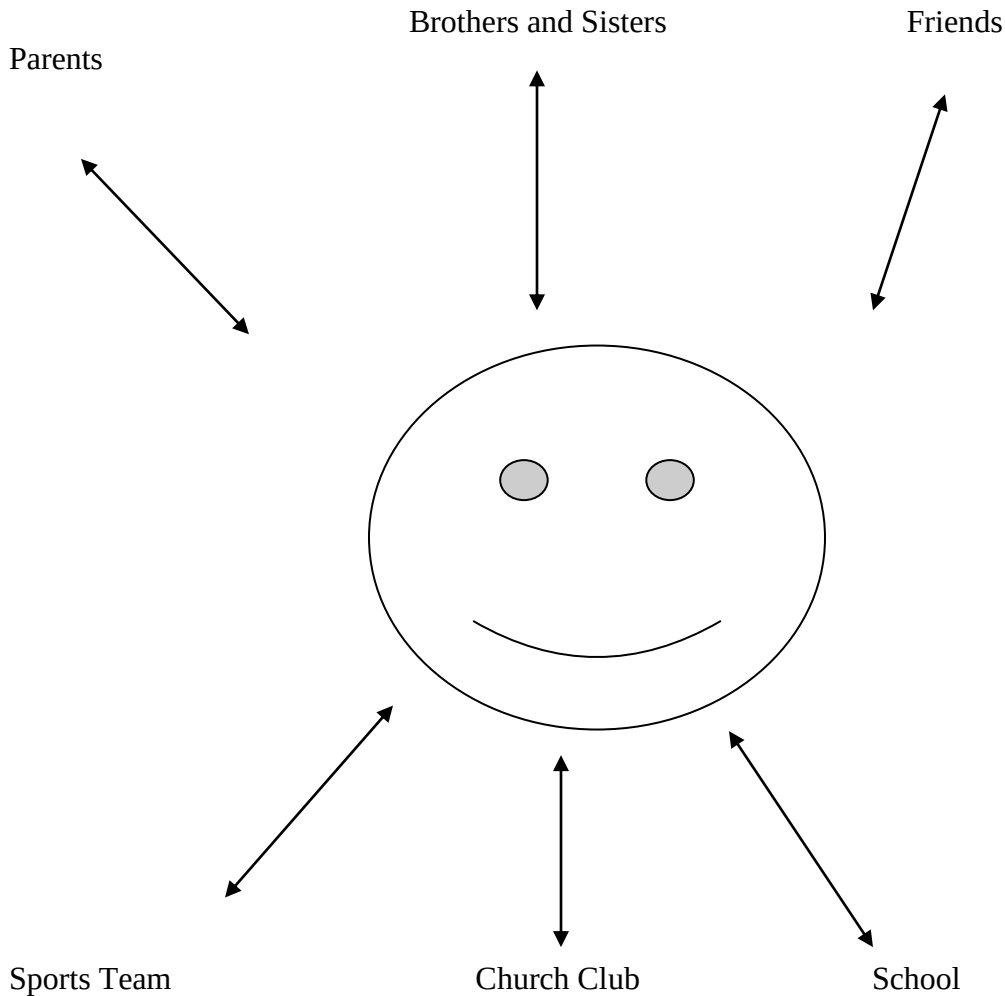
Review what kinds of groups you and your child belongs to. Name the kinds of things you receive by belonging to these kinds of groups and what kinds of things you think you give to others in the groups.

Draw a representation of a person on a paper. Explain that this is "Lonnie."



Lonnie

Explain that, like all of us, Lonnie has many needs. He depends on many people for certain things in life, and they, in turn, depend on him. Draw a diagram that shows Lonnie's interdependent world.



Ask your child to name needs and desires that Lonnie's different groups provide for him. Write his/her answers in the appropriate places on the diagram.

Next, point out that the arrows go both ways. This means that Lonnie does not just get things from the people and groups he is connected to; Lonnie also gives to the people and groups he is connected to. Ask what Lonnie might give to the groups he belongs to. Write in his/her answers on a paper in brackets in the appropriate places. Explain that this giving and receiving is what makes life joyful.

Ask: What if Lonnie was alone all the time? Would he be happy? No, because we need other people in our lives. Explain that is why it is good to be interdependent—so we have

many sources of happiness in our lives. The fewer the sources of happiness, the less happy we are.

Mention that it is good to make many friends too. Even though your child may only have a couple of very good friends, or even just one best friend, it is important to make a circle of acquaintances to have a stronger interdependent system. That way, if a friend moves away or if the friendship changes—something that often happens at his/her age!—they are not just left alone. They have other people and activities to turn to.

Urge your child to practice interdependence in their lives for greater support and happiness.

Chapter 15: Quit Picking on Me!

Objectives

Cognitive: Your child will understand how painful teasing and bullying can be for someone.

Affective: Your child will empathize with Akmed in the story. He/she will want to stop teasing and/or bullying others. He/she will feel empowered to cope with teasers or bullies.

Behavioral: Your child will distinguish between friendly teasing and nasty teasing. He/she will compose retorts to common teasing situations. He/she will role-play dealing with teasing. He/she will identify areas of life that are not appropriate to tease people about.

Session 1

Read the story together.

Ask your child to summarize the story of “Quit Picking on Me!” Ask your child how he/she felt about Akmed. Ask how he/she felt about the boys who were teasing and bullying him—Tommy and his gang. Ask how he/she felt about Ramona.

Explain that often people tease someone who is different in some way, and, in the story, Akmed is different. Have your child name the ways in which Akmed is different. Ask: “Does the fact that he’s different mean that Akmed should be teased to the point that he does not want to go to school?” Affirm that, of course, it does not.

Explain that sometimes friends and acquaintances tease each other in a friendly way. Even though this teasing may involve some sarcasm or joking accusations, it is meant in fun. Sometimes families tease their own members: the youngest one might be teased about getting chocolate ice cream all over her face; the oldest one might be teased about having a crush on someone; parents might be teased about their “old-fashioned ways” or

when they show affection for one another. Point out that this kind of friendly teasing doesn't hurt anyone. Ask your child to share ways their families and friends affectionately tease one another.

Mention that we all know what hurtful teasing is like. Ask how many people have been teased in a hurtful way, either in school or out of it. You will likely raise your own hand too! Explain that teasing happens a lot, and it doesn't mean that we are a bad person or that what others are teasing us about is true.

Explain that Akmed and Ramona have some good ways of dealing with teasing. Akmed tries to ignore the teasers. Sometimes this is enough. Even though a teaser may tease even more once the person starts to ignore him or her, sooner or later the teaser will get bored and stop.

In Akmed's case, he seems to be dealing with bullies who are not easy to stop. At the same time, they seem to be all words and no action. Even though they say they are going to beat him up after school, they do not.

Ramona has learned how to defeat teasing. She is a confident girl who has succeeded at school even though she was teased and bullied when she first came to the school. She has a sharp tongue, so she can answer any teaser or bully back well. She is also able to laugh at herself, which helps.

Ask your child to make a list of the things people usually tease others about, or the kinds of teasing remarks he/she hears neighborhood children make to others. Then, on the same paper, he/she can write down retorts to the teasing. If teasers realize they are going to be answered back, sometimes they "back off."

Write these teasing and bullying remarks on a paper and Ask your child to supply retorts to them:

- "Where'd you get those glasses, Four-Eyes?"
- "I saw your mother kiss you goodbye. Mama's little baby!"
- "That's a cool shirt." (Rolling eyes and bursting out laughing with others.)
- "Better not eat that chocolate, Fatty!"
- "You're such a loser."
- "Who'd want you on the team!"
- "Hey, Short Stuff, stand up. Oh—he is standing up!"

Explain that it is sometimes hard to come up with an answer quickly, especially in an emotional moment. Sometimes it is good to say something simple like, "So what?" or "So, what's it to you?" every time a teaser or bully says something. Saying this over and over again may tire out a bully or teaser!

Session 2

Remind your child of the story of “Quit Picking on Me!” and Akmed’s difficulties with being teased and bullied. Ask your child for suggestions as to how Akmed could have handled his situation if Ramona had not been there to help out.

Next, explain that you want your child to become a “Bully Reporter” for a day. Ask him/her to read and carry out the Exercise in his/her student book.

Exercise

Become a “Bully Reporter” for a day. Document on a piece of paper each bullying incident that you witness. Write down the date, time, who was the bully, who was the victim, how you think you should handle the situations, did anyone tell an adult, etc.

Explain that we can all feel sorry for someone who is being teased too much or being bullied. What if it turns out we ourselves are the teaser or the bully? Does anyone have any pity for a teaser or a bully? Ask your child to think of reasons why a child might be a teaser or a bully. Given those reasons, what could other children do to help the teaser or bully stop?

Discuss the Questions in his/her student book.

Questions

If you are unsure whether your words or actions are bullying to someone else, ask yourself the following questions:

1. Are my actions or words hurting someone else’s feelings?
2. Are my actions or words hurting someone else physically or making him or her feel afraid of me?
3. Would I want someone else to treat me the way I am treating him or her?
4. Am I unfairly taking my anger out on another person?
5. Am I trying to control someone against his or her will?

Ask your child to think about things that people easily feel hurt or inferior or upset about. Suggest that one thing might be a person’s weight (too fat, too thin). Another thing might be being clumsy at sports or slow in school. Something that is very sensitive is a person’s family. If others make nasty or supposed-to-be-funny remarks about members of a person’s family, he or she is bound to be hurt and angry. Ask your child to watch out for the way he/she speaks to others about these kinds of things to make sure he/she is not being bullies or teasing too much.

List the following statements on the chalkboard, and Ask your child whether they are bullying or mean teasing behaviors or not.

- a. Making fun of someone's looks
- b. Calling people names because of the color of their skin
- c. Making the other children play the game the way you want them to
- d. Ridiculing a student about their clothes he or she is wearing
- e. A group of children won't let someone sit down at the lunch table with them, even though there is enough room
- f. Joking or fooling around by putting someone down

Look over these websites and decide if you want to take time to discuss and perhaps watch videos on Cyberbullying. It would be wise to at least mention the term and how to recognize it and what to do when it happens.

<http://www.netsmartz.org/Cyberbullying>

<http://www.stopcyberbullying.org/index2.html>

<http://kidshealth.org/parent/positive/talk/cyberbullying.html>

<http://www.ncpc.org/cyberbullying>

Chapter 16: Peacemaking

Objectives

Cognitive: Your child will understand that teasing and put-downs lead to conflict. He/she will also understand that conflicts are part of life and he/she needs to learn to cope with it.

Affective: Your child will want peace and to be a peacemaker. Your child will reject violence in the media and violence in themselves and others.

Behavioral: Your child will identify peacemaking behavior. He/she will interpret his/her actions and attitudes as peacemaking or trouble-making. He/she will apply peacemaking techniques when in a conflict situation.

Session 1

Read the story together.

Ask your child to summarize the story of "Peacemaking." Ask your child if he/she prefers to be in a place where everyone is fighting or one that is peaceful. Explain, then, that it is good to learn something about being a peacemaker.

Ask your child to imagine a peaceful place—a quiet lake, silent woods, a summer night on the roof, or perhaps a homey living room at dusk as a happy family prepares for dinner together.

Ask him/her to imagine the whole world like this, at all times, and his/her life like this at all times. Hopefully, this will bring some smiles to his/her face!

Point out that in the last story, the source of conflict was teasing, just as it is in this story. Explain that teasing causes many fights. What is Kathryn being teased about? Isn't it one of the sensitive topics discussed in the last class session—a person's weight? Mention that Alexis calls Kathryn a name that is an insult to Kathryn. Ask your child what that name is. Alexis also says something sarcastic about Kathryn's abilities in the kitchen, implying that she eats too much, and is therefore fat. Fortunately for Kathryn, she has defenders in the classroom—her cousin and Luisa. Although Kathryn's cousin, Ralph adds “fuel to the fire,” Luisa serves as a real peacemaker. How does Ralph add “fuel to the fire?” How does Luisa bring peace?

Luisa is a peacemaker. Ask: What is a peacemaker? Affirm that a peacemaker is someone who tries to bring peace to stressful or challenging situations or situations of conflict.

Explain that conflict is part of our everyday lives. We all have occasions of conflict, even with people we love. However, conflict can be handled so that it doesn't turn into a bigger fight, just like Luisa helped make this conflict settle down into peace and eventual friendship.

Ask your child to come up with ways to make peace. Write his/her answers on a paper. Explain that additional ways to make peace are the following:

Tell the person in a diplomatic way what's bothering you.
Do not let your emotions take control.
Always listen to the other person.
Focus on how the other person is feeling.
Do not call names or insult the other person.
You should refrain from physical contact.
You should not yell or raise your voice.
Look for a compromise.
Don't practice revenge or try to “get even” with your aggressor. Practice forgiveness.

Discuss the Questions in his/her student book.

Questions

1. Do you agree or disagree: When you get into a conflict with someone, it's okay to call names and hit the person. Why or why not?
2. What's bad about violence?
3. Have you ever gotten into a disagreement because you were actually upset about something else? What happened? How did you feel afterward? What did you learn from that?
4. Do you think there is something wrong with someone who walks away from a fight or disagreement?
5. What are the benefits of resolving conflicts in a peaceful and positive way?
6. What did you think of Luisa's efforts to make peace? Would Luisa be a good friend to have?

Session 2

Materials Needed

Pieces of 8 ½ x 11 paper

Colored pencils, crayons, markers

Masking or scotch tape

Remind your child of the story “Peacemaking.” Explain that you are going to create a peacemaking quilt where he/she colors squares illustrating peace or a way to resolve conflict. Give your child time to do this and then mount the “quilt” in an attractive way on a wall. If more children are available, have them make color squares too.

Now mention that many parents and teachers think there is too much violence on television and in movies. It seems like this makes children less sensitive to real violence in our homes and communities and more tolerant of it. Such shows may also encourage people to do violent things. Ask your child if he/she agrees with this or disagrees with it. Mention that many studies have shown that watching violence on screen does lead people to be more violent and get into more fights. Encourage him/her not to watch such shows or programs as well as violent video games or violent online games.

Next, ask your child to imagine he/she is a parent with children his or her age now. Ask him/her to write a letter of advice to his/her future child as to how to be a peacemaker. Tell him/her to write to his/her child all that he/she has learned about peacemaking and about how to solve conflict and disagreements. Also, ask him/her to tell the child in the letter how he, as a parent, feel about violence and how you hope he or she will deal with violence in his or her own life.

Then have your child do the Exercise in his/her student book.

Exercise

Here is an example of a true/false quiz to find out if you are a peacemaker.

True/False

1. I treat other people the way I would like to be treated. _____
2. I am open-minded and reasonable. _____
3. I consider the feelings of all people who will be affected by my words and actions.

4. I find it hard to forgive people. _____
5. I think other people should be more like I am, and I am angry that they are not.

6. My family is the best family in town. Others are not as good as we are. _____

7. I like to share with other people. _____

8. I don't get mad. I get even. _____

If you answered True to Numbers 1, 2, 3, and 7, you have the makings of a peacemaker. If you answered "True" to Numbers 4, 5, 6, and 8, you need to think about how these attitudes might lead to conflict rather than peace.

Chapter 17: A Good Friend

Objectives

Cognitive: Your child will understand the difference between responsible reporting and tattling. He/she will understand the importance of good friends and how to tell if a friend is good or not.

Affective: Your child will want to be a responsible reporter and to have friends who are good for him/her.

Behavioral: Your child will distinguish between tattle-tale behavior and responsible reporting. He/she will choose correctly between examples of good friends and bad friends.

Session 1

Read the story together.

Ask your child to summarize the story of "A Good Friend."

Ask your child if he/she has ever been nervous in a new situation or new school. When a family moves into a new neighborhood, sometimes it is hard for the children to make friends at first. Can your child relate to how Jacinta was feeling on her first day at a new school? Did being nervous and in a new situation influence how Jacinta responded to the stealing she was confronted with? How? Affirm that Jacinta wondered if this new school was a place where it was all right to steal—that maybe her new friend Susan would laugh at her for "making a big deal out of nothing. Maybe that was just the way things were at this school. Maybe everyone was used to it."

Explain that a certain amount of nervousness is natural when we enter any new situation, and it is also natural not to want to "rock the boat" of the way things are when you are a stranger to a situation. Make the point that, still, right and wrong don't change from place

to place. Stealing is wrong, wherever you go. And not telling on someone when they have done something as wrong as stealing can make us feel guilty and bad, just like Jacinta did until she and Susan told the supervisor.

Mention that there are many situations in life where it is wrong to do nothing at all. Explain that you are going to describe some situations, and you want them to choose the best thing to do.

1. A big boy took a little girl's doll and threw it in a street. Crying, she is about to run out into the street to get it. You:

- a. Beat up the big boy.
- b. Shrug and walk away. That little girl is a brat anyway.
- c. Stop the little girl from going into the street, telling her you will get her doll for her when there's a break in the traffic.

2. You see a plume of smoke coming from an apartment on your street. You:

- a. Figure someone else will do something about it.
- b. Run into a crowded place screaming, "Fire! Fire!"
- c. Go up to a policeman you saw on the corner and point out where the plume of smoke came from.

3. Your baby brother comes out from under the table where your aunt lost her medicine bottle. The medicine bottle is now empty, and there is medicine smeared all over the baby's face. You:

- a. Give him some milk and hope he is all right.
- b. Tell your mother right away.
- c. Go scream at your aunt for not looking harder for her medicine bottle.

Explain that you don't want to encourage him/her to be a tattletale and tell on every little thing his/her friends and classmates do wrong. Still, you do want to encourage him/her to report bad things like stealing, cheating, hitting or hurting others, bad teasing, dangerous situations, and other things that he/she knows is wrong. Tattling is just trying to get someone else in trouble for a little thing that doesn't matter much. Responsibly reporting is to stop bad things from happening.

Stealing is a bad thing. Ask your child why stealing is wrong. Point out that Jacinta felt bad every time she looked at the boy who had had his lunch stolen. Ask if he/she wouldn't feel bad for a boy who had to go hungry.

Draw a T diagram on a paper and ask your child to think of common situations that would fit under each category. You might start him/her out with examples, such as Tattletale: Kevin is jealous of Tommy's new soccer ball. Kevin tells the teacher Tommy is cheating by having such a good new ball. Responsible Reporter: Tilly sits behind

Cara. Cara is always scratching her head lately. Tilly looks closely and sees little things in Cara's hair. Tilly tells the teacher she thinks Cara ought to see the nurse about lice.

TO TELL OR NOT TO TELL	
Tattletale	Responsible Reporter

Ask your child to read the Exercise in his/her student book and to write a half-page essay on the questions asked.

Exercise

Sometimes we need the help and support of other people as we face challenges. What is the biggest challenge you as a student are facing? Are you winning the challenge? Figure out who—friends, parents, coaches, or teachers—could help you meet this challenge better, and approach them about it.

Session 2

Discuss the Questions in his/her student book as a way to review and think about the story of the previous lesson.

Questions

1. What good thing happened to Jacinta on this first day in a new school?
2. What bad thing did she witness?

3. What do you think Jacinta should have done?
4. What would you have done?
5. What was the right thing to do?
6. What role did Jacinta's mother play in her daughter's first day at school?
7. Was it healthy for Jacinta to keep what she knew about the lunch theft to herself?
8. Is Susan a good friend for Jacinta?

Ask your child to repeat Jacinta's mother's advice to her. Does your child think this is good advice? What advice would he/she give to a student entering a new school for the first time?

Mention that, since our parents are our “first friends,” we should realize that our parents want what is best for us. Sometimes we just have to trust our parents' or guardian's advice, especially if we are doing something totally new. Of course, parents are concerned about what kind of friends we make, because our friends can sometimes lead us into trouble.

Ask your child to notice the part of the text that says, “At this point, Jacinta felt she would be glad to be hanging out with any kids at all!” Ask if your child has ever felt this desperate for friendship, especially when entering a new group. Has he/she ever done something he/she wishes they hadn't in order to try to be friends with someone or to fit into a group? Has he/she ever done something he/she knew was bad that he/she could get in trouble for—and something that he/she would not have done or even thought of on his or her own?

Ask your child if he/she has ever had a friend who got him/her into trouble by encouraging him/her to play with matches, break a window on an abandoned building, stay out long after dark, take money from someone, etc. If your child is willing to share about these kinds of incidents, encourage him/her to do so.

Then ask him/her if he/she has ever had a friend who helped him/her to be good. Once again, if your child wants to share about this, it is good to do so. Mention that because friends can influence a person for good or for bad, parents want their children to choose friends who will help him/her be good, not get him/her into trouble. This is part of parents' wisdom and care for their children.

Tell your child you are going to describe four children and their relationships, and you want him/her to say whether that person is a good friend or not.

1. Because Rita is her best friend, Mary told Rita about her mother's cancer operation, but she asked Rita not to tell anyone else. The next day, two girls come up to Mary and say, “Does your mother have cancer?” Is Rita a good friend?
2. Peter is dying to steal some candy from the local store just to see what it feels like. Karl tells him not to do it. They get into an argument and Peter storms away, feeling very angry at Karl. Is Karl a good friend?

3. Brian and Brad are best friends. Brian is good at basketball, though, and Brad is not. When they are playing basketball at the park with a group of boys, the other boys start laughing at and making fun of Brad's playing. Brian joins in the laughter and teasing. Is Brian a good friend?

4. Lisa got invited to a birthday party, but her friend Marta did not. Lisa offers not to go in order to please Marta. Marta says, "No, you should go and have fun. I'll do something fun with my cousins that night, and we can tell each other all about it the next day." Is Marta a good friend?

Encourage your child to make friends with others who are good friends and who encourage him/her to do good things.