



Session Topics and Objectives

7th-8th grade

The Mission of the TEACH program is to provide a safe environment for students to express themselves while they learn to build healthy relationships and bystander intervention skills. To achieve this mission, The Center for Violence-Free Relationships has developed a program that builds on the interrelated social emotional skills of students that include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, responsible decision making, and relationship skills. These skills will help students and faculty create a school community that encourages and supports healthy interpersonal relationships.

1. TEACH Overview

- Introduce the TEACH program, meet facilitators
- Begin to build trust with students and teachers
- Take pre-survey

2. Building Team & Trust

- Begin to build team work, trust and a sense of community in classroom

3. Mindfulness

- Introduce key parts of the brain that show us how we learn and why we behave the way we do
- Learn how brains respond to stress
- Practice strategies for quieting the mind

4. Empathy (Part 1 of 3)

- Explore mindful attention in all 5 senses (taste, touch, hearing, sight, smell)
- Practice mindfulness as a way to process emotions for better decision making

5. Empathy (Part 2 of 3)

- Learn about *perspective taking* (seeing situations and events from another person's viewpoint)
- Practice taking different perspectives

6. Empathy (Part 3 of 3)

- Appreciate the diversity of the group and learn to treat others as diverse human beings
- Provide an opportunity to reflect empathy by “walking in someone’s shoes”

7. Media Literacy 1 – Introduction to Media Literacy (Part 1 of 5)
 - Discuss common types of media
 - Introduce ways media can shape attitudes through text and subtext
 - Take pre-survey
8. Media Literacy 2 – The Language of Persuasion (Part 2 of 5)
 - Explore the ways media messages affect our thoughts, attitudes, actions and emotions
9. Media Literacy 3 – Media Literacy & Gender (Part 3 of 5)
 - Examine the ways gender roles are portrayed in media
 - Explore gender stereotypes from media and how they can reinforce harmful attitudes (prejudice) and actions (discrimination)
10. Media Literacy 4- Media and Attitudes Towards Violence (Part 4 of 5)
 - Define the difference between fantasy and reality media
 - Examine violence and stereotypes in music videos and video games
 - Identify persuasion techniques in music videos and video games
11. Media Literacy 5 – Attitudes Towards Violence: Taking Action (Part 5 of 5)
 - Identify where media promotes fantasy and desensitizes the impact of real world violence
 - Identify positive relationship qualities in music videos
 - Take post-survey
12. Boundaries (Part 1 of 3)
 - Define the meaning and role of boundaries in student relationships and experiences
13. Boundaries (Part 2 of 3)
 - Participate in an activity that explores the meaning and role of boundaries in student relationships and experiences
14. Boundaries (Part 3 of 4)
 - Differentiate between behaviors that are acceptable with peers and behaviors that are against school policy or against the law
15. Boundaries (Part 4 of 4)
 - Identify locations in the school where students feel comfortable and uncomfortable
 - Provide information for school to use to develop a more comfortable school environment
 - Empower students to transform uncomfortable areas by examining the issues that make them uncomfortable

16. Communication (Part 1 of 3)
 - Learn how mindful, reflective listening skills can help communicate more successfully
 - Practice reflective listening
17. Communication (Part 2 of 3)
 - Review communication styles (Passive, Aggressive and Assertive)
 - Express needs and defend rights with assertive behaviors
18. Communication (Part 3 of 3)
 - Understand importance of self-awareness & self-control in managing anger
 - Examine a problem-solving approach to managing anger
 - Practice anger management techniques and skills
19. Healthy Relationships (Part 1 of 6)
 - Learn the importance of friendship and the qualities of a good friend
20. Healthy Relationships (Part 2 of 6)
 - Examine limits and expectations in relationships
 - Participate in an activity that examines the similarities and differences among peers in regard to boundaries in relationships
21. Healthy Relationships (Part 3 of 6)
 - Learn about the cycle of dating (including breaking up)
 - Discuss the current dating process at school
22. Healthy Relationships (Part 4 of 6)
 - Learn the characteristics of healthy/unhealthy/abusive relationships
23. Healthy Relationships (5 of 6)
 - Introduce terms: consent & coercion (8th only Coercion)
 - Introduce terms: sexual harassment & harassment
 - Practice asking for consent in an age-appropriate way
24. Healthy Relationships Project (Part 6 of 6)
 - Learn about 'red flags' in teen dating violence
 - Become aware of resources for teens in relationships
25. Peer Abuse (Part 1 of 2)
 - Explore peer abuse on social media
 - Explore digital abuse (8th Grade)
 - Become aware of laws that govern peer abuse in social media
 - Learn how to be a positive cyber citizen

26. Peer Abuse (Part 2 of 2)

- Digital abuse (7th Grade)
- Become aware of the dangers of sexting and the possible consequences

27. Conflict Resolution (Part 1 of 3)

- Explore methods to cool down during conflict
- Practice active listening and reflection
- Develop solutions to a complex problem

28. Conflict Resolution (Part 2 of 3)

- Learn to problem solve, communicate ideas; practice reflective listening; develop trust and respect; develop leadership skills and cooperate with one another on a team in order to achieve a goal

29. Conflict Resolution (Part 3 of 3)

- Practice Conflict Resolution skills while working in a large group on a complex activity

30. Final Class

- Celebrate!
- Take post-survey



Session 1: Introduction to TEACH (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Introduce the TEACH program, meet facilitators

Begin to build trust with students and teachers

Take the pre-survey

Integrating TEACH into the Classroom:

Welcome to TEACH in Middle! TEACH in Middle School is a weekly program for students in the 7th - 8th grade designed to help them acquire the knowledge, attitudes and skills needed to recognize and manage their emotions, demonstrate caring and concern for others, establish positive relationships, make responsible decisions and handle social situations constructively. These skills encourage students to calm themselves when angry, initiate friendships, resolve relationship conflicts respectfully, and make ethical and safe choices. In order to do this, students need to experience safe, nurturing, and well-managed environments where they feel valued and respected; and to receive positive and specific guidance. It is our mission to provide a safe environment for students to express themselves while they learn to build healthy relationships and bystander intervention skills.

We are only in the classroom 55 minutes each week, so it is the responsibility of teachers to recognize and reinforce students for using the skills they learn in TEACH throughout the week. This means being present during TEACH and learning the skills along with the students; using the same language and utilizing teachable moments to encourage students to apply what they are learning to their daily classroom experience. These social emotional skills are critical for building resiliency by helping students to connect to school and friends, and developing the skills they need to build and maintain healthy relationships now and in the future.

We look forward to working with Middle Schoolers each year! The curriculum in Middle School is different than the younger grades as we start to focus on developing deeper relationships and continue to develop bystander skills. Some of the old lessons are weaved throughout but others are new.

As you know, students at this age can be difficult at times. We learn so much from 7th and 8th graders each year, we know they are in a critical point in their development and it's important to build the foundations they need for healthy relationships. We spent the summer working on updating the program and we hope will be relevant, especially after having TEACH for three years. We look forward to seeing these students as they continue on their journey into their teens.

We will be doing more TEACH Trash this year and will try to incorporate it as often as possible, but teachers can do it, too! The point of TEACH Trash is for students to get things that are bugging them out of their heads and on to paper. Sometimes just writing them is enough to ease the stress. They are anonymous and everyone can relate to them. We never give advice and we encourage you to help students to start problem-solving their own issues. Always ask what they would do in that situation, and how they would feel. Get as many ideas as possible. We want the students to get to a place where they do not use TEACH Trash, but will ask the questions out loud or eventually handle them with the skills and knowledge they learn over the course of a year.



Session 2: Building Team & Trust (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Begin to build team work, trust and a sense of community in classroom

Integrating TEACH into the Classroom:

We hope that middle school students continue to embrace changing the way we do some of the presentations in TEACH, by sitting in circles. In some of the classes this might not be logistically possible. We did this during several classes last year and had pretty good results. Circles reinforce the fact that no one is ahead or behind and we are all the same with different stories. We can work out logistics of changing tables, desks, etc., to make it a smooth transition each week. We will not circle for every class, but there will be many that we do throughout the year.

We are going to work on a sense of team in this session as we begin to help the students take ownership of their words and promote a deeper sense of empathy and working together.

The 7th graders will be doing a fun paper air plane activity. This activity will help students interact with each other and learn something new about their classmates. Also, the student will be sharing a few things about themselves.

The 8th graders will learn about concrete and abstract thinking in TEACH. Much of the work we do deals with abstract concepts and we wanted to help them understand our process. From there we will show a short video on *Emotional Hygiene* and discuss the importance of taking care of ourselves. We have a fun activity for them to write uplifting things to themselves for when they are not feeling like themselves.

We encourage teachers to partipate in these activities, too.

Session 3: Mindfulness (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Introduce the key parts of the brain that show us how we learn and why we behave the way we do

Learn how brains respond to stress

Practice strategies for quieting the mind

Integrating TEACH into the Classroom:

We will once again do a session on Mindful eating with all the grades. The students loved it! We continue to utilize the work of Daniel Siegel, MD and The Hawn Corporation's Mind Up Curriculum, as well as others. The science of mindfulness is encouraging and we feel it will enhance our efforts to build resiliency and the skills they will need for healthy relationships.

Today's session includes an introduction to the physiology of the brain. All grades will learn the basics of how our brains work in terms of how we react to everything around us, as well as how the different parts function and interact. Many of the kids have had this, but we will review how important it is to understand how our brains work, especially when they feel stressed. This year we will introduce and read a child's book called *Hey Warrior*. Written for small kids it explains the work of the amygdala in a way that is fun, cute and interesting for any age group.

We will be using a core practice of deep breathing in each TEACH session so students can broaden their awareness of the connections between their brain and body, between what goes on "inside" and the actual experience. We want to help the students develop an awareness of their impulses, thoughts, feelings, and behaviors in order to build their confidence and pleasure while supporting their learning process. It also helps to understand that they can control how they react to and show up in the world. At the end of each session will try to do another deep breathing just before they leave. We will remind them they are **strong, healthy and kind**.

In this particular session we will introduce the concept of mindfulness through an eating activity called *Know Your Orange or Your Apple*. Students will experience eating oranges in a very thoughtful way. This activity is a great way for students to look beyond automatic responses to thinking and learn to do it in a deep and meaningful way. And its fun! We may add a Hershey Kiss at the end and have them go through the same process.

Learning to be mindfully in tune with what's happening in the moment prepares students to make sound decisions rather than be ruled by their emotions. As we go through each session, we will encourage students to be mindful of their thoughts and feelings....by asking **what** they are **thinking** and **feeling** and **where** in their bodies they feel it. This will help them to understand

the distinction between thoughts and feelings and understand how the brain triggers their reaction. Eventually, we hope they can get to a place of understanding that they do not have to react to every thought they have...they can acknowledge them, and let them go. By asking where they feel certain feelings in the body they will become aware of the triggers and sensations that certain feelings cause and they can learn to respond appropriately.

We invite teachers to incorporate a core practice of starting and ending each day with deep belly breathing and focused attention (or meditation).

If you are interested in the science, Dan Siegel, MD has a great video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LiyaSr5aeho>

Here are some other books we are using as resources:

[Mindful Teaching and Teaching Mindfulness](#) by Deborah Schoeberlein David

[The Whole Brain Child](#) by Daniel Siegel, MD and Tina Payne Bryson, MD

[The Whole Brain Child Workbook](#) by Daniel Siegel, MD and Tina Payne Bryson, MD

[Child's Mind](#) by Christopher Willard

[Mind Up Curriculum](#) Grades 3-5 and 6-8

[5 Good Minutes](#) by Jeffrey Brantley, MD and Wendy Millstine

[Just One Thing](#) by Rick Hanson, PHD

Below is an article from Huffington Post on teaching Mindfulness to teens:

Teaching Mindfulness to Teenagers: 5 Ways to Get Started

by Sarah Rudell Beach

When we think of *mindfulness*, we may not think of teenagers. But a growing body of evidence suggests that mindfulness practice could be beneficial to teens, helping them cultivate empathy, as well as skills for concentration and impulse control. In short, mindfulness can help adolescents navigate the challenges of adolescence. As parents or teachers, we can introduce young people to the practice of mindfulness, or *purposeful, nonjudgmental awareness*. It might take some work, however, to convince teenagers of the value of slowing down, disconnecting from their digital devices and simply breathing. So let's start with square one: getting "buyin" when teaching mindfulness to teens.

1. Model Mindfulness

We can't show adolescents the benefits of a mindfulness practice without modeling it ourselves. This doesn't mean we always need to be paragons of contented bliss, but we should demonstrate our ability to manage stress and respond, not react, to setbacks. Last year, as I handed out a revised course calendar to my high school students (due to having lost five days of school to the cold weather), one of my students said, "You seem so stressed out about this! Normally you're so chill!" Her comment actually surprised me. I'm pretty intense and active when I teach (who wouldn't get fired up about European history?), but apparently, I still demonstrate a "chill" demeanor. If we want students to take mindfulness seriously, they need to see it in action. They need to see us paying attention and handling challenges skillfully. Those millennial Holden Caulfields can spot a phony a mile away.

2. What's in it for Them?

Teenagers may see mindfulness as completely unrelated to their busy and connected lives. Here are a few research findings that you could share with them:

Studies show that students who meditate before an exam perform better than students who do not. Mindfulness practice can improve concentration. Mindfulness based interventions have been demonstrated to reduce the symptoms of anxiety, stress and depression (three things I see all too frequently in my students) (For more information about the benefits of mindfulness and meditation, [click here](#).)

3. Teach Teens About Their Brain

Adolescents are fascinated about how their brains work. We can teach teens how mindfulness instruction is like getting the owner's manual for their brain. This TEDx talk by Dan Siegel, author of *Brainstorm: The Power and Purpose of the Teenage Brain*, has a great demonstration that you can use with teens (or even younger kids) to teach them about the parts of the brain, using their hands as a model. (The demonstration starts at about the 12:00 mark). The demonstration focuses on three structures of the brain: the brainstem (our "reptilian" brain, responsible for breathing, heart rate, etc.), the limbic system/amygdala (our "mammalian" brain, involved in emotion and memory) and the cortex (our "human" brain, responsible for thinking and self-regulation). The hand model reveals

how close the amygdala is to the prefrontal cortex, and how mindfulness can help the thinking part of the brain process the raw emotion of the limbic system. And that can lead to better decisionmaking it allows a mindful pause, a skillful response instead of an unthinking reaction.

We can teach teens that mindfulness is a form of training for their brains: meditation has actually been shown to increase gray matter in the portion of the brain responsible for selfawareness and compassion. Mindfulness can play a role in the *neuroplasticity* of the brain our experiences can actually transform our brains, the way exercise can transform our bodies.

4. Teach Teens About Their Mind

When I teach mindfulness to my high school students, I use the analogy of the monkey mind, constantly jumping around from branch to branch, thought to thought. When I did a mindfulness exercise with my students during a stressful week of finals, I explained that a lot of our anxiety is truly "in our heads" our stress comes from our worrying brains ruminating on all the worst possible scenarios. I gave this example: "You may think, *'I'm going to fail the final, my parents will be furious with me, I'll never get into a good college, and I'll never find a job!'*" One student exclaimed, "Omigosh, have you been inside my head!?!"

When we practice mindfulness, we learn that much of the chatter of the mind is just that: chatter. It's not reality it's worry, it's anxiety, it's baseless projection. Mindfulness teaches teenagers to be aware of their thoughts, perhaps simply labeling them as "worrying." They can acknowledge anxiety, without getting caught up in the negative thoughts it generates. Adolescents can discover that there are ways to approach the mind skillfully. This is often eye opening!

5. There's an App for That!

I realize there's a bit of irony in recommending apps to practice mindfulness, especially to get teens to practice disconnection from their uberconnected cyberworlds. I use the Insight Meditation Timer when we practice mindful breathing in class, and students always want to know what app I am using. They love seeing the map graphic on the Insight Timer that shows all the locations worldwide where people are meditating.

Here are some of my favorite meditation apps for teens:

Stop, Breathe, and Think. My students like this app because it opens with a short "interview" where the user selects several words to describe how they are feeling, and then the app recommends guided meditations for their current state.

Smiling Mind. Designed for adolescents (and my students generally love anything with an Australian or British accent!)

Take a Break! Not necessarily just for teens, but it provides short guided meditations for stress relief. I am wholeheartedly convinced that we can all benefit from incorporating mindfulness practice into our busy lives, especially teenagers. I hope these tips help you encourage the adolescents in your life to spend some time in digital detox, in stillness and in mindfulness.

This post originally appeared on Sarah's blog Left Brain Buddha. You can follow Sarah on Facebook, Pinterest, and Google+.

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Session 4: Empathy 1 (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Explore mindful attention in all 5 senses (taste, touch, hearing, sight, smell)

Practice mindfulness as a way to process emotions for better decision making

Integrating TEACH into the Classroom:

In this session we continue to explore mindfulness using all of the senses to build awareness and insight into the interconnections of perceptions, thought, and feelings. We will also introduce a **sixth** sense: thoughts or perceptions.

We will do an awareness activity that will guide students through each sense: sight, hearing, touch, smell, taste and finally, thoughts. The activity was actually adapted for children with attention difficulties and shifts to different senses rather quickly. The purpose is to bring awareness to different sensations, and our reactions to those sensations. We'll label these sensations as pleasant, unpleasant and neutral. We respond differently in thought, emotion and action to each one and it's amazing how often we want to grasp at something good.

If we get through the sensory activity we will move on to another activity called Safari. Students will go outside for a short period of time and notice everything around them through all their senses. They will be asked to bring one item back from their experience.

Talking about feelings comes easy for some kids and it can be very hard for others, but it's important to introduce the concept of self-reflection to help identify feelings. Learning to mindfully tune in with what is happening in the moment prepares students to make sound decisions rather than being ruled by their emotions and impulse behavior. They simply acknowledge that these feelings exist, but they don't have to act on them.

Students' ability to understand their own emotions leads to greater self-confidence since this understanding helps them to feel they have control over their 'inner life.' Understanding others' feelings and needs is the core of empathy, and we will address that definition in two sessions.

Teachers can support students by helping them identify and validate what they are feeling, then helping to articulate what they need when they make decisions and redirecting (giving alternatives) when feelings are self-destructive.

Teachers can also model the use of self-reflective language in the classroom or in one-on-one conversations saying things like "What are you feeling? Or when studying other people in class,

ask “What do *you* think *they* were feeling?” “If this were to happen to you how would *you* feel?” This promotes empathy and helps to develop an environment where students feel safe and can learn to verbalize their feelings and needs, and can understand and empathize with others who have been through similar experiences.

It’s also good to let the class know how you are feeling. For instance, “I’m feeling very frustrated at the amount of talking going on when only one person should be talking. I would like to take a few seconds and do some deep breathing to help us get centered and remember to listen and stay in the moment. This will also help your amygdala slow down so your prefrontal cortex can take over.” A bit much, but you get the idea!

Session 5: Empathy 2 (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Learn about *perspective taking* (seeing situations and events from another person's viewpoint)

Practice taking different perspectives

Integrating TEACH into the Classroom:

The ability to consider a situation multiple ways has social benefits, such as reducing conflicts among students, facilitating group work, and cultivating an inclusive peer community. On the most practical level, students who are able to accept that other classmates may behave or think differently than they do are much better equipped to tolerate and find ways to get along with peers; they can talk out a problem and find a solution that is mutually agreeable. (MindUp Curriculum)

Perspective taking is the ability to see situations and events from the viewpoint of another person. As we mindfully practice this, we become more skilled at interpreting the behavior of others. Mentally standing in someone else's shoes requires reflection, which can stall unthinking reaction. Repeatedly viewing issues or events through different 'windows' builds and strengthens the neural networks that enable us to reason before we take action. Paying attention to a situation in a calm, focused, mindful manner is a physiological workout for the brain, which actually stimulates blood flow to it! Calm perspective taking directs incoming information to the reflective, thinking prefrontal cortex, not the reflexive, reacting amygdala. A brain that operates in prefrontal cortex makes superior decisions, facilitating making good choices. Honoring differences of opinion when disagreement is respectable allows students to perceive the classroom as safe and risk-free. We encourage teachers to include various opportunities for students to practice taking other perspectives. (MindUp Curriculum)

We will do a short activity on ***perspective taking*** based on how students interpret others feelings in pictures.

Being concerned about the welfare of others and understanding the feelings of those around us are basic skills for emotional intelligence. Compassion and empathy can be developed through mindfully practicing random acts of kindness. As students develop compassion and empathy, they learn to recognize that their words and actions have an impact on others. This feeling of interconnectedness helps them reflect on their responses to the words and actions of others and better monitor and control their emotional responses. Practicing compassion and empathy builds the social and emotional competence that they will need in order to be resilient and confident. Research confirms the power of practicing kindness. Scientists are discovering that compassion is an emotion as ancient as fear or anger. Our brains are hard-wired for altruism (a behavior that

benefits someone else rather than oneself). Our brains release the feel-good neurotransmitter dopamine in response to altruistic acts....which reinforces interconnectedness. (MindUp Curriculum)

We will also talk about the benefits of kindness and being kind. Students will be given an opportunity to anonymously choose a name of one of the students in their class and will be required to perform an act of kindness for them. They are also asked to take notice of how it feels when they perform it AND when someone performs one for them. And finally, they are tasked with noticing if they see acts of kindness around campus. Always ask them how it felt, and where they felt it. This will help them to rekindle those good feelings in times of need.



Session 6: Empathy 3 (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Appreciate the diversity of the group and learn to treat others as diverse human beings

Provide an opportunity to reflect empathy by “walking in someone’s shoes”

Integrating TEACH into the Classroom:

Empathy is the ability to recognize emotions in others and to have compassion when others react emotionally. Students who display empathy are good listeners, sensitive to others’ needs and feelings, and treat others with respect; it is also the foundation of healthy relationships. Empathy is also a prerequisite for social problem-solving, conflict resolution and developing active bystanders. As students develop empathy they are less likely to abuse their peers.

In this session we will provide an opportunity for students to “walk in someone’s shoes“. We’ll stress how important it is to see that others have gone through similar experiences and can empathize with us just as we can empathize with them. We tell students throughout the exercise that they do not have to cross the line if they do not feel comfortable. We also encourage them to talk about their feelings with their parents and/or caregivers.

This is a powerful exercise and we will spend most of the time de-briefing the experience. Emotions usually run high during and after this activity so we will make ourselves available to students to de-brief at any time. We encourage them to support one another and their vulnerability. They may also want to reflect on the activity with teachers. Just support them and listen if they want to talk. It is also a good time to refer them to their parents/caregivers. There may be some underlying issue that they need to know about.

REMINDER: To encourage empathy in students we invite teachers to continue to help students take on and understand different perspectives and to take responsibility for their actions. Teachers can also foster empathy by encouraging students to remember what it was like for them when they experienced similar situations. We also encourage teachers to choose texts and select activities that enable students to explore multiple experiences and different points of view, and always ask, “how would you feel if you went through this similar experience?” How do you think they were feeling?”

Session 7: Introduction to Media Literacy 1 (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Discuss common types of media

Introduce ways media can shape attitudes through text and subtext

Take pre-survey

Integrating TEACH into the Classroom:

The next 5 lessons are adapted from the NJ Coalition Against Sexual Assault; Gender and Violence – How Media Shape Our Culture – A media literacy education curriculum to address sexual violence and harassment. (NJCASA)

Young people – particularly teenagers – spend up to 8-10 hours or more a day interacting with some form of media (e.g. internet, tv, video games, social media, etc). The effect this has on an individual person and collective community is mitigated by the number of influences and conditions; media can shape thoughts about social norms, relationships, and power dynamics. For example, images and depictions of girls and women perpetuate dominant cultural attitudes regarding female sexuality and gender roles. Girls and women are habitually sexualized in the media and these messages are being transmitted to young girls and boys alike.

Critical media literacy is an opportunity for individuals to challenge messages and norms, while also giving them a chance to create their own media messages that reflect their lived experience and hope for the future. This process has the potential for significant transformation among young women, who experience sexism, and other oppressed groups.

The core tenets of media literacy are the ability to access, analyze, and evaluate media messages and constructed images. Critical media consumers also create their own messages and constructed images. Critical media consumers also create their own media to begin presenting new ideas and norms into social landscape. (NJCASA)

We change the pictures every year, but the lessons remain the same. We hope to ‘dig deeper’ and encourage students to move beyond stereotypes in the media and in their interactions in school. Discussion may become passionate at times. This is all part of changing attitudes and behaviors.

In this session we will introduce media, the tenets of media literacy, and how we are influenced by media. In addition we will learn about the language of persuasion. We encourage teachers to continue to talk about the lessons with students, and take advantage of all teachable moments in the classroom as they pertain to persuasion.



Session 8: Media Literacy 2 - The Language of Persuasion (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Explore the ways media messages affect our thoughts, attitudes, actions and emotions

Integrating TEACH into the Classroom:

This session is a continuation of the first session. We will review the tenets of media literacy and the intent of media to promote certain social norms and ideas, and introduce the potential for social change.

We'll begin the class with an activity that will prompt some discussion around how we think about gender norms in the media and get students to move around the room. Students will be asked to stand under 1 of 4 signs.

We will introduce the idea of deconstructing media by asking questions, looking at content in ads and learn about some of the techniques and strategies used to persuade us. If there is time we will do another activity where students will come up with a product to sell, write a skit using several persuasion techniques, and perform the skits for the class.

We encourage teachers to continue to talk about the lessons with students, and take advantage of all teachable moments in the classroom. Media influences so much of our daily lives and there are so many ways to point this out. Remind them of the techniques used and how to deconstruct. We will practice this in the future with music and lyrics to popular songs.

Session 9: Media Literacy 3 – Media Literacy and Gender (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Examine the ways gender roles are portrayed in the media

Explore gender stereotypes from media and how they can reinforce harmful attitudes (prejudice) and actions (discrimination)

Integrating TEACH into the Classroom:

In this session we talk about several words and definitions that are from the **Positive Prevention Plus, Sexual Education for America's Youth, Middle Schools, page 37-39**. This is the El Dorado County Office of Education Board approved curriculum. We will introduce the following words and definitions from the curriculum: sex, gender, gender role, with an emphasis on gender equity/equality. In the 8th grade we will introduce the terms gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation.

These concepts can be challenging for students at this age, particularly if this is the first time talking about them. However, identifying the differences between sex and gender and gender role is essential for moving forward with other sessions and overall program goals. We will cover these concepts respectfully, factually, and with the intention of sparking thoughts and conversation around adhering to strict gender roles, not accepting differences and how they can contribute to violence, even in middle school.

In order to promote tolerance and positive self-images, we will incorporate opportunities for students to generate empowering portrayals of gender. An emphasis will be placed on the ways media examples make students *feel*, as opposed to obvious text or subtext.

Because of the content in this session, we will revisit the rules and guidelines for creating a safe place to speak. It is our intention to stay on topic, but this session may also bring up issues around race, ethnicity and sexuality. We will acknowledge feelings again, but stay on topic. As always, we will focus on creating accountability and safety throughout each session.

In addition to sex and gender, we will also introduce the concepts of ***stereotype*** as *thought*, ***prejudice*** as *attitude* and ***discrimination*** as *action*. These concepts will be discussed in terms of how they relate to our discussion on gender and media.

ACTIVITY: “Be a Man” and “Act Like a Lady, “ or **Gender Boxes**. We will discuss gender stereotypes and prejudices and how they can lead to discrimination and violence. It is a fun activity and always brings up thoughtful discussion. This is also where most kids are bullied in middle school

– when they do not meet the gender stereotypes.

Teachers are in a great position to witness students reinforcing gender stereotypes and making discriminating statements. Call it as you see it and remind students of their discussions in TEACH. Discrimination is an action that is supported by prejudices and stereotypes, so remind students how this keeps them from connecting with each other as human beings. Connection with others is one of the main components in being resilient. Encourage connections.

Personal values, belief and attitudes

As human beings, we all have our own values, beliefs and attitudes that we have developed throughout the course of our lives. Our family, friends, community and the experiences we have had all contribute to our sense of who we are and how we view the world. At many schools we are often working with students who are vulnerable and/or who may live a lifestyle that mainstream society views as being different or unacceptable. In order to meet the needs of all of our students and help them to feel empowered, we need to be aware of our own personal values, beliefs and attitudes and be prepared to adopt the professional values of our industry—and not impose our own ideas on our students.

What are values?

Values are principles, standards or qualities that an individual or group of people hold in high regard. These values guide the way we live our lives and the decisions we make. A value may be defined as something that we hold dear, those things/qualities which we consider to be of worth.

A 'value' is commonly formed by a particular belief that is related to the worth of an idea or type of behavior. For instance, some people may see great value in saving the world's rainforests. However a person who relies on the logging of a forest for their job may not place the same value on the forest as a person who wants to save it.

Values can influence many of the judgments we make as well as have an impact on the support we give students. It is important that **we do not influence student's decisions** based on **our** values. We should always work from the basis of supporting the student's family values. To that end we have adapted the following protocol from the Public Health Dept. of Seattle & King Counties, FLASH Training of Educators:

- Validate the question
- Identify the question as a belief or value question
- Answer the factual part of the question (if possible)
- Describe the range of beliefs
- Refer student to family, clergy, or other trusted adult

Personal Questions

Because we carry authority, we always say it back. We will actually say "I am not going to share my values." And we don't ask kids what they **think** – we ask what they've **heard**. The idea is to find out what they've heard and give them facts.

If students use **slurs** in class we use the following steps:

- Validate the question
- Identify the term as an offensive word (e.g. fag)
- Let the class know we won't be using the word in school, ever, because it is hurtful. We will proceed as though the student didn't mean harm because it will help them save face and readily adopt respectful language.



Session 10: Media Literacy 4 – Media and Attitudes Towards Violence (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Define the difference between fantasy and reality media

Examine violence and stereotypes in music videos and video games

Identify persuasion techniques being used in music videos and video games

Integrating TEACH into the Classroom:

It is so hard for us to bring music videos and video games to TEACH. There are so many inappropriate words, the music video may be too sexualized or the games are over-the-top violent. We've scoured the internet and we just can't find examples that we can use with a Middle School audience. We wonder if video games and music videos go from g-rated straight to R-rated with very little (if anything) in between. Something to think about.

However, we *will talk* about popular songs and video games. We will break them down in terms of violence and stereotypes, and begin to notice if they reflect real life. The idea is that people have different realities, but fantasy in music videos and video games are made from one person's perspective. Everyone brings their own experiences, opinions, and interpretations to every single piece of media. We will have samples of a few music videos that are more positive about life and relationships.

The effects of media is very subtle – we don't always notice the effect or the feelings – we just know they exist. Media messages and other things we see in life can desensitize us to violence, which is often how violence keeps happening – we don't think it's a big deal, we excuse the behavior, and we look the other way when violence is happening. (NJCASA)

This lesson is pretty abstract, but we will tie it all together next week when we talk about how media can affect the way we think about violence, gender violence, stereotypes and roles that support gender inequality; including how they influence the way people behave. By breaking down video's we can begin to see the techniques and strategies used to get and keep the users attention.

There are opportunities for conversations about violence in media all the time. Continue discussing the use of stereotypes and violence in media whenever possible. Ask students about the violence, fantasy and reality. The more it's talked about, the more students become informed users of media.

Session 11: Media Literacy 5 – Attitudes Towards Violence: Taking Action (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Identify where media promotes fantasy and desensitizes the impact of real world violence

Create our own media

Take post-survey

Integrating TEACH into the Classroom:

Our media system produces lots of negative, demeaning imagery, values and ideas. It renders many people invisible or misrepresented. If we really want equality and justice, we have to change the media system.

More and more people are realizing how important it is to have a media system that is open to more people and more perspectives, that elevates human values over commercial values, that serves human needs in the 21st century.

Media literacy is a great foundation to build a media system that builds bridges between communities and takes down walls. (NJCASA)

In this final session we tie all the sessions together by talking about violence and what it means to be an active bystander in social media; examining how it relates to students' personal experiences and begin to create proactive media consumers who can stop attitudes that excuse or support violence. We will do a final activity that reinforces their proactive skills.

Media literacy education is a valuable tool both in and outside of the classroom. Media literacy skills can help all of us – children, youth, and adults to:

- ❖ Understand how media messages create meaning
- ❖ Identify who created a particular media message
- ❖ Recognize what the media maker wants us to believe, think, feel, or do
- ❖ Name the “techniques of persuasion”
- ❖ Recognize bias, spin, misinformation and lies
- ❖ Discover the part of the story that’s not being told
- ❖ Evaluate media messages based on our own experiences, beliefs, and values
- ❖ Create and distribute our own media messages
- ❖ Become advocates for change in our media system

ACTIVITY: *Nutritional Impact* – Students receive a handout that looks just like the nutritional value of ingredients in food and they rate the intensity of healthy/unhealthy relationship ingredients in songs. Just a fun activity to reinforce awareness and proactive skills.



Session 12: Boundaries 1 (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Define the meaning and role of boundaries in student relationships and experiences

Integrating TEACH into the Classroom:

As a teacher you know how important it is to have clear boundaries in the classroom. Having clear boundaries is especially good for children of all ages, even adolescents and teens who want to know who is in charge and what “the rules” are. There is security in knowing what to expect in predictability and routine, and in support. Rules/boundaries/limits actually help students to feel safe knowing what is expected of them. Your job is easier when the boundaries are clear, the consequences of crossing them are clear, and everyone understands both.

The concept of personal boundaries is crucial for kids to help them develop their personal power. We want them to feel empowered to protect themselves with confidence; and know it is wrong to cross others’ boundaries without active consent. Helping students develop good boundaries now reinforces their refusal skills, encourages them to become active bystanders, to respect others’ boundaries and to avoid high risk behavior. Healthy boundaries **and respect for them** is the foundation of social relationships and can contribute to preventing Teen Dating Violence later in life.

Why are boundaries important?

Boundaries define self. When we have established clear boundaries (both our outer skin boundary and our internal inner life boundary), we are more aware of our own rights, have a strong sense of self, and how we deserve to be treated by others. By first respecting ourselves, we are then able to instill respect in others and set limits around how we want to be treated. With boundaries, we also have a clearer picture of our own needs and desires, so that we can choose to ask for assistance if we are unable to meet our needs on our own.

Boundaries clarify responsibilities. Clear boundaries also help define what we own; what we are responsible for. This means that we do not have to take on other people’s responsibilities unless we choose to, just as they do not have to take on ours. While it is important to be sympathetic to other people’s needs, it is equally important to know our own limitations. Also, it is our responsibility to respect others’ boundaries and take responsibility for our behavior when we cross them.

Boundaries give us options. Since boundaries give us ownership, we have more control over

what happens to us and our bodies. Our choices and options are broad because we have the right to say whether or not we want something to happen or not happen.

Boundary Principles

1. **We each belong to ourselves** – I belong to myself - my body, my time, my feelings, my personal space, my thoughts, my spirit, all of me. And other people belong to themselves.
2. **Some things are not a choice.** My family, school, and coach have rules that I must follow or there will be consequences. I can speak up but I cannot always control what other people will think, feel, say, or do. I can set boundaries, leave, or seek help if others harm my health or safety. I cannot always control whether a situation or relationship at home, at school, with friends, or at work will get better.
3. **Problems should not be secrets** – and neither should touch, teasing, gifts, or favors.
4. **Keep telling until you get help.** Getting help can mean -- asking the person who is creating the problem to change his/her behavior; talking to someone who is in a position of authority to solve the problem; gathering with other people to deal with the problem together; asking for personal support from someone outside the situation completely; or even taking legal action.

Using “I” statements

- I feel ... (state your feeling in terms that are all yours rather than attacking the other person)
- When you ... (state the specific behavior that is a problem to you; try not to use words like “you never” or “you always”)

With the older children we will practice asking for what they actually want:

- Would you please ... (say what you specifically want the person to do).

Using “I” statements are a critical part of non-violent communication. Using them is less accusatory and does not place blame on anyone. Students have worked on “I” statements in the 4th – 6th grades and will be reviewed in 7th – 8th.



Session 13: Boundaries 2 (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Participate in an activity that explores the meaning and role of boundaries in student relationships and experiences

Integrating TEACH into the Classroom:

We will continue to define boundaries. This year we will show students how boundaries are defined with friends and people we don't know as well. We will do a measuring exercise that will reinforce how we protect ourselves and how others protect themselves and how we respect others' boundaries.

Why are boundaries important?

Boundaries define self. When we have established clear boundaries (both our outer skin boundary and our internal inner life boundary), we are more aware of our own rights, have a strong sense of self, and how we deserve to be treated by others. By first respecting ourselves, we are then able to instill respect in others and set limits around how we want to be treated. With boundaries, we also have a clearer picture of our own needs and desires, so that we can choose to ask for assistance if we are unable to meet our needs on our own.

Boundaries clarify responsibilities. Clear boundaries also help define what we own; what we are responsible for. This means that we do not have to take on other people's responsibilities unless we choose to, just as they do not have to take on ours. While it is important to be sympathetic to other people's needs, it is equally important to know our own limitations. Also, it is our responsibility to respect others' boundaries and take responsibility for our behavior when we cross them.

Boundaries give us options. Since boundaries give us ownership, we have more control over what happens to us and our bodies. Our choices and options are broad because we have the right to say whether or not we want something to happen or not happen.

Session 14: Boundaries 3 (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Differentiate between behaviors that are acceptable with peers and behaviors that are against school policy or against the law

Integrating TEACH into the Classroom:

We want students to understand that recognizing other people's boundaries often takes some time to figure out, and that's okay. Personal boundaries may differ depending on the situation, so they are harder to figure out than legal boundaries. Some people, for instance, don't like when others stand too close to them; other people don't mind. Certain kinds of language (e.g. vulgar or lewd language), especially when directed at someone, can violate a person's personal boundaries. Personal boundaries should be respected at all times and crossing them carries consequences, which sometimes can be legal in nature. We will also talk about **active consent**; what that means and consequences for not respecting boundaries.

We will pass out a list of scenarios and ask if they are: 1) No big deal; 2) Against school rules; or 3) Against the law. There are several scenarios and we will discuss each one in depth. Most of the time students open up about many things and the discussions are rich. We strongly encourage teachers to participate and hear what students are thinking about a variety of different topics. A copy of this is enclosed for teachers to review. The conversations from today are great opportunities to have on-going dialogue with 7th and 8th graders, especially since we may not get through all of them in one TEACH Session.

Also at this age students are thinking pretty concrete, so they need to know what kinds of behavior are not appropriate in school and/or against the law; most specifically sexual harassment. Sexual Harassment will be covered throughout the year in TEACH.

We strongly encourage teachers to talk about some of the things that came up during this activity. The more they hear and talk about boundaries, the more we can reinforce appropriate behavior. Some of the expected behaviors in the scenarios are rather obvious...some are not. They will need reminders of the consequences for crossing boundaries.

There will be different scenarios for 7th and 8th graders. In combined 7th/8th grade classrooms, we will use the 7th grade scenarios.

Session 15: Boundaries 4 (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Identify locations in the school students feel comfortable and uncomfortable

Provide information for school to use to develop a more comfortable school environment

Empower students to transform uncomfortable areas by examining the issues that make them uncomfortable

Integrating TEACH into the classroom:

We do this lesson every year with great results in Middle School. The goal is to map the areas of the school where kids feel comfortable and where they feel uncomfortable; and to become empowered by having them come up with solutions and presenting them to the school administration.

The areas we have them map will include areas where peer abuse and sexual harassment happen. Sexual Harassment can happen anywhere in the school and it's important that students know what to do if they are sexually harassed. We will be presenting the school policy on sexual harassment as part of this session so students know how to make a complaint. **(This year at Gold Trail we will be helping the Administration develop a protocol for reporting sexual harassment. This will take time and we hope to include parents, teachers and students in the process).** Please read below.

According to a study by the AAUW, students most often experience sexual harassment for the first time between 6th and 9th grades; 76 % Of boys and 85% of girls report they have been sexually harassed in Middle School. Harassment can include visual, verbal or physical and the following is a list of the places sexual harassment generally happens in schools and our statistics from last year support them:

Hallways: 66%	Classrooms: 55%
School Grounds: 43%	Gym or playing fields: 43%
Cafeteria: 34%	Buses: 26%
Field trips: 24%	School Parking Lot: 18%
Locker room: 18%	Restrooms: 10%

If you feel a student is being sexually harassed, support and validate students' feelings about their sexuality and what happened. Never minimize their feelings or what they did or did not do. Sexual harassment is very difficult for students to talk about and report. We recommend that you educate yourself on sexuality and homophobia by reading or talking to the facilitators from TEACH who understand these issues and can communicate with young people about them. Sexual Harassment

will be covered in 7th and 8th grade TEACH.

Create a trustworthy environment within your classroom, your office, the locker room, the hallways, and other school areas. Students need to know that there are people they can confide in about these issues. If a student makes a report to you assure them that you will guarantee their confidentiality to the extent that you are able to do so and that they will never be penalized for reporting sexual harassment. Information on the incident should only be shared on a “need to know” basis, and never investigate charges unless you are the appropriate person to do so. Report any sexual harassment that you witness directly to the appropriate person at school. Make sure you know who the appropriate person is and the reporting protocol in order to help the victim of sexual harassment. Do not be a passive bystander. Incidents of Sexual Harassment are always shared with parents and/or guardians.



Session 16: Communication 1 (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Learn how mindful, reflective listening skills can help communicate more successfully

Practice reflective listening

Integrating TEACH into the Classroom:

Mindful Listening lays the groundwork for social awareness and effective communication. Being able to listen in a focused way and pay attention to details such as tone and inflection give the listener a clearer idea for how to respond. We will do a fun activity on mindful listening, then another activity that will prompt some thoughtful discussion.

Learning to mindfully listen can help prepare students for following directions, resolving conflict through discussion, building friendships, and listening critically to media messages. As they learn to choose what they focus on or respond to, they build self-awareness and self-management skills. But most of all, learning to listen will help them to develop deeper connections in their relationships.

Encouraging Mindful Listening:

“I know I’m listening if I can repeat what you said exactly.” When students need to resolve conflicts, encourage them to use mindful listening to help them stay focused on what their classmates are saying or feeling. Training students to repeat verbatim what the other person is saying before they respond helps them concentrate on what that person is saying. This practice gives the listener a chance to calm down and to reflect the situation. It supports all students, especially those who tend to react too quickly.

The best way to train, of course, is by modeling this behavior. ONCE A DAY resist the urge to immediately answer a question from a student. Savor the time to reflect and develop a thoughtful response. Encourage students to repeat what you just said verbatim. Based on their reflection to you, show gratitude for their ability to listen in a mindful way. (Mindful Curriculum)

Session 17: Communication 2 (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Review communication Styles (Passive, Aggressive, Assertive)

Express needs and defend rights with assertive behaviors

Integrating TEACH into the Classroom:

In the second session on Communication we will review the concepts of passive, aggressive and assertive communication styles and the activity will be active group discussion. A story will be read and students will choose which response they would have to a particular situation. Each response will directly correlate to a communication style and students will learn when/if it is appropriate to use and how to do it. This activity will involve the students moving around the room.

We encourage teachers to use the words – passive, aggressive, assertive – in your classrooms. When students communicate you might point out the style they are using, or if someone they are studying has a certain style, eg., Martin Luther King used assertive communication to express non-violent strategies, while Anne Frank used passive communication due to her intense need for secrecy and safety (*which is an appropriate use of **passive** communication!*).

Continue to help students ‘find their voice,’ and vocalize their feelings in a way that is appropriate. The more they recognize their feelings they can begin to understand their needs, and we can support meeting their needs in positive ways. Once again, modeling assertive communication important.

Last year one of the 8th grade students suggested we talk about how to communicate with teachers and parents. This is a very difficult age for students and communication can become a battleground. We will spend some time talking about communicating with teachers and parents in this session

Session 18: Communications 3 (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Understand importance of self-awareness & self-control in managing anger

Examine a problem-solving approach to managing anger

Practice anger management techniques and skills

Integrating TEACH into the Classroom:

This last session on Communication focuses on anger and coping skills. Students will learn about healthy and unhealthy anger, including what thoughts, feelings and actions are associated with each. We will also talk about taking steps to managing their anger: ***calm down, think before acting, consider the other persons feelings with reflective listening, and find solutions.***

Anger is often not really about anger (or angry feelings). It can be about more vulnerable emotions that are concealed underneath an angry cover. When a situation arises and anger is present, it's important to talk to the students involved *after* they've calmed down. In *private*, you might ask a student what else they are feeling in addition to anger. They may describe emotions like anxiety, worry, hurt, sadness, frustration, distrust, uncertainty, guilt, shame, regret. In young students, you may have to help them to identify these feelings. How they cope with these strong feelings is where they tend to get in trouble, especially if they don't have appropriate skills to manage them.

An important thing to remember is that it's not the **event** that triggers anger; it's the **perception** of the **event** that brings a strong emotion. The equation is not: *event = emotional experience*. **The equation is: *event + INTERPRETATION = emotional experience*.** That being said, continue to encourage students to verbalize their feelings. When they verbalize feelings it causes them to slow down and think and you might ask them what they need to feel better. For instance, if they say they feel distrustful of someone they are angry with, you can talk about what it would take to trust them again. This could lead to some very interesting conversations and opportunities to help them build coping skills.

Managing emotions includes the ability to redirect disruptive impulses and to 'shake off' negative moods. Teachers cannot eliminate frustration and conflict in the classroom, but can help students to manage their emotions. Use their emotional expressions as teachable moments to coach and support them in developing skills they need to manage their emotions successfully. Teach students to have more patience with themselves and each other and to develop perseverance and skills to work through conflict and frustration. A key to doing this is to have a method for resolving conflict when more than one student is involved. If you have a successful method for resolving conflicts in your classroom, we'd love to hear about it. If not, we use this method when more than

one student is involved: 1) calm down - deep breathing (remind them of their Amygdala and calming it down); 2) agree to ground rules; 3) talk it out using reflective listening and “I” messages (share versions of the incident, feelings, etc.); 4) brainstorm solutions, and 5) come to an agreement and make affirmations. Good conflict resolution is non-violent, meets the important needs of each person involved, maintains – and can improve – the relationship of everyone involved.

Many kids do not have the opportunity to talk about their feelings, so it becomes important to give them the message that feeling angry is okay when they handle it appropriately. Helping students to identify what makes them angry *and* build skills to cope with angry feelings is a big task. It takes time, patience and practice, but in the end it will enhance their personal growth, and improve their ability to function in the classroom and in civil society.

Session 19: Healthy Relationships 1 (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Learn the importance of friendship and the qualities of a good friend

Integrating TEACH into the Classroom:

Since this is the first of several sessions on Healthy Relationships we remind students that this is a very important part of why we are here. All the work they do each year in the other areas has led up to these next sessions on Healthy Relationships. We will remind them of our organization and being mandated reporters. We will also remind them of the guidelines for participating, specifically confidentiality and creating a safe space. We invite teachers to join us at any time, to be part of the discussion. This will help to reinforce any of the concepts.

We begin at the beginning - defining friendship and listing the qualities we want in a friend (and don't want) and talking about why friends are important. Having teens say the things they like about friends really puts it into perspective and validates their need to connect with others.

Then we go on to discuss relationships by talking about qualities they might want in someone they were interested in. We compare the 2 lists and they notice how similar they are to each other.

We also bring in a list of the qualities a 4th grade class said they wanted in a friend. We show them how much the 4th graders list matches their relationship list. It is all human nature and the basis for connections.

Teachers can reinforce good behavior and how it relates to being a friend. Remind students of the list of behaviors that they do not like in friends, especially when there's a collective behavior like gossiping. Something you might say is "**Not only is gossip destructive and wrong, everyone in the class said it was one of the things they did not like in a friend.**" The important thing is that they are able to distinguish healthy and unhealthy behaviors in others **and** themselves, as well as identify power and control in unhealthy relationships. These concepts will help build the foundation for healthy relationships later in life.

At this age some of the students will be 'dating' but most won't. There is no magic age or time to start dating and we do not encourage it or discourage it. We remind students that some families have very strong feelings about the age they can date and some don't. We encourage them to talk to parents and discuss dating, boundaries, teen dating violence, etc.

Statistically, in Middle School the number of students who are sexually active is very low. Usually at this age they are experimenting how to talk to each other, learning to flirt, using social media to 'date.'

At the end of this session we will introduce the statistics for Teen Dating Violence, which are alarming. One out of three teen relationships between the ages of 12 & 18 are unhealthy. We want to bring this point home to each and every student. We believe that it's important for them to understand this **before** they start dating; to raise awareness.



Session 20: Healthy Relationships 2 (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Examine limits and expectations in relationships

Participate in an activity that examines the similarities and differences among peers in regard to boundaries in relationships

Integrating TEACH into the Classroom:

In this session we remind students of the qualities they want in a friend and a relationship and will spend the whole time on an activity called **STAY OR GO** that will introduce students to the concept of how relationship behaviors fall on a spectrum from *healthy* to *unhealthy* to *abusive*. During the activity there will be subtle 'red flags' that they may or may not notice, but will experience them together; they will be asked to make a decision to stay in the relationship or go.

Students will be asked why they made their decisions and we get some great discussion out of their experiences. It also gives us an idea where they are with their personal boundaries and their ability to distinguish signs of power over and abuse.

We will refer to their decisions in this activity throughout the Healthy Relationships sessions. Teachers can also refer to them in classroom discussions. Luckily, their decisions today are only a point in time. With knowledge and information they can begin to change how they see red flags in relationships and can make healthy choices.



Session 21: Healthy Relationships 3 (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Learn about the cycle of dating (including break up)

Discuss the current dating process at this school

Integrating TEACH into the Classroom:

The goal of this session is to talk with the students to develop a process map of how they date. We will be writing each step on the board and it's very interesting to see the different processes at each school, and even each class.

We will begin with a review of the Cycle of Dating including definitions of relationships, intimacy, partners, flirting/hurting, and breaking up. This is the most interesting session for adults. We get to peek into the world of teens in Middle School to look at their dating rituals. Each class has their own differences and similarities, sometimes even different terminology. We have not had any experiences where classes refused to share; teens are very excited to share this part of their world, and they have many questions and opinions. We will try to work through dating in a general sense, being as concrete as possible.

We will talk in depth about flirting and when it might cross the line into hurting, we really focus on staying healthy.

These discussions will also include conversations about breaking up. Usually, this is where the drama and chaos in middle school happens so we want to shed light on breaking up and hopefully take out some of the fear and loathing teens seem to have around it. The average length of a middle school relationship can be counted in weeks, so there is always drama around breakups.

This is discussion-driven and we invite teachers to participate, even if it's just to listen. It will provide some insight into current dating practices of the students, as well as power and relationship dynamics of the students. As you know at this age, whatever is going on in their relationships can have a direct bearing on their behavior in the classroom, especially during break-ups.

We do not *encourage* dating relationships, nor do we *discourage* them at this age. We simply provide information to develop the skills they'll need to make healthy choices now **and** in the future. It is up to students what they do with this information. We believe it's good for teachers to learn these lessons in order to become active bystanders in cases where teen dating violence and/or sexual harassment may be happening. Teachers are usually the first to hear about them.

Reaching out now can literally save lives; it did when it was peer abuse (bullying) and it does now when it's teen dating abuse.

We encourage teachers to learn the 'red flags' in unhealthy relationships and let students know you are there to talk if/when you notice something going on. You could say something like, 'Remember the red flags they talked about in TEACH? Are you ok? Are you safe?' If they do open up to you it's critical not to judge them or tell them what to do. You might simply ask, "How can I help?" Make sure they are safe and offer resources. Encourage them to talk to their parents or guardian. It's important they know someone is there and they don't need to go through it alone. If they are unsafe, teachers must report.

It's always been an unwritten policy for teachers not to get involved in teen relationships. There is always some level of drama and they don't really last that long. However, when 1 out of 3 teens are in unhealthy relationships, and many lead to teen dating violence. This violence can be verbal, physical and/or sexual in nature. Every year we hear stories about teens at *our* schools that are in unhealthy relationships. Being an active bystander means saying or doing the right thing. It's important that the perpetrator knows that their behavior is abusive and will not be tolerated. Teachers are always willing to step in when students are bullying one another, this is equally important.

The following websites specifically target teens and have several resources for those that are abused, and for teens who are abusive. Refer the students to us or give them the links below.

<http://www.loveisrespect.org>

<https://www.breakthecycle.org>



Session 22: Healthy Relationships 4 (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Learn the characteristics of healthy/unhealthy/abusive relationships

Integrating TEACH into the Classroom:

In this session we go deeper into the characteristics of a healthy relationship: Respect, honesty, trust and communication. We tend to spend more time talking about unhealthy relationships so we want to have plenty of space to talk about **healthy** relationships. This session is discussion-driven. We remind them of the list they made and to become aware of their needs as human beings.

We will show a short video from LoveisRespect.org about the **Relationship Spectrum**.

LoveisRespect.org **Relationship Spectrum** short video <https://youtu.be/srhlXuS6vFE>

We take this information very seriously and feel it is a good time to talk about these subjects before they are **seriously** dating. If you or any of your parents have any questions or concerns please let us know. We hope these conversations continue at home and in the classrooms. If you have any parent call that wants to have more information or is concerned about the topic, please have them call Cathy at The Center, 530-626-1450.

Session 23: Healthy Relationships 5 (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Introduce terms: consent & coercion (8th only for coercion)

Introduce terms: Sexual Harassment & Harassment

Practice asking for consent in an age-appropriate way

Integrating TEACH into the Classroom:

Today we introduce the concept of consent. In the **7th grade only** classes we talk about getting consent in a general way, eg., holding hands. We will also talk about how conflicted teens feel around consent, females are taught to 'be nice, don't hurt feelings' and there is pressure for males to 'make the first move.' We remind students of their personal boundaries, that it is not ok to cross them, and they have a right to say no. We will also talk about how someone may coerce another person into kissing even when they don't want to (coercion). We show the short video ***A Cup of Tea*** (link below). We've shown this video for 4 years and the students love it. It's cute and funny and takes some of the embarrassment out of talking about **consent**.

In the **8th grade** classes we will talk about sexual consent and coercion. We use a power point with the definition of consent/coercion, including the methods of coercion: *pretending to care more than they really do; ignoring verbal attempts to say stop; continual fighting and arguing about it; threats to end the relationship*. At the end we also give the definition of sexual harassment, but will talk more about this in Peer Abuse 1 & 2.

We take this information very seriously and feel it is a good time to talk about these subjects before they are **seriously** dating. As always, we encourage students to talk to their parent/guardian. If you have any questions or concerns please let us know. We hope these conversations continue at home and in the classrooms. If you have any parent call that wants to have more information or is concerned about the topic, please have them call Cathy at The Center, 530-626-1450.

A Cup of Tea <https://youtu.be/fGoWLWS4-kU>



Session 24: Healthy Relationships 6 (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Learn about the 'red flags' in teen dating violence

Become aware of resources for teens in relationships

Integrating TEACH into the Classroom:

This whole session revolves around unhealthy and abusive relationships. We learn that relationships can fall on a spectrum from healthy to unhealthy to abusive. Together we'll name behaviors across the spectrum, and introduce the cycle of violence to show students how interpersonal violence works.

These topics are hard but necessary for students to understand what a violent relationship looks like. We refer back to the Media Sessions, and how the reality of violence in the media intersects with the reality of violence in interpersonal relationships. So many teens think abusive behaviors are normal, so the cycle continues. And it's important to know they are not normal and they can change.

All the work we've done up to this point is to get them to a place where they can discuss violence in relationships. We name it, talk about it, and help them to understand that they all deserve healthy relationships.

At the end of this class we are going to discuss how students might be active bystanders in teen dating violence and what they might say to a friend in an unhealthy relationship. The idea is to get them thinking that being an active bystander in teen dating violence is similar to being an active bystander to bullying, and to think about their responsibility. We will offer resources for teens to research on the internet in the comfort of their own space. These websites are teen-focused and are great resources to visit for anything to do with interpersonal relationships.

www.loveisrespect.org www.thatsnotcool.com www.breakthecycle.org www.thecenternow.org

At the end of the Unit we would like to do a project around healthy relationships. We are going to invite students to use a variety of mediums like art, drama, poetry, storytelling, etc. We will devote the next class period to work on them and if they need more time, we will take another TEACH session to finish up. The projects will be used as part of our Annual Sexual Assault Awareness March in Placerville. We devote the Healthy Relationships portion of our campaign to our local teens, especially the teens we see in TEACH.

Session 25: Peer Abuse Part 1 (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Explore peer abuse on social media

Explore digital abuse (8th grade)

Become aware of laws that govern peer abuse in social media

Learn to be a positive cyber citizen

Integrating TEACH into the Classroom:

We've changed our Peer Abuse (bullying) focus to Cyber Abuse in Middle School. It's prevalent in Middle School and far-reaching. We will present the latest information on what it is and all the platforms teens are using. We will also talk about how to stay safe, to continue to be active bystanders, and become a positive cyber citizen.

Cyber Abuse is uncontained (anyone can access it), permanent, immediate, and can be anonymous. Cyber Abuse happens 24/7, 365 days. It is important students know that whatever they send, post, and say on social media whether it is through text messages, snapchat, Instagram, Twitter, video games, etc., it is out there for anyone to see. It is important that students empathize with the victim online just like they would in a face to face situation.

We will discuss the following in terms of what they mean, the laws around them, and the consequences of negative participation:

- Harassment & Sexual Harassment (will discuss in depth in the next session)
- Peer Abuse
- Cyber Abuse

In addition, we'll talk about what to do if someone is a target of any of the above terms; how to take care online; the importance of self-care in an online world.

Definitions of Harassment and Peer Abuse/Bullying

- Harassment is always linked to Anti-discrimination Laws and will focus on ***gender, race, ethnic background, color, religion or belief, sexual orientation or disability***. Harassment may be a single incident or a series of incidents.
- **Peer Abuse/Bullying** is unwanted, intentional, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over

time.

For Next Session: We will be soliciting examples of classroom conflict. We would like them to be relevant and timely. The discussion is much richer if it is meaningful.



Session 26: Peer Abuse Part 2 (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Digital abuse (7th Grade)

Become aware of the dangers of sexting and possible consequences

Integrating TEACH into the Classroom:

Three years ago a student asked us to address sexting. When we did, we found out it was a bigger problem than we thought. Some students admitted doing it, but many admitted receiving one or seeing one on a friend's phone. Last year we expanded this into a whole session.

This is a very serious subject because laws are explicit about the consequences of sending and receiving sexts. We implore students not to do it and will explore what sexting is, why teens do it, and the laws around sexting. We have several stories of kids in El Dorado County who have gotten in trouble for sending/receiving sexts and will share.

Discussions around sexting will lead us into sexual harassment. "We've mentioned it several times in previous sessions, but will spend a good portion of this session talking about it. Sexual Harassment is a difficult subject, but critical at this age. Statistically, most sexual harassment happens in Middle School. Every year there are incidents at school. We'll talk about what to do if someone has been sexually harassed, what not to do, supporting friends, reviewing laws, and naming behaviors that are considered sexual harassment.

We are also working on a Sexual Harassment Procedure at Gold Trail and hope to develop a template to use in other schools.

We will be soliciting ideas to help students work through a conflict. We would like to have one that is relevant and timely. The discussion is much richer if it is meaningful.



Session 27: Conflict Resolution 1 (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Explore methods to cool down during conflict

Practice active listening and reflection

Develop solutions to a complex problem

Integrating TEACH into the Classroom:

In this session we introduce the concept of managing conflict with students. We begin with a definition of conflict and talk about triggers that students feel and remind them of the skills they've learned this year and how to use them.

We'll talk about the conflict they came up with last week and check to see if it's still relevant and stress that **THEY** will come up with a solution. We strongly encourage the use of I statements and will begin to examine their needs. We will provide a handout with **Feelings and Needs** to help them through the process. Our goal is to have some authentic discussions around issues that bother the group as a whole and work them out in a non-violent process.

During this activity we will be using the following steps to managing conflict:

- 1) Cool down in the heat of the moment;
- 2) Say what the problem is using 'I feel' statements and identifying needs;
practice reflective listening
- 3) Brainstorm solutions and decide on one;
- 4) Act on solutions
- 5) Check-in

If they do not come up with a conflict we will do a physical activity outside.

Session 28: Conflict Resolution 2 (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Learn to problem solve, communicate ideas, develop leadership skills, practice reflective listening, develop trust and respect, and cooperate with one another on a team to achieve a goal

Integrating TEACH into the Classroom:

After all the hard work they've done up till now, it's important to have some fun. This session is fun and we'll learn something, too! We'll talk about why teams are important and how each person brings something different to a team. As we move through the activities the degree of difficulty increases so that by the end of the year they are able to work through a complex activity without much conflict. However, we will highlight conflict as a barrier to working on a team and how our ability to work through conflict directly relates to our inter-personal relationships as well. These activities involve the teacher's help to encourage participation, give support and help manage the groups.

Everyone loves the very popular **Marshmallow Building** that we are doing in this session! Each student gets an envelope with 20 pieces of spaghetti, 3-ft of twine, a large marshmallow, and 3 ft. of blue tape. With these tools they need to make a free-standing building.....tallest structure wins! This is a great activity to introduce the concept of working together cooperatively. The debriefing is always interesting.

Most teamwork activities are done outside (weather permitting). The activities encourage communication skills, creativity, critical and strategic thinking, leadership skills, conflict resolution, cooperation, negotiation, and planning - all the wonderful skills we've learned in TEACH.

At this point in the year it's important to keep reminding students of all the skills they've learned, their personal assets, and how each person brings their own unique gifts to the group.

Activities:

1. A Mystery (Parent/Teachers) this link has a few team working activities.

<http://www.teachthought.com/teaching/10-team-building-games-that-promote-critical-thinking/>

2. Build a Bridge

http://www.jubed.com/youth_ministry/view/Build-a-bridge/?s=106

3. Mission Possible

- In groups students have a task of things to do outside: do 5 jumping jacks, touch 2 trees, pick up 1 piece of garbage, run 1 lap etc.
- While completing these tasks in the given time students have to stay connected by holding hands or elbows.



Session 29: Conflict Resolution 3 (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Practice conflict resolution skills working in a group on a complex activity

Integrating TEACH into the Classroom:

There is only one activity this session and we will choose which one to do out of the following:

- ZOOM and RE-ZOOM
- TOXIC WASTE

Whichever activity we choose, it will be done outside for the whole class time.



Session 30: Final Class (7th-8th)

Key Objectives:

Celebrate!

Take post survey

Integrating TEACH into the Classroom:

This is the final session of the year. Students have to take a final survey and we may have goodies for them. We'll talk about all the things they've learned through the years and their futures.