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Activity One

Stand up for yourself

This activity helps students explore how they treat themselves in comparison to how they treat others. The activity helps students to stand up for themselves and assert their own needs. Students complete a questionnaire pertaining to their friends then repeat the same questionnaire for themselves. The repetition of the questionnaire opens up the student's awareness of self-assertiveness.

Materials Required

✔ Sufficient photocopies of 'Aren't you nice' and 'How nice are you?' handouts for all students as well as scoring sheets, pens

Step One

Provide students with the 'Aren't you nice' handout and ask them to complete it. Provide the students with the scoring sheet. When completed have a discussion about the scores and questions, presumably most students will score higher in the c and d range (see answer sheet).

Step Two

Provide students with the 'How nice are you?' handout and ask them to complete it.

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Step Three

After the students have scored themselves, compare their scores to the first handout. Did the students mostly get c's and d's. Are they as nice to themselves as they are to their friends? If not, why not? Perhaps it's time to stand up for themselves.

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Aren't you nice? Handout Sheet

Please circle the response that best represents what you would do?

1   At lunchtime, your friend is drawing a cartoon picture when a group of older kids grab your friend's pencil case and race off with it. A few moments later, the older students walk back. One of the students in the group says the pencil case is down one of the boys' toilets. Do you?

a) Go to the toilet block and push the button on the toilet.

b) Ask your friend what he had done to the older students for them to do this him.

c) Say the older students are jerks and suggest forgetting what happened.

d) Go to the toilet block, find the pencil case and go tell the teachers.

2   At recess, your friend is mouthing off about the teacher because he thinks the teacher was picking on him in class. Do you?

a) Laugh at him telling him he deserved it.

b) Tell him he is stupid for getting upset over something little.

c) Say the teacher's is crazy and stupid.

d) Encourage the friend to come and play a game to forget about it for a while. If it is still bugging him after that, tell him to talk to someone like his parents or the school counsellor.

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3 You have noticed lately that a couple of your friends in your group are not inviting one of the other students, who is your friend too, to the movies. Also, when you are at lunch time, they don't seem to include her in the conversations anymore. Do you?

a) Think that she has been a bit of a dork and start not hanging around her as much.

b) You don't want the group to drop you so you will go along with them and just text her later to say you are sorry and really still her friend.

c) Pretend you haven't even noticed what has been happening.

d) Decide since she has been your friend since grade 1, you will stay friends with her even if that means the group will drop you.

4 Yesterday after school when one of your friends was going home, some other kids from another school picked a fight with your friend. They grabbed her mobile phone and broke it and she hurt her arm trying to grab the phone. Do you:

a) Stop being friends with her in case those other kids try to bash you up or take your phone.

b) Say it's her fault because she should not have got her phone out when they were walking past because everyone knows what those kids are like.

c) Send her a get-well text when she gets a new phone.

d) Call around her place with a DVD to watch.

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Aren't you nice? Answer Sheet

Were your answers mostly:

A's Wow, I think you need to have a big think about what it means to be a friend. Is it that you know what it means to be a friend but it is too hard or scary to stand up for your friends?

B's You are a little nicer as a friend than the 'a' person but you need to work on this a bit more. Perhaps like the 'a' person maybe you might need some practice at standing up for what you believe in.

C's You are a pretty good friend to have around. Perhaps things could be even a little bit better if you were more assertive.

D's Wow, you are a great friend to have around and you know when to stand up for your friends and assert yourself. Well done.

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How nice are you? Handout Sheet

Let's do the quiz again to see how nice you are to yourself.

Please circle the response that best represents what you would do?

1   At lunchtime, you are drawing a cartoon picture when a group of older kids grab your pencil case and race off with it. A few moments later, the older students walk back. One of the students in the group says the pencil case is down one of the boys' toilets. Do you?

a) Wish your life could be picked up and flushed down a toilet.

b) Be angry at yourself because you knew you shouldn't have annoyed the boys by sitting near them on the bus to school this morning.

c) Realise it takes all types to make up this world, jerks and all.

d) Go to the toilet block, find the pencil case and go tell the teachers.

2   You are really annoyed because today in class, the teacher was seriously having a go at you. Do you?

a) Think he probably had a right to do because you never do anything right.

b) Get even more frustrated with yourself at still being annoyed over the incident.

c) Say the teacher is crazy and stupid.

d) Just put it down to one simple little incident and decide not to let it spoil your day.

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3   You have noticed lately that when a couple of your friends go to the movies on the weekend and they have not been inviting you like they used to. Do you?

a) Think it's probably due to the fact that you are really not as cool as them, they have better clothes and they are really popular at school, unlike you.

b) Wish your parents would buy you the new iphone because they all thought Kate was cool when she got hers.

c) Don't even bother thinking about it

d) Text some of your other friends and see if they want to hang out this weekend.

4   Yesterday after school when you were on your way home, some other kids from another school picked a fight with you. As they tried to grab your mobile phone, it broke and you hurt your arm trying to save it. Do you

a) Think nothing good ever happens to you. You are the unluckiest kid in the world.

b) Should have listened to your mother who has always said to keep your phone in your pocket unless you need to use it.

c) Forget it and avoid those kids in the future.

d) Realise it could have been worse; you could have broken your arm. On the bright side, you have managed to score a day off school.

Score yourself from the answer sheet previously given out.

Activity Two

Practice makes perfect

This activity uses dice to demonstrate that when undertaking a new skill it is not always achieved on the first try. In small group work, students throw a dice a number of times and record the frequency of the numbers thrown. The activity also highlights that in demonstrating new skills, failures are required before total successes can be fully achieved. Overall, this activity provides students with positive reinforcement to encourage persistence when undertaking a new skill such as being assertiveness.

Materials Required

✓ Sufficient photocopies of 'Practice Makes Perfect Handout' for students

✓ Pens, dice–(one die per group of 5-6 students)

Step One

Tell the students that people are not necessarily born assertive and need time to develop these skills. Like anything it takes a bit a practice.

Ask the students to think back to when they first got on a push bike. Could they ride perfectly the first time they got on the bike? Did it take some practice? Ask the students – who plays a musical instrument or learns a form of dancing. Ask the students when they are learning a new song to play or a new dance routine, when they finally get it right, do they do it right every single time after that. Learning a new way of relating to others, being assertive is no different. It takes practice and sometimes you fail before you succeed.

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Step **Two**

Begin this activity by organising the students into groups of 5 to 6. Each group will need one dice, the 'practice makes perfect' handout and a pen.

Step **Three**

Provide each group with the dice handout. On the left-hand side of the piece of paper is listed the words: round 1, round 2, round 3, round 4 and round 5. For round one, one student throws the dice ten times. Each time the dice is thrown, the number is recorded on the sheet next to round 1 by one of the students in the group. For round two, another student throws the dice ten times while one of the other students records the number thrown next to round 2 on the handout sheet. This continues for all 5 rounds. It does not matter who throws the dice, but it is important that the numbers are recorded for each throw in each round.

Step **Four**

At the end of each round, ask students how many sixes they rolled. How many ones did they get?

Explain that on the law of averages, you should get 1-2 sixes in ten throws. From the total of the 5 rounds, ask the students how many sixes they got. Again, from the law of averages, they should get 6-8 sixes. Ask the students after 10 throws, how many times they got number 1 on the dice and then how many times after 50 throws. Presumably the number of times a six was thrown was approximately the same frequency as the number of times a one was thrown.

Step **Five**

Ask students what's the best number to throw in a dice when you are playing a game. Often this is considered to be 6. What are students' thoughts on if they throw a 1 on the dice? Is it generally seen to be a good number to throw? Think of a six as being successfully being assertive and a one as learning to be assertive. From the law of averages, we know that you can only be successful (throwing a six) by having some not so successful moments (throwing a one). You may not always be spot on at being assertive but according to the law of averages, you will certainly get it right some of the time.

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Practice Makes Perfect Handout

Round 1

Round 2

Round 3

Round 4

Round 5

How many sixes in 10 throws? [ ]   How many ones in 10 throws? [ ]

How many sixes in 50 throws? [ ]   How many ones in 50 throws? [ ]