

Weller Health Education Center

Mean Streets of Middle School
Character Education
Grades 5-8

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Program Objectives



Program Description:

Pre-teens explore the challenges of middle school social dynamics and practice addressing intimidating behaviors in a non-escalating manner to enhance school safety and emotional wellbeing.

Standards:

PA 1.6.5ad, 10.2.6d, 10.3.6ac, 11.2.6h

NJ 2.1.6ef, 2.2.6a, 9.2.8abc

Objectives:

Upon completion of the program, students will:

1. Define intimidation;
2. Identify three types of intimidation;
3. Explain 3 negative consequences of intimidation; and,
4. List two strategies to manage intimidating situations.

Terminology:

Bully—a person who hurts or frightens others

Conflict— a disagreement between two or more people

Decision— a choice

I-message— a statement that contains 1) a specific behavior 2) the effect the behavior has on the individual and 3) the feeling that resulted

Intimidation— when an individual or a group creates fear through threats, insults, or aggressive behavior

Self-esteem— what a person thinks or believes about himself/herself

Social group— a group of people who are of similar age and share similar interests or hobbies

Target— a person who is harmed by violence



The Mean Streets of Middle School

Directions:

Search for and circle the terms below. Good Luck!

E I N T I M I D A I T I O N I
D M S A F O R M O N F B U L L
Y I O I T N S G T T I W T R Q
T O V T E O T N L I I K A T X
L X B E I U L W O M C P R I G
D A X B R O I E G I L V G C Z
E N C M P S N N R D S N E J T
S O C I A L I A R A W I T U T
B C P S S Y H T L T N Q C C R
Z N I V L Y C S Y I O C I E Y
H Q G L N V H G A O B L E R D
K X U B X B F P V N F U U Z X
K B M E E T S E H N A E L R T
C X B X V P N C O T L D O L L
G V N Y Y F F C K Z X T F O Y

BULLY
DECISIONS
ESTEEM
SOCIAL

BULLYING
DIVERSITY
INTIMIDATION
TARGET

CONFLICT
EMOTIONAL
PHYSICAL
TOLERANCE



Who's the Boss Activity

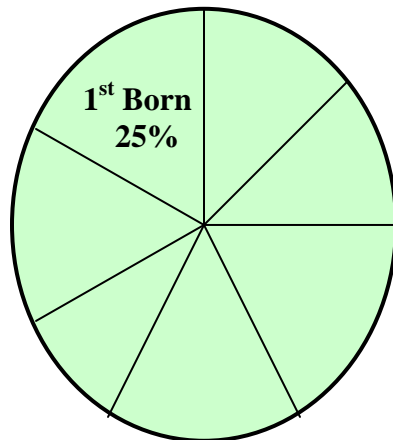
Objectives: Birth order itself does not determine a child's personality, but may influence how he/she interprets his/her place in the family or how he/she interacts among classmates. Students will discuss the advantages and disadvantages of various birth-order positions and draw conclusions based on these lists.

Directions: 1) Divide class into the following groups (students must decide on **1 group** to be included in):

- A) Only child
- B) First born
- C) Second born
- D) Middle of three
- E) Youngest
- F) Twins (if any)
- G) Middle child (large family)

2) Appoint a spokesperson from each group. The spokesperson will jot down the groups opinions and will report back to the class. The groups are to write down all the advantages and disadvantages of their birth positions.

3) Upon completion, have students **create a pie graph** (see below) and show what percentage is represented of each group.





Scavenger Hunt (Getting to Know Class Members)

Objective:

Often the start of school is somewhat stressful. Getting to know each other can often relieve anxiety. Students can find people in the class who fit the characteristics described below by talking to them and then sharing their results with the entire class. Please be sure to have students write down student names.

Find Someone Who:

Likes to ski (snow or water) _____

Has traveled across the U.S. _____

Was born in another state _____

Has more than 3 siblings _____

Has been to a concert _____

Likes to cook _____

Likes to jog or run _____

Likes school _____

Plays an instrument _____

Likes cafeteria food _____

Received two A's on his/her last report card _____

Has played 18 holes of golf _____

Has a brother or sister under 3 _____

Has been to Disney World _____



Note to teacher- the following letter is intended for your students to take home as a follow-up for the days program. Please copy and distribute as you see fit in order to enable caregivers of students to reinforce the lesson of this program effectively.



Weller Health Education Center

Dear Caregiver,

Your child has participated in a program called “Mean Streets of Middle School” that was presented by the Weller Health Education Center. As educators, we understand the importance of school safety to parents and children. The program discusses intimidation and the various contexts where it can occur as well as who is targeted-everyone. Most importantly, students had the opportunity to develop and practice skills for standing up to intimidation safely yet effectively. The Weller Health Education Center emphasizes the importance of handling behaviors appropriately when faced with a bully and never resorting to any kind of physical behavior.

Statistics show that direct, physical bullying increases in elementary school, peaks in middle school and declines in high school. Verbal abuse, on the other hand, remains constant. The U.S. Department of Justice reports that younger students are more likely to be bullied than older students. Many cases go unreported and while physical bullying such as punching and shoving can be very visible and therefore easy to respond to, more subtle forms of bullying including shunning and spreading of rumors can be much harder to detect. This is why creating a safe school environment for our students require the collaborative efforts of parents, teachers and students.

Below you will find some sample activities to guide you in taking steps to improve family health and continue the message started today in our program. For additional resources you are welcome to utilize the parent, teacher and student resource links found on our website at www.wellercenter.org.

Sample Activities

1. Talk about your own experiences. Share your own experiences of school, cliques have been around for a long time!
2. Shed some light on social dynamics. Acknowledge that people are often judged by the way a person looks, acts, or dresses, but that often people act mean and put others down because they lack self-confidence and try to cover it up by maintaining control.
3. Foster out-of-school friendships. Get kids involved in extracurricular activities that give them an opportunity to create another social group and learn new skills.
4. Communicate concerns about sustained bullying calmly with school personnel and work together to seek solutions.

Yours in good health,
Weller Health Education Center