

# Challenge Violent Thinking and Violent Acts

## Summary

In this lesson students will learn about the cycle of violence and how to stand up against violence in school.

## Main Core Tie

Health Education II (9-12)

[Strand 6: HUMAN DEVELOPMENT \(HD\) Standard HII.HD.9](#)

## Materials

Handout: "[Cycle of Violence](#)"

Worksheet: "[Cycle of Violence](#)"

Handout: [Magic Questions](#)

Pencil

## Intended Learning Outcomes

Students will learn the cycle of violence.

Students will learn how to ask for help using magic questions before violence takes place.

Students will become empowered to stand up against violence in their school. relationships.

## Instructional Procedures

### Readiness or Setting the Focus:

Lead a discussion about the cycle beginning with the [escalating tensions](#) and moving around the cycle, making sure each stage is covered well, emphasizing the aggressor, targeted victim, and bystanders. Use the following outline to aide in the progression of the discussion.

Drawing answers from the students and not feeding them with information is key. If students own this discussion, the lesson will be more effective. The first few minutes of the discussion are critical in engaging the students with the discussion. Empower the students that they do have input and choices in their own environment. Students may remember an experience that they were glad not to be involved in and can describe it in third person.

Set up the discussion scenario by asking some of the following questions.

Do you think violence is a problem in our school?

How are different people affected with violence?

How are perpetrators, victims and bystanders affected?

Whose responsibility is it to keep violence out of our school?

What examples can we refer too?

Are there stories you know from other areas?

If something is going to happen in our school, who is the first to know?

Who will be the next to know? And then who? And then who?

What is the responsibility of someone who knows?

### Strategies and Activities

Continue the discussion by using the "Understanding the Cycle of Violence" poster. Many teachers like to use the included signs of parts of the posters so they can place them on the board as they are brought up in the discussion Others use the entire poster and direct the discussion with the poster in front of students. Use whatever is most comfortable. Remember, have students educate you or teach you what these concepts look like in your school. In many schools, students are more streetwise to the

## Escalating Tensions

What are "escalating tensions?"

Are escalating tensions something we can visibly see?

What do they look like?

What is "posturing?"

What kinds of actions, words or dress fuel escalating tensions?

Who would like to role play some of these posturing actions?

What is meant by, "No choice is a choice?"

What is the message if we do nothing?

What do these tensions look like in our school?

Can you stop this?

How can you stop these escalating tensions from going to the next step?

Students will probably throw out easy solutions. Allow students to be the ones who provide answers rather than supplying teacher directed answers. Teachers are encouraged to ask many more questions than statements.

## Trigger Thoughts and Feelings

What are trigger thoughts?

What are trigger feelings?

What does it mean to "save face?"

How can something be built into larger-than-life?

Where in our society do people have to "save face?"

How is it that people would rather play it out than just back down?

What does it mean to "earn respect?"

How are the terms "earn respect" and "fear me" related?

What is the difference between the terms "earn respect" and "fear me?"

Can you stop it here?

If students don't know how to stop the violence, just go on. Don't allow one student to take over the lesson with statements like "you don't back down," or "you can't just let it go."

## No Choice is a Choice

### No Choice is a Choice

Have you ever known of a student who has brought a weapon to school for safety?

What choices are available?

If not getting involved or not making a choice is the choice, what are the consequences?

How can you stop it here?

Is just turning over the situation to law enforcement the end of the cycle?

## Rage Building and Anger Exploding

How do cell phones and texting fuel rage building

How do friends and bystanders fuel rage building?

How can you stop it here?

## Event Problem Set-Up

How do you know when the event has been set up?

When the event is set up, how easy is it to end?

Can this be stopped here?

How can you stop it here?

## Event/Problem is On

Who does this include?

How can this event escalate?

How can we de-escalate the event?

Can this be stopped here?

Consequences

What are the results of this violence?

How does the violence continue if it is not resolved?

Distribute the student worksheet, "Challenging Violent Thinking" Direct students to indicate on the worksheet the answer to the following question. In which place of the violence cycle would it be easiest for you to stop the violence from happening? If there is more than one place to intervene, note each place where you could personally stop the violence.

If appropriate, and with student permission, share some of the comments on the worksheets.

Discuss ideas the students have suggested to violence intervention.

Distribute the handout, "Magic Questions."

Read the magic questions to the class.

Ask students to listen to the questions and decide if one of the magic questions, if asked by a friend, would cause the student to listen and think.

Instruct students to underline which questions are meaningful to them.

Instruct students to add a question to the list that would be impactful to them if there is not one already there.

Ask students to share a meaningful question. Remember, these are questions that are asked by someone close, not by someone you don't care about.

Wrap-Up or Closure

The objective of the lesson is to assure students that they are empowered to intervene in violence at some level.

Instruct students to write, on their worksheet, four or five questions that would work on themselves if someone asked it to them.

Ask students, "If this would work for you, would it work for a friend?"

Some people think that being "powerful" means to bully or manipulate when in fact those actions only take away real power. Impress on the students the idea that real power come from all students creating a safe place where laughter and learning can happen.

Focus on the fact that all people in the school have the power to create the kind of place they want the school to be.

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