

LESSON PLAN
Courtesy of TEEN CONTACT
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Topic:
Conflict Management

Title:
Effective Ways to Handle Conflict

For:
Middle School

Length of time needed:
30 - 45 minutes

Objective(s):
1. To learn effective ways to handle conflict

Material needed:

1. Poster board or transparency with "Talk It Out" rules posted on it
2. If using transparency, you will need an overhead projector
3. Copies of attached handouts

Activity:

1. **"What does the word conflict mean to you?"** Have students answer out loud. (possible answer: conflict means disagreement).
2. **"What feeling do you think we have the most when we are involved in a conflict?"** Have students answer out loud (answer: mad or angry). **"Is it easy for you to be nice or polite when you are mad or angry? No, it is not easy. It is very difficult to handle conflicts in a nice or polite manner, but it is the most effective way. Why do you think being polite will help you handle conflict?"** Have students answer out loud (possible answers: not getting upset will help you think more clearly about solving the problem; people will be likely to compromise if you are being polite, etc.) **"Conflicts will happen for the rest of your life, so it is very important to learn effective ways to deal with them."**
3. **"There are three polite and effective ways to handle conflict."** Distribute page 1 and have student volunteers read each one aloud. **How do you think talking it out will help?** Have students discuss. **How do you think ignoring it will help?** Have students discuss. **How do you think getting help will help you resolve your conflict?** Have students discuss. Explain that being able to talk it out usually leads to a winning situation, but there are times when ignoring it or getting help is the best choice when handling a conflict.

4. Have a student volunteer come up in front of the class and pretend to accidentally drop his coke and spill it on you. Do this exercise four times. Yell at him the first time and call him stupid. Discuss how this reaction is not polite and will usually end up in a bad situation. Repeat the tripping skit three more times using talk it out, ignore it, and get help to resolve the conflict in a polite manner. Discuss why these solutions are better.
5. Divide students into small groups and distribute page 2. Have students use the three methods for handling conflicts for each situation. Give students 5-8 minutes and then have each group explain why they chose their solution.
6. Explain that all three methods can help effectively handle conflicts, but that many times the best way to handle conflict effectively is to talk it out. This often leads to the most understanding lasting resolution. Have a student volunteer role-play an argument with you (some suggestions for an argument are who was in the lunch line first, when the person will bring back the CD they borrowed from you, or whether the person tripped you on purpose). When you are arguing with the student, break some of the “Talk It Out” rules (break some of these rules: have a positive attitude about solving the problem, don’t yell, listen, don’t interrupt, be honest, no name calling).
7. Post the “Talk It Out” sheet, page 3 (that you’ve prepared either on a transparency or piece of poster board). Discuss the six ways to help people talk out conflicts.
8. Divide the class into groups of two. Ask each group to rank the six rules of “Talk It Out” in order of importance, and have each group member write them down on their own sheet of paper. Have each group share with the class their rankings and how they came about.
9. Ask each group to prepare a role-play. The role-play should be a conflict where they break one of the rules. Have the class guess which rule they broke.
10. Ask the groups to prepare a second role-play where the conflict is successfully talked out. Have the class discuss what they used on the “Talk It Out” sheet.
11. Review 3 ways to handle conflict politely and effectively, and review ways to “Talk It Out”.

Evaluation:

Have students answer the following questions on a piece of paper.

1. List the 3 ways to politely and effectively handle conflict.
2. List the 6 methods of solving a conflict by “Talking It Out”.

Resources used:

Conflict Management. *Reference for School Counselors*. Retrieved on June 18, 2003 from <http://mis.spps.org>.

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3 Ways to Handle Conflict
Politely and Effectively

1. TALK IT OUT

2. IGNORE IT

3. GET HELP

(Conflict, <http://mis.spps.org>)

1
Situations

Use the three methods of handling conflict for the following situations.

1. Somebody takes your stack of paper from your desk.
2. Somebody finds your athletic locker combination and steals your gym clothes.
3. Somebody makes fun of your new haircut.
4. A classmate calls you stupid for getting the wrong answer on your paper.
5. Somebody steps on your foot on purpose.

2

TALK IT OUT

1. Positive Attitude

2. Don't Yell

3. Listen

4. Don't Interrupt

5. Be Honest

6. No Name Calling

(Conflict, <http://mis.spps.org>)

