

Health

4.ICR.1.4

Recognize situations that might lead to violence.

Materials Needed:

A sentence that can be used to play the whisper game.

Poster or board to record list of situations that can cause violence.

Focus:

Tell students that you are going to play the whisper game. You will whisper a statement into the ear of one student, and they will in turn whisper what you said to the next student. Once students have whispered around the entire classroom ask the last student to repeat the sentence. The sentence will most likely be quite different from the original. Write the original sentence on the board. Ask students why they think the sentence was so different. Ask the students if they can think of examples of times when miscommunication or misunderstandings might lead to violence.

Statement of Objectives:

Today, you will learn about situations that might lead people to make unacceptable behavior choices. More importantly, you should identify strategies to avoid or diffuse these situations. We have learned many of these strategies in prior lessons.

Teacher Input:

Ask students to brainstorm other situations that they can think of that might lead to violence. Record answers on a chart or board to be used later in small groups. Explain that violent behaviors are learned and can be changed. Acknowledge that this is not easy because there is no one cause of violence. Make sure that students include possible warning signals of violence including peer pressure, miscommunication, anger, conflict and retaliation. Explain that while we cannot always predict every violent situation sometimes we can recognize that a volatile situation is about to occur. Some typical 4th grade issues: name-calling, teasing, breaking in line, pushing and shoving, taking someone's things without permission, pulling a chair out from under someone, excluding people, saving seats, spreading rumors, etc.

Teacher Information

Violence is most likely to occur if one or both people are angry and in conflict over something. If one or both people are unable to control their behavior when angry, then pushing, hitting, kicking, or throwing objects can result. Situations that might lead to violence: when someone is treated with disrespect, when someone's physical safety is threatened, or when someone's needs are not met. Often hurtful words happen first, followed by physical force. Being angry is a normal emotional response when one is hurt or excluded or frustrated. Acting on those angry feelings in ways hurtful to others and is not acceptable behavior. It is better to learn communication skills and problem-solving skills such as identifying the problem and finding solutions that are acceptable to all.

Assessment:

In small groups, pairs or individually, ask students to explain how inappropriate behavior can be avoided in the scenarios they brainstormed earlier. Use communication skills and problem solving skills learned in previous lessons. For example: Instead of continuing a story about someone that you know will be hurtful, say, “I don’t want to talk about something that can hurt someone. Can we talk about something else?”

Closure:

Even though we can’t avoid problems all the time, our classroom is a much better learning environment for everyone when we all work together and behave appropriately.