

Rounding up role models

SPECIFIC OUTCOMES

Recognize that individuals can have a positive and negative influence on the feelings of others.

Assess how to act as important role models for others by

- identifying personal feelings experienced as a result of positive qualities in others
- understanding that role models set an example for others by making healthy lifestyle choices

Demonstrate effective decision-making, focusing on careful information gathering by

- considering the value of life experiences and relationships

CONTENT AND TIME (45-MINUTE LESSON)

8.1 Opening activity: Pondering peer pressure (5 minutes)

8.2 Radiant role models (20 minutes)

8.3 Producing a pledge (15 minutes)

8.4 Review: What have we learned (5 minutes)

REQUIRED MATERIALS

HANDOUT 8.2: Radiant role models

Chart paper

Wax crayons/pencil crayons

8.1 Opening activity: Pondering peer pressure (5 minutes)

Ask the students to provide examples of situations where one friend talks another friend into doing something positive (picking up garbage on the playground, playing with a new student, joining the soccer team). Then ask them to provide examples of situations where one friend talks another friend into doing something negative (bullying another student, cheating on a test, stealing from somebody).

Ensure the students understand that peers are friends or classmates who are about the same age, and that peer pressure is when friends or classmates try to influence the decisions of others. Explain that peers can influence others into making wise decisions (positive peer pressure) or poor decisions (negative peer pressure), as seen in the examples above. Discuss with the class the desire most people have to be liked and accepted by their peers; however, at some point they may be faced with the responsibility of refusing to engage in an activity that they know to be wrong (bullying, stealing, taking drugs, etc.).

8.2 Radiant role models (20 minutes)

Explain to the class that a person who provides a positive influence for others is defined as a role model. A role model is an individual

- whose actions set a positive example for others
- who has set admirable goals and has worked hard to achieve them
- who is admired for his or her positive qualities and contributions

"You look up to your mother because she came here from another country, on her own, without knowing the language. She is very brave. She had to overcome challenging obstacles to achieve her goals in life."

Record as many qualities as possible on chart paper. The following is a list of examples.

courage	caution	patience
trustworthiness	kindness	sensitivity
positive outlook	compassion	generosity
loyalty	energy	gratefulness
thoughtfulness	humour	dependability
fairness	responsibility	honesty

Following several responses, discuss with the class how positive qualities in others affect them personally. Ask them to think about how they feel when they are with someone who is trustworthy, or how they react to a person's positive outlook. Encourage answers such as the following:

"Someone who demonstrates patience influences me to be less irritable when things don't go my way."

Ask why positive role models are important in discussions about drugs, alcohol and gambling. After giving the class the opportunity to make this conclusion, clarify that young people who have a positive example to follow are less likely to experience addiction. For these young people, a role model influences them to make wise decisions and guides them through difficult situations. This role model is an individual in whom they can confide and trust, somebody on whom they can lean for support in difficult times.

Distribute HANDOUT 8.2. The students will choose a personal role model to write about and record his or her name in the centre of the sun. Next, they will describe the qualities they appreciate about this role model inside the rays of the sun. In the tree leaves below, the students will describe how this role model makes them feel. Upon completion, they may colour their pictures.

Challenge the students to discuss the symbolism in this picture. Have them compare the important effects of sunlight on leaves to a role model's positive influence on others.

As an extension to this activity, you may want to invite an appropriate role model into your class as a guest speaker on a topic such as:

- the pursuit of goals in athletics, the arts, the community or in some other significant way
- the value of identifying what is important in life, making wise decisions to achieve the things worth having
- the difference a positive role model can make in a young person's life

This role model can be a university student, a musician, an athlete, an artist, a dancer, a counsellor, a school graduate or anybody with whom the students can identify.

8.3 Producing a pledge

(15 minutes)

Explain to the class that a personal promise is a pledge. It is an agreement with yourself to accomplish something in which you believe strongly. Pledges are often said aloud and sometimes with other people. Encourage the students to describe pledges they have made themselves or pledges they have heard others make (for example the Girl Guide or Boy Scout pledge). Ask the class to consider how making a pledge can guide an individual's choices and behaviour.

Help the students write a class pledge about healthy decision-making, using the knowledge they have gained in these lessons. The following is a sample pledge:

I promise to think about what is important in my life and how drugs and gambling might hinder that. I will practice safety with medicines, I will make wise choices and I will surround myself with positive role models. I promise to make the most of me.

Have everyone say the class pledge together.

During another class, you can extend this activity by asking the students to type the class pledge on the computer. You may also give them the option of writing and illustrating their own pledges. Ask the students to include two lines on the pledge form; one for their own signature and another for the signature of a witness who listens to them read their pledge. Have the students keep their completed pledge forms posted in their lockers or encourage them to take their pledge forms home and share them with family.

8.4 Review: What we have learned

(5 minutes)

As a class, ask the students to share their favorite part of the lesson and one new thing they learned.

Assign students to add new information to the class bulletin board. Refer to the questions generated during the first lesson and ensure that they have all been answered.



Radiant role models

1. In the centre of the sun, write the name of a role model you admire.
2. In each sunray, write a quality you appreciate about that person. Try to use all of the sun's rays.
3. In the leaves of the tree, describe how this person makes you feel inside.

