

# Session 1

## Looking At Conflict In Our Lives:

### The Conclusion

We experience and express conflict in many ways. Everyone has conflict; people are not good or bad because they experience them. Conflict is a normal part of life, and sometimes it is a necessary part of life. The important issue is how we handle conflict. If we resolve our conflicts by fighting, then conflicts becomes something negative. If we handle it in a positive way, then conflict can help us learn more about ourselves and others.

(Page 20)

## Session 2

### When Conflicts Become Fights

Brainstorm what types of media we see conflicts in:  
(Possible answers can include: television,  
books, movies, video games,  
newspapers...)

Using the nine words (see teacher AVB notebook resources) ask the students what they think that the nine words describe? They all describe violence seen on TV or movies - words were given my middle school student.

Questions to ask:

- What do you think about what you have seen? How many conflicts ended violently?
- Why do you think so many television shows feature violence that is handled violently?
- How do you think that viewing television violence - both on the news and in shows or movies - influence your view of conflict in real life? (Page 32)

Facts:

The percentage of people that think TV is real? \_\_\_\_\_. Therefore, \_\_\_\_\_ % knows that it is not. How many hours of the day does the average middle school student watch TV? \_\_\_\_\_. That would be \_\_\_\_\_ hours per week. By graduation from high school (age 18) that would be \_\_\_\_\_ of TV compared to \_\_\_\_\_ hours of class time. At the age of 18 the average high school student has seen \_\_\_\_\_ TV murders and \_\_\_\_\_ TV suicides.

(Page 38)

Answers to the Facts:

The percentage of people that think TV is real? 72. Therefore, 28 % knows that it is not. How many hours of the day does the average middle school student watch TV? 3.2. That would be 22 hours per week. By graduation from high school (age 18) that would be 22,000 of TV compared to 11,000 hours of class time. At the age of 18 the average high school student has seen 18,000 TV murders and 800 TV suicides. (Page 38)

**\*\*The first facts come from the New Mexico Media Literacy Project\*\***

## Session 2

# When Conflicts Become Fights

## Conclusion

We can take certain steps to resolve our conflicts without fighting. We know that fighting often leads to more violence. In the upcoming lessons, we will learn and practice how to deal with common problems that often lead to fighting.

(Page 33)

# Session 3

## Examining Beliefs About Conflict and Violence

### PRIMING:

As we discussed before, the violence we see on TV affects our view of the world - in fact it may lead some people to feel that people in general are basically bad.

### QUESTIONS:

\*Does the media devote more time to telling you about violence prevention or to tell about violence - shootings, stabbings, fights, etc.?

\*Does the media devote more time telling us about the violent kids than telling us about those who are nonviolent?

### INTRODUCTION:

Today you will have the opportunity to examine some of you own beliefs about conflict and violence and discuss where these come from.

Session 3  
Examining Beliefs About  
Conflict and Violence  
Conclusion

Many things affect our attitudes and beliefs - our families, our friends, television, books, advertising, news coverage, and music. And what we believe affects what we do. If we hold hostile beliefs, such as "people are basically mean," then we are more likely to act in a hostile way. Therefore, it is important for us to think about our beliefs, and try to understand where they come from and why they don't always hold true.

(Page 48)

## Session 4

### The Fight In Your Head

#### QUESTIONS:

\*What does the expression "a fight in your head" mean to you?

\*What do you think or what types of thoughts do you have when you have "a fight in your head" ?

\*How do you think the fight in your head can turn into a real fight between you and someone else? (Page 60)

# Session 4

## The Fight in You Head

### Conclusion

When we are upset, our heads are often swimming with thoughts and feelings.

The Think-First Model gives us some help in sorting through the jumble in our heads so that we are better able to resolve our conflicts. It is a tool that helps us explore our ways of thinking when we are in conflict. Most, importantly, the Think-First Model helps us understand our options and make choices to prevent fights.

In the next set of sessions, we will begin to explore and apply the different steps of the Think-First Model.

(Page 62)

# Session 5

## Keeping Cool

### Conclusion

We all experience times of conflict when we become upset. During these times, we have a rush of thoughts and feelings that tells us we are upset. Feeling angry and upset and thinking angry thoughts is normal during conflict. However, we do not have to act on our hot-headed thoughts and feelings.

Instead, we need to pay attention to our anger signals and find ways to stay calm. Once we cool down, we are able to pause and think about the situation with a clear head and are more likely to stay in control and choose a cool response. To really keep cool you need to size up the situation and find out what's going on. We'll be doing that in the next few sessions.

(Page 76)

## Session 6

### Sizing Up the Situation

### Conclusion

To size up the situation so that you are able to resolve conflicts and prevent fights, you must be aware of several things. You need to know, for yourselves and others, what baggage you are bringing to the conflict. You also need to know what all the facts are before you jump to conclusions and impulsively and erroneously define the problems. In the next lesson, you will have the opportunity to practice effectively sizing up the situation.

(Page 92)

# Session 7

## Sizing Up the Situation Again

### Conclusion

When we are able to size up the situation well, we can handle conflict without fighting. We avoid acting on our hot-headed thoughts, we avoid jumping to conclusions, we try to understand where others are coming from, and we define our problems in ways that do not lead to fights.

In the next session, we will talk more about thinking about a situation - figuring out what you want when you are in conflict and some of the options available to you to resolve conflict.

(Page 107)

# Session 8

## Thinking It Through

### Conclusion

Today we learned about the importance of thinking through conflict situations. By thinking it through, you can remain cool-headed and come up with goals and options that help you prevent fights. You also understand that the option you choose will have consequences for yourself and others. How you handle immediate situations has a great impact on whether you can reach your short- and long-term goals. It is important to be aware of the consequences so that you are able to select the option with the most positive outcomes. In the next lessons, you will have an opportunity to practice thinking it through and acting out your best option.

(Page 121)

# Session 9

## Thinking It Through Again

### Conclusion

Today you practiced dealing with conflict by looking and seeing the likely consequences of the different options you generate to meet your goals. This ability to foresee the results of your decisions and actions allowed you to weigh one solution against the other, thinking about the pros and cons of each option for yourselves and others, and to pick the best option - the option with the most positive outcomes for yourself and others.

(Page 137)

# Session 10

## Doing the Right Thing

### Conclusion

After you choose your best option in conflict, you need to act on your choice and do the right thing. You need to talk to people, choose your words carefully and communicate effectively, and pick an appropriate place and time to talk to them. Yet, even with careful thought, the best plans sometimes go awry simply because you were unable to foresee how someone else might react. Therefore, it is also helpful to look back on your choices in conflict and examine how everything turned out. This way, you are able to apply what you learned to resolving future conflicts.

(Page 150)

# Session 11

## Delivering the Message

### Conclusion

There is an old saying; "You catch more flies with honey than with vinegar."

In many ways this statement summarizes what we learned today: positive words and actions are more likely to get you what you want when you are in conflict. Negative language may only get you into fighting and violence. We also learned that the language we use is part of our style and our way of dealing with conflict.

(Page 164)

# Session 12

## Visions of a Nonviolent World

### Conclusion

It is important to hold on to our visions and hopes for a nonviolent world. Yet, it is especially difficult to hold on to our visions when we encounter conflicts every day or when we see our leaders advocating war. Again, and again, we see glorified images of the powerful and the aggressive. But we have to wonder whether their victories are empty because they come at the expense of others. There is an Ethiopian proverb, "When two elephants fight, the grass suffers." Whether violence occurs as a fight between two individuals or a war between several countries, it affects our environment and it affects people who had nothing to do with the original conflict.

(Page 176)