

Session Topic: Social Skills (Deal with Prejudice)

Developmental Level: Middle School

Purpose: To increase awareness and understanding of prejudice and stereotypes.

Materials: pre-made labels (Located in 28a.)

Description of Session:

1. Before the group starts, prepare adhesive labels with adjectives or descriptions written on them. Some should be positive (Friendly, helpful, attractive, good athlete, good student) and others should be slightly negative (snobby, teacher's pet, bossy, lazy, shy).
2. Say "We are going to play a game called Labeling. I am going to place a label on each person's forehead so that no one can see his or her own label. Then we will mingle and chat with one another, and you should treat each person as if his or her label is true. For example, if my label says Leader, you might want to ask my advice or follow my lead. The object of the game is to try to guess your own label based on how others treat you. The three rules are: 1) You can't look at your own label. 2) You can't tell anyone what his or her label says. 3) You can't ask other people to tell you what your label says.
3. Place the labels on their foreheads. Model the interactions by treating group members stereotypically as if their label were true. Make sure to interact with students who may not be actively participating.
4. After 5-10 minutes of interacting, ask group members to guess what their labels say. Then have them take off their label and see what they say.
5. Ask students how it felt to be treated based on a label.
6. We all wear labels and people treat us as if they were true. This is called prejudice. Prejudice is often based on stereotypes (explain what it means if they need).

Discussion Questions:

1. What are some examples of stereotypes you've heard, either about your own group or others'?
2. Where do these attitudes come from? Where did you learn the stereotypes you have?
3. Who has ideas about what we can do to eliminate prejudice?
4. What did you learn from the Labeling game? What did you learn about prejudice?