

Children's Connection Curriculum

**Session Topic:** Social Skills / Interactions – Friendships, Peer/Peer (I Can Choose Not to Hurt Others: Activities 1, 2, and 3)

**Developmental Level:** Elementary School

**Purpose:** To teach children that “getting back” at others is not an effective way to resolve conflict; to help children identify the consequences of hurtful behavior; to brainstorm positive responses to hurtful actions and remind children that they can choose not to hurt each other

**Materials Needed:** All Activities: (Optional) Book: We Can Get Along by Lauren Murphy Payne, M.S.W., illustrations by Claudia Rohling, M.S.W.

Activity 1: Tattling vs. Telling handout

Activity 2: Copies of “Caution Handout” from A Leader's Guide to We Can Get Along, p. 35, printed on bright yellow paper if possible; crayons, colored pencils or markers; Home Handout “25 Things That Friends Don't Do” from A Leader's Guide to We Can Get Along, p. 13 (optional)

Activity 3: Poster board and easel, or paper and tape to put the paper up on a chalkboard or wall; markers; Home Handout “20 Things to Do Instead of Hurting Someone Back” from A Leader's Guide to We Can Get Along, p. 36 (optional)

**Description of Session:** Read all or part of the book We Can Get Along (optional).

Activity 1: The Trouble with “Getting Back”

Remind the children of a recent occasion when two or more of them had a physical altercation of some kind or pose a hypothetical situation using the names of children in your group. Discuss the situation and the outcome using Discussion Questions below.

Activity 2: Choices and Consequences

Introduce this activity by asking the children, “Who knows what a consequence is?” Guide them to understand a simple definition: *A consequence is something that happens as a result of something else.* Give examples, using the names of children in your group. For example:

- “If Leeza hits Betsy, then Betsy feels hurt. That hurt is a consequence.”
- “If Zach pushes Noah down on the playground, Noah might get a bloody knee. His bloody knee is a consequence.”
- “If Tracy and Mariah are friends, and Mariah punches Tracy, then Tracy might not want to be friends anymore. Losing a friend is a consequence.”
- “If I see Robert push or punch someone else, I'm going to put him on a time-out. The time-out is a consequence.”

Give each child a copy of the “Caution” handout. Ask them to think about hurtful things they sometimes feel like doing when they are angry. If they need help getting started, you might refer to the “25 Things That Friends Don't Do” Home Handout.

Tell the children to use the top half of their handout to draw or write about hurtful things they sometimes feel like doing (or a hurtful thing they have actually done). Have them use the bottom half to draw or write about the consequence (potential or real) of that action. Afterward, ask volunteers to show their finished handouts to the group and share what they felt like doing and the consequence.

#### Activity 3: What Else Can You Do?

Ask the children, "If someone hurts you, what else can you do instead of getting back at the person?" Invite the children to brainstorm alternatives and write down their responses on poster paper. If the children have difficulty getting started, give some examples from the "20 Things to Do Instead of Hurting Someone Back" handout. Affirm the children's good ideas.

#### **Discussion Questions:**

1. What was the conflict about?
2. Who started the \_\_\_\_\_ (hitting, kicking, pushing, etc.)?
3. When \_\_\_\_\_ (other child) hit (or kicked or pushed) back, did that make the conflict worse or better?
4. Do you think that "getting back" ever makes a conflict better? Or does it always make it worse?

Reference: A Leader's Guide to We Can Get Along by Lauren Payne, M.S.W., and Claudia Rohling, M.S.W., p.33-36, 13