

Junior Soldiers

Unit 13 : Lesson 3



Resolving Conflict

PURPOSE: For the children to explore and understand safe and healthy ways to resolve conflict.

*Losing your temper causes a lot of trouble,
but staying calm settles arguments.*
Proverbs 15:18 (CEV)

Consider & Prepare

Read:

- Proverbs 15:18
- Proverbs 20:3
- Romans 12:17-18

In today's lesson we will be focusing on how to respond to conflict in a safe, healthy manner that promotes a peaceful resolution.

It's important for children to understand that conflict is inevitable in life. We will not always agree with everyone and misunderstandings will occur.

Be mindful that some children may have witnessed conflict in the form of physical/verbal violence.

Let the children know that today's topic may stir up uncomfortable feelings for some. Assure them that you are happy to talk with them more after the lesson if they would like.

What you will need:

For 'Connecting In'

Activity option 1

- List of YES or NO questions (example list provided)

Activity option 2

- Inflatable beach ball
- Permanent marker
- List of YES or NO questions (example list provided)

For the 'Main Thing'

- Envelopes containing printed scenarios (page 7). Place parts A and B in separate envelopes and mark the scenario number on the front of each envelope

For 'Tying In'

- Paper, crayons/pencils (for those who don't want to role-play or talk)

For 'Home and Beyond'

- Print off the 'Home and Beyond' cards attached
- Print off the "STOP, LISTEN, SAY, COMPROMISE" memory cards (page 8)

Connecting In

I wonder if you have ever had a disagreement with someone. Maybe you are angry with someone right now because of a difference of opinion! Today we are going to take some time to think about how we can respond when we experience conflict.

Activity

Option 1

Instruct the children to stand in the middle of the room. Explain that you are going to call out a question (use the list of questions from Option 2, or make up your own). If their answer to the question is 'YES', they are to move to the right side of the room. If their answer to the question is 'NO', they are to move to the left side of the room. Once children have moved into position, ask another question.

Option 2

Draw 13 large shapes (boxes/stars/speech bubbles) on an inflated beach ball. In each shape, write out a question from the list below. Have the children stand in the middle of the room, tossing the beach ball to each other. When the leader calls out the word, "PAUSE," the children are to freeze and remain quiet whilst the child holding the beach ball reads out loud the question under their right thumb, and then shares their answer with the group.

Example of fun, easy YES or NO questions:

- *Are chocolate milkshakes yummier than strawberry milkshakes?*
- *Is maths the best subject at school?*
- *Is green the best colour?*

- *Are kittens cuter than puppies?*
- *Are computer games better than board games?*
- *Are sweet foods better than salty?*
- *Is Batman stronger than Superman?*
- *Is Coke better than Pepsi?*

Example of harder YES or NO questions:

- *Is it okay to tell a lie if it's going to prevent someone from having their feelings hurt?*
- *Is it okay to hit someone?*
- *Is it okay to bully people you don't like?*
- *Is it okay to steal a loaf of bread if your family is poor and really hungry?*
- *Is it okay to disobey your parents?*

Link

Gather the children together to discuss the following questions:

- Is it okay to disagree with someone?
- How do you feel when you someone expresses a different opinion to you?
- How do you respond in that situation?
- Which of the questions in the game really mattered

The Main Thing

Activity

Option 1 - Larger groups

If your group has more than ten people, divide the children into five groups and give each group an envelope containing a scenario. Ask them to open their envelope and take it in turns to read out the scenario.

- How do you feel about this?
- How would you respond to this?

Option 2 - Smaller groups

If your group has less than ten people, read a card to the whole group and discuss:

- How do you feel about this situation?
- How would you respond in this situation?

Repeat with the other scenarios.

Well, what if I told you that you don't have the full story? In these envelopes (hold up the B envelopes to show them) I have the rest of what happened. I will let you have a look later in the lesson.

Some conflict starts with a disagreement. It is normal for us to disagree and possible for us to disagree and still get along. Some conflict comes from misunderstandings.

When conflict happens, there are many different ways that we can respond. Some responses can destroy relationships but some responses can allow us to work through the conflict and continue to be friends.

We are going to look together at four steps for resolving conflict in a positive way.

NOTE: There are actions that go along with each of the steps that you might like to demonstrate as you say the step. Before reading out each explanation ask the children what they think they might have to do in that step.

1. STOP (*action – hand up in front*): Stop and calm down. What are some ways to calm down when you are facing conflict? Take a breath, close your eyes, take a step back, count to ten, talk quietly, etc. Why do you think this step is important?
2. LISTEN (*action – hand cupped up next to your ear*): Listen to the other person. Give them time to explain what they would like in the situation. It is important to listen and not jump in while the other person is talking (as hard as it can be).
3. SPEAK (*action – hand splayed out in front of mouth*): When the other person has explained their side of the conflict, gently and with kindness explain your side.
4. COMPROMISE (*action – both hands together in a hand shake*): Work together to find a solution that can work for both of you. This might be sharing, taking turns, playing together, or you might even work out that you want different things from one another. Aim to find a solution that you can both agree on.

The Bible gives us an example of conflict that ended badly. Have you heard of the story of Cain and Abel?

Look up Genesis 4:1-8 (CEV) and read it together.

This is an extreme story but a good example of what can happen if conflict is not resolved in a peaceful and calm way.

- What are some of the feelings that Cain had in this story?
- How did he react to those feelings?

Cain was jealous of Abel and if they had talked about this together the whole story might have ended very differently.

- What are some things Cain could have done or said to Abel that might have helped resolve the conflict?

Role Play

Ask two children to stand up and act out what Cain and Abel might have said if they followed the steps we have looked at for resolving conflict. If individuals get stuck acting out the scene let the other children offer suggestions for what they could do. If lots of them want to act out the story using the conflict resolution steps and have different ideas; then go through the role play a few times to show them sometimes there is more than one solution. Encourage the children to use the actions and say the four steps out loud as they do the role play.

Activity

If you have more than ten children ask them to get back into their five groups and give them the B envelopes.

If you have less than ten children read out the B envelopes to the whole group.

- How would your reaction be different now that you have the full story?
- Do you think if you had used the four steps “STOP, LISTEN, SAY, COMPROMISE” before you had the full story it could have helped you not to feel so upset/hurt?

Tying In

Break into small groups and create ‘before and after’ role plays of conflict with and without using the conflict resolution steps.

- Do the four steps, “STOP, LISTEN, SAY, COMPROMISE” make it easier to come to an agreement?
- How did you feel after using “STOP, LISTEN, SAY, COMPROMISE”?
- Ask the children to say the four steps out loud and to do the actions to help them remember the steps.

NOTE: Some children may struggle with the role play and find it uncomfortable. They may prefer to draw examples with speech bubbles or talk to you about it instead.

Memory Verse

Share the memory verse with the group and ask them to repeat it after you. Say it five times as a group. Ask if anyone is willing to attempt to say it on their own. Encourage as many children to have a turn at this as would like to.

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Prayer Time

Instruct everyone to sit/stand in a circle. Holding a soft/light ball in your hands (e.g. tennis ball, beach ball, stress ball), tell the children that we will be using the “speaking ball” while we pray together.

Focus on any/all of the following topics:

- Thanking God for loving us, even when we do the wrong thing.
- Saying sorry for the times when we have reacted unfairly towards someone else.
- Asking for God’s help when faced with a conflict.

Ask the children to raise their hand if they would like to pray out loud. Allow children to choose which prayer topic they would like to focus on. Throw the ball to a child who has their hand up. Encourage the child to say their prayer out loud. When the child has finished their prayer, ask who would like to pray next. Ask the child holding the ball to throw the ball to the next person (who may be sitting/standing on the other side of the circle). Repeat this activity as many times as you like, allowing all children who raised their hand to have at least one turn at praying out loud.

Home & Beyond

Print off the ‘Home and Beyond’ cards attached. The children might like to keep these in their journals or notebook where they could write or stick the challenges, reflect, answer questions or complete activities each week.

- Tell your friends/family/Big Bud about the four steps to resolving conflict (“STOP, LISTEN, SAY, COMPROMISE”) and teach them the actions.
- Remember to use the four steps if you face conflict this week. If you use the steps, talk to your Big Bud about how helpful it was.

Hand out the “STOP, LISTEN, SAY, COMPROMISE” memory cards for the children to take home and display as a reminder.

RESOURCES / HAND OUT

SCENARIOS ('The Main Thing')

*The blue is the second part of the scenario that is handed out later

Scenario 1 (Part A) - Hannah has invited you to play at the park with her. You go to the park and see her playing with Olivia instead. When you walk towards them they get up and walk away.

Scenario 1 (Part B) - Hannah arrived at the park early and saw Olivia fall and badly hurt her leg. Hannah had gone over to help and make sure Olivia was okay. There was dirt in Olivia's scratch so they were walking over to the tap to wash it off.

Scenario 2 (Part A) - Your best friend Mike had a birthday party at his house and invited all his friends except you. Mike stops talking to you as much as he used to

Scenario 2 (Part B) - Mike's mum sent out the invitations and yours got lost. Mike thought you didn't like him because you didn't go to his party.

Scenario 3 (Part A) - You were playing with a ball but then someone called you over to talk to them so you put the ball down and walked away. When you came back Tristan was playing with the ball and wouldn't give it back saying he was there first.

Scenario 3 (Part B) - Tristan had been playing with the ball earlier but had to go to the toilet. Because he was gone Tristan didn't know you had been playing with the ball too.

Scenario 4 (Part A) - You are fixing a lamp and your mum comes in and gets angry at you and sends you to your room for time out.

Scenario 4 (Part B) - Your little brother was running around the house and knocked into the lamp, causing it to fall and break. You were trying to fix it when your mum came in and assumed that you were the one who broke it.

Scenario 5 (Part A) - Your class is waiting in line for a treat from the teacher when Sally pushes in at the front of the line and gets the first treat.

Scenario 5 (Part B) - Sally was being picked up early by her parents because she had to go to a doctor's appointment. She had already spoken to the teacher who recommended that she receive her treat first.

“STOP, LISTEN, SAY, COMPROMISE” memory cards

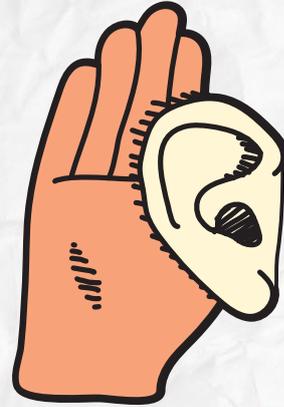
1. STOP

Stop and calm down.



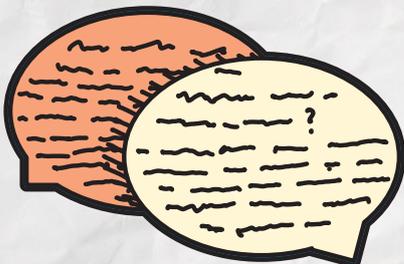
2. LISTEN

Listen to the other person



3. SAY

Gently and with kindness explain your side.



4. COMPROMISE

Work together to find a solution that is okay for both of you.





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Home & Beyond

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