

## Handout for Teachers

### Building Healthy Friendships with Great Leadership

Outline of the class lessons: grades 4-7 (with practice, 45 minutes.)

Easiest to prepare to facilitate by viewing first at

<https://vimeo.com/oneworldourworldprogram/videos/sort:alphabetical/format:detail>

**Note:** Success depends upon enough group members adopting these ideas to shift the dynamics of their group's interactions. Help this happen by only attempting the lesson when it:

- 1) Follows an empathy generating event, like our interactive global assembly program.
- 2) Is conducted for all classes of the same grade within the same day, and
- 3) Is presented by someone whom the students will consider a special speaker.

**PART I** 12-min. **Defining True Friendship** Brainstorm with students how they define friends and friendship. Illustrate how "sticking with friends, no matter what" can be dangerous, even deadly ... depending upon the choices made by our friends (drugs, weapons, gangs, etc.)

1. Ask, "What would you do if a friend were considering..." (gangs, drugs, suicide?)  
Typical responses are that they'd help convince their friend otherwise (keyword for list: ADVICE.)
2. Emphasize their response above: that good friends, true friends, give their friends help/advice to avoid mistakes - we'll come back to this in part III-b.

**PART II** 15-min. **A Break in the Tension (with use of prepared overhead transparencies or board)**

1. **Active Listening** involves our full attention, our posture, our eye contact, ... and our thinking about the content and emotion of the speaker
2. **Exercise: Practice listening in pairs**, (show sample discussion topics, make pairings, time one minute to speak, listener restates for 15 seconds.) Invite student comments. Typically, there will be mention of the good feelings when others actively listened to them. Reverse roles and repeat.
3. **Extrapolate** as to how this could help them during periods of conflict, whether with parents or classmates.

**PART III** 13-min. **Defining Leadership via Extreme Examples** (use overheads, and diagram on board)

1. Briefly brainstorm names of famous world leaders (Bad and Good) of the past 100 years. The two most consistent names that kids provide are Hitler and Dr. M. L. King, and they serve this exercise well as archetypes of leadership.  
**(Strong recommendation: avoid/ disallow naming USA presidents – to avoid political viewpoints.)**
2. Ask what Hitler did that earned his notoriety. (**Hint** as to how he gained popularity & power – Tell them they are a great class, and then ask if you should keep talking or be quiet. Hitler became popular by praising the German majority, and blaming problems on a minority group.) He did it very effectively and gained great power, and caused great harm. **Saddam Hussein, Osama bin Laden, Stalin** (and others whose names the kids provide) used similar techniques.
3. Ask: Did Martin Luther King (and **Mother Teresa, Gandhi, Einstein, Schweitzer, Susan B. Anthony, Sadat, or Mandela**) gain fame for separating people? No! They're known for speaking in ways to bring people face to face with moral principles, and in the process bringing people together to solve common issues.

**PART IV** 5-min. **Conclusion: Linking Leadership to Friendship**

1. Looking to the schoolyard: "How do our friends / classmates behave?"
2. Ask if any of the popular kids "sometimes, maybe, try to build themselves up by putting others down." ... soften the next statement by pointing out that "these same kids are learning math, learning science, and if it is their personality to want the attention of leadership, they are learning /practicing how to lead.... Ask them, "At the time they put others down, which type of leader are they practicing to become?" "Is that in their friend's best interest?" And "Would a friend wish this outcome for their friends?"
3. Returning to their earlier assertions and using their new view of leaders:  
Real friends will only support respectful behavior within their circle of friends.
4. Ask them to raise their hand if they have at least one friend at the school. If honest, everyone will be included.
5. If each friend only made the effort to help their own friends, it would mean that everyone would have a person to help them be their best. And, if we each act as true friends, we'll only develop good leaders! Our class and school (now and through High School) will be a friendlier, safer place...just about immediately. It is up to them!

**Teachers and staff need to nurture these ideas. The first students to try are more vulnerable to peer criticism.**

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