

#9301

ME AND MY FAMILY: SOLVING CONFLICTS

SUNBURST COMMUNICATIONS

2001

Grade Levels: 5-9

24 minutes



DESCRIPTION

Does getting the facts help avoid conflicts? How does saying how you feel help? Does body language count? Shows practical conflict resolution techniques in realistic family situations. Lists skills used.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Subject Area: Working With Others

- Standard: Uses conflict-resolution techniques
 - Benchmark: Understands the impact of criticism on psychological state, emotional state, habitual behavior, and beliefs
 - Benchmark: Determines the causes of conflicts
 - Benchmark: Does not blame
 - Benchmark: Identifies an explicit strategy to deal with conflict
- Standard: Displays effective interpersonal communication skills
 - Benchmark: Provides feedback in a constructive manner
 - Benchmark: Uses nonverbal communication such as eye contact, body position, voice tone effectively
 - Benchmark: Does not react to a speaker's inflammatory deliverance

Subject Area: Self-Regulation

- Standard: Restrains impulsivity
 - Benchmark: Remains passive while assessing situation

INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

1. To identify and define common family conflicts and problems.
2. To demonstrate ways to resolve family conflicts using conflict resolution skills.
3. To enable young adolescents to recognize and understand causative factors of conflicts within the family.
4. To emphasize the importance of honest and open communication.
5. To encourage teenagers to respect the feelings and opinions of other family members.

AFTER SHOWING

Discussion Items and Questions

1. Discuss the questions that appear onscreen in the video.
2. In what ways are some of the "Top Ten Solutions" appropriate for your family? How do you feel about this list? Discuss some situations where they could be put to use.
3. Andy's older sister says he could have avoided the fight with Liz if he had asked "a simple little question." Can you think of a time when you or someone you know got into a fight because of not getting the facts? Describe the situation and the outcome.
4. Andy ended up not only feeling foolish, but also probably getting into trouble for causing the lamp to be broken. Have you ever gotten into or observed a fight (and trouble) that could have been avoided by using some of the conflict resolution skills in the video? What was the situation? What could you have done differently?
5. Marni describes an incident where she felt that her father's behavior not only embarrassed her, but also caused her to miss an important play in her soccer game. Why do you think young teens often find their parents' behavior embarrassing? Do you think that Marni really believed her father caused her to miss the soccer play? What do you think was really upsetting her?
6. Marni spoke to her father about this problem in two very different ways. Which way are you more familiar with? Do you think using "I" messages is a realistic thing to do? Have you ever used an "I" message to tell someone how you feel? What affect did it have on the conflict?
7. When Jody returns from the movies, she confronts her brother Ross. Although Jody is very angry, Ross is indifferent. Have you ever found yourself in a similar situation? Describe the situation and its outcome. Do you think that you could have handled the situation differently? Discuss the alternatives.
8. The reaction of Jody's mother is not unusual. It seems as though she is protecting the younger sibling. Jody ends up feeling angry and frustrated. Do you agree with her feelings? Why or why not? Do you think this is common experience?
9. Jody's mom says, "You're right. I should have found out what happened first. I guess we all could learn to listen." How do you feel about this reaction? Why do you think this type of comment is helpful in solving family conflicts?
10. Cliff's mom asks him to drop "that tone" from his voice. What does his voice suggest? Why might this be a means of expression at this time? Relate this to a situation that you have encountered.
11. How do you feel about Cliff's comment to his parents, "Could you maybe give me a little credit for having some smarts?" Have you ever said that to a family member? How did you feel at the time? Was there anything in your behavior that made your family feel that you were too immature to handle a situation? What could you have done to change their opinion of you?
12. Cliff tried to discuss his problem with his brother. Why do you think Cliff felt frustrated by Will's reaction? Have you ever felt this way?
13. Later Will says that if Cliff wanted to discuss his problem he should have waited for Will to finish his game. Do you agree with Will? Why or why not? What difference would it have made?

14. Although it is difficult, Cliff is honest when he tells Jesse and Gordon why his parents are against his participation in the band. What are the advantages of this honesty? Have you ever been in a similar situation? Discuss the situation and its outcome.
15. Mark Twain once said, "When I was a boy of 14, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be 21, I was astonished at how much the old man had learned in seven years." Discuss this quotation and its relevance to solving conflicts at home.

Applications and Activities

1. Ask students to write down some typical family conflicts they have experienced. Then make a list of all the issues the students mentioned. Compare the similarities and differences. Do one or two issues appear more than others? Ask students to think about why families have the same or different conflicts. Do they note any cultural differences? Gender differences? Any differences that occur because of their birth order in the family?
2. To solve conflicts it is important to be able to express feelings without attaching the other person. "I" messages allow you to say how you feel in a positive way. An "I" message has four parts:
 - a. I feel... (state the feeling)
 - b. When you... (state the other person's behavior)
 - c. Because... (state the effect)
 - d. I need... (state what you want to happen)Have the students make up situations of their own. Using "I" messages, ask them to write a response for each situation that states their feelings, but does not attack the other person. Then ask the group to read their responses and share them with their classmates.
3. Television offers unique opportunities for students to observe fictional family life. Ask students to watch a specific television program or videotape one to show to the entire class. Then ask them to write a report on the program including:
 - a. A brief synopsis of the family and the family relationships;
 - b. A description of the conflict;
 - c. The way in which the conflict was resolved;
 - d. Alternative techniques that could have been used.Then ask the students to discuss how realistic they thought the program and people were. Did they think there were lessons they could learn from the TV families?
4. Compile a list of common family conflicts and write them on the chalkboard. Divide the class into small groups. Have each group:
 - a. Select one conflict.
 - b. Identify causes.
 - c. Look for possible solutions.
 - d. If the situation is one that cannot be solved quickly and easily, ask students to brainstorm for other solutions.
5. Body language and tone of voice have a direct, often negative, affect on conflicts. Ask students to describe and/or demonstrate the body language and tone of voice they associate with these emotions typical of family conflicts—feeling: *left out; unappreciated; taken advantage of; jealous; treated unfairly; treated like a baby.*

RELATED RESOURCES



Captioned Media Program

- Getting Better at Getting Along #3249
- It's Not My Fault: A Program About Conflict Resolution #3051
- Mela's Lunch #3055



World Wide Web

The following Web sites complement the contents of this guide; they were selected by professionals who have experience in teaching deaf and hard of hearing students. Every effort was made to select accurate, educationally relevant, and "kid safe" sites. However, teachers should preview them before use. The U.S. Department of Education, the National Association of the Deaf, and the Captioned Media Program do not endorse the sites and are not responsible for their content.

- **OUT ON A LIMB**

<http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/conflict/maria1.html>

A guide to getting along, presents topics geared for lower elementary grades such as "Feelings," "Listening," "How we see things," and other types of feelings.

- **FAMILY WORKS**

<http://www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/familyworks/index2.html>

Strategies for building stronger families, presents several topics on "Families and..." which include respect, anger, stress, managing time, and much more.

- **BLENDED FAMILIES**

http://kidshealth.org/kid/feeling/home_family/blended_p3.html

Gives a short description on how to handle conflicts within a blended family. Also available in Spanish.

- **GIRLS AND BOYS TOWN**

<http://www.girlsandboystown.org/hotline/behaviors.htm>

Stresses that kids "will never be totally independent from their parents and will always do 'parent things.'" However, there are some steps kids can take to help parents realize how responsible they are, which are presented on this site.