



Trending: Consent / Week 1

BEFORE GROUP

BOTTOM LINE

Honor others, and expect to be honored by others.

SCRIPTURE

Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves (Romans 12:10 NIV).

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To help students see the power they have as middle schoolers to both give consent and honor the consent of others.

THINK ABOUT THIS

There's a tricky tension to navigate when talking to middle schoolers about consent. For starters, they're still at an age where they have to honor the wishes of the adults and authority figures in their lives. Sometimes saying "no" is not an option. Keep in mind that there may be some confusion as it relates to this conversation

because they're struggling to balance having to do what they're told in some areas and finding the freedom to say "no" in others. On top of that, you may have some students who haven't had their consent respected. They may open up to you about what happened to them without even realizing how big of a deal it really is. Individual follow up is going to be key here so that students who need help can take some steps to get it. And finally, remember to talk about what it means to honor other people's "no." We don't want to dismiss the fact that there may be some students in your group who are pushing against the consent of others, and this could be the message and conversation that helps them see that.

This guide is a suggestion, not a formula. Adjust the questions and activities as needed, and don't feel like you need to do, or ask, everything you see here.

DURING GROUP

DISCUSS THIS

1. What's one example of something you have to ask permission for . . .
 - a. From your parents?
 - b. From your teacher?
 - c. From your friends?
 - d. From your siblings?
2. What's one example of something a middle schooler might be allowed to give permission for on their own?
3. In your own words, how would you define "consent"?
4. Why is it important to talk about consent?
5. On a scale of 1 to 10, how comfortable do you feel saying "no"? (1 being very uncomfortable, and 10 being very comfortable)

DO THIS (EXPERIENCE)

Read the provided scenarios out loud to your group and prompt your students to discuss ways that they can honor the consent of others and expect to be honored by others as well.

6. What's the hardest part about saying "no" for you?
7. What's one thing that makes saying "no" easier for you?
8. How does it make you feel when someone doesn't respect your "no"?
9. How do you think it makes others feel when you don't respect their "no"?
10. What's one way you could honor . . .
 - a. Others in your relationships?
 - b. Others in your friendships?
 - c. Others through technology?
 - d. The adults in your life?
 - e. Your siblings?
11. What's one way you want to be honored by others . . .
 - a. In your relationships?
 - b. In your friendships?
 - c. Through technology?
 - d. With the adults in your life?
 - e. In your family?

CONSENT SCENARIOS

SCENARIO 1

You really like someone in your class. After weeks of DMs and liking everything each other posts on TikTok, you finally got the courage to tell them you like them. Even though they've acted like they're interested in you, all they said was, "Cool." What does that mean? What should you say or do?

SCENARIO 2

Someone you like said it was okay to hold their hand, so you did. But then the next time you hung out, they changed their mind and said they didn't want to anymore. It's confusing. Do they like you or not? Do you ask them about it or not? What do you do?

SCENARIO 3

You've been dating your boyfriend/girlfriend for a few months and they asked you to send them nudes on Snapchat. You don't feel totally comfortable sending the photos. On the other hand, the good part about SnapChat is that the pictures disappear, so no one would ever know. You've never done this before and you don't want to hurt this person's feelings or damage your relationship with them. You really like them and you want them to keep liking you. What do you do?

SCENARIO 4

When joking around with your friends, you push or shove them, take their things just to mess with them, or make fun of them. It's all in good fun and they laugh when you do it. Even though they smile and laugh, they ask you to stop. It's confusing. Are they serious about wanting you to stop? Or do they think it's just as much fun as you do? What should you do?

SCENARIO 5

A friend your parents don't want you to hang out with keeps pressuring you to lie to your parents so that you can hang out together this weekend. You really want to hang out with your friend, but you don't want to lie to your parents. You've already lost your phone enough times for lying. What do you do?

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