

Lesson #4: Fighting

OPENING – Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) is a leadership program for preventing violence.

Check in with students:

Remind students who you are. Ask how things are going since your last visit. Have they been bystanders to any situations like the texting/sexting incidents we discussed last time? Have they had a chance to show bystander leadership when faced with controlling texting behavior? Or stopping negative comments about someone on social networks?

Remember our MVP goals?

MVP Goals

- Raise Awareness on the prevalence of violence.
- Challenge Thinking – because most of this violence is accepted in society.
- Open Dialogue – have the opportunity to voice your opinion on these matters and get you talking about this issue.
- Inspire Leadership – or inspire you to take a stand against this violence.
- Emphasize our role as a bystander – stopping violence is up to each of us.

The working definitions for this lesson focus on fighting and inciting fighting.

Working Definitions

- **Self-defense:** A right to use reasonable non-deadly force may arise where a person is reasonably concerned for his or her own personal safety. The extent to which a person may use force in his or her own defense depends upon many circumstances, including whether the person has availed him or herself of all other appropriate means of retreat or escape. If self-defense is claimed, the force used to defend one's self must also be reasonable under the circumstances. Some of these circumstances may include the place of the attack, the relative physical prowess of the people involved and the opportunities for escape. Self-defense cannot ordinarily be claimed by a person who initiates an affray.
- **Battery:** When you intentionally, and unjustifiably use force, make unpermitted contact with a person, or physically harm that person, you have committed battery. Battery generally requires that you have touched the person or made contact with that person by use of yourself, a weapon, or other device.
- **Assault:** When your behavior towards a specific person is calculated to cause that person to be afraid, even when no contact is made, you may have committed assault. For example, when a man exhibits intimidating behavior toward a female, he may have committed an assault against her.
- **Disorderly Conduct:** when a person knowingly disturbs the peace by: (a) quarreling, challenging to fight, or fighting;(b) making loud or unusual noises; (c) using threatening, profane, or abusive language; (d) discharging firearms, except at a shooting range during established hours of operation; (e) rendering vehicular or pedestrian traffic impassable; (f) rendering the free ingress or egress to public or private places impassable; (g) disturbing or disrupting any lawful assembly or public meeting; (h) transmitting a false report or warning of a fire or other catastrophe in a place where its occurrence would endanger human life; (i) creating a hazardous or physically offensive condition by any act that serves no legitimate purpose; or (j) transmitting a false report or warning of an impending explosion in a place where its occurrence would endanger human life.
- **Aiding and abetting:** when a person is legally accountable for the conduct of another, which violates a provision of the election laws of this state, is also guilty of a violation of that provision. **Where accountability exists:** A person is accountable for aiding and abetting when they cause another person to perform an illegal activity. When either before or during the instigation of the offense with the purpose to promote or facilitate that instigation, the accountable person solicits, aids, abets, agrees, or attempts to

aid the other person in the planning or instigation of the offense. ***No accountability:*** A person is not accountable if the person tried to stop the offense before it happens or stops the instigation of the offense and does one of the following – (1) takes away the person’s ability to instigate/carryout the offense; (2) gives timely warning to law enforcement; (3) makes other proper effort to prevent the instigation of the offense.

CLOSING

1. Do you feel like you have a role as a bystander to help reduce fighting between girls and boys?
 2. What are some risks for an active bystander? Can you think of a solution to this risk where you could still be a leader?
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Teaching Sneak Attack

Background

Although we generally think of physical violence as the domain of males, it is not uncommon for physical violence to erupt among young women as well. This scenario provides the opportunity to discuss the potential damage of escalating violence between young women.

Discussion Starters

- Could this be just a rumor? How can you find out?
- Just because you have heard this “rumor” do you have a responsibility to do something about it?
- Why would a girl who wants to start a fight announce that she is looking for her opponent?
- Does your decision to do something about this situation depend on whether or not you know the intended victim?
- Does your decision depend on how well you know the attacker?
- Do you have responsibility only to your friends in this type of situation?

Common Concerns

- Physical violence is against the law and can result in conviction and incarceration.
- Physical violence can cause life changing injury to the recipient of the violence.

Sneak Attack

You've just heard that this girl and her group of friends are looking for another girl at your school to start a fight. The two girls have been verbally fighting for awhile, and now one of them wants to make it physical.

Train of Thought

This is going to happen right away. I'm not sure this girl even knows they are after her. Should I try to find her? If I do tell her, won't I just be contributing to the drama? What if she just gets her friends together and makes it an even bigger fight? Are these girls really serious or just blowing off steam? What if they hurt her? Will they come after me if I try to help her? What should I do?

Options

1. Mind my own business. They aren't after me.
2. Find the girl and let her know what's going on. Offer to go with her to talk to an adult or wait with her until a parent comes.
3. Contact an adult—the SRO, a teacher, a counselor or principal and let them know what's happening.
4. Talk to the girl and her friends who are starting this and tell them that violence isn't the way to settle their differences and can get them suspended.
5. Personal Options:

Teaching Fight Club

Background

Young men are often challenged by their peers to “prove their manhood.” One of the ways to do this is by fighting other young men. Internet sites like YouTube have taken this “rite of passage” to a new level.

Discussion Starters

- Why would a young man feel he “doesn’t have a choice” when challenged to such a fight?
- Is there anything you can say that will support your friend and help him decide not to go through with the fight?
- Is there a “code of honor” that keeps kids from reporting these fights before they happen? Why do you think kids feel they have to honor it?
- Could the people cheering on such a fight get in trouble themselves?
- Are there any unintended repercussions of posting such an event on YouTube?

Common Concerns

- Physical violence is against the law and can result in conviction and incarceration.
- Physical violence can cause life changing injury or death.
- Bystanders at a staged fight could be charged with promoting a fight. If the fight happens on school property, everyone present could get in trouble.

Fight Club

My friend is being pressured to fight another guy after school. The plan is to tape it for YouTube. I don't think my friend really wants to fight, but he feels like he doesn't have a choice. A lot of kids around school are excited about the fight and are planning to be there.

Train of Thought:

These staged fights are becoming pretty common and kids do get hurt and in trouble for staged fights. What should I do? Is it any of my business? Should I tell the SRO or a teacher? I know my buddy isn't excited about this fight, and he might get hurt. Maybe he just needs me to tell him not to do it. Or will everyone just get mad at me for interfering? What if I go to the fight? Can I get in trouble, too? What should I do?

Options:

1. Don't get involved. It's none of my business.
2. Go to the fight and be there for my friend.
3. Get a message to the SRO or someone in authority, so they can try to stop it before it happens.
4. Talk to my friend and let him know that if he wants to back out of the fight, I'll support him.
5. Tell my buddy and our other friends that we should stop the fight
6. Stay away from it because with the videotaping going on, I know we all could be charged for promoting the fight, even if we are just watching.
7. Personal option:

Agree/Disagree/Unsure Statements

If a guy doesn't want to fight, he deserves to be called a wimp.

It's okay to fight someone if you've heard that person is trash talking you.

Fighting outside of school for fun is ok. It's only a game.

It's ok for me to film a fight between two other people and post it on the Internet or show my friends.

It's ok for me to cheer someone on who is fighting as long as I don't throw an actual punch.

I am breaking the law if I promote or try to start a fight during an event (music/sports/on a city street).