

BAD CHOICES VS GOOD CHOICES



OBJECTIVE:

The goal of this activity is to show the students that choices are important in life. There are lots of choices that we have to make in life. Some choices are easy. Some choices, however, are VERY important. We want to make sure we are using the right choices.

TIME NEEDED: 20-30 minutes

GROUP SIZE: Any size group

MATERIALS:

- Small folding table
- Clear drinking glass (*must be glass*)
- Pitcher of water
- Paper for 4 small signs
- Marker



PREPARATION:

- Label front right side of the table with a piece of paper that says “BAD CHOICES” and the left side of the table with “GOOD CHOICES” so the students can read it as they watch you.
- Label the empty drinking glass with the word “ME” (*Make sure to put it all the way at the top of the glass.*)
- Label your pitcher of water with the words “GOOD CHARACTER”.
- Make a sheet of paper with an arrow on it (*Make the arrow wide enough for students to see and lower on the paper so it will be below the water level when you add water to the glass*). The arrow should be pointing to the right as shown.

LESSON:

Begin by talking about the fact that we all have the ability to make choices. Some of the choices we make in life have little effect on our future. But, some choices will change the course of your entire life. They are life changing moments. Those are big moments with big consequences tied to them. Then put the folded piece of paper with the arrow on it behind the empty glass and ask the students if they can see the arrow

Next, show the kids the empty glass and tell them that it represents you and me and our lives. Then you can tell them to notice the bad choices in life and the good choices in life on your table. Put the picture of the

arrow directly behind the drinking glass and ask the students which way the arrow is pointing. (The arrow should be pointing to “bad choices”).

Discuss with the students how most decisions are minor and we make them without much thinking or automatically - what to wear to school in the morning, what we want for breakfast, etc. But many of the decisions we make throughout the day take real thought, and have serious consequences. Consistently making good decisions is arguably the most important habit we can develop. Our choices affect our health, our safety, the relationships we have, how we spend our time, and our overall well-being.

Now pour some water from the pitcher into the drinking glass filling it about $\frac{3}{4}$ full. As you fill the glass with water, remind the students that the water represents good character values. Things like trust, respect, accountability, citizenship and kindness. **Make sure to hold the arrow approximately 8-10 inches behind the glass.** (You will need to practice doing this to determine how far away you need to have the arrow, so it will reverse) If we fill our lives with good character values, we will learn to make good choices. Ask the student to watch what happens to the arrow when the water with good character values is added. The arrow should now point to “Good Choices”.

The decisions we make determine our reality. They directly impact how we spend our time and our relationships we have with others. Inevitably, we all make some poor decisions every single day. But if we are aware of the importance of having the courage to have good character and take the steps to make these values a part of our lives every day, we can make better decisions that have a positive impact on not only us, but everyone around us.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What are some of the things we have to make a decision about?
- How do you make a choice or a decision?
- When you're faced with a choice between right and wrong, what influences your decision?
- What kind of values should you set for yourself when making a decision?
- Should you think about the consequences these choices will have for yourself and others who are involved?
- When faced with a spur-of-the-moment decision, why can pausing for a moment make a difference?
- Have you ever really wanted to do something, but deep down you felt it wasn't right? How did you decide what to do?
- Have you ever made a decision that you now regret? How might your life be different if you made decisions in light of your past experience and current circumstances?
- How often do you think about whether something is right or wrong before you decide to do it?
- What would happen if nobody cared about doing the right thing?
- How do you know when something you might do is right or wrong?

Explain to students that thinking responsibly and using good character to make your decisions is a key thing to do if they want to achieve their 'most amazing life'. There will be many choices they will have that could prevent them from achieving their dream life. Responsible thinking at the right times will help each student to more likely get what they want.

IT TAKES COURAGE TO HAVE CHARACTER!

