

WHERE WE STAND

Scenarios



Scenario: An overweight student is embarrassed to change into her gym outfit at school because the other girls tease her about being “fat” and call her names. They have even taken pictures of her with their cell phones and sent them to several other schoolmates.

Action: You see this happening all the time, but you don’t say anything because you don’t want those girls to do the same thing to you.

Scenario: You find out three of your good friends created an email account, posing as a boy you know. They apparently emailed love letters in his name to other students. They printed the emails and displayed them around the school in an attempt to embarrass the boy they impersonated.

Action: You decide to tell the boy who was responsible for the emails.

Scenario: When you try to enter the bathroom at school, you see a younger student in tears. Three older students told him that he cannot use the bathroom. They have blocked the doors to the stalls as well as the exit. The older student blocking the entrance says to you, “You can’t come in, and if you say anything, you’ll be next.”

Action: You leave and find another bathroom to use, saying nothing because those kids really were big.

Scenario: You watch as the “popular kids” at school force a pair of students to get up from their seats in the lunchroom. They won’t allow anyone who is not a part of their group to sit at their lunch table, even when it’s crowded and there isn’t anywhere else to sit.

Action: You decide enough is enough. You make an appointment to tell the principal that this dynamic is going on in the lunchroom.

Scenario: You have two good friends in your grade, but unfortunately, they do not get along at all. One of them invites you to her birthday party, but you later find out that she did not invite your other friend. You decide to tell your uninvited friend about the party because you know that she will inevitably find out about the party from posted Facebook pictures and people speaking about it at school on Monday.

Action: After speaking to her and hearing her disappointment, you decide that you no longer want to go to the party if your friend is not also invited.



TEACHING TOLERANCE

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MIDDLE GRADES ACTIVITY



Scenario: It is Sept. 4, 1957, and 15-year-old Elizabeth Eckford begins her walk to her new school, Central High School in Little Rock, Ark. Up until this morning, the school had always been for white children only, like you. Elizabeth is an African-American student, and under the new laws for integration, she and eight other African-American students are attempting to attend Central High School. Many people in your community are angry that things are changing. Some white parents, including your own, do not want their children to go to school with Elizabeth and the other African-American students. As many as 400 people are standing outside the school. As Elizabeth holds her head high and walks toward the school, they protest her presence and yell threatening words at her. When Elizabeth approaches the school and attempts to go into the building, soldiers from the National Guard prevent her from entering. The crowd cheers and the taunting continues.

Action: You march alongside your friends, who are yelling unkind, racist words at Elizabeth. You keep walking with the crowd, though not saying a word. You are not sure if Elizabeth should be there at your school, but you are also not sure if your community's reaction is appropriate.

Scenario: The year is 2004. You are a defense attorney for BALCO, a steroid maker that has been implicated in illegally supplying performance-enhancing drugs to professional athletes. You have become increasingly frustrated that while your client faces criminal charges and potential jail time, the athletes who allegedly received the performance-enhancing drugs are not being tried in the court of public opinion.

Action: You decide to illegally leak grand jury testimony to the press, knowing that the ramifications could include the loss of your license to practice to law, the loss of your job and even a prison sentence for committing a felony.

