



The Society for Safe & Caring Schools & Communities  
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## ***Supporting a Safe and Caring School— Assembly Script 9 for Elementary Schools***

### *Resolving Conflicts Peacefully*



#### **Note to Principals:**

These scripts are designed to be used in assemblies as introduction to the topics in the Safe and Caring Schools Program. The Principal takes a key role in delivering the message in the assembly.

Please read over each script before implementing. You are welcome to adapt the script to suit your school audience.

# ***Assembly Script 9—Topic 5 Resolving Conflicts Peacefully***

## **Objectives**

This assembly script has the following outcomes:

- to help students understand the reasons for conflict
- to help students recognize different responses to conflict
- to provide teachers with one method of conflict resolution that could be shared with classes

## **Materials Required**

- a sound system for CD of music (optional)
- an overhead projector and screen

## ***Introduction***

As students gather for the assembly an appropriate song may be played to introduce this month's topic. The Principal should welcome and greet the students as usual for assemblies.

The Principal should briefly review any activities that the school had last month to recognize the last topic—Dealing with Bullying

**Say: Throughout this school year we have been talking about and practicing skills to help us build a Safe and Caring School Community. One of the most important ideas that the staff of our school has tried to present is the idea that we can all make choices about how we respond to conflicts. It is our own actions that determine whether we will build up ourselves and our community, or tear each other and our community down. We all know what peace means; but it takes a conscious choice on our part to practice peaceful choices.**

**This month, we are going to look a little more closely at the idea of conflict.**

Using OH 1 go over some of the reasons for conflict.

**Say: Most conflicts are the result of reasons that may not, at first, be noticeable to the persons involved. Conflicts can happen for many reasons: because people misunderstand each other, because a person feels they are not being treated fairly, or just because two people have different ways of looking at the same thing.**

**Say: One of the first steps we can take to becoming better peacemakers is by understanding what caused the conflict in the first place. Watch these scenes to see how conflicts can start.**

Using the attached script, have teachers or students act out the scenarios. After each one, be sure to point out the main reason for the conflict.

**Say: Understanding the WHY of conflict is an important first step. The next step is to examine HOW each of us behaves when we are faced with a conflict. Sometimes, we act from habits, or without thinking. Let's take a look at some different ways a person might act when they have a disagreement.**

After the presentations, use OH 2–5 to go over the different styles of responding to conflict.

**Say: This month, I am asking each of you to become a thinker when you find yourself in conflict, whether it be at home, school, with teachers, family members or friends. Think about the reasons for the conflict. Think about how you usually act when you are having a disagreement with someone. Think about taking a problem solving approach. Your teachers have some activities for classes that will help you to focus on conflict, your response to it and problem solving approaches to dealing with conflict.**

**Together, we can learn how to respond to conflict peacefully and cooperatively.**

Thank the students for their attention and close the assembly according to your usual procedures.

## ***Conflict Skits***

These roles can be played by two teachers, or two students. If the assembly is large, it might be best to have both characters use a microphone.

### **Conflict Skit #1 : Misunderstandings.**

Two characters meet each other. One character is noticeably angry.

**1<sup>st</sup> Person:** Hi! Did you have a good weekend?

**2<sup>nd</sup> Person:** *(in an angry voice)* How could I have a good weekend? You said you'd call and we'd get together. Instead, I got stuck at home waiting for you. I sure don't need friends like you! *(Exits)*

**1<sup>st</sup> person:** *(while friend is leaving)* Hey, wait! I didn't mean to leave you, but my mom said I had to do yard work all weekend. Wait.....

### **Conflict Skit #2: Feeling unfairly treated**

One person is the parent and the other person is the child.

**Parent:** I'm sorry, but you can't go to a movie today. I need to go shopping and someone has to watch your little sister.

**Child:** But you promised I could go out. Why can't you take her with you?

**Parent:** I know I said you might be able to go to a movie, but your sister isn't feeling well and I really need to get this shopping done.

**Child:** I always get stuck with her! I never get to spend time with my friends!  
*(Exit in opposite directions.)*

### **Conflict Skit #3: Differing Points of View**

Two friends are having a discussion.

**1<sup>st</sup> person:** School's finally out for the day. Let's go have some fun!

**2<sup>nd</sup> person:** No, I'm going to stay after school and work out in the gym. I'm going to try out for basketball this season.

**1<sup>st</sup> person:** Basketball! Why'd you want to try out for some lame team? They always lose anyway.

**2<sup>nd</sup> person:** Well, I think it might be fun!

**1st person:** Well, if you want to spend all your time at practices that's your choice. I guess I'll go find some real friends.  
(*Exit in opposite directions.*)

## **Ways of Responding to Conflict**

The same characters as in the previous skits should be in these follow-up skits as well to ensure consistency.

### **Response #1 Confrontation**

**2<sup>nd</sup> person:** Hey, look, I'm sorry I got so mad about the weekend. I guess I just misunderstood what you said.

**1<sup>st</sup> person:** (*Loudly*) Yeah, well, tough luck for you. I don't need losers like you for a friend. Next time get your facts straight before you tell me off!  
(*Both exit in opposite directions*)

### **Response #2 Avoidance**

**Parent:** Look, I'm sorry you missed the movie with your friends. I just needed some help. Can I make it up to you?

**Student:** (*without making eye contact*) It's no big deal. Forget it. I'd rather not talk about it just now. (*Parent exits—teen's friend comes in*)

**Teen:** Man, I hate it when my parents mess up my plans. They are so unreasonable.

**Friend:** Yeah, parents sure know how to make things worse.  
(*Teens exit together*).

### **Response #3 Problem-Solving**

**1<sup>st</sup> student:** I'm sorry about calling basketball lame. I know you want to try out for the team. I guess I just think that we won't see very much of each other if you're always practicing.

**2<sup>nd</sup> student:** Yeah, I know it's going to take away from my free time. Are you sure you don't want to try out?

**1<sup>st</sup> student:** Nah, I wouldn't be any good.

**2<sup>nd</sup> student:** How about coming with me to practice, and seeing if the coach needs someone to do stats or be manager? Then we could still spend time together.

**1<sup>st</sup> student:** Hey, that might be fun. Let's go talk to him.

## ***Follow-Up Activities for the Classroom***

1. There are many good children's books that deal with conflict. Teachers could spend time reading and discussing the conflicts according to the information on the overheads—what are the underlying reasons for the conflict? how do the people in the stories respond to the conflict? What steps could or did the characters take to find a peaceful solution?
2. Students could be encouraged to discuss television programs they have seen that dealt with conflicts. Students could discuss the reasons for the conflicts, the methods used to respond to the conflict and the outcomes. This is also an opportunity to discuss how television sometimes presents unrealistic images of overcoming conflict.
3. Students could create classroom posters that display peaceful resolutions to conflict and reinforce problem solving and peaceful resolutions to conflict.
4. Students may wish to discuss common conflicts that occur in the classroom or on the playground and analyze these conflicts in terms of the information presented in the session—what are some hidden reasons for conflicts? How could problem-solving be used to solve the conflicts?

## ***Reasons for Conflict***

### **Misunderstandings**

Sometimes we don't hear the other person, or we don't have all the information.

### **Unmet Needs or Wants**

A person who feels that he or she is treated unfairly may become angry and frustrated.

### **Differing Points of View**

There are many ways to look at a situation; not everyone has the same likes and dislikes or beliefs about things.

## ***Confrontation***

Confrontation means fighting back. It usually makes the conflict worse.

It means:

- X attacking those who disagree with me;
- X arguing, threatening, using put-downs;
- X being loud or sarcastic;
- X using force or violence;
- X hiding personal feelings; and
- X using racial slurs.

# ***Avoidance***

Avoidance means not dealing with the conflict. It doesn't solve anything and can make the problem get even bigger.

It means:

- X being afraid of facing the conflict;
- X not telling others how we really feel;
- X going along with others to avoid conflict; and
- X complaining to sympathetic others

## ***Problem solving***

Characteristics of people who use problem solving include:

- X not fearing conflict;
- X saying what they feel without anger or putdowns;
- X being good listeners, trying to understand others;
- X being concerned with solutions rather than blaming or winning; and
- X being willing to work with others to find solutions.

## ***How to Find a Peaceful Solution:***

- **Listen carefully to the other person. Be sure you have all the information.**
- **Don't use anger or violence towards the other person.**
- **Try to find a solution that both of you can agree to.**
- **Ask an adult to help you solve the problem.**

