

Choices and Change: A Curriculum Designed to Challenge Interpersonal Violence

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW



Choices and Change is an violence prevention curriculum first developed in 1994 by Boulder area teachers, administrators, and domestic violence educators. We continuously review and revise the curriculum to reflect the changing population and needs of Boulder County. Our goals are to promote a more inclusive and peaceful school environment where all children have the right to be safe.

Currently, the *Choices and Change* curriculum includes two focus units with four lessons each. Each lesson includes an optional student disclosure period where student can elect to speak to a SPAN facilitator about any issues that arose for her/him as a result of the lesson. The facilitator will then share any pertinent information regarding the child's safety with the classroom teacher and principal. Lessons, including the disclosure period, are one hour in length for grades 1-5, and 45 minutes for kindergarten. All lessons are customized for each grade level.

UNIT A: BUILDING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Day 1: Family Diversity and Problem Solving

Learn to identify and validate a diversity of family structures; normalize conflict among family members and develop skills for resolution.

Day 2: Feelings and Relationships

Develop skills to recognize emotions in oneself and others; be empowered to take responsibility for personal reactions and choices.

Day 3: The Anger Dynamic

Recognize anger as a natural and normal emotion; identify how anger feels in the physical body; build skills to manage and release anger in a healthy and nonviolent way.

Day 4: Personal Safety and Boundaries

Foster skills to identify and articulate personal boundaries; increase awareness of physical reactions to unsafe/safe situations; identify safe adult resources in families and communities.

UNIT B: ANTI-BULLYING AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Day 1: Groundwork on Bullying

Identify the characteristics of bullying; develop safe strategies for the target to use in bullying situations; role-play effective strategies; identify people and resources that can offer support.

Day 2: Bystander Intervention

Observe bullying situations in schools and communities; develop effective problem-solving skills through role-playing bullying scenarios with an emphasis on bystander intervention.

Day 3: Developing Empathy

Learn concepts of empathy, point of view, and active listening and why they are essential to developing healthy friendships; form an empathy panel and share about unfair and oppressive experiences; participate in a dyad to practice listening skills.

Day 4: Problem Solving and Safety Planning

Identify cues to recognize the various forms of bullying; develop critical thinking skills through role-playing bullying scenarios to decide which skills are most appropriate for a given situation; create a safety plan for dealing with bullying situations.