

Making the Best Decision

Overview:

This lesson plan coincides with the release of the teen version our popular [Making Ethical Decisions](#) book.

The book has been adapted for pre-teen and teen readers, presenting them with relevant and realistic scenarios illustrating how easily decisions can impact lives and have consequences further lasting than we would first imagine.

This activity ties with online safety and decision making that takes place there. To learn more about cyber safety and cyber bullying, visit our [training page](#) for details.

Materials:

- N/A

Procedure:

1. Have a show of hands of how many students have a Facebook account. Ask how many friends they have in their account. Start in the low hundreds and work your way up. Chances are some of your students will have over 500 friends.
2. Ask them how well they know their “friends.” This means, have actually met that person or knows someone who is friends in real life with that person. The number of real friends will probably drop dramatically. This is fine, Facebook is about collecting friends as much as it is about sharing information.
3. Explain that the problem begins when they don’t sufficiently protect what they share, especially when there are a large number of “so-called” friends.
4. Present the class with the following scenario:
Jane posts an update to her Facebook status: “We’re going to Hawaii for ten days.” The next weekend her house is broken into and swarms of kids gather there, stealing computers and other valuables while the family is on vacation.
5. Ask: What was the first bad decision Jane made? How could she have protected her family’s house? Do you think the people who invaded her house were her friends? Why or why not?
6. Explain that our first instinct might not be to make a great decision, but to stop and think about it can really help us avoid getting into trouble. Ask them if they’ve ever done something they’ve regretted online (no need for details unless they want to share).

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7. Talk to the group about the best possible result decision making model (below) and remind them to ask themselves if what they're about to do really will have the best possible result for all involved. They might not be able to employ this every time they make a decision, but have them apply it to Jane's decision to update her status with information about her family's vacation.
 8. Walk through the Jane's scenario using the following matrix:
 - A Poor Decision: is illegal, unethical, and/or ineffective
 - A Good Decision: is legal, ethical, and effective
 - A Better Decision: is legal, ethical, and effective, and does not cause unintended and/or undesirable consequences.
 - The Best Decision: legally, ethically, and effectively accomplishes the best possible result while avoiding unintended consequences and enhances the decision maker's credibility and relationships.
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McREL standards

Standard 3. Considers risks

Level IV Benchmark 1. Weighs risks in making decisions and solving problems

<http://www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks/index.asp>