

Dealing w/ Putdowns

Procedure 1: Introduce the lesson by asking students to write their definition of a put down. (Give them a few minutes to create their responses.) Next ask them to write about a situation where they were being put down. Create a chart on the board, with one column labeled "What are Put Downs?" and the other column labeled "Examples/Situations of Put Downs." (You can also ask students to copy the chart onto paper so they can access it later for reference.)

(If students don't understand what put downs are, explain that put downs are acts as well as words, intended to humiliate someone.)

Procedure 2: Read the following scenario to students:

Brendan and Patrick live on the same block. Patrick always follows Brendan and his friends. Today when Patrick was on his way to a music lesson Brendan made a comment to Patrick, "Playing the flute is for sissies!"

Use the following questions for class discussion:

1. What is the problem? (Answer: Patrick is being put down, teased, and bullied by Brendan because Patrick plays the flute.)
2. How do you think Patrick feels about being teased/bullied? (Possible answers: sad, hurt, angry, embarrassed.)
3. What do you think Patrick can do about the problem? (Possible answers: Maybe ignore Brendan, tell Brendan how he feels, tell his parents, take a different route home, or call Brendan names back.)

Continue with the story:

Patrick decides to ignore Brendan but Brendan still chooses to tease him. Patrick decides that, instead of ignoring him, he will tell Brendan how he feels and politely ask him to stop the teasing.

4. What do you think Patrick could say that would make Brendan stop teasing him? (Possible answers: Please stop teasing me. I don't like it when you do that.)
5. If Brendan continues to tease Patrick, who do you think Patrick could reach out to for help? (Possible answers: His parents or a teacher.)
6. Why do you think Brendan teases/bullies Patrick? (Possible answers: Maybe Brendan doesn't have any friends or he doesn't know how to make friends. Maybe Brendan is bullied by others and then treats Patrick that way.)

Procedure 3: Close the discussion by asking students:

From this lesson, how do you think a person could "calm down" from being put down? (Possible answers: Maybe take three deep breaths, think nice/positive thoughts, or even just ignore the person who is saying negative comments.)

Procedure 4: Role Play: Ask students to develop scenarios that deal with put downs. Have them come up with solutions as a part of their role play.