

PEER RIVALRY:

REPLACING FIGHTING WITH NEGOTIATIONS

Recognize Mistaken Notions

1. I gain recognition by fighting.
2. Only the more powerful person is important.
3. Others will stop me from fighting before anyone gets hurt.
4. I don't need to evaluate how much it will cost me to fight.
5. I'm not important unless I can do whatever I want.
6. I have to either fight or give in.
7. When I feel hurt, I must hurt back.

Redirecting Fights

1. Stop hurtful actions; teach the victim self-protection.
2. Avoid making the person feel disrespected.
3. Avoid judging the fight or taking sides; put them in the same boat.
4. Help them realize the pain and futility of fighting.
5. Acknowledge the feelings of each; identify and state wants.
6. Model for them how to discharge feelings acceptably and set limits.
7. Heated - Acknowledge anger; reflect each person's point of view; describe the problem with respect; express confidence in the ability to develop solutions; withdraw from power struggles.
8. Dangerous - isolate yourself; look for calm times to continue discussion; identify the purpose of the discussion in a non-accusing way.

Preventing Peer Rivalry

1. Resist the urge to compare - describe what you see or what you feel needs to be done.
2. Remember - people don't necessarily need to be treated equally, they need to be treated uniquely, according to their individual need.
3. Be sure others don't exclude themselves when a person exhibits a particular talent in a certain area.
4. Treat people not as they are, but as we hope they will become.
5. Verbalize your expectations for behavioral change specifically and hold them accountable for the changes.
6. Avoid locking people into a role - by themselves, by their family members, or by their peers.

Conflict Resolution

Guide the following interaction by telling the listener not to talk while the other person is sharing. Point out harmful, nonverbal cues from either one.

1. Have one person complete the statement, "I feel _____ when _____," while the other person listens. If feelings are too volatile suggest that they take a self-quieting break and return in a few minutes to try again.
2. Have the other people complete the "I feel..." statement.
3. Have each person complete the statement, "I want _____," while the other people listen.
4. Have one person negotiate, taking into consideration the requests from other people until they come up with things they can agree on in a way that all win.
5. Have each person complete the statement, "I will _____," making a commitment to the other people regarding their agreed upon solution.
6. Encourage the person to use this process on their own after practicing it with a "coach" present a few times.

Self-Control Strategies

1. Teach the angry person to become aware of his/her usual response when angry and then note the results (ie- mean words which result in others saying hurtful things back).
2. Help the person to recognize that he/she is in charge of own reaction and can choose another one at any time. It is best to decide what results are desired (win-win solutions, etc.).
3. Encourage the person to practice noting physical reactions to anger and use them as a cue to gain self-control by taking a deep breath in through the nose and slowly out through the mouth, while saying silently, "I am calm," and then count either forward to or backwards from ten.
4. Another option is to say, "I am angry and I need a break; I'll be back in ___ minutes to talk about it," then go to a self-quieting area (if necessary).
5. Have the person visualize how she/he wants the encounter to end.

Self-Protection/Assertive Techniques

1. Teach the person how to block a "hit" and get out of the "line of fire," while saying, "Stop that!"
2. Teach the person to use assertive behavior instead of aggressive behavior. Role play with a progressive increase in assertiveness if the person does not favorably respond.

For example:

- a. Could you please do _____."
 - b. I asked you if it would be possible to _____."
 - c. I want _____."
 - d. Either _____ or I will have to _____."
3. Role play while coaching the person to use assertive, powerful voice instead of a plea or whine. Remind the person to avoid smiling while being firm in his/her request.
 4. Encourage the person to see assertiveness as another option. Instead of fighting or "wimping out" it is a way to gain control and power by standing firm to protect his/her boundaries while respecting others.