Secondary Guidance Lesson

**Gossip and Rumors Pt. 2**

**Objective:** Students will understand how impactful gossip and rumors can be to a person and steps that can be taken to avoid being a part of it.

**Activity:**

Tell students to line up across the room on the straight masking tape line you have put down on the floor or anything that would make a line.

 Tell them you are going to ask them a series of questions. If they can honestly answer “yes” to a question, they are to silently take one normal step over the line. For each question, they are to take one step further (There are 17 questions, so judge how much space you have before you tell them to return to the masking tape line.)

Questions:

* Has anyone ever rolled his or her eyes at you?
* Have you ever rolled your eyes at someone?
* Has anyone ever ignored you?
* Have you ever ignored someone?
* Have you ever been the subject of a rumor?
* Have you ever repeated a rumor?
* Has anyone ever been nice to you to your face then talked about you behind your back?
* Have you ever been excluded?
* Has anyone ever gossiped about you?
* Has anyone ever called you and tried to get you to say something negative about a person you did not know was already listening in to the conversation?
* Have you ever called someone on the phone and tricked him/her into saying negative things about someone else who was secretly listening in on the conversation?
* Have you ever been cyber-bullied- computer, voice mail, or text?
* Have you ever cyber-bullied anyone?

**Discussion:**

Have the students return to their seats or sit in a circle where everyone can see each other’s faces. Ask:

• “How did you feel about this activity?”

• “What do you feel about the behaviors of gossiping? Rumors? Eye rolling?”

• “How does this behavior affect a person’s (victim’s) reputation?”

Talk to students about being aware of the following negative situations (relational aggression):

* Someone “directs” them to behave in a way that would hurt another person, but does not take responsibility for telling you what to do (the phone calls).
* Someone you thought you could trust uses information that you gave him/her against you.
* Someone is nice to your face, but gossips about you behind your back.
* Someone bumps, shoves, or in some other way picks on weaker people.
* Someone wants you to change.
* Someone makes you choose between friends.

Ask students what they can do if they are a victim or witness these behaviors. (“I messages”, report to an adult, walk away, and answer so “so what”.)

Remind students that there is a difference between tattling or “snitching” and reporting (telling). If someone is being hurt emotionally or physically, the incident must be reported to an adult. Reporting is being assertive and standing up for yourself and others and saying that you are not going to allow these hurtful behaviors to continue.

Conclude by emphasizing the importance of treating each other with respect. They do not have to like everyone, but they should respect each other. If they cannot say something nice about someone, they should not say anything at all.

**Follow-up/Closing:**

Remind students that there is a difference between tattling or “snitching” and reporting (telling). If someone is being hurt emotionally or physically, the incident must be reported to an adult. Reporting is being assertive and standing up for yourself and others and saying that you are not going to allow these hurtful behaviors to continue.

Conclude by emphasizing the importance of treating each other with respect. They do not have to like everyone, but they should respect each other. If they cannot say something nice about someone, they should not say anything at all.