

# VIDEO DISCUSSION GUIDE

for use with  
Program 1

## COOPERATION

In the Youth Guidance Video Series



### EDUCATIONAL GOALS:

- 🍏 Children learn that cooperation is a basic life skill that helps us work successfully in groups and interact harmoniously with others.
- 🍏 Children learn about the benefits of being a cooperative person.
- 🍏 Children learn how cooperative people behave toward each other.

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## HOW TO USE THIS VIDEO

*Use in classrooms, libraries, youth service agencies, youth groups, or show it to your kids at home. Ideal for parents, too.*

***YOU CAN CHOOSE!***<sup>®</sup> is an entertaining and thought provoking video series designed to help children develop a range of important life skills and a healthy self-esteem. Each episode presents an imaginative skit in which one character makes a tough choice with the help of a group of real elementary school children. In this program, ***Cooperation***, Moose has to decide whether to quit his singing quartet or learn to be a cooperative member of the group.

In addition to learning what it takes to be a cooperative person, viewers will see that everything they do involves choices and that they have the power within themselves to make the best choices.

You can greatly enhance the impact and usefulness of this video by following it up with discussions, writing assignments, learning activities, and by enlisting parental support. We have prepared this guide to help you in your efforts.

Before you show the tape, we recommend that you ask a few questions to start the kids thinking about the issues treated in the program. You'll find some appropriate questions in the "Discussion Questions" section of this guide.

Since the program is divided into three segments, you have the option of stopping the tape after any segment to talk about it. Here is how the program breaks down:

1. **Skit, Act I:** Moose falls into a dilemma and faces a difficult decision.
2. **Group Discussion:** School children explore the issues and decide what Moose should do.
3. **Skit, Act II:** Moose follows the children's advice and discovers the personal rewards that come from making a good choice.

While this discussion guide may appear to be written for classroom teachers, any group leader or parent will find it a useful tool for getting the most out of this ***You Can Choose!***<sup>®</sup> video program.

## THE STORY

Moose, the proud lead singer of a popular school quartet, vows to quit his singing group when the other members want to perform a song which would require him to sing backup. Despite their pleas for Moose to be more cooperative and share the limelight, he stands by his decision never to sing with his friends again. Unfortunately, his attitude not only hurts the group, it deprives him of participating in something he loves. If only Moose could learn to be more cooperative! But, after overhearing host Michael Pritchard and a group of real children talk about the benefits of cooperating, Moose makes the choice to rejoin his quartet and let his friends teach him how to be a cooperative animal.

## HOW TO BE A COOPERATIVE PERSON

**LISTEN** carefully to others and be sure you understand what they are saying.

**SHARE** when you have something that others would like to have.

**TAKE TURNS** when there is something that nobody wants to do, or when more than one person wants to do the same thing.

**COMPROMISE** when you have a serious conflict.

**DO YOUR PART** the very best that you possibly can. This will inspire others to do the same.

**SHOW APPRECIATION** to people for what they contribute.

**ENCOURAGE PEOPLE** to do their best.

**MAKE PEOPLE FEEL NEEDED.** Working together is a lot more fun that way.

**DON'T ISOLATE OR EXCLUDE ANYONE.** Everybody has something valuable to offer, and nobody likes being left out.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### *Questions to ask before showing the tape.*

1. What makes working in groups fun? What can make it not fun?
2. What does the word "cooperate" mean?
3. Can you name some things you do at school that require cooperating? At home?

### *Questions to ask after showing the tape.*

4. Why did Moose have so much difficulty cooperating with his friends?
5. How do you think Moose felt about himself for quitting his group? How do you think it made Moose's friends feel about him?
6. Why do you think Moose changed his mind?
7. What did Moose's friends do to make it easy for him to cooperate? How could they have made it difficult?
8. The kids in the discussion part of the program talked about many of the things you can do to be a cooperative person. How many can you name? (*See the list of cooperative behaviors on page 3.*) Can you think of any they left out?
9. What makes you feel like an important part of a group?
10. What is the difference between cooperating and just going along with the group?
11. Did the kids in the discussion part of the program say anything that you strongly agree or disagree with?
12. What did you learn from this video?

## GROUP ACTIVITIES

1. Break the kids into 4 groups and tell them they're going to make music. One group claps, one group whistles, one group taps on their seats, one group makes shushing sounds with their mouths (like cymbals). Each group plays their sound when you point to them. The object is for each group to get itself coordinated into something that sounds good without talking to the other member(s) of the group. In order to accomplish this they have to listen to what each other is doing and adjust accordingly. Point to the groups one at a time, letting each group get their act together. Then, start adding the groups together allowing time for them to adjust what they're doing until they start to sound good. Eventually, you'll have all the groups going at once in a well coordinated ensemble.

When the concert is over, ask the kids what made this activity fun and why it required cooperation to make it work. What would have made it work better? If it didn't work, why not?

2. Break the class or group into small teams (five children per team is a good number). Their assignment is to invent a new animal. They must name it, draw it, and decide how and where it lives. Afterward, have each team present its animal to the class and tell exactly how they worked together to create it.

3. Design a "How to Cooperate" poster that illustrates the cooperative behaviors listed on page 3. Keep it displayed on a wall.

4. What's good about cooperating? Make a list of all the benefits.

## WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

1. Think of a really good experience you had as a member of a group. What made it good? Think of a bad experience. What made it bad? What can you learn from the comparison?
2. Are you a cooperative person? For each of the cooperative behaviors listed on page 6, rate yourself on a scale of one to five (1=awful, and 5=terrific). For each of these behaviors give an example of how you are either good at it or not so good at it, and what you could do to improve.
3. Describe a time you had difficulty cooperating. What made it difficult? What did you do about it? Is there something you could have done that would have made it easier?
4. Imagine that you get out of bed one morning in a rotten mood and you feel like being totally uncooperative for the whole day. Write about all the things you could do that would make your friends and teachers look at you and say, "Boy, are you being uncooperative today!"
5. Think of a time somebody (a friend, classmate, family member, etc.) was very uncooperative with you. Write a pretend letter to that person describing what he or she did, how it made you feel, and what you want this person to do differently in the future.
6. Write about a problem in the world that might be solved if people would cooperate more. Why aren't they cooperating now? How could they do a better job of cooperating?

## HOME ASSIGNMENTS

To enlist the involvement of parents, make copies of the Parents' Page (see next page) and send them home with the children. Tell the children to discuss the video with their parents, and to perform the following activities.

1. Have a discussion about cooperation in the family. In what ways do you cooperate with each other, and how does that make things nice? In what ways do you not cooperate enough, and how does that make things difficult or unpleasant? Make a "family cooperation" chart and see if you can do something about improving the cooperation within the family.
2. For one week keep a daily record of all the things you do that require cooperation (at home, at school, and everywhere else). At the end of the week give yourself a grade on how cooperative you have been.
3. Pick one television program and watch it with your family. Afterward, have a family discussion about things people did in the program that were examples of either good or bad cooperation. Make a list of these examples.

*Note to the teacher or group leader: It might be a good idea to think of some way for the children to share the outcomes of these activities with each other. Perhaps they could give written or oral reports or discuss their experiences in small groups.*

(Copy this page and send it home to the parents.)

## PARENTS' PAGE

Dear Parent,

Your child is involved in learning-activities designed to enhance self-esteem, develop positive life skills, and empower young people to make good choices for themselves.

He or she may be asked to complete several tasks at home. Your cooperation with these activities will support our overall program.

The current lesson is about the importance of cooperating with friends and classmates. We have shown a video entitled, *Cooperation*, which presents a skit and discussion about the problems that arise when one member of a singing group insists on having everything his way.

**Here are some things you can do to support the idea that cooperation is an important life skill and that the rewards outweigh the sacrifices.**

Ask your child to tell you about the video program and what he or she learned from it.

Schedule household chores at a time when all members of the family can work together to finish them.

Initiate a fun project that involves all family members (a garden, jigsaw puzzle, homemade pizza, etc.).

"Catch" your child cooperating (or attempting to cooperate) and offer your encouragement by verbally showing your appreciation; material rewards are not necessary.

## ABOUT MICHAEL PRITCHARD

Michael Pritchard is a juvenile probation officer turned comedian / youth counselor / public speaker. After his college graduation in 1973, Mike went to work for the St. Louis Police Department and then moved to San Francisco's juvenile hall. In his years of working with young offenders, Mike discovered that his penchant for humor served as a powerful counseling tool, enabling him to break down communication barriers and help a lot of troubled kids turn their lives around. As Mike is fond of saying, "the shortest distance between any two people is a good laugh." Mike's unusual combination of talents gained him recognition as California's "Probation Officer of the Year" the same year that he won the San Francisco International Comedy Competition.

Whether he's being funny or serious, Mike's big love is talking with kids about the choices they make in their lives. He teaches young people that they have the power of choice, that they are responsible for the choices they make, and that they owe it to themselves to choose the best.



"The shortest distance between two people is a good laugh."

## LICENSE AGREEMENT

This license grants you some very useful rights regarding the use of this videotape, including public performance rights:

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You **may** play this video on your institution's closed-circuit television system within a single building or campus. This right **does not** extend to multiple schools within a district.

You **may** permit viewers to watch this video on your premises, or lend it to them to take out.

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