

VIDEO TEACHING GUIDE

for use with
Program 8

ASKING FOR HELP

In the Youth Guidance Video Series



EDUCATIONAL GOALS:

- 🍏 Children learn that it's important to ask for help when they are having difficulties.
- 🍏 Children learn not to let pride or embarrassment keep them from asking for help.
- 🍏 Children learn that everyone needs help occasionally, and that it's nothing to be ashamed of.

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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![®] 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, ***Asking For Help***, Moose has to decide whether to hide his reading deficiency or ask for help in overcoming it.

In addition to learning the importance of getting help when they need it, 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 video, 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 video 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!*** video program.

THE STORY

Moose, Fiona, and Missie are working on school science project growing crystals in a beaker. Each has been assigned a role, and Moose is supposed to read the instructions. Unfortunately, Moose can't read. What's more, he's too embarrassed to admit it, so he fakes it by making up most of the instructions. Since the crystals have to be left overnight to grow, Moose has plenty of time to ponder what he's done. He knows he's ruined the experiment. He's sure they'll all get bad grades. And he's terrified that when the girls find out what happened they'll think he's a dope. What can Moose do now? Happily, though, it all comes clear when a group of real children, led by host Michael Pritchard, conclude that when we're having difficulties we should get the help we need to overcome them. Moose confesses his reading problem to the girls, and is surprised to learn that they, too, have had problems that required special help. Relieved to learn that he doesn't have to go through life reading poorly, Moose vows to ask his teacher to help him.

HOW TO ASK FOR HELP

- * Remember: it's okay to ask for help. Don't be embarrassed, and don't worry about other people judging you.
- * Think what might happen if you don't get help-- or if you do.
- * Decide what the problem is and what help you need.
- * Think about who you can ask for help. Choose someone you trust who will know how to help you.
- * Think about what you'll say when you ask for help.
- * Do it. Remember, getting help when you need it is part of being responsible -- to yourself.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Questions to ask before showing the video.

1. Have you ever felt embarrassed because you didn't know something or couldn't do something? How did it feel? What did you do about it?
2. Why can it be hard to admit you don't know something? What could happen?

Questions to ask after showing the video.

3. What is Moose's problem?
4. How do you think Moose is feeling? Have you ever felt that way?
5. Why didn't Moose tell Fiona and Missie that he couldn't read? Was he being fair to them?
6. What could happen if Moose never asked for help?
7. Have you seen kids try to make others feel stupid? What makes them do that?
8. Think about a time when you needed help because you didn't know how to do something. Who did you turn to? How did you feel asking for help?
9. If you're having trouble with schoolwork, what can you do about it? What can happen if you don't do anything?
10. If you need help but don't ask for it, how can that lead to more problems?
11. What can you say or do when someone you know needs help?
12. What did you learn from this video program?

GROUP ACTIVITIES

1. Have the class look for ways people treat each other in TV shows. Do they put each other down and try to make each other feel stupid? Or are they kind and helpful toward each other? In what types of shows are they kind and helpful? The children could also look for role models of helping or put-down behavior in books or stories.
2. Encourage students to ask for help by organizing a "help swap." Those who want help write what they need on a slip of paper and place it in a shoe box or envelope. Read the slips of paper aloud occasionally, and ask volunteers to provide the needed help or suggest ways to get it.
3. Have the class work in small groups to brainstorm different kinds of help kids can get from others. Each group focuses on a particular group of helpers such as teachers, friends, siblings, or parents. This activity could be expanded by making a classroom bulletin board or posters showing different kinds of help and potential helpers.
4. Divide the class into pairs of "helping buddies." Each buddy has two tasks: (1) decide on some knowledge or skill he or she would like to improve and (2) work with his or her buddy to improve the knowledge or skill--or get the necessary help. The buddies meet regularly for a week or two and then report to the class on how they helped each other improve.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

1. Write about a time when you or someone you know was really embarrassed about something. How did it turn out?
2. Divide a piece of paper lengthwise into three columns. In the first column make a list of things you do really well. In the middle column make a list of things you'd like to know or do better. In the third column list ideas about where you could go for help to improve the things in the middle column.
3. Keep a "helper's journal." Write about times you've helped other people or observed people helping each other. Share the journal with your classmates.
4. Imagine that someone needs help but is embarrassed to ask for it. Write a short story about the person with two different endings: (1) if he or she didn't ask for help and (2) if he or she asked for help and got it.
5. Group writing project: Get together with two or three classmates and make a list of different things kids might need help with--one to a page. Pass the pages around the group and have each group member add a new idea for getting help with that problem.
6. Write a thank-you letter to someone who helped you solve a problem, learn something, or improve a skill.

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. Ask a family member or neighbor to tell you about a time when he or she felt embarrassed about not knowing or not being able to do something. What happened? How did he or she get help?
2. Be a "secret helper" to friends or family members by helping them without talking about it. At the end of a week or two, tell them about the help you gave them. See if they can remember some things you did to help.
3. Ask a friend or family member to help you reach a goal. An example might be improving a skill or learning a new one. Make a plan together with small steps that will help you get closer to the goal every day.

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 getting help when we're having difficulties in school or elsewhere. We have shown a video entitled *Asking For Help*, which presents a skit and discussion about someone who's too embarrassed to admit he can't read. We urge you to ask your child to tell you about this video program and what he or she learned from it.

Here are some things you can do to encourage your child to ask for help when he or she needs it. Keep in mind that many children don't ask for help because they're too embarrassed to admit they need it.

- Talk with your child about the importance of letting you know when he or she is having difficulty with something. Let your child know you want to help or get the right kind of help to overcome the problem.
- Make it clear that it's normal and okay to ask for help. Let your child know about times when you needed help and how you solved problems by getting help from others. Stress the importance of taking responsibility for getting the help we need.

ABOUT MICHAEL PRITCHARD

Michael Pritchard is a juvenile probation officer turned comedian / youth counselor / public speaker. After his college graduation 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."

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