

PROTECTING VALUE



MIDDLE SCHOOL
CURRICULUM

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Students for Life group! We are so excited that you are coming along with us on the journey to learn about valuing others.

Although it would seem like everyone should be treated the same, sometimes, people make decisions that negatively impact others and take away their value. We want to help you see the value in everyone and stand up for those who are being treated unfairly. You may not be a famous superhero, but you could be the hero someone is looking for!

This Students for Life group is about educating ourselves, educating others, and making a positive impact on the world around us. Together, we are going to learn why people have value, how losing sight of people's value can create problems, and how you can help restore value to people and create positive change around you.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

(This is a chance to write down your thoughts and questions.)

What are some ways you've seen others be treated unfairly?

Have you ever stood up for someone you felt was being harmed or treated unfairly?

ACTIVITY:

Discuss as a group what you hope to learn by joining this group and how you want to be the hero at your school and in your community.

ACTION:

This week, look out for someone being treated unfairly and stand up for them!



SECTION 1

EVERYONE HAS VALUE

There is something about everyone in this room that is the same. Can you guess what it is?

That same “something” is actually true of all people on the whole planet! Every person on earth shares this one characteristic!

We are all humans!

No person walking around is of another species. And that's what makes us valuable. More than birds, lions, bears, even dogs and cats, humans have fundamental value simply because we are humans.

Because of our humanness, most everyone agrees human beings should all be treated equally. Even though each person is unique, they should never be treated poorly or have their rights taken away simply because they are somehow different. Some people are older, some are younger. We have different hair color, eye color, and skin color. But, none of those traits make us “unequal” or less valuable than another human being.

From toddlers to senior citizens, from the physically disabled to the athletic, from dark skin to light skin, from men to women: despite all our differences, we all agree that all these human beings have equal value and worth. No one is worth more than anyone else.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What is a unique characteristic that you have?

Have you ever had someone treat you poorly because you are different?



ACTIVITY:

Make a list of all the different characteristics that people in your group have. Discuss why it is not okay to treat someone unfairly because of physical traits, age, or mental ability. Share examples of when situations like this have been seen and how you should respond.

ACTION:

If you see someone this week that is different from you, find a way to compliment them for being unique.

SECTION 2

INJUSTICE: LOSING SIGHT OF OTHERS VALUE

Even though every person has value, sometimes others lose sight of that value and treat people poorly. This is called “injustice.” You might have heard this phrase before when learning about different times in history. For example, 200 years ago, people of color were treated differently because of their skin color. By law, slaves were not considered “persons” and therefore **did not receive the same rights that you and me have.** They couldn’t own property and were not free to make their own decisions. Many who were slaves had someone else who owned them and were often times beat up and separated from their families! This is a case of injustice, where a group of people lost sight of the value of other human beings and treated them like **they were not equal. They removed their “humanness”** in order to justify bad behavior.

We saw this again during World War II, when Adolf Hitler, the leader of Germany, singled out Jewish people and said because of their heritage, they were less valuable. This led to the killing of millions of Jewish people simply because Hitler believed that a certain nationality was less valuable. This is called the Holocaust.

Today, we still have injustice. People argue about skin color, wealth, gender, and it leads to bad behavior. When we think someone is less than us then we can defend bad behavior towards them. Would you ever treat someone unfairly that you respected and looked up to? No! Because you value them! The goal is to treat everyone the same way and to not let yourself lose sight of others’ value, no matter how different they are!

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What are some other examples of injustice that you have learned about?

How does hearing about injustice make you feel?

What do you think the response to injustice should be?



ACTIVITY:

Draw a picture of yourself and combine it with all the pictures of everyone in the group to create a diverse display. Create a banner that says, “Everyone has value” and ask to hang it up in a public area at your school.

ACTION:

Think about how you treat people and look for differences based on how you view the other person’s value. Try and treat everyone equally and see what happens!

SECTION 3

ABORTION. THE ULTIMATE INJUSTICE.

Today, we have our own common injustice, where a group of humans is considered less valuable, much like slavery and the Holocaust. The new targeted group are pre-born children in their mother's womb. In our country, it is legal for a mother to end the life of her child, as long as he or she is still inside of her womb. **This is called abortion.**

People have lost sight of the value of the pre-born person and treat them differently because they are at a different level of development than you and me. They are exactly the same species, with human DNA, brainwaves, heartbeats, and fingerprints. They just haven't grown enough to live on their own, outside of their mom. This has become the deciding factor for many people to believe it is okay to kill them. They have lost their value because of physical characteristics, just like slaves and Jewish people did before.

Unfortunately, abortion is more common than you think. One in four pregnancies end in abortion, resulting in about one million children being killed every year. That is a hard number to wrap your mind around so imagine a football stadium. The University of Texas football arena holds 100,000 people. That seems huge right?! Well, it would take 10 of those football stadiums to hold one million, the same number of children killed every year by abortion. Every day, these are 2,700 lives lost to abortion.

If you are against abortion, you are **pro-life**. Pro-life people assign value to all human persons despite age, gender, size, level of development or location. And believe it is wrong to kill children who are different than you and me.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Do you think pre-born children should be treated differently because they are not fully developed?

How does the idea of abortion make you feel?

ACTIVITY:

Review and discuss a baby's development inside the womb as a group. See if you can guess when the heart beats, when they begin to dream, and when they develop fingerprints!

ACTION:

Take a moment every day to remember in a moment of silence or pray for those affected by abortion and those babies who are in danger of being aborted.

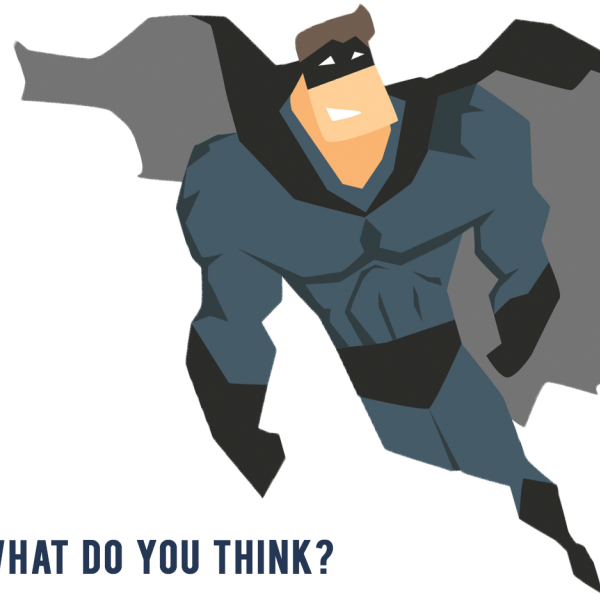
SECTION 4

GIVING VALUE TO OTHERS AND RESPONDING TO THOSE IN NEED

It can seem difficult to understand why a mother would think that abortion is okay, but often times they are confused, scared, and feel like abortion is their only option. Not only are the babies not valued, but the mothers don't feel valued either. They feel like they aren't strong enough or don't have enough resources to raise a baby. People who support abortion often times take advantage of this feeling and encourage women to end the life of their child.

In order to restore the value to these women and children, we have to extend compassion and offer help and hope. Abortion is horrible and can make us feel a lot of emotions, but we can't let our emotions affect how we treat mothers who are scared, confused, and in need. This is your chance to be the hero! Offer a helping hand to a mother who has lost sight of her value and the value of the baby inside of her.

There are places all over the country that offer help and resources to these mothers called **Pregnancy Resource Centers**, or PRCs. Your Students for Life group can get involved by volunteering at your local PRC or hosting a fundraiser or baby item drive for them. You can be a helping hand by providing tangible gifts to the mothers or to the centers.



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Have you ever met a woman who was pregnant and worried about the future?

How can you show compassion to women who need help?

ACTIVITY:

As a group, find out if there is a local PRC near you. Contact them and ask if there is any way your group can help support them.

ACTION:

Think of ways that you can show mothers in need compassion. Brainstorm what your group can do to help restore value to them in your community and bring your ideas to the next group meeting!

SECTION 5

TELL THE WORLD

It is not enough to just be pro-life in word, you have to live out your beliefs and share the truth with those around you. This can seem overwhelming, especially if you're new to it. But, we have some tools to help you become more vocal about abortion and more involved in helping mothers.

It's important you learn to talk about abortion and the rights for pre-born humans. Here are some tips on how to remember important details:

What's the difference between a fetus and a toddler?

Frequently when talking about abortion, people try to tell us that abortion is okay because pre-born humans are different from born humans, like you and me. While they're right that there are many differences, none of them make it okay to kill a pre-born baby. To help us remember the differences between pre-born humans and born humans and to remind us that none of the differences make it okay to kill pre-born babies, we have a useful tool. We use the word **SLED** to break down all the differences between pre-born humans and born humans. It goes like this:

S is for 'Size'. L is for 'Level of Development'. E is for 'Environment'. D is for 'Degree of Dependency'.

So what does **SLED** mean? Let's break it down into each part.

SIZE

Pre-born humans are a different **SIZE** than born humans, they're smaller, but that doesn't change anything, right? If you have a 2-year-old baby sister, she's a lot smaller than you; but that doesn't make it okay to kill her, right? The size of your little sister doesn't change who she is or that we should protect her from being hurt. Being smaller doesn't make you non-human.

LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT

Pre-born babies are less developed than you and me, but this doesn't change anything, either. We know this because newborn babies are less developed, too, but that doesn't make it okay to hurt newborns. Being less developed doesn't make you non-human.

ENVIRONMENT

Pre-born babies are in a different place than you and me. They're in their mother's womb, but being in a different location doesn't change who you are. You are the same person when you're at school as when you're at home – moving from one place to another doesn't change who you are or how we should treat you. So the fact that pre-born babies are in the womb doesn't make them non-human.

DEGREE OF DEPENDENCY

Pre-born babies need more help from their moms than we do -they're more dependent. However, this does not change anything about them or make it okay to hurt them. Newborn babies are also totally dependent on their moms and dads, right? Babies won't survive without their family to take care of them. But we know that doesn't change anything about them, and it's still very wrong to hurt babies. So pre-born babies being dependent on their moms doesn't make them non-human or make it okay to hurt them either.

So there you have it! A fun and easy way to remember what the differences are between pre-born babies and born people and how their differences don't justify abortion. SLED – size, level of development, environment, and degree of dependency.

Next, it's time to get active as a group. Use your Middle School Guidebook for ideas on what you can do as a group to educate your peers and help families.

Let's start planning how your Students for Life group is going to bring value to mothers and children in your community!





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