

“It’s In the Bag” - Relationships

Purpose:

- To discuss stereotypes, decision-making, and how choices lead to positive or negative results.

Preparation:

- Prepare enough bags for all members of the class to have one plus at least one extra per group.
- Attach one picture on the outside of the bag. May attach pictures of people, cartoon characters, entertainment or sport personalities, including a variety for selection.
- The bag should be folded down twice allowing the placement of three numbered labels on the bag. When folded, the labels should be able to be revealed one label at a time during the activity.
- The labels provided are numbered with the labels number 1,2,3
- Place the labels on to the folded sections of the bag and
- The first label deals with a social stereotype such as:
 - Your date is considered a skank.
 - Your date is considered a jock.
 - Your date is involved in student government.
 - Your date is a cheerleader.
 - Your date is considered a skater.
 - Your date is considered a Goth.
 - Your date gets all A’s
- The second label deals with personal beliefs and values such as:
 - You have caught your date telling several lies to stay out of trouble.
 - Family is important to your date.
 - You know your date has had sex with at least two of your friends.
 - You have heard rumors that your date does drugs.
 - Your date loves to party.
 - Your date has several educational goals that they are determined to reach.
 - Your date has the same religion as you.

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- **The final label deals with sexual information about the date such as:**
 - **Your date will only consider having safe sex in a loving committed relationship.**
 - **Your date does not believe in premarital sex.**
 - **Your date has two older sisters who have gotten pregnant.**
 - **Your date has admitted that they have herpes. However, they do not have an outbreak now so it is safe to have sex.**
 - **Your date has been pressuring you to have sex after only 3 weeks. You may have to give in if you don’t want to lose them.**
 - **Your date wears a birth control patch.**
 - **Your date thinks that oral and anal sex are safe alternatives to vaginal sex. Plus, you would still be considered a virgin right?**
 - **Your date wants to remain abstinent.**
- **Each bag should contain something different. For the provided example, pictures of candy bars are included , but other items could provide symbolism. e.g. candy bar, magic marker, pad of paper, string of paper clips, dollar bill).**
- **Place the corresponding number of “result” inside the bag. Make your own results.**
- **After stuffing the bag with the desired outcome, item and after placing the labels on the folded bags, secure each closed with a paper clip.**

Implementation:

- **Place students in groups of one less than the number of bags you have per group. (i.e. 8 bags = 6 - 7 people)**
- **Ask students to choose one bag simply on the basis of looks. Student should be instructed to be non-gender biased or heterosexist and represent all genders and orientations when selecting.**
- **Discussion may occur throughout the activity. (see Teaching Tips)**

ROUND # 1:

- **After each student has selected their “date” have them remove the paper clip and lift up only ONE fold to reveal the first label...and then replace the paper clip.**
- **Have students read their first label to their small group.**
- **Individuals may trade bags with the bag/bags that were not selected in round one, trade with another person or keep the bag they have.**

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ROUND # 2

- After each student has traded, selected their new “date” or kept their first selection, have them remove the paper clip and lift up only the **SECOND** fold to reveal the next label...and then replace the paper clip. (Students who selected a bag from the previously unselected will open two sections)
- Have students read their 2nd label to their small group.
- Allow students to trade one last time if they would like to select at different person based on the information revealed. **THIS IS THE LAST TRADE OPTION**

ROUND # 3

- Explain that each person has made decisions based on various pieces of information.(see Teaching Tips for discussion questions)
- After each student has traded, selected their new “date” or kept their selection, have them remove the paper clip and lift up only the **THIRD** fold to reveal the next label...and then replace the paper clip. (Students who selected a bag from the previously unselected will open additional sections)
- Now they may open their bags to find a note inside that deals with consequences of their decisions and candy for the group that relates to the consequences.

Examples of Candy Slogans:

Congratulations! A “Hundred Grand” for having safe sex or remaining abstinent. (100 Grand candy bar to indicate nothing stood in the way of reaching their goals. It would probably have more impact if a dollar bill was also placed in the bags in which no negative consequence was present.)

- **Your girlfriend is going to have a baby. What now! (Baby Bottle Candy, Baby Ruths, or Cry Babies)**
- **You are a sucker! You fell for the oldest trick in the book. Keep your fingers crossed that you or your partner are not pregnant or do not contract an STD.**
- **Everyone is snickering at you for giving in so easily. Keep your fingers crossed that you or your partner are not pregnant or do not contract an STD. Stay Safe! (Snickers)**
- **A thick milky discharge was your first sign that you have an STD! (Milky Way)**
- **You have a red hot STD! Your first symptom was burning when you pee! (Hot Tamales)**

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TEACHING TIPS:

Tip # 1: Discuss the following questions:

- **How did you first decide on a bag?**
- **How did each piece of information affect your decision?**
- **How do you feel about the decision you made?**
- **Do you want to re-think the decision?**
- **How do you make decisions about other things?**
- **How does the process of making decisions in this example apply to everyday decisions?**

Tip # 2: Adapt the labels to reflect stereotypes at your school to lead to discussions on stereotyping groups and the problems that occur regarding labels.

Tip # 3: Make the pictures gender free (i.e. cartoon characters, and allow individual to discuss characteristics that the character has that is attractive. (i.e. My Little Pony – kind, Sponge Bob – funny, Cinderella – pretty, He-Man - strong)

Tip # 4: Prep the group by indicating that this is a gender / orientation non-biased activity to help discuss the decisions made based on limited information. Decisions made regarding sexual activity may be based on misinformation or incorrect assumptions by the people involved = consequences for actions.

In separate documents:

Labels, pictures, and candy bar results are provided as an example only and should be adapted for your community and school.