

Teaching Students to make ethical decisions

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Topics

- How ethical issues arise
- A decision model
- Using the case method

How ethical issues arise

- Without a label that says “ethics”
- Quickly, suddenly
- Predictably, unavoidably

ETHICS VALUE CHAIN



Difficult moments for teenager

- Recognizing an ethical dilemma
- Taking personal responsibility
- Thinking clearly through the dilemma
- Taking action based on clear thinking

Recognizing an ethical dilemma

- Developing empathy – how a situation or action affects others
- Thinking in advance about predictable, unavoidable dilemmas
- Understanding responsibilities one has based on roles one plays in life

Roles of a teenager

- Friend
- Brother or sister
- Son or daughter
- Neighbor
- Student
- Club, team leader
- Employee

Unavoidable dilemmas

- Brainstorm what kind of situations typically arise
 - Friend needs help on homework
 - Friend being hassled by others
 - Friend getting into drugs
 - Friend sad after breakup
 -

A decision model-

Recognizing the issue

1. Is there something wrong here?
Could the situation be harmful to anyone?
2. Does the issue go beyond the rules or beyond just what is legal?

A decision model – Get the facts

3. What are the facts of the situation?
What don't I know?
4. Who has a stake in the situation?
Who will be affected by the situation?
5. What are the options for acting?
Can I think of some clever or creative options? Are there any win-win solutions?

A decision model – Evaluate alternative actions

6. Which option will do the most good and the least harm?
7. Which option respects the legitimate rights of those affected?
8. Which option is fairest to all affected?
9. Which option, if followed by everyone, would produce the best community?
10. Which option leads me to act like the person I want to be?

A decision model – Make a decision and test it

11. Considering all these criteria, which is the best option?
12. If I told someone I respect, would they think this is the best option?
13. After acting, do I still think it was the best decision?

Case Study Method

- Using a typical or real situation, explore how the issue arises, how unavoidable such issues are, how both existing principles and clear thinking can help resolve the dilemma.
- Prepares to deal with the predictable issues – and the unique ones

Case: A Danger to Himself?

Sally Johnson, a 17 year old high school junior, watched as Rob Evans, an 18 year old senior, drank his fifth beer in an hour at the Saturday night party. He was talking loudly and seemed to slur a word or two. Her worry increased as she realized he intended to drive to Berkeley with his girlfriend, Amy, after the party. She wondered whether he could find the car, much less navigate the bridge safely.

She heard a friend of Rob's argue with him not to drive, but instead to take BART. Rob yelled at his friend that he was a good driver and had never had any trouble after having "a couple beers." Sally was not a really close friend of Rob's, but it looked like some of the senior guys were. Sally was a close friend of Rob's younger sister, one of Sally's junior class friends.

Case: A Danger to Himself?

(Continued)

Sally wondered whether she and others at the party should do. Should they argue with him again? What if he ignores them too? Should she talk to Amy and encourage her not to go? Should she call Rob's sister? Should she ask the host, a senior girl, if her parents were home and could stop Rob? Should they try to take away Rob's keys forcibly? Should she call Rob's parents, whom Sally knew well?

Using the Case

- Take students through the decision model
- Ask students to play different roles – Sally, Amy, Rob, Rob's senior friends, Rob's sister
- Ask students to find a creative way of stopping Rob from driving
- Ask students how they would feel if Rob and Amy were killed or injured driving to Berkeley
- Tell students how you would handle a situation like this
- Ask student what other kind of situations arise at parties, with friends, etc.