

DROPOUTS: SMALL GROUP ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION

Large Group Activity (5 Minutes)

Make two columns on the chalk board: “High School Dropout” and “High school Graduate.” Ask the following questions to the class: “What careers can you most likely have if you don't finish high school?” and “What careers can you most likely have if you do finish high school?” List class responses in the appropriate columns on the board.

SHOW THE VIDEO (16 Minutes)

Small Group Questions (10 Minutes - 5 per group, assign 3 or 4 questions)

Have each group address one area of this question, “How does high school help you to be a better person academically, physically, socially, morally, mentally, or in regards to responsibility?” Also, assign each group three of the following questions:

1. Does being in school actually benefit you, or is it just a place where you have to go because you're not old enough to do anything else?
2. If you weren't in school all day, what would you be doing with your time? How would your actions be better or worse for you than your actions now?
3. Why do you think students drop out of school? (list at least 5 reasons)
4. What could be done by teachers, parents, administrators and you, to help make school more bearable and to help make graduation more achievable?
5. How would your life be different socially, mentally, and in regards to your career and family plans, if you were to drop out of high school right now?
6. What are five things that you can change to better cope with school?
7. How do extracurricular activities affect your attitude about school and do they encourage you to stay in school?
8. What significance will high school have on your life 15 years from now?

Group Activity (5 Minutes)

Discuss #3, #4, and #6. Spend time discussing solutions and coping strategies. Coming up with solutions and short term goal setting with rewards can be key in students realizing that they can finish school. Encourage those who are just going through the motions of school that these few years of "pain" is going to pay off in the workplace in just a few more years, and for a lifetime!

WRAP-UP: DROPOUTS

DROPPING OUT OF SCHOOL WILL CHANGE YOUR FUTURE.

- With no diploma, your job choices will almost always be the hardest working and lowest paying.
- With no diploma, you can't go to college. If you change your mind in five years, you'll have to re-learn school courses to get your diploma, and it will be a lot harder.

SCHOOL IS TOUGH BUT IT'S ALMOST OVER!

- A few years of "just doing it" and graduating is a small amount of time compared to a lifetime of work and a career.
- You may not like it, but sometimes you just have to dig in and do things you don't like so you can reach your final goals.

GET HELP FROM A TEACHER OR A COUNSELOR.

- If you have a hard time learning, talk to a counselor to get help. There are programs designed to help you in all kinds of areas. There are people who want to help you succeed in school. Take advantage of it!
- If you just hate school, talk to your teacher or counselor about how you feel and find out how you can better cope with school. Maybe you need to be involved in school activities or clubs, or hang around with friends who are more into school.

IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT HAS HAPPENED UNTIL NOW— IT'S WHAT YOU DO FROM HERE THAT COUNTS.

- Take charge of your future. Decide to stay in school and do your best for YOU and YOUR future. Dropping out will only be something you regret in just a few short years, and for the rest of your life!
- Make a decision to do whatever it takes to turn around your school situation. Get tutoring help for your grades, counseling help with your attitude, and help from friends. Don't allow others to influence you into thinking that school is not important.

HOMework: DROPOUTS

HOMEWORK Project: Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous.

Find an adult that is at least 15 years older than you who is living a lifestyle that you would like to have someday. Ask them the following questions about their monthly cost of living. Ask, "What do you pay in..."

1. Federal and state taxes?
2. Housing expenses (rent, mortgage, insurance, property taxes, utilities, etc.)?
3. Car expenses (payments, insurance, gas, maintenance)?
4. Medical expenses (health insurance, medical/dental bills, life insurance)?
5. Clothing, groceries, and dining out?
6. Travel and entertainment (vacations, movies, etc.)?
7. Monthly savings for the future (retirement, college, emergency funds, etc.)?
8. Education or childcare (tuition, materials, transportation, and day care)?
9. Any other monthly expenses (loans, childcare, private schooling, etc.)?

Assuming you could get a job for \$10.00 an hour, working 40 hours a week, figure how much you would make in a month. Subtract 25% for income taxes. Is it enough to support the lifestyle of the person you interviewed? Write a page-long description of the lifestyle this job would support. Now, consult a counselor to find out what is the average starting salary for a college graduate versus a non-college graduate. On a second page, answer the following questions: Why is finishing your education essential if you want to attain the lifestyle you desire? What is the likelihood of you legally achieving your desired lifestyle if you do not finish your education?

HOMEWORK: Do employers hire high school dropouts?

Call the Human Resources or Personnel Department at any professional place of business where you might hope to work someday. Ask them for a few minutes of their time and tell them you are doing a report on how to decrease high school dropout rates. Ask them the following questions:

1. Are you likely to hire a high-school dropout? Why or why not?
2. If you had two applicants with the same work experience, but one with a high school degree and the other without, which would you hire and why?
3. If one of them had a college diploma and the other only a high school diploma, which would you likely hire and why?
4. In your company, do people with more education typically go farther and make more money? If so, how much farther and how much more money?
5. Why is it important to you that an applicant completes their education?
6. What skills are learned in high school that you can't gain just through working?

Write a persuasive two-page paper on why completing your education is, or is not, essential to attaining the lifestyle you desire.