

On the Road to Adulthood: Getting There Safely



Student Activity - What would you do?

These activities are intended to engage students in the critical thinking process regarding safe behavior currently confronting teenagers. The real life scenarios below are designed to generate dialogue around issues teens might face day to day. These may be used in either a classroom discussion format or in small group discussion. You may also choose to incorporate role plays in these exercises as these scenarios easily fit this format as well.

Scenario A: Don't Play Games with Concussion

A soccer player who is a forward on your school soccer team (*'player'*) is the lead scorer on the team and often scores more than one goal in a game. During practice, *player* collides with another athlete. The coach asks if *player* has any symptoms and since *player* is feeling fine after the impact, *player* remains on the field. Within a few minutes *player* has a headache but doesn't tell anyone and continues with practice, knowing that the soccer team has a game scheduled for the next day.

Activity A: Classroom Discussion Format or Small Group Discussions

- Have the kids discuss *player's* decision to continue with practice.
- Have the kids discuss what they think is going through *player's* mind as *player* decides what to do.
- Have the kids discuss what they think *player* should have done.
- Ask the kids if anything would be different if the collision had occurred during a game and not in practice.
- What if this happened during a tournament?
- A championship game?
- What if *player* is being looked at by a highschool/college scout?

On The Road to Adulthood: Getting There Safely

Activity B: Classroom Discussion Format or Small Group Discussions

Player confides in a teammate that *player* has a headache and is experiencing some concussion symptoms but asks the teammate not to tell anyone and continues playing soccer.

- What should the teammate do?
- What would you do if you were the teammate?

Activity C: Classroom Discussion Format or Small Group Discussions

After the impact, *player* isn't feeling any concussion symptoms but teammates notice that *player* seems confused, slow on the field or off balance. When asked, *player* still says everything is fine.

- What should the teammate do?
- What about the coach?

Additional Points for Discussion:

- Why would an athlete want to continue to practice or play while experiencing concussion symptoms?
 - Athlete's pressure on self
 - Teammates' pressure
 - Coach's pressure
 - Parental pressure
 - Culture among athletes
 - Walk it off/play through it
 - You're weak if you sit out
 - It's just a headache and not a big deal
 - Would you feel that you're letting down teammates/coach/school/parents?
 - Is pressure different for male vs. female athletes?
 - What are the risks of playing/letting someone play, when there are signs or symptoms of concussion?
 - Longer recovery time
 - Second Impact Syndrome, which is, in very rare circumstances, catastrophic injury or even death when the brain does not fully recover before there is another injury - considered to be a teen/adolescent phenomenon and not usually seen in adults.
 - Cumulative brain injury
 - Discussion should include the following:
 - What is the best course of action for the player?
 - What is best course of action for the team?
-

On The Road to Adulthood: Getting There Safely

Scenario B: Just Drive

It's Friday night and you're excited to have the weekend ahead of you. You have plans to go to Mark's party with your friend Betsy. You know that Mark's parents are out town for the weekend and you are looking forward to a good time. Betsy just picked you up and you're on your way to pick up two other friends. Betsy is texting her boyfriend while she is driving. You make a joke about how unsafe this is, but she tells you that she does this all the time and that she is keeping one hand on the steering wheel. Below are some activities that depict hypothetical situations that can be derived from the above scenario.

Activity A: Classroom Discussion Format or Small Group Discussions

- Have the kids discuss if they've ever been in this situation before and how they have handled it.
- Have the kids discuss the pros and cons of getting involved in and speaking up around safety issues.
- Have the kids discuss how they would like to be approached if the roles were reversed and they were the one driving while texting.
- Have the kids discuss what they think they should do as the passenger, sitting next to the driver.

Activity B: Classroom Discussion Format or Small Group Discussions

The next day, you are riding with your mother to softball practice, and your mother is texting your father while driving.

- What should you do?

Activity C: Classroom Discussion Format or Small Group Discussions

You are driving to work on the weekend, and your phone keeps buzzing. You quickly glance at the phone and see that the classmate you like from school is texting you.

- What should you do?
- What are some suggestions for combatting the temptation to respond to every text or notification?

Additional Points for Discussion:

- What are some distractions you have seen as a passenger and/or driver?
 - Texting while driving
 - Eating while driving
 - Checking social media while driving
 - Playing a phone game while driving

On The Road to Adulthood: Getting There Safely

- Searching for something in your bag while driving
 - Driving when fatigued and tired
 - Would you feel that your friends would make fun of you if you reminded them to be safe while driving?
 - What are some things that can happen if you are not paying attention while driving?
 - What is the best course of action to making sure the car is distraction free?
 - At your school, is it common to see teen drivers using their phones while driving?
 - Have you ever been in or almost been in a crash because of a distracted driver?
 - How do you feel when you see someone driving erratically and then see that they are on their phone?
-

Scenario C: Walk This Way

You're on your smartphone when you see that there is a Pikachu down in the center of town. You throw on your Uggs and head downtown with your smartphone. You're looking at your phone when you hear a car horn blasting. You look up and realize that you're in the middle of the street trying to catch Pikachu. You realize that you are so engrossed with finding Pikachu that you walked into the street without checking out the traffic.

Activity A: Classroom Discussion Format or Small Group Discussions

- Have the kids discuss how often and where they walk outside
- When they are walking outside do they use their phones?
- Have the kids discuss pedestrian rules they are aware of:
 - If there is no sidewalk what side of the road do you walk on?
 - What is the safest way to cross the street?
 - When do cars have to yield to pedestrians?
- What else could happen if you aren't paying attention while walking?
- Have the kids discuss why it's always important to be aware of your surroundings
- Have the kids discuss potential consequences of distracted walking
- Have the kids discuss how they would feel if they were the driver and they hit someone who wasn't paying attention

Activity B: Classroom Discussion Format or Small Group Discussions

Let's have you take another perspective. The next day you're the driver of the car when you come to the center of town where there are frequently pedestrians.

- Have the kids discuss what their role is as the driver.
- What should you do when you come to an area where there are a lot of pedestrians?
- Can they identify areas of town they know as having heavy foot traffic?

On The Road to Adulthood: Getting There Safely

Activity C: Classroom Discussion Format or Small Group Discussions

- Have the kids discuss areas of town where there are a lot of pedestrians.
- Are areas of town where there are a lot of pedestrians considered pedestrian friendly?
- What makes an area pedestrian friendly?

Additional Points for Discussion:

- What are the pedestrian laws for Connecticut?
 - Do you consider your school pedestrian friendly?
 - Do you consider your town pedestrian friendly?
 - What are ways you could improve pedestrian safety around your school? Around your town?
-

Scenario D: Bullying and Violence

Jack is the smallest boy in your class. He is a freshman to the school and recently moved to the area. He does not dress like the other kids, does not play sports and he is not what the other kids consider as 'cool'. You are in the hallway and you see several older kids, probably juniors, following him into the bathroom. You hear yelling and lots of noise coming from the bathroom. You peek into the bathroom and see 3 other guys hitting Jack, banging his head to the floor. You also notice one of the guys trying to record everything with his cell phone.

Activity A: Classroom Discussion Format or Small Groups

- Have the kids discuss what they would do?
- Do they witness fighting and bullying in their school?
- What can happen if no one steps in and a fellow student is beaten, particularly in the head?
- What would they do if that was a sibling or a friend getting beaten up?
- If it was you what would you want others to do?

Activity B: Classroom Discussion Format or Small Groups

- Does their school have a policy regarding bullying?
- Does their school have a policy regarding physical violence?
- What are the consequences for bullying?
- What are the consequences for fighting?
- What should the consequences be? Would those consequences prevent further bullying?

Activity C: Classroom Discussion Format or Small Groups

- What does bullying and fighting have to do with preventing brain injury?
- What are other ways you can sustain a brain injury?

Additional Points for Discussion:

- Why do you think some kids bully and/or fight?
- Why do you think some kids are always the victim of bullying and/or fighting?
- What can you do to prevent bullying and fighting in your school?
- What can the school and/or community do to prevent bullying and/or fighting?