



# Respect Handout

Our nation and world is made up of many different cultures, languages, and beliefs. It is this variety that keeps democracy ever new, but only if we can find a way to get along with one another. And to do that we have to respect each other.

Key characteristics of respect:

- Listen to others when they speak.
- Value other people's opinions.
- Be considerate of people's likes and dislikes.
- Don't mock or tease people.
- Don't talk about people behind their backs.
- Be sensitive to other people's feelings.
- Don't pressure someone to do something he or she doesn't want to do.

Please discuss the following questions and record the groups responses on a separate sheet of paper:

- 1) How does government "of, by, and for the people" depend on respect? How is listening to different points of view a sign of respect and a cornerstone of democracy? What is it about the concept of democracy that relies upon mutual respect among people? How is the very concept of democracy related to respect for the individual?
- 2) Bullies are often trying to make people "respect" them. Is this really respect, or is it fear? What is the difference? How is bullying and violent behavior an act of disrespect?
- 3) Write about a time when you were disrespectful to someone. Why did it happen? Was it the right thing to do? What were the consequences? How did it make the other person feel? What did you learn from the experience?
- 4) Describe three things you could do to be a more respectful person. How would that affect your relationships with others? How does it benefit you to be a respectful person?
- 5) If one person treats another with respect, the respect begins to spread out from there. Write an editorial for your school newspaper encouraging students to start the "respect ripple effect." Describe what it could accomplish in your school setting.

## Possible Activities

- ❖ Develop questions to ask and conduct a survey in your school or community. (e.g.- Do you think people are respectful enough? What are some disrespectful acts that really annoy you? What are some respectful acts that you especially appreciate?). Afterwards, compile the results into a report.
- ❖ Brainstorm ways to make your school environment more respectful. Create a list of recommendations and place them in your school newspaper or on a poster.
- ❖ Divide the class into small groups. Have each group develop a list of do's and don'ts for being a respectful person. Have them make oral reports to the class addressing the following questions: What happens when people live in accordance with these guidelines. What happens when they don't. In what ways does respectful and disrespectful behavior affect our community and society?
- ❖ Bring in articles from newspapers and magazines describing situations in which respect or disrespect are issues. Talk about who is acting respectfully, and who is acting disrespectfully in these situations. Using the articles as evidence, tell the class about the consequences of disrespectful and respectful behaviors.
- ❖ Role play some typical situations in which disrespectful behavior leads to hostility and maybe even violence. Then, change one of the disrespectful actions into one of respect and see how the outcome changes.