Process – As a group of parents, we went to our school district to review the Second Step curriculum. We looked at some lessons as a group and at some individually. When looking at a lesson, we would review the Lesson Plan (given to the teacher), the Student Handout (given to the students) and the lesson itself (played for the children - sort of like a PowerPoint presentation with slides, pictures, cartoon videos and actual videos of classrooms or of students talking to the camera, or a skit played out). We also reviewed the Quick Start Guides. These are videos at the beginning of each Unit that prepare the teacher to teach the lesson. They include tips, a summary of the content and instructions.

Overall Concerns – In our opinion, there is an undercurrent of social justice, critical race theory, race and gender power and privilege, gender fluidity, collectivism, sexualization and other disturbing ideologies flowing throughout this curriculum. In addition, generally, the lessons steer students away from (or don't mention) their family. Some lessons suggest going to someone for support or help or ideas; however, if a family member is mentioned at all as one of these, family is usually the last source mentioned. The students are encouraged to "stand up", "speak out", "start a movement", etc. One of the criticisms of CRT (Critical Race Theory) is that it has an objective of turning people (especially children and youth) into activists. The language and ideas in this curriculum support the link between those theories and this content. Also, the videos, pictures and cartoons are not demographically representative of our country. The white students are almost always the minority in these lessons and almost always are portrayed as the harasser, the agitator, the bully, the instigator, etc. We are certain that if the roles were reversed, certain groups would call out racism on this. Similarly, we are concerned that the "negative" roles are universally assigned to the white student. It would have been preferable for the curriculum to not portray a single ethnic group in the negative roles and for the cartoons and videos to be more representative of the demographic of our country.

Opinions - These notes represent our opinions as we looked at this 8th Grade curriculum. The purpose of this report is to inform those who do not have hours to spend combing through the curriculum and to direct readers where to look for specific examples of our concerns. Again, these are just our opinions as we reviewed the materials – each person is free to make his or her own opinion and to agree or disagree with our assessment of the curriculum.

Unit 1 Quick Start Guide – Video for teachers to help teach this unit.

CONCERN: *Even though this is for the teachers and not for the children, this video still shows the disproportionate number of non-white students in this curriculum.*

8th Grade – Unit 1 – Mindsets & Goals - Lesson 1 – Welcome! – Lesson Plan – follow norms when discussing sensitive topics. Class defines the norms to feel safe. Video – states that parents didn't face what students are facing today. Shows a BLM protest, shows a vigil after a school shooting.

CONCERN: The entire curriculum starts by outlining that they will be talking about sensitive topics. The teachers are not psychologists or mental health professionals. They should not be engaging in these lessons that may elicit very strong, emotional reactions from the students or confessions of fears, traumatic experiences or private, family experiences or relationships. If there is a need for a particular student, that should be dealt with by professionals who are trained in how to assist the student with his or her, individual need. In the video, by telling the students that their parents didn't face what they are facing, they are suggesting that the parents don't know or understand and, therefore, can't help the students. It is starting to create a gap between the students and the parents and family. Showing the BLM protest is HIGHLY suspect in this video. It is a leftist organization who's platform advocates destruction of the nuclear family. There is no counter organization shown. This immediately – in the very first video – sets the tone for the political agenda behind this curriculum.

8th Grade – Unit 1 – Lesson 2 – Who Am I? My Identity - Student Handout - Students make an identity map. The picture is a circle in the middle with the student's name and then cloud shaped forms coming out from the center circle which have suggested areas of the student's identity. The suggested areas include roles – relationship, gender, personality, race … Examples include culture, family, grade, interest, personality, race, religion, roles. The example given is Alex who fills in his clouds with: boy, adopted (Chinese, white), cooking from dad.
Lesson – Video is of adults and children saying part of their identity. One lady says "I am a mother", a child says "I am an athlete", another says "I am a student", then others "I am an artist", "I am a sister", etc. In the middle of this video, there is one student who declares "I am gay".

CONCERN: By inserting the "I am gay" student, it is taking the lesson to an even deeper level of self-identification. No one else declared their sexual orientation in the video and there was no counter declaration like "I am straight". Most people don't introduce themselves by declaring their sexual orientation at first glance; that may be left to a subsequent discussion when there is more familiarity or a deeper level of connection as a basis for the discussion. It isn't necessary in this lesson and it certainly isn't necessary in the second lesson of this entire grade level. One criticism of CRT, BLM and other leftist ideologies is the inappropriate sexualization of children as well as an agenda of genderfluidity. Including this statement without any other or counter related statement is introducing sexual preference into this curriculum.

8th Grade – Unit 1 – Lesson 3 – My Interests and Strengths -

CONCERN: No real concerns in this lesson.

8th Grade – Unit 1 – Lesson 4 – Harnessing My Strengths - Lesson Plan – overcome is to deal with, gain control of or get past "roadblocks".
Student Handout – the students list strengths and roadblocks. There is 1 line for a strength that will help them achieve and 3 lines for roadblocks that will hamper them achieving.

CONCERN: *By listing only 1 line for the student to fill in a strength but 3 lines for roadblocks, the lesson suggests that the students will have three times as many roadblocks to achieving (as compared to the strengths they will have to assist them in achieving).*

8th Grade – Unit 1 – Lesson 5 – Pursuing My Interests – There is a list of positive factors to influence the outcome. Friends, teachers, and mentors are listed, not parents. One negative factor that could influence the outcome has "lack of support" listed.

CONCERN: *By listing only friends, teachers and mentors, the lesson is leaving out parents and family as a possible factor to help the students reach their goals. In addition, the lesson lists "lack of support" as a negative factor. If friends, teachers, and mentors are all supporting this hypothetical goal, who is responsible for the "lack of support" mentioned? Parents and family seem to be the group left out who would be the ones not giving support.*

8th Grade – Unit 1 – Lesson 6 – My Future Self - Student Handout – the students recreate the identity map from the earlier lesson, but this time, they are imagining 10 years into the future and what their identity map will look like then. Students fill in the "clouds" with what the identity of the student will be in the future. Then, they circle what changed and put a block around what stayed the same.

CONCERN: *The exercise is to circle what changed and put a block around what stayed the same. Yet, race and gender are two suggested areas of the identity map. The suggestion in this exercise is that any part of your identity can change or stay the same. Genderfluidity is a tenant of CRT and other leftist ideologies.*

8th Grade – Unit 1 – Lesson 7 – My Path Forward – Still working with future identity map from last lesson. Students list roadblocks they faced in getting to this place 10 years in the future. The example (still Alex from the previous lesson) has a future identity cloud of being in a band. One roadblock he lists is not having the support of his parents. Next, the students list who supported them in getting to this place 10 years in the future place. The example, Alex, lists: band members, guitar teacher and partner.

CONCERN: *The roadblock given in the example is that Alex's parents don't support him. This frames the parents in the antagonist or opposition role. Alex's example of who supported him lists his band, his guitar teacher and his partner. Again, his parents and family are framed as the opposition and his band teacher and partner (non-family) are the ones who supported him in this imaginary, goal achievement 10 years in the future. Also – not his wife, but his partner is a reference to a non-traditional family and possibly a gay partner. The entire message here is that your parents won't support you but your band mates and "partner" will. It continues to put a wedge between the student and their family.*

Supplemental Activities – Label-Maker – Today we're going to practice describing ourselves based on the identities we have now, knowing that we aren't stuck with these descriptions – we can always "try on" different ones in the future.

Strengths and Interests Inventory - who at the school or in the community could help you get better at these (interests and strengths).
Volunteer Seekers – teachers have a list ready of organizations in their community that will help the students expand their investigation.

CONCERN: Some aspects of one's identity always stay the same. By suggesting the students "try on" identities can be introducing the genderfluidity that is a tenant of BLM and other leftist ideologies. The suggestion is that the student has help in the school or the community, but there is no mention of parents or family. They are to seek out help in the school or community to get better at their interests and strengths, ignoring the arguably best help that would be from the people that know the student best and love the student the most. Another concern is what "organizations in their community" are on the teacher's list? They could be politically leaning organizations – who monitors what the teachers are exposing the students to?

Unit 2 Quick Start Guide – note – have a staff mtg and review policies before this unit is taught about bullying. Students may report to you. You need to know what you need to document and how to report. The families also get a letter informing them what their students will be learning. Don't push students to talk – they may be having personal experiences with the lesson topic. By this time in their education, students know the "what". They know that it happens…. In this unit, they explore the "why". As leaders in their school, 8th graders are asked to look inward. They examine how their school may unknowingly foster bullying and harassment and they consider ways to change the status quo. Students begin with an anonymous survey to gauge class attitudes about bullying & harassment. They then examine the social and environment factors that allow bullying to persist. They'll ask how social factors like common attitudes and environmental factors like physical space or school rules contribute. For example, what happens if people believe that bullying is just part of growing up? How do rules about after school activities affect student behavior. Students will discuss conditions of their school and how they compare with schools nationwide. Now that students know some of the factors that underly bullying and harassment, it's time to work on prevention. Here, we introduce disruption strategies. Disruption strategies are ways to change the underlying social and environmental factors that allow bullying and harassment to happen. These lessons cover several strategies – speaking up or using your voice to disrupt negative behavior, starting a movement say by leading a discussion or creating a social campaign and engaging the entire school to increase inclusivity or advocate for change. Unit 2 ends with a performance task…. Here, students will discuss which factors contribute to bullying and harassment at their school and create a plan to disrupt one of them – say by creating a social campaign or hanging posters.
You're now ready to teach Unit 2 to your 8th graders. Remember, teaching your students about the structural factors that enable bullying and harassment plus, offering specific strategies to disrupt them help students drive positive change at school and in their communities.

CONCERN: Even though this is for the teachers and not for the children, this video is concerning in that the teachers are warned that students may report bullying or harassment. They are also instructed not to push students as they may be having personal experiences with the subject matter. They are not psychologists or mental health professionals and should not be counseling students what to do in these situations. There is an assumption that bullying and harassment

already exist at the school and the teachers are reminded to teach the students about structural factors that enable bullying and harassment. The lessons talk about social factors that contribute to bullying. Even in the training videos for the children, there is a disproportionate number of non-white students. Also, this mentions that families will get a letter informing them what the students are learning. That only seems to happen in this lesson – the lesson about bullying and harassment. Families should be informed at all points in this curriculum, not just in the bullying lesson.

8th Grade – Unit 2 – Recognizing Bullying & Harassment – Lesson 8 – Understanding Bullying – Lesson Plan – Vocabulary – Bullying occurs when there's a real or perceived power imbalance. Harassment – aggression against someone based on a real or perceived characteristic they have, such as their race, religion, sex or gender. We'll explore ways to change these systemic problems. Student Handout – warm up – How do you think bullying has changed since your parents were in school? - Students take an anonymous survey of what is ok and what is not ok. Then, they exchange papers, and they move to a side of the room, based on the answer of what is on their paper. Lesson – what percentage of students in this country report experiencing bullying – how does that compare to other countries. Clicking on countries reveals similar numbers all around the world (20-25% in US and other countries. Interesting – Namibia is 45%)

CONCERN: The definition of harassment includes the Title 7 protected categories of race, religion, sex or gender. Certainly, there are other reasons someone might be harassed such as someone's height or weight, their name rhyming with something, money, where they live or drive or wear. To only focus on the Title 7 protected categories is limiting in the teaching of this lesson, but also causes the students to focus on those categories. This, along with the statement that these are "systemic problems", opens the door to teach the victimhood that is so prevalent in the tenants of CRT and other leftist ideologies. The lesson suggests that parents don't understand or relate to the students because bullying has changed. The lesson uses collectivism in having the students "vote" with their bodies to one side of the room. Even though they are moving based on another student's paper, they see what is being "voted" by the rest of the class. There is pressure to conform with the rest of the class and doubt or alter the student's own opinion.

8th Grade – Unit 2 – Lesson 9 – Social Factors that Contribute to Bullying – Social factors such as common beliefs, attitudes and behaviors of a particular group or community. Bullying and harassment are done by individuals, but social factors contribute. – Stereotypes and beliefs about how boys and girls should act or look. – 3 reasons are given for bullying: 1- Bullying is accepted, 2- Power and Privilege "Sometimes people experience power or privilege based on a race, gender, class popularity or physical power in a situation. People often don't stand up to those with more power", 3- Stereotypes and assumptions.

Student Handout – 2 examples are given (offensive names and racial t-shirts) and the students need to mark and explain factors that contributed to the bullying or harassment.

Lesson – power and privilege – video is of white student being bullied socially, black student bullied because he is gay, another black student was bullied.

8ᵗʰ Grade – Unit2 – Lesson 10 – Environmental Factors that Contribute to Bullying – The lesson plan discusses how environmental factors contribute such as bullying in a stairway or when teachers are not present. What social or environmental factors do you want to change the most? Social factor lists power and privilege.

8ᵗʰ grade – Unit 2 – Lesson 11 – Speak Up and Start a Movement -
Subject matter is bullying and harassment. The stated objective is that students will be able to explain how to use strategies to disrupt factors that contribute to bullying and harassment.
Lesson Plan – "sexist" means "showing negative attitudes, stereotypes, or prejudice against someone based on their sex or gender."
Warm up – Three social factors for bullying. 1 – Bullying is accepted (people think it is acceptable) 2 – Power and privilege 3 – Stereotypes and assumptions. Two environmental factors for bullying. 1 - Physical Space 2 - Rules and Regulations.
Set the purpose of today's lesson: Today we'll learn how speaking up and starting a movement can disrupt the factors that contribute to bullying and harassment.

Throughout history, people have worked and struggled to disrupt, or change negative attitudes that hurt or even end people's lives. The US civil rights movement that began in the 1940s and still continues to this day is one such attempt to change beliefs and attitudes about people of color. Because of this movement, race-based segregation and discrimination was made illegal. Today we'll look at how we can disrupt some of the factors that contribute to bullying and harassment so we can improve our school.

If needed, explain that "disrupt" means to prevent something from continuing as usual or expected. It's not meant to cause disruption in a chaotic sense, but as a way of challenging and changing attitudes, beliefs, traditions, or practices that make bullying and harassment socially acceptable.

Define – The two strategies we'll look at today are speaking up and starting a movement. Using these strategies can help you disrupt the social and environmental factors that contribute to bullying and harassment at school. When we disrupt these factors, we create a positive school culture where bullying and harassment aren't tolerated ... You can speak up both in person and online. Starting a movement can be as simple as talking to people and getting them to spread your message to others.

Conclude the lesson: This week, look for ways you can safely speak up or start a movement to reduce bullying and harassment here at school and online. In the next lesson, we'll learn two more strategies that can help us make our school community safer and more inclusive.

Handout – Vocabulary – Disrupt – to prevent something from continuing as usual or expected.

Disruption Strategies – Speak up: Don't laugh at negative comments or jokes about someone's differences or physical characteristics. Make it clear that you don't think they're funny. Start a movement: Start a social movement in your community or online by leading a discussion, making a poster or starting a hashtag on social media.

Scenario – Rodney sees classmates gossiping about each other on social media – another scenario is students making comments about girls' clothing and bodies. Assignment is to check all the factors that contribute – one is Power and Privilege.

Wrap Up – Which disruption strategy can you see yourself using to disrupt the factors that contribute to bullying and harassment at your school? How could you use it?

Lesson - Disruption Strategies – cartoon drawing - two white kids, five non-white kids

Possible Answers – one is "Environmental factor: You're anonymous online so there are no consequences to gossiping." "Strategy: Start a movement. Rodney could make a hashtag to counter the gossip he sees online."

Scenario 2: Chris and Marisa – One black girl crying and a white student just looking on. "How could Chris and Marisa disrupt the factors contributing to sexist comments about girls' clothing and bodies?"
Possible Answers: "Social factor: Belief and attitude that girls who dress in a certain way deserve to be ridiculed and shamed."

Wrap up "Which disruption strategy can you see yourself using to disrupt the factors that contribute to bullying and harassment at our school? How could you use it?"

CONCERN: The lesson is discussing racial and gender power and privilege, rather than universally saying that anyone bullying anyone else is wrong. Also – the term "disrupt" is used in BLM, CRT and other leftist ideas and may be trying to familiarize them with the term. We recognize the term is also used in positive ways (i.e.: creating an invention to disrupt a certain market to streamline processes typically used) but given the overall agenda of the creators of this curriculum and its tenants, we flag it as a concern. We have similar concerns with "Start a Movement". Also – in the scenario, it lists power and privilege as one of the reasons for the bullying about the girls' bodies. Bottom line is that no one (girls or boys) should be bullying someone about their bodies (girls or boys). There is no need to discuss power and privilege which turns bullying into a political theory. The white student appears to be the bully in the lesson. Finally – a possible answer in one part of the lesson references being "anonymous online so there are no consequences to gossiping". Students should not be taught that they are

anonymous online because they aren't. Comments, likes and all online activity can be traced back to them. Plus, there are consequences even if it can't be traced. This encourages them to be hurtful online and tells them that there aren't consequences.

8th Grade – Unit 2 - Lesson 12 – Be Inclusive and Change Policies – Lesson Plan - Be Inclusive and Change Policies. By the end of the lesson, students will be able to explain how to use additional strategies to disrupt factors that contribute to bullying and harassment.

Today we'll learn how making school more inclusive and requesting policy changes can disrupt the factors that contribute to bullying and harassment.

Activity: Disruption in Action – Some social factors that contribute to this scenario could be that it's considered normal and okay to exclude others and make fun of people if you have more power than them.

Student Handout – Disruption Strategies – Request a policy change: Challenge a school or class policy you believe contributes to bullying and harassment.

Activity – Disruption in Action – choose a scenario and identify the social and/or environmental factors that might contribute to the bullying or harassment in that scenario. Social factors that contribute (check all that apply) – one is power and privilege.

Wrap Up – List two social factors and one environmental factor that you feel contribute to bullying and harassment at your school.

Lesson – Disruption Strategies – Disruption in Action – two girls started a dance club and one acts like she runs the club – making mean comments about new members and ignoring or excluding them during club meetings.

Scenario 1 – Imani and Makayla - How could Imani and Makayla disrupt the factors contributing to negative stereotypes about women? Possible Answers – Environmental factors: Students make jokes when adults aren't around. You're anonymous when you make jokes online. Strategy: Request a policy change. Imani and Makayla could tell school leaders about the meme. They could request that teachers discuss the negative impacts of it in their classes and give consequences for making insulting jokes about women.
Scenario 2 – Sarah and Dario – How could Sara and Dario disrupt the factors contributing to unwanted touching in the stairwell? Possible Answers – Social factors: Belief that grabbing or touching is okay as long as you know the person. Environmental factors: The grabbing and touching happens in a place where school staff aren't present. Strategy: Request a policy change. Sara and Dario could ask school staff to be more present in the stairwells. They could ask school leadership to post a list of who to go to about bullying and harassment.

CONCERN: They are discussing power and privilege, rather than universally saying that anyone bullying anyone else is wrong. Also – the term "disrupt" is used in BLM, CRT and other leftist ideas and may be trying to familiarize them with the term. We recognize the term is also used in

positive ways (i.e.: creating an invention to disrupt a certain market to streamline processes typically used) but given the overall agenda of the creators of this curriculum and its tenants, we flag it as a concern. In the lesson, students are encouraged to challenge a school or class policy that contributes to bullying and harassment. This suggests to the students that the school or the class itself has actual policies in favor of bullying and harassment in place. That would be unlikely. The lesson also talks about "social factors" of power and privilege and that those contribute to the bullying or harassment. The lesson suggests some think it's ok to bully or harass others if you have more power than them. It's never ok to bully or harass anyone. The talk of power and privilege is a tenant of CRT and is divisive. We have similar concerns with "Start a Movement" Also – in the wrap up, students are asked to list two social factors (and one environmental factor) for the bullying and harassment at their school. First, this presupposes that there IS bullying and harassment at their school. Second, there are only three examples of social factors with one being power and privilege. They will almost certainly have to choose power and privilege as one of the social factors. The lesson leads them to the conclusion that there is power and privilege leading to bullying and harassment at their school. Scenario 1 gives a possible answer to a question of why bullying and harassment takes place and says, "you're anonymous when you make jokes online". Students should not be taught that they are anonymous online because they aren't. Comments, likes and all online activity can be traced back to them. The lesson discusses reasons why there may be grabbing or touching in a stairwell and possible reasons for this (an assumption that if you know the person, it's ok and no teachers are present). They are telling students how to get away with things: you can grab someone if you know them, and no adult is present. An overall concern in this as well is that there is mention of going to a teacher or administration if there is a bullying or harassment problem – there is no mention of going to a parent or family member.

8th Grade – Unit 2 - Lesson 13 – Stand Up for Change! – Link to "Performance Tasks" – the last lesson in each unit of the 2nd step digital program has been designed as a performance task. The activity in each performance task provides an opportunity for students to demonstrate the skills and knowledge they acquired from that unit. A rubric is provided with each performance task. Provides descriptive criteria to assist teachers in determining whether students have met the expectations for each part of the task.

Lesson Plan – Objective - By the end of this lesson, students will be able to apply their knowledge from the unit to create a plan for disrupting factors that contribute to bullying and harassment at school. Performance Task: Stand Up for Change!

Vocabulary – Bullying – intentional physical, verbal, or social aggression. It's often repeated over time and occurs when there's a real or perceived power imbalance.
Harassment – aggression against someone based on a real or perceived characteristic they have such as their race, religion, sex, or gender. It's serious enough to create an unsafe environment and is a form of discrimination.

Warm up – Throughout this unit, we've examined our beliefs and attitudes about bullying and harassment…

Today we're going to create a plan for disrupting factors that contribute to bullying and harassment at our school. These can be actions that individual students and teachers are taking, or actions the school administration is taking.

Activity – Rubric – Your plan identifies a factor you think needs to be disrupted and why. Your plan identifies a specific disruption strategy. Your plan explains the details of your disruption strategy. Your plan identifies others who could help you put your plan into action.

Wrap up -… call on groups to describe their Stand Up for Change plans to the class.

Student Handout – same definitions in lesson plan.

Lesson – Stand Up for Change! The cartoon drawing shows black hands with a phone and on the phone, it says, "Stand Up for Change"

Think About Our School – What factors at our school could be changed to reduce the incidents of bullying and harassment?

Stand Up for Change Plan – With your group: 1 Choose a factor from the list 2 Choose a disruption strategy 3 Decide how you'll put your strategy into action. Cartoon drawing shows fists in the air

Rubric – your plan identifies a factor you think needs to be disrupted and why. Your plan identifies a specific disruption strategy. Your plan explains the details of your disruption strategy. Your plan identifies others who could help you put your plan into action.

CONCERN: The lesson is discussing power and privilege, rather than universally saying that anyone bullying anyone else is wrong. Also – the term "disrupt" is used in BLM, CRT and other leftist ideas and may be trying to familiarize them with the term. We recognize the term is also used in positive ways (i.e.: creating an invention to disrupt a certain market to streamline processes typically used) but given the overall agenda of the creators of this curriculum and its tenants, we flag it as a concern. In the warm up, the lesson is identified as trying to stop bullying and harassment at the school. It states that these actions could be things done by individual students or teachers or administrators. There is no mention of family involvement at all. We recognize the family isn't always AT school to do something, but they are not even mentioned as involved or able to contribute to the goal of the lesson in any way. One of the cartoon pictures in the lesson shows a black teacher talking to a white student and the lesson asks what can be done to lessen bullying and harassment at the school (the suggestion is that the white student is a bully and is being talked to by the black teacher). Students are encouraged to "Stand Up for Change" and there is a black hand holding a cell phone suggesting the black student will be standing up for change. On another slide in the lesson, the picture next to is of seven fists in the air with the biggest and most prominent fist being black. This symbol has traditionally been the symbol of black power and of solidarity against oppression. One of the criticisms of CRT and its tenants is that it is trying to turn children into social justice activists. Introducing this symbol in the text of this lesson certainly supports the idea that this curriculum may have this goal as well.

Here is an article about the raised fist:
https://www.google.com/amp/s/tellersuntold.com/2020/06/29/10-events-in-history-that-have-used-the-raised-fist-symbol/.

Supplemental Activities for Unit 2 – Standing Up Against Harassment – Work to prevent sexual and gender harassment in the community
Objectives – Identify the effects sexual and gender harassment have on the people in the community – Investigate ways to help support people in the community who experience sexual or gender harassment – Take steps to support people in the community who experience sexual or gender harassment.

Part 1 – Prepare – Preparation – Have a list ready of community organizations that support people who experience sexual or gender harassment.
Project Description – Sexual and gender harassment is a problem in many communities. In this project, students will work to reduce sexual or gender harassment so everyone in their community can feel safe and accepted. In this Service-Learning Project, students will identify the effect sexual and gender harassment have on people in the community. Then, student will investigate ways they can help support people who experience sexual or gender harassment (for example, starting a public awareness campaign, writing letters to newspapers, or supporting a community organization.) Finally, students will take steps to help support people in the community who are experiencing sexual or gender harassment. – See photo of Steps including interviewing people who experience this…..

CONCERN: These supplemental activities presuppose that there is gender and sexual harassment in the community. The students are encouraged to research the effects gender and sexual harassment have on people in the community. We are extremely concerned what content the students will be exposed to when typing "effects of gender or sexual harassment" into a search engine. Students are also encouraged to interview community members or social service organizations. This is problematic as a typical 8th grader, at age 13, will be potentially exposed to situations, descriptions or issues that are not age appropriate. This activity talks of having students consider what they can do to help others be safe and supported. Our concern here, again, is whether this is age appropriate. We do not want to have the children feel this is their burden to bear or that they, alone, have the responsibility to make sure everyone is safe, protected, and free from harassment or bullying. This could be overwhelming to a child and produce anxiety or stress. Certainly, the lesson could teach that that they have a part to play and that no one should be bullied or harassed, but that they are working as part of a community in doing this and not having the entire burden put onto their shoulders if they should encounter bullying or harassment.

Unit 3 Quick Start Guide – Video for teachers that directs them how to teach this unit.

CONCERN: *Even though this is for the teachers and not for the children, this lesson shows a disproportionate number of non-white students when compared to white students.*

8ᵗʰ Grade – Unit 3 – Thoughts, Emotions & Decisions - Lesson 14 – Understanding Stress and Anxiety – Lesson – cartoon drawings – video. Video was talking about what happens to them when they are stressed or have anxiety. Few solutions…. mostly problems. Discuss says "In what ways did these students respond to stress? Are any of them similar to the way you respond to stress?"

CONCERN: The video has students talking about what happens to them when they are stressed or have anxiety. We heard few solutions. The lesson asks how the students in the video respond to stress and if any of those are similar to the way the viewing students respond to stress. However, other than the girl in the hijab saying she taps her fingers together, we didn't hear solutions of how to respond to stress.

8ᵗʰ Grade – Unit 3 - Lesson 15 – Where Does Stress Come From? – Lesson Plan – For each stressor on the screen, read the stressor aloud, wait for students to give a thumbs-up or thumbs- down. Call on students at random to explain their choice. Drag the stressor to the correct column and explain why it belongs there.
Things I Can Control – Doing homework, studying for tests. Things I Can't Control – Divorce, family illness, mean posts

Student Handout – Activity – With a partner, list common stressors for each category – School, Home, Social, World. Put a C next to stressors that you can control and an NC next to stressors you can't control. Write "most stress next to the stressors that cause you the most stress.

Lesson – Where Does Stress Come From? – Cartoon drawing - Video – girl with hijab from last lesson's video starts out …. Answering where does stress come from? She says "At home, it's chores. Chores makes me stressed. Like, after we go a really long day of school and just coming home with the dishes filled in the sink. That really makes me stressful because I'm like how am I going to do my homework as an 8ᵗʰ grader, we've got pretty much a lot of homework." Next – discuss – what general types of things did the students say caused them stress?

Common stressors – A stressor is something that causes stress. Work with a partner to list common stressors for these three categories: School, Home, Social, World. On the suggested page it gives examples: School/Homework… Home/Family Illness…. Social/Mean posts…. World/Climate change. They have to categorize what they can and can't control.

What Can I Control – What are some things you can control if this happens? Family illness, mean posts, climate, divorce.

Things I can control – one example is I can make changes in my life to help the climate.

What can I control – assignment is to put a C next to what you can control and an NC next to what you can't control. Cartoon drawing has three thought bubbles. One is a phone, one is a paper, one is an iceberg breaking apart. Two slides later, What's one stressor in your life that you would like to work on managing? Same 3 thought bubbles with the breaking icebergs at the top of the page.

8th Grade – Unit 3 - Lesson 16 – Can Stress Help You Grow? – Vocabulary Distress – a negative, threatening form of stress   Eustress – a positive, challenging form of stress

Warm up – What are some unhelpful thoughts you might be having? Research shows that our brains are hardwired to focus on the negatives. This has helped humans survive threats, such as being eaten by sabretooth tigers, but it doesn't help us write papers! Stress isn't always a bad thing, though. What are some positive things that could come from feeling stressed about writing the paper?

Student Handout – They must list helpful thoughts in a situation and how they can reframe this situation into a challenge or opportunity for growth. Situations are: being asked to write and recite a poem in front of the school, your sick aunt asks you to babysit your three cousins and they are active and noisy, you've just been told your family is moving across town and you'll go to a new school.

Lesson – Video – no kid – more like a blob –

8th Grade – Unit 3 - Lesson 17 – Strategies for Managing Stress – Lesson Plan - conclude the lesson: Today we practiced some research-based strategies that help with stress. Remember to ask for help and get support if you've been using stress-management strategies and you're still feeling very stressed or are experiencing anxiety. We all need help sometimes. In the next lesson, we'll learn how to decide if we need to ask for support with managing our stress. No mention of whom to go to. Hopefully the next lesson will direct them to their parents.

CONCERN: The only concern with this lesson is that it mentions getting support with managing our stress. There is no mention of whom to go to. It would be preferable to refer students to their parents or family.

8th Grade, Unit 3 - Lesson 18 – Changing Strategies and Getting Help – Objectives By the end of this lesson, students will be able to 1- analyze stressful situations and decide if they need to change strategies or get outside help to manage their stress 2- identify people who can help them when they feel their stress is unmanageable.

Lesson Notes – Warnings about this lesson: During this lesson, some students may mention cutting themselves, drinking alcohol, or other self-destructive ways of managing stress. Make sure students understand that self-harming acts such as these do not lessen stress and can create other problems. If a student discloses that they have harmed or want to harm themselves, or have been harmed by someone else, follow your school's or district's mandated reporting policy.

Conclude the lesson. This lesson is really important because, as human beings, we can't do everything on our own. Reaching out for support is always a positive and courageous thing to do. Now that you've listed two specific people you can go to for help, remember that you could be on someone else's list as well. In the next lesson, you'll create a more concrete and detailed plan to help you in the future when you feel overwhelmed and stressed.

Student handout – Wrap up – Name someone you've reached out to for support in the past. Why did you pick this person and how did they help you? Name two different people you can go to for help if you're struggling with stress. Describe how you'll contact these people, so you have a plan.

Lesson – John has "Too Much To Do!!!" John is thinking "I just can't do it all." "My teachers ask too much." "I never have any fun." The lesson talks about what he can and can't do to fix the problem. It goes to a comic book type format and shows him distracting himself with games, up late with homework, hard time waking up, tired and can't focus, gets angry at home, feels more anxious, plays more games, starts missing school.

They suggest reframing and then there is another comic book scenario where he makes a homework plan, turns off his phone, finishes homework early, gets good sleep, alert in class, patient with sister, feels less stressed and talks to mom if overwhelmed.

The next slide is: You might need out reach out to get help if you are:
Feeling more stressed or anxious, not sleeping or wanting to sleep all the time, missing school, having thoughts of self-harm, having thoughts of harming others

Wrap up – shows pic of john with mom – Name someone you've reached out to for support in the past. …..Name two different people ….. just like in the lesson plan.

CONCERN: This lesson deals with managing strategies and getting help with stress. There is a note in the Lesson Plan for the teachers to be prepared that students may report cutting themselves, drinking alcohol or other self-destructive ways of managing stress. It instructs the teacher to make sure students understand that self-harming acts do not lessen stress and can create other problems. It refers teachers to their mandatory reporting policies. However, our concern is that teachers are not psychologists or mental health experts. The potential of this lesson to have students reveal self-harm actions is problematic at best. They should not be instructed to tell them that self-harming acts do not lessen stress. They should not engage in this type of counsel at all – the parents should be notified to get the student professional help. But it would be better to not have the children reporting any of this as a result of this lesson. The student handout has the student list two people they could go to for help. There is no suggestion of a parent or family member. The subject of the video is John who can't deal with his stress, so he plays video games and puts off homework and doesn't get sleep and then he misses school. We are concerned that the result is missing school. We don't want to have that even suggested for John. We were pleased; however, that the next scenario is John planning to handle his homework, etc. and he talks to his mother. The next slide gives scenarios where the students might need help. One of the scenarios is if they are thinking of hurting others. This is concerning to suggest as a scenario.

Grade 8 – Unit 3 - Lesson 19 – My Stress-Management Plan – Performance Task - Warm Up – What are four things causing you stress right now? List one for each category below. School, Home, Social Life, World. Which of these is your biggest stress? Put a check mark next it.

Activity – My biggest stress right now (copy from above): What are the physical, mental, and emotional signs that you're experiencing stress? How can you turn this distress into eustress? Describe how you can reframe your current stress into something positive. What stress management strategies will be most helpful to you? What positive actions can you take to help manage the situation? Name two people you can go to for support. How will you contact them?

Lesson –School, home, social life, world. Example of Stress Management plan – Father is ill. Talks about worrying about all the work mom has to do. What might happen if he doesn't get better? Sad, scared, reframe – I can be more responsible by helping my mom with chores and taking care of my sister. Remind myself of everything the doctors are doing to help my dad. Get help from someone – maybe see a counselor. I can sit with my dad and do something fun with him. Two people to go to for support – Aunt Carrie and Mrs. Fisher the school counselor.

CONCERN: There is only a minor concern with this lesson. The activity is to name two people to go to for support. There is no mention of a parent. Later in the lesson, there is a mention of an

aunt and the school counselor, but maybe this is acceptable since the father is ill and the mom is stressed with the father's illness.

Supplementary Activities for Unit 3 – How does it feel when you are angry, how does it affect others?
What's one thing at school that people might feel stressed about? What things outside of school might make someone feel stressed? Would you describe yourself as often stressed, sometimes or rarely, why? How does stress feel in your body, in your mind? What helps you feel better when you are stressed?

Responding to Rejection – almost everyone experiences rejection at some point. What are some situations where students here at school might fear being rejected? What does it feel like? What are some common ways you've seen people respond to rejection? Can being rejected ever be positive? What's one helpful way you can respond to rejection?

Drawing a Calm Preserver – they draw a life preserver and outside, they write or draw pics of all the things they can think of that cause them stress. List strategies they use to deal with stress or lower their stress. What's one new strategy for coping with stress that you heard about today that you might try in the future?

Anxiety triptych – create a pic that reps how anxiety feels or something that makes you feel anxious or stressed. Create a pic that reps what you do to calm down – create a pic that reps how you feel after you've calmed down.

Community Health – Design a project to help with a community or global health issue. Objective – identify pressing health issues in the community, investigate the organizations and services that are focused on these issues, create a plan of action to help an organization or entity address a local health issue. … Students will begin by identifying a diverse list of health issues affecting their community. This list will help guide them as they settle on one issue they'd like to address. Next, students will investigate organizations that focus on this issue and choose one they'd like to help. They should identify what kind of help is needed, making sure to follow any guidelines or parameters the organization provides. … If possible, give students the opportunity to formally present their project to peers, staff, or families (for example, at a community event, school assembly, or in a documentary posted on the school or district website).

Get Well Soon – Support sick or injured community members – Objectives – investigate organizations that help sick or injured people and the kind of support these organizations need – identify ways you can help, create a plan and take action to support sick or injured people in the community.

CONCERN: The main concern with this Unit's supplementary activities is how "confessional" they are. The students are asked to report how stressed they are and how that stress feels in their body and in their mind. They are asked to talk about situations where a student may be rejected. They are asked to report how anxiety feels and what makes them feel anxious or stressed. It seems that these are very tender and sensitive issues. Teachers are not psychologists or mental

health professionals and are not trained to deal with anxiety and stressful issues that a classroom full of children may have. In addition, expressing what makes the students feel anxious or stressed could give ammunition to a class bully who would use that information to taunt or target the students with their fears or feelings.

Unit 4 Quick Start Guide - Video for teachers to help teach this unit - 7 lessons – lesson components – basically these are lessons for teachers. This unit talks about conflict mgmt. remind students to protect people's privacy by only sharing their own personal experiences and if necessary to speak to you privately. In this unit, Students learn skills that help them manage conflicts and maintain healthy relationships…. With friends, but also with family members, romantic interests, co-workers and more. Suggests pairing students with peers but not friends. They already know how to deal with their friends, let them learn how to deal with these peers that they don't have a relationship.

… Next, 8th graders identify common sources of stress such as homework or household chores and learn to distinguish the stressors they can control from the ones they can't. One key to managing stress is managing how you respond to stressors. … In lesson 18, 8th graders learn to analyze stressful situations, decide how to disrupt the cycle of stress, and determine when to ask for help. … Students also learn to recognize when they have too much stress and identify where to find help. During this lesson, 8th graders may bring up self-destructive ways of handling stress such as drinking alcohol or cutting themselves. Be sure they understand that these behaviors do not reduce stress and can create other problems. If a student discloses that they intend to hurt themselves or others, be sure to follow your school or district reporting procedures…. Also – if students have trouble naming someone to go to for help, they might need additional support or connections at school.

CONCERN: *Even though this is for the teachers and not for the children, this video is concerning in that the teachers are warned that students may report personal experiences or an inclination for self-destructive ways of handling stress. The teachers are directed to inform the students that those behaviors don't reduce stress and can create other problems. They are not psychologists or mental health professionals and should not be counseling students who are self-harming or engaging in dangerous behaviors. Again – the videos have disproportionate amounts of non-white students as compared to white students.*

8th Grade - Unit 4 – Managing Relationships and Social Conflict – Lesson 20 – My Values –
Objective – by the end of this lesson, students will be able to identify their core values and how their behaviors demonstrate these values.
Vocabulary - values – the beliefs and ideals that matter most to you.
Lesson Plan – Today we're starting a new unit. We'll look at our relationships and how our values show up in the ways we act with others. We'll also discuss conflicts that can arise between people and how to resolve them.
Can you think of some other values we could add to this list? Have students do a think, pair, share, then call on students at random to share what they discussed with the class. As they do, add their ideas to the list…. Empathy. Friendliness. Generosity. Helping others. Independence. Loyalty. Respect. Trustworthiness.

Student Handout – read each behavior and rate how important it is to you by putting a check mark on the rating scale. Leave the Values column blank. … Put a check mark next to the five behaviors that are the most important to you. … with your partner, share your top 5 behaviors, help each other name the values guiding your behaviors. Write your value(s) in the Values column. I took pic.

Lesson – Possible Values (Courage, empathy, friendliness, generosity, helping others, honesty, independence, kindness, loyalty, perseverance, respect, trustworthiness)

CONCERN: This lesson has students making a list of values, ranking them and then sharing. Collectivism is used to have the students see how others rank their values and there may be pressure to conform with the rest of the class and doubt the student's own ranking. Also concerning is that one of the black students in the video is wearing a hat that says "You can't kill me - I was born dead".

8th Grade – Unit 4 - Lesson 21 – Values and Relationships – Lesson Plan – Lesson notes – the relationships addressed in this lesson are all types of relationships, not just romantic relationships. Eighth grade students are typically curious about dating or may already be dating. In this lesson, there's one question about healthy dating relationships. Having students recognize when a dating relationship is not healthy can help prevent abuse and bullying in their dating relationships.

Teacher is to give an example of a healthy relationship from their own life or use the example given of a best friend. Ask what are some other behaviors that are signs of a healthy relationship? Why do you think they're called "healthy" relationships? Are any of these behaviors particularly important in a dating relationship? Why? …. Important behaviors: respecting each other's boundaries. Not be controlling, not putting each other down, why – to make sure it's not an abusive or unhealthy relationship.

Wrap up – today we took a closer look at the connection between our values and how we behave in healthy relationships. Later in this unit we'll also talk about what to do if we're in unhealthy relationships. If you think you or someone you know might be in an unhealthy relationship, there's a national hotline you can contact for advice and support.

Student Handout – choose the three values that are most important to you in healthy relationships. Value – why it is important – how does this value guide your behavior in your relationships?
Think of someone you have a healthy relationship with and complete these sentences. …

Lesson – You're in a healthy relationship if you and your friend: support each other's interests, enjoy spending time together, encourage each other when you're doing something challenging, respect each other's boundaries, value each other's opinions, even when you disagree, apologize when you're wrong, give each other space when needed, aren't controlling, don't put each other down.

Wrap up – think of someone you have a healthy relationship with and complete these sentences: I have a healthy relationship with… an important value we share is … one way I behave in our relationship that's guided by this value is…. One way they behave in our relationship that's guided by this value is…. Then there is a button to click labeled "National Hotline" When clicked…. It shows National Hotline loveisrespect.org.

CONCERN: This lesson states that it is about "all types of relationships, not just romantic relationships". However, at the end of the lesson, there is a slide that shows a "National Hotline" and shows the website loveisrespect.org. It is abhorrent that this curriculum refers the students to that site. When one visits that site, the first thing one sees is a pop up that informs them that their online activity can be tracked. It gives the viewer direction on how to clear a browser history and how to exit out of that site immediately if necessary. The site shows pictures of gay and heterosexual couples, talks about how sex is an important part of your relationship and how you should be enthusiastic about sex. It has many tiles to click on and learn more. It gives advice on what to do if your family doesn't like your partner and what to do if your partner tries to blackmail you by threatening to tell your family that you are having sex. It talks about how your first time (having sex) might not be great. It refers viewers places to get an abortion. A viewer can call, text or chat to get support, advice, and answers. This is a totally and completely inappropriate website to refer a 13-year-old to.

8th Grade – Unit 4 - Lesson 22 – Recognizing Others' Perspectives – Lesson Plan – reviews last lesson where we talked about signs of healthy relationships. … All relationships have ups and downs, and even healthy relationships have conflict. Today we'll learn how to analyze conflicts from multiple perspectives so we can prevent them from escalating. Example is that one girl gets a boyfriend, and the other girl feels left out. Lots of questions about seeing things from the other girl's perspective. Next example is that a girl wants to hang out at her friend's house after basketball and listens to a new album and deliberately ignores texts from her dad. When she gets home, her dad is really upset with her. He didn't know where she was. He has a rule that he needs to know where she is and that she must ask permission before she goes anywhere. Willa thinks that since she's in 8th grade, she shouldn't have to do this anymore. Her dad should trust her more. Willa tells her dad that she's not a little kid anymore and storms off to her room and slams the door.

Lesson –Video – best friend started dating guy and she didn't talk to friend as much – Willa and her dad.

CONCERN: One concern here is that Willa thinks since she is in 8th grade, she shouldn't have to let her dad know where she is or ask permission to go anywhere. Although 8th graders are all trying to be independent, the suggestion is that her father is controlling and that she doesn't need to ask permission or notify her father where she is. Her solution to not wanting to have to tell her location or ask permission is to ignore her texts from her dad. This shouldn't be a solution to anything. Students should follow their parents' rules until they are able to make new rules in conjunction with the parents.

8ᵗʰ Grade – Unit 4 - Lesson 23 - Finding the Best Solution – Lesson plan – vocab – compromise – an agreement where both people give up some of what they want or need … conflict resolution is a way to come up with several potential solutions and find one that's acceptable for everyone. Sometimes, to reach an agreement, both people have to give up something they want or need. This is called a compromise.
Student Handout – Activity – a sibling dilemma – step 2 – list possible solutions – are they safe and respectful, do they take all perspectives into account. Step 3 consider the consequences for each solution. How will everyone feel? Will it meet their needs or wants? Will it work? Will it uphold personal or family values?

CONCERN: The only concern in this lesson is that, again, the primary representation is that of non-white students and siblings.

8ᵗʰ Grade – Unit 4 - Lesson 24 – Making Things Right – Conclude the lesson – Today we learned some ways to make amends and restore a relationship after a conflict. While conflict is natural in relationships, having a lot of conflict with someone can signal that it's an unhealthy relationship. In the next lesson, we'll talk about how you can recognize the signs of an unhealthy relationship.
Student Handout – scenario – friend cancelled, and then other friend learned that friend "hung out with his crush instead".

CONCERN: No concerns in this, individual, lesson.

8ᵗʰ Grade – Unit 4 - Lesson 25 – Unhealthy Relationships – Objective – by the end of this lesson, students will be able to distinguish between healthy and unhealthy relationships. Lesson Notes – Eighth grade students are typically curious about dating. If students disclose that they have an unhealthy relationship with a family member, encourage them to speak with a trusted adult, such as the school counselor. Also, encourage them to visit the following online organization: loveisrespect.org.

Lesson points out that there are many reasons we no longer want to spend time with some people…. But sometimes it can be something more serious. …. What happens when there's still conflict in the relationship or the other person is not respecting your values? From time to time, it's important to take a step back and evaluate our relationships.
We're going to watch a video of students talking about some of their relationships. As you watch, see if you recognize any warning signs that their relationships are becoming unhealthy.
Activity: Is the relationship unhealthy? scenarios – ask students if the relationship is unhealthy or healthy. If unhealthy – ask them to describe the warning signs that led to their decision. If needed, click on the screen to display the signs of healthy and unhealthy relationships. Girlfriend gets jealous, friend picks a fight, friend is mean to others and if they don't join in, mean to them.

Discuss – what can you do… strategies…. If you find yourself or someone else in an unhealthy relationship and need help, here is an online organization you can contact for advice and support.

Wrap up – think about people in your life right now who are reliable and who you trust. They can be friends, family, or other adults in your life.   Conclude the lesson: There isn't one right answer for how to navigate an unhealthy relationship, but there are resources out there and its ok to ask someone for help and support. Remember the three people you picked and think about how and when you'll decide to reach out to them. …

Student handout – signs of a healthy or unhealthy relationship. … What to do if a relationship is turning unhealthy. Tell the person in a clear, firm way what you need or want. Talk to someone you trust about what's happening and ask what to do, spend more time with other people, consider ending the relationship. For advice and support, visit: loveisrespect.org

Lesson – common warning signs that the relationship is becoming unhealthy – person is not very reliable, person is clingy, don't listen to your opinion, you aren't sure you can trust them, you feel bad after you hang out with them, they make fun of you in ways that hurt your feelings, they don't like you hanging out with other people. Video – can a positive relationship turn into a negative one? - kid talks about girl and when he first started hanging out with her, she was nice, she made him laugh – she was fun – she said how much she liked him and how she was jealous of her friends that were girls – at first he thought it was just flirty but then it got weird – hearts – she asks to see texts, looks at phone when he is looking at – she asks "what are you hiding" – now she's nice again – maybe I should just let her check my phone – second scenario, kid trips the other kid and is aggressive – then group of girls – one is the leader and makes fun of others –leader says not to be friends with guy. Girl stands up and leader now makes fun of her –

Is Dina's behavior out of line – should I break up with her? Is Logan a bad friend or do I just need to tough it out? They say real friends won't be mean to you or try to control you. I'm not sure I want to be friends with someone like vanessa.

Is the relationship unhealthy? With a partner, complete the table on the back of your handout: 1 – decide if you think each relationship is healthy or unhealthy 2- write the warning signs that led to your decision. Use the signs of a healthy or unhealthy relationship chart on your handout to help you decide.
Same strategies put on lesson plan – For more information, go to loveisrespect.org

CONCERN: From the start of this lesson, teachers are encouraging students to visit the website loveisrespect.org. The teachers are instructed to tell the students that they can get advice and support from this site. This site is referenced in the teacher's Learning Plan, in the Student Handout and in one slide of the actual lesson. It is abhorrent that this curriculum refers students to that site. When one visits that site, the first thing one sees is a pop up that informs them that their online activity can be tracked. It gives the viewer direction on how to clear a browser history and how to exit out of that site immediately if necessary. The site shows pictures of gay and heterosexual couples, talks about how sex is an important part of your relationship and how you should be enthusiastic about sex. It has many tiles to click on and learn more. It gives advice on what to do if your family doesn't like your partner and what to do if your partner tries to blackmail you by threatening to tell your family that you are having sex. It talks about how your

first time (having sex) might not be great. It refers viewers places to get an abortion. A viewer can call, text or chat to get support, advice, and answers. This is a totally and completely inappropriate website to refer a 13-year-old to.

8th Grade – Unit 4 - Lesson 26 – Guide to Healthy Relationships – Performance Task – Lesson plan – objective – by the end of this lesson, students will be able to describe the importance of choosing healthy relationships, tell if a relationship is healthy, recognize and manage unhealthy relationships – one assignment is to create a social media post that's a guide to healthy relationships – one part is to create a hashtag for their post. Student handout – one part asks how can you tell if a relationship is healthy, what are some common warning signs of an unhealthy relationship, what can you do if you're in an unhealthy relationship? Include hashtags and visual images.

CONCERN: The concern with this lesson is that it discusses healthy and unhealthy relationships and dating. These are 8th graders and too young for actual dating.

8th Grade – Unit 4 - Lesson 27 – High School Challenges – Objective – identify challenges many students face starting high school - identify people they can go to for help with these challenges - … Who can you go to for help with a problem at high school – category – teachers. Counselor/advisor. Admin. Study groups. Other students.

Student Handout – vocab – nervous – alarmed or anxious – overcome – to deal with, gain control of, or get past something.

CONCERN: This lesson is about high school challenges that the students could face next year. One of the exercises is to identify people they can go to with these challenges. Possible answers are teachers, counselor/advisor, administration, study groups and other students. There is absolutely no mention of going to parents or family for help with these challenges. It is a life changing event to transition to high school, yet there is no mention of turning to parents or family who know the student best and love them the most. One of the black students in the video has a hat that states "You can't kill me – I was born dead".

Supplemental lessons – Values Reflection – Discussion – has a friend ever asked you to do something that went against your value? Did you do it? How did you feel? Have you ever said no to a friend who asked you to go against your value? What happened? How did you feel? How does your value help you make decisions when you disagree with a friend?

Ask – Do friends have to share the same values? Why or why not?

Be Aware – what's one negative thing that friends can do to each other? Be bossy, be aggressive, start an argument, tease, gossip   How does dishonesty affect relationships, how does good communication affect relationships, what can you do if you're having trouble communicating with a friend or someone you're dating?
What are some consequences of being dishonest with a friend or someone you're dating?

Dating – Students discuss aspects of dating relationships, including respecting boundaries, lying, and wanting space. Objectives – participate in a discussion about behaviors in dating relationships…. Warm up – how do you know if someone respects your boundaries? They don't try to make me feel bad for wanting space. They listen when I talk and remember what I say. … Discussion – what characteristics do you think are important in a dating relationship? How should you respond if you feel pressured to do something you don't want to do? How does it feel when someone lies to you? … Reflection – is it ok to spend time with friends without the person you're dating? Why or why not?

Relationships change – What are some difference places people make friends?

Unhealthy Signs – warm up - think of a positive relationship you have with a friend or someone you're dating. What's one work you would use to describe it – happy, easy, supportive, fun … Discussion – what are some of the differences between positive and negative relationships, can a relationship start out positive and then become negative, why or why not? Is a negative relationship always negative for both people involved? Why or why not? How can it affect people outside the relationship? Do you think negative relationships are common in middle school? Why or why not? Reflection – what kinds of effects can a negative relationship have on a person, even after the relationship is over?

Seed of Conflict – warm up – what are some reasons students here at school get into minor disagreements? Gossip, dating, insults or disrespect.

Love – Students think of actions that demonstrate love and reflect on the definition of love. Objective – reflect on the definition of love. … Intro – what makes positive relationships positive? Today's challenge is an opportunity for us to be open and talk about what love means to us. On a large sheet of paper, draw a big heart. In the center, write the word "love", have students come up and write actions they think demonstrate love. Reflection – Based on what everyone wrote – how would you define love?

Would you rather? Objective – to think about how people's preferences differ – students line up and as questions are asked, they go to one side of tape on the floor or the other side. Questions are like do you like the beach or the snow, would you rather be in a mansion or on a farm, would you rather walk on hot coals or broken glass - Last one is would you rather be extremely wealthy but never fall in love or fall in love but not have much money…wrap up – were you surprised when your friends and classmates chose differently than you did? Why do you think they made those choices?

Crowdsourcing advice – they write down a concern about high school on a paper and then pass the paper around and everyone else gives advice about that concern.

Knotty situation – group chooses a consequence if there are knots in the rope that is in a shoebox. Ask – what was difficult about choosing a consequence? How did you get past those difficulties?

Perspective Poetry Slam – objectives – take another person's perspective in a poetry slam – Intro – We're going to choose an important issue we all care about. Then, each of you will write a poem about it to perform for the class. … Steps – what do you want to write your poems about? Everyone needs to agree on the topic. The issue can be school-focused (for example, peer pressure, bullying, or academic challenges) or community-focused (for example, inequality or discrimination). … have students write poems expressing their opinions about the issue. Collect the finished poems, then redistribute them randomly, have student read the poems they received. Wrap up – how did it feel to perform someone else's poem? How was the person's perspective similar to or different from yours?

Where do I stand? Students fill out anonymous survey about behaviors in a dating relationship and discuss the results. Objective – discuss behaviors in a dating relationship. If that behavior is ok, the students gather on one side of the room. If that behavior is not ok, they gather on the other side of the room. Hand out the surveys, have the students complete them without putting names on them. Gather them, distribute them randomly and have the students go to the sign as you read the questions. This is representing the person's answers who completed the survey, not the one going. … Why do you think people answered the way they did? What makes this behavior ok or not ok. … wrap up – based on the survey results, how do you think most people in this class want to be treated by someone they're dating?

Community Awards – objectives – identify categories in which to recognize community members or organizations with awards, investigate categories teachers and staff think community members or organizations should be recognized in, choose recipients, create award certificates, and present awards to community members or organizations. … preparation – have a list ready of community organizations and types of people in the community (for example, politicians or civil servants) students can use to choose award recipients.

Supporting Victims of Domestic Violence – objectives – identify the effects domestic violence has on victims, investigate ways to help support people in the community who experience domestic violence, take steps to support victims of domestic violence in the community… project description

CONCERN: These supplementary lessons talk about dating. These are 8th graders and too young for actual dating. The lessons also talk about what love means to that student. In one of these activities, the students must move to one side or the other of a line depending on what they would rather do. Collectivism is used to have them very openly choose a position and then see how others in the class decide. If a student is the only one on one side of the line, there is pressure these to conform to the class and to change their opinion, value, or view. Most of these choices are mutually exclusive. For example, to live on a beach or in the snow. However, in the last question, they must choose whether they would rather be extremely wealthy and never fall in love or be in love and not have much money. The suggestion is that they must choose between these, rather than having both, which is entirely possible. In another exercise, they must go to one side of the room if a behavior is acceptable in a dating relationship and to another side of the room if the behavior is not acceptable. They are voting based on the paper of a classmate. However, again, there is pressure on the student to side with the others, even if he

or she did not think that the behavior was acceptable in a dating relationship. The next exercise has the students write a poem about an issue. The instructions outline that it can be about a school issue or a community issue. Examples of a school issue are: peer pressure, bullying or academic challenges. Examples of a community issue are: inequality or discrimination. Why are these the suggested, community issue?. There could be many more, less political examples, of middle school age, community issues. For example, people not keeping dogs on leashes or trash in the park, etc. The agenda of this curriculum remains at the forefront in these lessons. One of the last exercises in this 8th Grade curriculum is to have the students identify the effects of domestic violence and take steps to support victims. The concern is that they may encounter age-inappropriate material when learning what the effects of domestic violence are.

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