

# Reality Ride

## 6. The Game of Life

**Spatial Requirements:** Regular classroom setup: little or no space required

**Activity Type:** Movement/group

**Grades:** 3-12

**Group Size:** 2 or more

**Time:** 30-45 minutes

**Introduction:** We get stuck in the loop when we avoid thinking about the consequences of our negative actions, and instead focus on the perceived benefits. This activity looks at the consequences and perceived benefits of real-life behaviors, encouraging students to think twice before making a decision.

### Materials:

- Whiteboard
- Markers
- Eraser
- 6 poker chips of the same color
- 6 poker chips of different colors
- 1 container to hold chips
- Props, as listed below (These can also be found at [www.whytry.org/activities](http://www.whytry.org/activities).)

### Activity:

**Number the poker chips (front and back) from 1 to 6 for each color. Write the following on the board:**

Perceived Benefits	Consequences
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6

Ask the students, "What things do we do that get us in trouble?" and let the students brainstorm. Following this discussion, have the group brainstorm some "Perceived Benefits" for using drugs. and write these responses on the whiteboard. (You may use any of the other brainstormed ideas, but the sample props listed below may not apply.) The list may look something like this when you are finished:

#### Perceived Benefits

- 1 Buzz/High
- 2 Escape
- 3 Social/ fit in
- 4 Look older/status
- 5 Rebellion
- 6 Money

Now list six consequences associated with drug use. The props correlate with the following six categories, so try to tie in student responses to these:

- 1 School
- 2 Loss of job/no money
- 3 Health
- 4 Legal/jail
- 5 Family relationships
- 6 Death

Once the “Perceived Benefits” and “Consequences” columns are filled out, put the set of same-colored poker chips in the container. You are now ready to play the “Game of Life.”

Tell the students that they are going to draw poker chips from the container. Hold the container up high enough that students cannot see what they draw, then allow the students to take turns drawing a chip. Look at their number and make a statement about the perceived benefit that matches the one listed on the board. For example, if a student drew a “3,” you could say something like, “You are new in school and are using drugs to fit in and be part of the ‘cool crowd.’” Once a student has drawn and been given their “benefit,” they should return the chip to the container. You will then mix up the chips and go on to the next person. Allow everyone to take a turn and receive a “perceived benefit.”

Now add the colored chips to the mix. Say, “As time goes on, consequences start to come.” Go through the same process, allowing each student to draw from the container. When a “perceived benefit” chip is picked, follow the same procedure as the first round. If a colored chip is drawn, use the prop that correlates with the number, representing a consequence. For example, if a “1” chip is drawn, use one of the four props that goes with the “school” consequences. Continue this until everyone has had a turn.

Finally, remove the “benefit” chips from the container and leave the colored “consequence” chips. Say, “As the drug use increases or escalates, there are more consequences and fewer benefits.” Continue the game in the same manner until everyone has had a turn in Round 3.

Have the students look around at the consequences their classmates are suffering. Ask, “How many of you have school problems, job issues, health issues, legal issues, family issues, or died as a result of your drug use?”

### **Processing the Experience:**

- Is this game true to life? Why or why not?
- Have any of the “Consequences” happened to you?
- Have any of the “Consequences” happened to people you know?
- What are some of the consequences that you would be willing to share?
- How do you break the cycle?

### **Props:**

#### **School**

A sign with a student’s report card as follows: English: F, History: F, Math: F, Science: F, etc.

A letter informing a student that they need to attend truancy school

A suspension letter

An expulsion letter

#### **Job**

Three different signs with the following:

“Got fired from my job, will work for food”

“Got fired from my job, I came in late one too many times”

“Got fired from my job, stole from the till to pay off a drug fine I owe”

## Reality Ride

### 8. The Keys to Staying on Track

**Spatial Requirements:** Classroom with moderate space required

**Activity Type:** Movement/group

**Grades:** 3-12

**Group Size:** 10 or more

**Time:** 30 minutes



**Introduction:** Individuals involved in self-defeating behaviors do not understand the impact they have on themselves, their family, their co-workers, their school, and on society. Self-defeating behaviors are easy, but doors will open to the person who takes the harder but worth it track and strives to achieve ambitions, dreams, and goals. Opportunity, freedom, and self-respect will follow. This activity demonstrates that what is not always easy is worth it in the long run.

#### Materials:

- 30 3x5 cards with the same number on both sides (from 1 to 30)
- Masking tape
- Timer/stop watch
- Whiteboard and markers
- Permanent marker

#### Activity:

To prepare for this activity, set up a rectangular shape (12' by 24') on the floor with the masking tape. Place the numbered 3x5 cards on the floor in random order with the even numbers placed on one half of the rectangle, and the odd numbers placed on the other half (as shown in the chart on the following page). Set this up in an area where the group cannot see it until they start the activity. Make a start/finish line 20 feet away from the rectangle with masking tape. Explain the activity in another room by drawing the rectangle with a few numbers inside on the whiteboard as an example. Do not tell them that there are 30 numbers. Tell the following story to set the stage for the activity:

Your group has been selected to compete for a contract to build a railroad to connect the tip of South America to Alaska. The people awarding the contract have come up with an activity to test your ability to work under pressure, meet deadlines, work as a team, and solve problems. Each member of the group needs to touch the numbered cardstock (the cardstock represents railroad ties) in numerical order (1 through 30). One player runs in and touches the #1 and comes back out. The second player runs in and touches #2 and comes back out, etc. Each member of the group needs to touch at least one of the numbers. There can only be one group member inside the rectangle at a time. A 10-second penalty will be added for: a number touched out of order, two people in the rectangle at the same time, or a person in the group not touching a number. In order for the group to get the contract, they need to do the activity in less than one minute and 25 seconds. They have four attempts to get the contract. Give the group three to five minutes to plan the activity without you in the room. After the planning is over, bring the group to the starting line and ask if there are any final questions. Start the group and start the timer.

#### Notes to the facilitator:

As the group is going through the activity, keep track of penalties. Stop the timer when the last person in the group is over the starting/ending line. Give the group their time and penalties, and allow three to four minutes to process. Start the processing by asking the group what they learned and what they can do better. Continue for three more attempts. After the fourth attempt, or when they get under the 1:25, process the activity.

#### Processing the Experience:

- What were some of the challenges of the task?
- Did you make the same mistake more than once? What was it?

- What mistakes did you correct in the activity?
- What type of teamwork was displayed in the activity?
- By accomplishing your goal, what kind of opportunities were opened up for your group?
- What consequences came as a result of penalties?
- What would have happened if a member of the group said, "This is stupid and I am not going to do it?"
- What motivated you to stay with the activity and not quit or give up?
- How do our choices in life affect others?
- What challenges do you face in your life?
- What were some of the principles that helped you accomplish the task?
- How would these principles help you on the path to opportunity, freedom, and self-respect?

