

Date Used: \_\_\_\_\_

Group: \_\_\_\_\_

## **DOUBLE TOUGH**

### **Topic: Handling Tough Choices**

#### **Purpose of this Session:**

It goes without saying that kids today have it tougher than past generations, so adults must equip them to face the tough choices. As much as possible, we need to protect young people from the culture while at the same time prepare them to live in a society that throws tough choices their way. One of the best strategies to accomplish this is dialogue with parents and other trustworthy adults. Use this TalkSheet to discuss the tough choices your kids face and how adults can help them navigate these bumpy waters.

#### **To Introduce the Topic:**

Ask the kids to list all the choices that they had to make to get to the meeting. Then tell them that you will be discussing the tough choices they face.

#### **The Discussion:**

**Item #1:** Here you have the opportunity to take the group's stress pulse and allow the kids to share that stress. Young people will share everything from very tough choices, like whom to live with after their parents divorce, to trading things with friends or working their VCRs. The vital point here is to validate as important all the choices kids have faced.

**Item #2:** Young people may ask "what if" questions. Tell them to work through these situations at face value. If there are any situations they wish to add, they can do so. As a group, determine what makes a situation easy or difficult to handle.

**Item #3:** You have an important opportunity here to encourage young people to talk with trustworthy adults when they face double tough situations. Keeping quiet about choices or only sharing them with peers can lead to bad decisions. That does not mean young people must tell adults everything, but tough issues need to be talked through with an adult. Go back to Item #2 and list the situations that are best talked about with an adult. Brainstorm other strategies kids can consider.

**Item #4:** Again, encourage young people to ask an adult for help, especially for the tough decisions. Give some examples and ask the kids for examples.

**Item #5:** During the preadolescent years, young people are given more freedom by their parents and teachers. Generally, they like this newfound freedom, but they are also concerned that they may make wrong choices. Discuss with them both the good and the bad consequences of decision making. Take the opportunity to talk about how God and our Christian values can direct us in making wise choices.

**Item #6:** The focus of Proverbs 8:33–36 on wisdom reinforces the need for young people to listen to trustworthy adults. Discuss how God's Word provides Christians with a road map that guides us through the tough choices. Another source of wisdom is the community called the church. And don't forget to talk about the importance of prayer. Young people who listen to adults, to the Bible, to God in prayer, and to the community of believers have a better chance of making wise choices.

#### **To Close the Session:**

If you feel comfortable with role-plays, you can play out different situations with volunteer young people. Ask each volunteer to choose a tough choice and come to you as the adult. These role-plays demonstrate the benefits of dialoguing with trustworthy adults. Your role-play need not be a lecture but a guided discussion where you ask a number of questions to help the young person make an informed choice.