

ETHICAL CHOICES

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

CONTENTS	PAGE
Program Overview	2
Objectives	3
How to Use This Teacher's Guide	3
Introducing the Topic of Rights and Responsibilities	3
Program Segments:	
Discussion Questions & Follow-Up Activities	4-7
The Socratic Method	7
Resources	8

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Honesty ... Responsibility ... Loyalty ... Independence ...

What do these words mean to today's teenagers?

The ETHICAL CHOICES series challenges high school students to question their beliefs and to consider the impact of their choices on society. Drawing from the experiences of teenagers on critical issues such as violence, health, and cultural diversity, ETHICAL CHOICES promotes the development of ethical reasoning, higher-level thinking, effective communication, conflict resolution, and responsible decision making. ETHICAL CHOICES utilizes the Socratic method, in which participants are asked to examine their values and assumptions in a question-and-answer forum. ETHICAL CHOICES originated from Thirteen/WNET's Teen Leadership Institute, a highly successful symposium for high school students in the New York–New Jersey–Connecticut area.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

ETHICAL CHOICES: RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES explores the conflicts that can arise when teens' individual rights and social responsibilities collide. What happens when one person's rights clash with someone else's? Or when one person's sense of responsibility clashes with another's right to live life as he or she sees fit? And what responsibilities do individuals have in exchange for the rights they are granted? Moderator Kim Taylor-Thompson, associate professor of law at Stanford University, brings a diverse group of seven teenagers together, along with high school principal Michael Johnson, ACLU president Nadine Strossen, and ethicist Robert (Bob) Royal. Through a series of hypothetical situations, the panelists explore their views on issues of social responsibility, freedom of expression, privacy, and setting limits on teenagers. The hypotheticals, which are based on real-life incidents drawn from today's headlines, focus on a series of ethical dilemmas that a group of teenagers might face.

When the program begins, one teen (role-played by the moderator) is deciding whether to buy a pair of sneakers manufactured by a company that exploits child labor in sweatshop conditions. Later dilemmas include whether to accept a scholarship from a tobacco company, a decision on publishing a controversial letter in a school newspaper, and how to react to a town curfew on teens. Panelists are asked to examine such current issues as whether high schools should require uniforms, drug tests, and locker searches. Like the moderator, who plays various roles in the scenarios, the adult and teenage panelists also assume roles, playing the school principal, family members, and friends. None of the responses are scripted. Thought-provoking and insightful, this 60-minute program raises tough questions and encourages young people to look within themselves for answers.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Engage in classroom discussions on the rights and responsibilities of the individual.
- Develop critical reasoning and communication skills.
- Analyze their values and ethics and evaluate how these make an impact on decision making.

HOW TO USE THIS TEACHER'S GUIDE

This Teacher's Guide provides suggestions for developing lessons on dealing with rights and responsibilities and is to be utilized in conjunction with the 60-minute video **ETHICAL CHOICES: RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**. Designed for use with high school students, the guide is divided into four general discussion sections — Social Responsibility, Expression, Privacy, and Setting Limits — each approximately 15 minutes long. Each section is broken down into smaller subsections, e.g., "Shopping with a Conscience." Sections and subsections are clearly indicated on the videotape by titles on the screen. This breakdown allows you to use these materials flexibly, over one or more class periods. If you choose to use some but not all of the segments and/or use them non-sequentially, provide students with an overview of preceding events.

The following steps are recommended for effective interactive use of the Teacher's Guide and videotape.

1. Pre-screen the program to determine its suitability for your students' needs.
2. Review the description of the Socratic method (page 7) utilized by the moderator in the program.
3. Conduct pre-viewing activities, such as Introducing the Topic of Rights and Responsibilities (this page).
4. Begin each program segment by discussing pre-viewing questions.
5. Give students a focus for viewing, i.e., tell them to listen to the opinions expressed by the panelists, or direct students to keep the pre-viewing discussion in mind as they watch the segment unfold.
6. Play the program as instructed.
7. Pause at cue. (The pause function provides an opportunity to check on comprehension, ask questions, call for predictions, and have students write down their observations or raise questions.)
8. Ask questions listed in the discussion section.*
9. Resume playing the program until the next pause cue or the end of the segment, and lead a discussion as noted.
10. Allow students time to discuss any outstanding questions or concerns in pairs or small groups before moving on to the follow-up activities.
11. Conduct follow-up activities to apply and reinforce the concepts discussed.

Be flexible. You need not follow the pause points strictly. Adapt the content of the program to your students' needs. Pause the video as frequently as needed to allow students to discuss what they have observed. Because of the sensitive nature of **ETHICAL CHOICES** topics, you may wish to pause the video after each panelist's response to slow down the discussion and fully explore students' reactions. To develop dialogues on topics more specific to your class, refer to Using the Socratic Method in Class (page 7).

*Questions may also be used after viewing the program in its entirety.

Special Note on RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ETHICAL CHOICES: RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES may provoke a variety of emotional responses in students as they view the program and delve into their personal experiences. Set ground rules in the classroom that call for confidentiality, respect, and consideration for students' thoughts and feelings. To establish a more private setting, you may wish to break students up into small groups to allow them to share and reflect on the issues raised in the program.

CROSS-CURRICULAR USE

ETHICAL CHOICES: RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES may be used in a variety of subject areas, such as ethics, social studies, government, debate, language arts, media, and business. You can use the guide in extracurricular activities as well as community-based programs for teens and parents.

INTRODUCING THE TOPIC OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Objective: To encourage open dialogue about how teenagers feel about both rights and responsibilities in their everyday lives.

Have students, individually or in groups, identify the *rights* that each of us — students, teachers, parents, administrators — has as a member of the school community. (This can be expanded to include the larger community or the nation.) After students have completed this list, ask them to identify the *responsibilities* that each of us has as a member of the school community. Ask students to distinguish between rights and responsibilities and then develop a definition for both a "right" and a "responsibility."

Have students widen their perspective by showing how organized groups, such as government, businesses, schools, unions, religious institutions, and families, use their rights. Society also has responsibilities. How do each of these larger groups demonstrate responsibility? Have students collect and share some examples of this.

START VIDEO

and play until **Kim** says:

"We hope that as you watch, you'll do the same."
(Approx. 2 min.)



photo: Joe Sinnott

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

The segment begins when **Kim** says, "Let me tell you about these sneakers I want to buy."

Pre-Viewing

Initiate a discussion about money and social responsibility. Ask students what factors go into their decisions about what goods to purchase (make a list on the chalkboard). Ask students if they ever consider a company's business practices (either positive or negative) in making such decisions. What responsibilities do they feel in terms of how they spend their money?

SHOPPING WITH A CONSCIENCE

PLAY VIDEO for approx. 4 min.

PAUSE VIDEO after **Michael** says:

"It may mean you don't get this particular jacket."

Discussion

- Ask students to respond to **Quin's** statement that not buying sneakers from the WIN company would make it impossible for the kids working in the sweatshops to have any money at all. Do they agree? If so, why? If not, what argument would they make to try to change his mind?
- Ask students if they think it matters who makes the products they buy. If so, how can they find out about specific companies?

THE SCHOLARSHIP

RESUME VIDEO for approx. 6 min.

PAUSE VIDEO after **Linda** says:

"I'm all for it."

Discussion

- Ask students if they would accept a scholarship from any organization or individual that might offer them money to go to college. Would the origin of the money or the product a company manufactured influence their decision? How, and to what extent? What factors would help them decide?
- Ask students if they agree with **Linda** that taking scholarship money from a drug dealer is a way of helping him reform. Or do they agree with **Victoria**, who says that taking the money "would make selling drugs be right"?

POLITICAL ACTION AND TRADE-OFFS

RESUME VIDEO to the end of the segment, approx. 4 min.

Discussion

- Ask students to respond to the dilemma of whether or not they should keep protesting if it is hurting someone they know. Would they move forward with their protest, as **Quin** and **Brandi** would? Would they search for a compromise, as **Siva** suggests? What if they could not arrive at one, and continuing the protest meant shutting down the company?
- Ask students to discuss **Bob's** statement about needing to balance two rights against each other. Is compromise possible in a situation such as this? Are there any cases in which compromise would not be possible?

Follow-Up Activities

Evaluating Protests

Have students brainstorm about their knowledge of protests. After coming up with a list of protest tactics, have them identify what the potential cost of each tactic might be (e.g., time, popularity with friends or family, money, arrests, negative impact on others). What price are students willing to pay? Then, have students do research on specific historical cases of political action and protests (e.g., demonstrations for women's suffrage, civil rights marches, grape boycotts, protests at nuclear reactors) and report back to the class. Which protests worked? What changes were effected? Were compromises made? Which actions were unsuccessful?

Survey and Report

Have students conduct a survey among friends, teachers, parents, and neighbors, based on the example about **Mr. Blood** that's used in the video. The survey should ask whether the respondent thinks that a student should accept scholarship money from a local drug dealer. Each student should survey at least ten people. Then, as a class, compile the results. Each student should then write a short essay reporting on the results and stating what their own answer to the survey question would be and why.



photo: Joe Sinnott

EXPRESSION

Pre-Viewing

Initiate a discussion on “freedom of expression.” Explain to students that although many people use the phrase “freedom of expression” when referring to speech, press, and other forms of communication, this phrase does not appear in the Constitution; rather, it is a modern interpretation of the rights guaranteed in the First Amendment. Write the actual wording of the First Amendment on the chalkboard: “Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press . . .” Ask students how they would interpret this language in today’s society. How would they define “speech”? (Is a T-shirt speech? Is marching speech?)

UNPOPULAR OPINIONS

PLAY VIDEO for approx. 4 min.

PAUSE VIDEO after **Linda** says:

“. . . bright enough to realize that carrying a gun to school is wrong.”

Discussion

- Ask students if they would publish the letter. Is it more responsible to publish the letter along with strong letters or articles taking the opposite side, or more responsible not to publish the letter at all? Do they agree with the panelists who believe that the ideas expressed in the letter will find an outlet elsewhere? Is this a valid criterion for deciding whether to publish something?
- How is the ethical question of whether or not it is responsible to publish this letter different from the legal question of whether or not students have a right to do so?
- Have students pretend to be members of King George’s parliament. Let them read the Declaration of Independence. Would King George be offended by the speech of the colonists? Should the colonists be censored? Is it good that the colonists spoke out, even if someone was offended? Does all speech necessarily offend someone somewhere? If shutting someone up meant that one day someone could shut you up, could you live with that?

SCHOOL UNIFORMS

RESUME VIDEO to the end of the segment, approx. 9 min.

Discussion

- Have students list the pros and cons of banning some clothing as noted in the video, adding their own. Do they support or reject the reasons given by the panelists? Why? Do the same with regard to requiring uniforms.
- Ask students to discuss the statement, “Clothes make the person.”

Follow-Up Activities

The Responsibility of the Press

Ask students to create guidelines for the school newspaper. Should the guidelines for letters to the editor be different from those for regular articles and editorials representing the newspaper’s position on issues? How should letters such as the one advocating that students bring guns be handled? (After this activity, you may want to invite the editor of the school newspaper and/or a representative from a local newspaper to discuss their paper’s policies and how they differ from those formulated by the class.)

Free Speech and Mass Communications

Have students explore the limits that society places on free speech. Have students, in teams, research regulations concerning television, radio, and telephone communications, for example. What is allowed and what is restricted? Then, have students research the current debate over what should be allowed on the Internet and what should be restricted, and write an essay on the following topic: Should Internet communication be protected under free-speech laws? Or should it be regulated, as television is? Give reasons.

PRIVACY

Pre-Viewing

Initiate a discussion on privacy. Have students name things that they consider private — such as a letter, a locker, a diary, a handbag, a phone conversation — and list them on the chalkboard. Are all of the things equally private? Discuss the limits to privacy. Is “teen” privacy different from “adult” privacy? Are there any circumstances in which it might be necessary to infringe on someone’s privacy? Ask students how they feel about revealing confidential information, and how they would decide whether or not to do so.

THE DIARY

PLAY VIDEO for approx. 5 min.

PAUSE VIDEO after **Nadine** says:

“But it’s not something the law is going to enforce.”

Discussion

- Ask students what they would do if they were Kim and Brandi. How would they decide whether to read the diary? What factors would influence their decision? What alternatives, if any, to reading the diary exist? Ask them to put themselves in the *parents’* place. Would their answers change?

(continued)

DRUG TESTING

RESUME VIDEO for approx. 5 min.

PAUSE VIDEO after Linda says:

"Why should they have different rights, just because of an age difference?"

Discussion

- Ask students if they were aware of the potential dangers of drug testing pointed out by Nadine (the risk of false-positives; the fact that tests reveal additional, personal health information that has nothing to do with illegal drugs). Does this information change their opinions about drug testing and when it is, or is not, acceptable? If so, how?
- Would drug testing be acceptable if there were a perfect test that detected only the use of illegal substances? Or would it still be a breach of privacy?
- Ask students to imagine themselves as a school principal or company president. What factors might help them decide whether to test students/employees for drugs: if someone may be hurting himself or herself? danger to others? fairness in competition? operating machinery? low performance? If students decided to test, would they test only certain students/employees, or all?



photo: Joe Simmott

LOCKER SEARCH

RESUME VIDEO to the end of the segment, approx. 5 min.

Discussion

- Ask students what they think about locker and bag searches. At what point do school officials have the right to search a student's locker or bag — if they suspect alcohol? drugs? a knife? a gun? Or do they never have the right? Is there a difference between searching a locker and searching a bag? Have students explain their reasoning.
- Ask students if they agree with Nadine that even if you have done nothing wrong, you still "have something to hide." What are the dangers of locker or bag searches? What are the benefits?

Follow-Up Activity

Locker Search Debate

Have students investigate their school's policy on locker searches. What do rights organizations (such as the ACLU) have to say about it? How have the courts decided in similar cases? Afterwards, divide students into two groups and have them debate the following point: The locker is school property, and therefore the school has the right to search it.

Setting Limits

Pre-Viewing

Initiate a discussion on setting limits: Should there be restrictions in children's and teenagers' lives? If so, what kinds of restrictions, and who should be responsible for designing them? What is a suitable age for making decisions about students' lives? What defines adulthood? Give reasons.

STORE LIMITS TEENS

PLAY VIDEO for approx. 4 min.

PAUSE VIDEO after Linda says:

"... I'm not going to let men in the store."

Discussion

- Ask students how they feel about the store's restriction. Is it reasonable or unreasonable? What are appropriate security measures for a shop owner to take? At what point might security measures lead to discrimination against a category of people?
- Do you agree with Linda when she says a store owner is a "public servant"? Or as a private business, can the store manager make decisions about who can come in and who can't?

FAKE ID

RESUME VIDEO for approx. 2 min.

PAUSE VIDEO after Quin says:

"I think you should try and get the law changed."

Discussion

- What reasons might a mall’s management have for not wanting teenagers at the mall after a certain hour? (What is the “teen nuisance”?) Do students think these are valid reasons? What other ways, besides requiring ID, can students come up with to solve the problem?
- Ask students if they believe people should be required to carry some form of ID at all times. What are the advantages and disadvantages of this requirement? Ask students if they know of a place in the world where people are required to carry ID at all times. What were the circumstances that influenced this rule?
- Ask students whether they agree that, “since no one is being hurt,” it’s okay to break the law and use a fake ID.
- Have students brainstorm ways in which students misrepresent themselves. This might range from using a fake ID to plagiarizing schoolwork. Have students indicate what the results of these misrepresentations might be. (This becomes increasingly important as students gain access to others’ work and papers on the Internet. What are the students’ responsibilities in the areas of schoolwork?)

CITY CURFEW

RESUME VIDEO

for approx. 6 min. to the end.

Discussion

- Ask the students which panelists they agree with. Does a curfew protect teens? Why or why not? What other solutions might be more effective?

Follow-Up Activities

Finding a Solution

Role-play a town meeting on the issue of not allowing teens under seventeen into the mall after six o’clock on Fridays and Saturdays. Divide students into three groups. The first group will represent the mall manager and store owners. The second group will represent the shoppers who feel that this rule violates their rights. The third group will represent those shoppers who feel that this rule will prevent a rise in crime at the mall. Have each group present its position. Brainstorm possible solutions and compromises. Then, take a vote on which solution should be adopted.

Do Curfews Curb Crime?

At one point on the tape, Bob says that places where curfews have been imposed have succeeded in reducing crime; Nadine responds that these findings are in contention. Have students research a town or city nearby that has imposed a curfew on teens. Ask students to find out why; what problems was it meant to solve? What opposition, if any, did the measure face? What impact has it had on crime? What other repercussions has the community felt? If possible, have students survey teens and parents affected by the curfew to find out their opinions on the curfew and its effectiveness.

Background

Essential to the ETHICAL CHOICES educational package is the use of the Socratic method, which is attributed to the Greek philosopher Socrates (ca. 470–399 BC). Known today as the “Father of Ethics,” Socrates transformed philosophy from the study of the external universe to the study of human beings and their relationships. He sought to establish ethical truth through absolute standards of conduct and a system of morality independent of opposing doctrines, a system that was valid for everyone regardless of individual religious or civic views.

Socrates’ method of challenging the claims of those who participated in his dialogues was to search for truth by discussion. He was able to expose ignorance by claiming his own ignorance (“Socratic irony”) at times to elicit honest answers. Using inductive reasoning, Socrates centered the discussion on the individual he was questioning and on that individual’s beliefs.

Using the Socratic Method in Class

Keep the following points in mind:

- Act as a facilitator rather than an authority figure, or allow a student to be a facilitator while you act as an observer.
- Draw from students’ experiences to select an issue that is both meaningful to them and may evoke many different points of view.
- Set up a hypothetical situation specific to your school and/or community that frames the ethical dilemmas raised by the issue.
- Devise a sequence of questions that progressively challenges students to examine their own thinking.
- Guide students by utilizing the questioning tips below.
- Follow up the Socratic dialogue with a discussion on the insights gained from the experience and their possible applications.

Questioning Tips

- Keep your questioning strategy flexible.
- Begin with general questions, and move toward specific and delving questions.
- Ask open-ended questions.
- If possible, share your own relevant experiences.
- Allow students time to think about answers before responding.
- Draw answers by innuendo, suggestion, and/or paradox.
- Probe students’ responses by challenging their statements.
- Restate and reflect the students’ statements in order to clarify and validate their thought (e.g., “I hear you saying that . . .”).
- Where there is an agreement among students, take on the role of devil’s advocate to enliven the discussion.
- Encourage students to ask questions or challenge other points of view.
- Avoid classifying students’ answers as right or wrong.
- Insist that students explain how they reached their conclusions.
- Prompt students to draw from their personal experiences and observations.

Organizations

American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)
 132 West 43rd Street
 New York, NY 10036
 Phone: (212) 944-9800
 Fax: (212) 944-9065
 E-Mail: aclu@aclu.org
 Website: <http://www.aclu.org>

The mission of the ACLU is to assure that the Bill of Rights — amendments to the Constitution that guard against unwarranted governmental control — are preserved for each new generation. The ACLU is the nation's foremost advocate of individual rights — litigating, legislating, and educating the public on a broad array of issues affecting individual freedom in the United States. Check your local phone directory for a chapter near you.

The American Ethical Union
 2 West 64th Street
 New York, NY 10023
 Phone: (212) 873-6500
 E-mail: AEUOffice@aol.com

The American Ethical Union is a federation serving Ethical Culture/Ethical Humanist Societies. These societies are humanist congregations where ethics are central and where the questions and problems of everyday living are explored unrestricted by creed or dogma. To put ethical concerns into practice, members seek to work for social improvements. For example, Ethical Culture members were instrumental in founding the first free kindergartens in New York and San Francisco, the Visiting Nurses Service, Child Study Association, Legal Aid Society, ACLU, and NAACP.

Amnesty International USA
 322 Eighth Avenue
 New York, NY 10001
 Phone: (312) 435-6388
 Website: <http://www.amnesty-usa.org>

Amnesty International is a worldwide human rights movement that works independently to protect basic freedoms and human dignity throughout the world.

Center for Civic Education
 5146 Fir Road
 Calabasas, CA 91302
 Phone: (818) 591-9321 or (800) 350-4223

The Center for Civic Education is a nonprofit, nonpartisan corporation affiliated with the State Bar of California. Develops and implements programs in civic education for public and private schools at elementary and secondary levels, cooperating with educators and scholars in the social sciences, humanities, and the law. Offers curricular materials, leadership training, and teacher education.

CHARACTER COUNTS! Coalition
 c/o The Josephson Institute
 4640 Admiralty Way, Suite 1001
 Marina del Rey, CA 90292
 Phone: (310) 306-1868
 Website: <http://www.charactercounts.org>

The CHARACTER COUNTS! Coalition is a nonsectarian alliance of more than 100 nonprofit organizations dedicated to strengthening the character of America's young people with a consistent set of ethical values. The values — which are not politically, religiously, or racially biased — are called the "Six Pillars of Character": trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship.

Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC)
 55 Chapel St.
 Newton, MA 02158
 Phone: (617) 969-7100
 Website: <http://www.edc.org>

Dedicated to promoting human development through education, EDC works to address educational, health, and social problems and to improve the quality of life for people of all ages and to all racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds. Specializes in designing curriculum materials dedicated to inquiry-based, hands-on learning; creating and implementing training programs for teachers, health-care professionals, and other workers; and conducting applied research on learning.

Educators for Social Responsibility (ESR)
 23 Garden St.
 Cambridge, MA 02138
 Phone: (617) 492-1764
 Website: <http://www.benjerry.com/esr>

National nonprofit organization dedicated to helping young people develop the convictions and skills to build a safe, sustainable, and just world. Promotes children's ethical and social development through its leadership in conflict resolution, violence prevention, intergroup relations, and character education. ESR supports educators and parents with professional development, networks, and instructional materials.

Global Kids, Inc. (GK)
 561 Broadway, 6th floor
 New York, NY 10012
 Phone: (212) 226-0130
 Contact: Evie Hantzopoulos, Director of Training,
 or Peter Wilson, Senior Trainer.

Global Kids, Inc. is a nonprofit educational organization dedicated to preparing urban youth to become community leaders and global citizens. Runs leadership, academic, and computer technology programs.

The Human Connections Institute Inc.
 237 W. Walnut St., Suite 2-J
 Long Beach, NY 11561
 Phone: (516) 889-1994

Committed to working with individuals, small groups, schools, hospital community agencies, and businesses that are servicing the educational and social service needs of communities. Offers conflict resolution workshops for young people, anti-bias/prejudice reduction workshops, and violence prevention, among other programs.

Publications

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photo: Joe Simnott