

MISTAKES DON'T HAVE TO BE MONSTERS



Goal: Students will learn that mistakes are common and that everyone makes them. What's important is that you *CHOOSE* to take responsibility for your mistakes and learn from them. This is one way to overcome poor decision making.

Activities: Role-Playing using *STORE Model for Overcoming Poor Decisions*

Materials: "*I Am Because I Choose*" picture book, *STORE Model Print Out*

Directions: After reading the book *I Am Because I Choose*, discuss with students that we all make mistakes. Share with them the *STORE Model for Overcoming Poor Decisions*, then have students role play different scenarios using model.

DISCUSSION: Express to students that everyone makes mistakes. Their moms and dads, their grandparents, even their teachers! Share with the students a time when you've made a mistake. An example can be leaving home without your purse or wallet and then being unable to purchase groceries at the store because you didn't have money. Ask students whose fault was it that you left your purse or wallet. Be sure to lead them to the conclusion that you were the only one responsible for your mistake.

Next, ask students to guess what you did after making your mistake (*returned home to grab your purse or wallet, blamed your pet for distracting you before walking out of the door, got angry and stormed out of store, cried and returned all of your groceries*). Help students to understand that when we make a bad decision, or a mistake, we can choose to get angry and blame something or someone else for our mistake, or we can choose to fix the situation.

Leave students with the conclusion that making a mistake doesn't make them dumb or stupid. It's a normal thing that everybody does. In fact, the only bad mistakes are the ones that we don't admit to, try to correct and try to learn from. Express to students that today they are going to practice overcoming their mistakes.

Activity 1: Distribute the STORE Model Print Out. Review the printout with the students, then, walk through the model using the scenario below:

Amanda is playing by her teacher's desk with a friend. She accidentally breaks the teacher's favorite coffee cup.

STOP: Amanda should stop playing by her teacher's desk immediately

THINK: Amanda should think of choices that will help to solve her problem. (Ask teacher for help, pick up the broken pieces of the coffee cup, apologize to teacher, etc...)

OWN IT: Amanda should immediately acknowledge that **SHE** broke the coffee cup because **SHE CHOSE** to run by her teacher's desk. It may be easier to blame her friend for asking her to play, or even the teacher for having the cup so close to the edge of the desk. But the best thing for Amanda to do is take responsibility for the choice that she made. Once you own the problem, you can begin working towards a solution, instead of engaging in a discussion about who's at fault.

REACT RESPONSIBLY: Now that Amanda has stopped, thought about her choices, and taken ownership of her mistake, she can pick the best and most responsible choice to help fix the situation.

EMPATHIZE: Amanda should think about how she might feel if someone had broken one of her favorite things, and respond to the teacher in the same manner that she would want someone to respond to her. This is an additional way to react responsibly to the situation.

Activity 2: Have students role play the following scenarios using the steps in the STORE model. This can be done in groups or in pairs. Feel free to cut the scenarios into strips to be given to the students as they come up with their role playing ideas.

- 1. You and your sister are playing in the house when you accidentally knock over your mom's favorite vase.*
- 2. Your friend rushes you to hurry for recess. As you're running out of the classroom, you accidentally knock over your friend's science project.*
- 3. A student dares you to take a stapler from the teacher's desk while the teacher is out of the room. You accept the dare. The teacher returns and sees you taking the stapler.*
- 4. A classmate drops a dollar bill in the hallway. You excitedly pick it up and decide that you're going to use it to buy ice cream at lunch. Later, as the class is preparing to go to lunch, you hear the student tell the teacher that they've lost their lunch money.*

REFLECTION: Remind students that we all make mistakes; but we must remember that we also have a wonderful super power which is our power to choose. One of the ways that we can use our super power for good is to **CHOOSE** to always take responsibility for our mistakes instead of blaming others for the choices that we've made. It is only then that we can learn from our mistakes and help to overcome our bad decisions.

S.T.O.R.E. MODEL

STOP – as soon as you make the mistake stop. This prevents you from making matters worse.

THINK – think about what choices you can make to help fix the situation.

OWN IT – take responsibility for making the mistake. Never blame others for a choice that you made. Once you take responsibility for the mistake, it's easier to correct it then learn from it. If you never take responsibility for your choice then you will never be able to fix it.

REACT RESPONSIBLY – now that you've stopped, thought about your mistake and owned it, you can act responsibly by making the best and most responsible choice to fix it.

EMPATHIZE – if your mistake affected another person, be sure to consider how you would feel if the situation had happened to you. Then try to respond in the same manner that you would want someone to respond to you. This is another way to react responsibly to your mistake.