



April 2007

Character Council Educator Quality of the Month Cautiousness

Cautiousness:
**Knowing how important right
timing is in accomplishing right
actions.**

I will:

- think before I act
- follow safety rules
- ask permission
- talk at the right time
- look out for danger

You've probably heard the phrases, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," and "Measure twice – cut once." In actuality, the best cautions *are* precautions. Being cautious is not the absence of risk and it is not being afraid. The practice of cautiousness simply requires thought before action.

☺ **Stranger Danger:** One way to teach cautiousness is to discuss stranger danger. This is a topic that can apply to all ages of children. There are many children's storybooks on the topic. For older students who may find the children's stories too juvenile, you can use small group discussions. Have each group discuss the possibilities of being abducted, drugged or mugged. They can exchange stories that they have heard or situations in which they have been involved. Be sure the discussion includes questions about how the situation can be prevented.



☺ **Safety Rocks!** For this activity have the students interview their parents about safety and security precautions that they encounter on the job. Look for things such as hard hats, steel toe shoes, earplugs, safety glasses, id badges, security guards, surgical gloves. You will get all kinds of answers on this. Once all of the items or procedures have been shared discuss why they think businesses take safety and security so seriously. Relate these precautions to safety and security rules that families have from curfews to prescription drugs and cleaning products being stored out of the reach of small children, etc. All of these rules exist to protect us.



☺ **You Decide:** Start this activity by having the students put their heads down on their desk and close their eyes. You will ask them a series of questions and they will answer by raising their hands. The questions will be a choice of two similar items and each student has to choose which they like better. Some examples are: Hamburgers or Hot Dogs; Soccer or Football; Red or Green. If they like the first choice better they raise their left hand. If they like the second choice better they raise their right hand. Compile a list of choices that are age appropriate for your class. Try to choose things that are similar so the deciding between them requires some thought. Aim for about 10-15 choices. It isn't necessary to count or record the answers. When you are finished with your list, ask the whole class to stand up. Designate opposite ends of the classroom as the answer areas. Read your list again and this time each student has to walk to the area for that answer. Watch their behavior as they decide which group to walk towards. Do any of them look around before making a decision to see where the rest of the kids are going? When the list is done, the students can return to their seats. Ask them to think about how differently they made their decisions when no one saw their answer and when others could see what they decided. Did it make a difference? This is peer pressure. These decisions were not life-altering but it gives them some insight into their own behavior.

☺ **Uppers and Downers:** This game is a take-off on the popular children's game Chutes and Ladders. Follow this link: <http://www.gapp.me.uk/Activities/Drugs/Uppers%20and%20Downers.pdf> to find everything you need to print and play this drug awareness game. Once the game is complete, ask questions about seeing the value in being informed before making decisions.

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