DEFENSE MECHANISMS

Target: To have students reflect on how they choose to react to pressure situations.

Materials: paper, pencil, Why Try powerpoint or “Duel at the mall” (Malcolm in the Middle) you tube video

Procedure:

1. Icebreaker: Split the kids in half. Have half this kids get up and act for the other half of the class. Have them walk around and show the audience a sad face, then have them switch to: walking angrily, walking in the rain, being a tightrope walker, smelling a skunk and walking on the moon. Then have the group sit down and let the other group act. Have them start with a scared face and then switch to: walking sadly, acting like a clown, acting like a duck, tasting a lemon, playing with a yo-yo.
2. Discuss the following questions:
   1. Why was it easy/difficult to demonstrate your feelings?
   2. What did you find out about yourself and others?
   3. What did we have to do to make this activity successful? (participation important)
   4. How could you tell that others were being good watchers and listener?
   5. How did you feel while you were participating in the activity? (some maybe embarrassed or comfortable, but all did something, showing that they’ve become family and close group)
3. Continue the lesson by talking about emotions and that in the activity they just did, they showed different ways to act. Tell them they are going to see a video about two women from an older TV show called Malcolm in the Middle. Tell them to watch their reactions and choices throughout the video.
4. Show the video.
5. Discuss what happened in the video. What future consequences will these ladies have? (police, husbands, no car) How could this situation been handled differently? (Ladies could have spoke differently to one another, could have let things go)
6. Have any of you ever lost control and made choices that you weren’t proud of? Give them some examples. Explain that losing control doesn’t always have to be violent (it could be screaming or yelling).
7. Have students work in a group to make a short list of times when they lost control or overreacted to a situation (think of being frustrated with siblings or with classmates).
8. Have students share out and then brainstorm how the individuals could have done things differently and discuss if the consequences were hard enough to make them change.