Your No Regrets
Team

noregrets

Parachute

GET TO KNOW YOUR TEAMMATES

Knowing your teammates is a very important part of having a team that works well together. When you know someone's strengths, interests, and other commitments (e.g., sports/activities outside of school), along with their weaknesses and dislikes, you can work with them in a more effective and positive way. Getting to know your teammates also provides an opportunity for you to build new friendships.

THINK POSITIVE AND GET MOTIVATED

Take a moment to remind yourself and your colleagues that the work you are doing is extremely important! By spreading awareness about the issue of preventable injury, you have the potential to save lives both in your school and community at large. When you encounter difficulties in planning for and hosting events in your school or community, try not to get discouraged and stay positive. Your team is part of a larger national network of No Regrets teams and injury prevention professionals who are there to support and cheer you on. Keep in mind the ultimate goal of the No Regrets program – to save lives and prevent injuries through smart risk taking. This can help you to get motivated and build your injury prevention network.

Team Building

"Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success."

- Henry Ford

Team building is not a process that will magically evolve in one afternoon. Rather, team building requires ongoing commitment that will, in time, lead to results. In order for efficiency and success to prevail, it is necessary for all team members in the group to maximize their efforts. It is inevitable that in any group setting there will be differences in personality, styles, and preferences; however, it is important to learn how to resolve difficulties and take preventive steps to avoid group conflict.

4 STAGES OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT

All of these phases are necessary in order for the team to grow, face challenges, tackle problems, come up with solutions, and ultimately achieve their desired outcomes. Some groups will never go through all of the stages, while others will reach the final stage and an event will occur that can throw them back to a previous stage. Where does your No Regrets team stand?

1. **Forming:** In this stage, team members are learning more about one another. Icebreaker activities are commonly used during this stage. Often individuals agree on goals and the tasks that they must complete in order to achieve this desired goal. This stage is often referred to as the honeymoon stage, as team members are usually on their best behaviour and get along well.

2. **Storming:** This stage is necessary in order for team growth to occur. Team members open up to one another and confront each other's ideas and perspectives. As a result, conflict and frustration could emerge in this phase. This stage, if identified early, can result in a stronger group, as it provides opportunities to learn how to tolerate differences and develop patience.

3. **Norming:** During this stage, all team members work together to establish common goals and determine the process that will be taken to achieve these goals.

4. **Performing:** Teams who have reached this stage are able to smoothly and successfully function as a unit. These teams do not display inappropriate conflict. Team members feel comfortable with one another and function interdependently. During this stage, the team may feel optimistic.

12 C'S FOR TEAM BUILDING: HOW TO BUILD SUCCESSFUL TEAMS

1. **Clear Expectations:** The team must clearly communicate their expectations (including the team's performance and outcomes).

2. **Context:** All team members must understand why they are participating on a team and how their work (as a team) will bring about the intended goals and vision.

3. **Commitment:** Do the team members consider the goals/vision to be important? Team members must be dedicated to the goals/vision in order to accomplish the intended outcomes.

4. **Competence:** Do the team members possess the necessary knowledge, skills, and capabilities in order to achieve the intended outcomes? If not, are resources available to the team members that will help them build the necessary skills?

5. **Charter:** The team must identify and state its goals, expected outcomes, timelines, the process the team will follow, and how the results will be measured.

6. **Control:** The team members must feel as though they have freedom and empowerment to accomplish the charter. At the same time, team members must be aware of their boundaries and limitations (e.g., financial and time resources). It is important that team members hold one another accountable for timelines, duties, and outcomes.

7. **Collaboration:** Team members must work together and develop an appropriate strategy to accomplish their goals, based on their different roles and responsibilities.

8. **Communication:** Team members must be able to communicate clearly and honestly with other group members. It is important for group members to be able to both give and receive honest feedback.

9. **Creative Innovation:** Team members must value and encourage creative thinking and unique ideas within the group.

10. **Consequences:** It is important for team members to feel responsible and accountable for the team's achievements. Within the group setting, both team and individual performance should be acknowledged and commended.

11. **Coordination:** In most cases, it is beneficial for teams to have a leader who will guide the group and assist the team in achieving their desired outcome.

12. **Cultural Change:** The current team culture is quite different than that of the past, which was more traditional and hierarchical in nature. Nowadays, groups focus on teamwork, collaboration, and empowerment in order to reach their intended goals.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEAM MEMBERS

- Take pride in your team's accomplishments.

- Create a positive working environment by communicating any problems that you may have directly with the team members involved and in a civilized manner.

- Always put the team first. Leave your pride/ego out of it.

- Focus on positive aspects of your teammates. Do not get hung up on the negative aspects, as we all have negative characteristics.

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEAM LEADERS

- Lead/guide people as opposed to bossing them around.

- Be flexible by opening yourself up to new suggestions and ideas.

- Provide your team with credit, praise, and appreciation.

- Involve everyone; try not to leave anyone out.

- Give praise in public but try to correct people or provide constructive criticism in private.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Working in a group can be a fun and challenging experience that most people will encounter throughout their lives. Whether you are in high school, university/college, or a workplace, group work is something that cannot be avoided. It is important to make the process as smooth as possible while trying to keep conflict at a minimum. This can be achieved among No Regrets team members by taking a proactive approach to conflict management.

CONFLICT: POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE?

Even if the entire team works to be proactive and avoid conflict, this is not always going to happen. This could be true for many different reasons, such as different opinions between student leaders and team members. It is important to remember that conflict can play both a positive and negative role in group settings. What is most important is how the team addresses the conflict.

Conflict Seen as Positive:

Without conflict, team members would not be challenged to think outside the box. When student leaders and team members come together with different perspectives, values, experiences, education, lifestyles, and interests, it makes sense that there may be a difference of opinion. This diversity can enrich brainstorming sessions, meetings, and activity planning as long as the conflict that occurs is resolved and the team can reach an agreement. It is important to ensure conflict does not compromise the quality of the No Regrets program.

Conflict Seen as Negative:

Conflict can strongly affect the overall success of any team. In order to counteract this negativity, the team must deal with its conflict constructively before members are no longer able to work together.

Only collaboration, and sometimes compromise, resolves the conflict over time. Other solutions are, at best, short-term fixes.

GUIDELINES FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION

If a team member is starting to notice conflict within the group, it is important to address the situation right away. Early recognition will help to prevent the situation from getting out of hand and gives members the chance to express their feelings and/or concerns. It will also give team members the chance to work out any major problems without affecting the overall quality of the No Regrets activities. The following are guidelines that can be used to help resolve conflict.

To help resolve conflict within your team, you may consider and/or apply any of the following principles. Several strategies are suggested to help ease the process of finding a reasonable solution.

1. **Every side usually has something valuable to say.** Listen to both sides equally and hear the valuable contributions of each side.

2. **It is hard to find a solution when there is little or no dialogue.** Initiate discussion and dialogue that will encourage participation between team members.

3. **High emotions can worsen the situation.** Create an environment where team members will be able to express their feelings and concerns.

4. **Team members will focus on differences.** Encourage members to identify the areas they have in common, as this can be considered progress.

5. **Team members may become defensive in trying to justify or explain their position.** Search for solutions and seek to understand while maintaining focus on the need to move on.

6. **Team members often feel their story has not been heard.** Listen to each team member's needs and encourage active listening within the group.

7. **Identifying and understanding the desired outcomes will result in progress.** Step back – identify and list the desired outcomes.

8. **Conflict creates emotions and feelings that are barriers to progress.** Identify and understand the emotions. Move the discussion to approaches, strategies, and desired outcomes.

Ice-breakers and Team Builders

Ice-breakers, team-building exercises, and energizers are absolutely essential for workshops with young people, and should be used frequently to keep energy and fun levels high.

❑ **Ball Toss:** Everyone in a circle. Participants throw a small soft ball from one person to the next. When you catch it, introduce yourself. Once people have started to learn each other's names, when you catch the ball, instead of saying your name, you can say the name of the person who threw it to you.

❑ **Who Is It?** Have everyone write something about themselves that no one in the group knows about and that might be a surprise; then collect them, read them out, and have the participants try to guess who it is. Alternatively, become someone else, mime it, and have people guess who it is.

❑ **Find Me:** Just before a break, have everyone discreetly write three things about themselves on a card (favourite colour, food, animal, hobbies, sports; last movie they saw; dream vacation; personal characteristic or personality type...); explain that we'll distribute the cards, and you'll have to find the person who wrote the card you have, and then tell the group who it is after the break.

❑ **Pass the Banana:** Participants stand in a very tight circle, touching shoulders, and with their hands behind their backs. One person volunteers to stand in the middle. The facilitator walks around the outside of the circle and secretly slips the "banana" (usually a marker) to someone. The "banana" is then secretly passed around the circle behind the participants' backs. The person in the middle has to observe the participants in the circle and guess where the banana is. When they guess right, the person with the banana becomes the person in the middle.

❑ **Two Truths and A Lie:** Participants are given three minutes to silently come up with two true facts and one believable lie about themselves. When each person has come up with their three facts each, they present them to the group (with a straight face!). The group must try and figure out what is true and what is fictional. E.g., John has a brother, was born in Saskatchewan and is a twin.

☐**Burning Questions:** Participants are given an index card on which they must write their most burning question— e.g., why is the sky blue? Is there really gold at the end of the rainbow? Once everyone has a question, the group mingles, asking their question to a partner in hopes of receiving an appropriate answer. Once both people have asked their questions, exchange cards and introduce yourself to a new partner and try and get an answer to your new question. E.g., Why are there 13 bagels in a baker's dozen? Where is Waldo? Will the Maple Leafs win the Stanley Cup?

☐**Oh That's What It Is!** Choose a random object and form a circle with the group. Start off by introducing the object, "You may think that this is a _____, but it is actually a..." and come up with an inventive use for the object. The rest of the group responds with, "Oh that's what it is!" Then pass off the object to the next person, who is challenged with coming up with a new use for the object. The energizer is complete when everyone has come up with a new use. E.g., You may think that this is a computer cable, but it is really the leash for my invisible dog!

☐**Scavenger Hunt:** Ahead of time make a culturally appropriate list of 5-10 characteristics, e.g.:

FIND SOMEONE WHO...	
_____	...was born in the same month as you.
_____	...has a little sister.
_____	...is wearing blue.
_____	...goes to the movies at least once a week.
_____	...likes hiking.
_____	...has a pet.

Give everyone a list. They have to find someone corresponding to each of the criteria, and get them to sign on the left. They must find a different person for each characteristic.

COMFORT ZONES

Everyone has different comfort zones. One team member may be comfortable speaking about the program at school-wide assemblies whereas another may find that experience frightening. Before jumping into the program at school, invest in finding out how comfortable team members are with certain tasks. This will go a long way towards helping the team to develop a common language around team roles and responsibilities. Keep in mind that providing tasks that challenge team members allows for personal growth but not to the extent that a member's wellbeing or safety is compromised.

NAME OF SESSION: Comfort Zones

TIMING: 15 minutes

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

- Practice risk management

- Develop a common language to assess risks

- Recognize that everyone has different comfort zones

PARTICIPANTS: No Regrets team including Staff Adviser

RESOURCES OR MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Anything to create three concentric circles or spaces (e.g. three ropes, three walls of a classroom, etc.)

- Comfort Zone Questions (see below)

PROCESS

1. Make three concentric circles (like a bull's-eye) or identify three different physical spaces a few metres apart from each other.

2. Explain the three different zones.

Zone 1: Comfort Zone

This is where you are at ease and you experience very little risk. Perhaps it is when you are at home watching television or out walking your dog.

Zone 2: Manageable Risk Zone

This is also known as the learning zone. Perhaps you are in your learning zone when you are taking driver's education classes or trying a new sport for the first time. There is risk involved in this zone but it is well managed and the risk of injury is low.

Zone 3: Danger Zone

This zone is stressful for anyone who has to spend any time here. Think of a time when you felt fearful or threatened and it is likely that you were in your danger zone at that time.

3. Invite each person to step into Zone 1, the Comfort Zone. Explain that this is a silent activity and their task is to react to the questions by moving through the zones to indicate how comfortable they are with each situation.

Read each of the questions beginning with the phrase, "How comfortable are you…" and observe what zones people move to.

Comfort Zone Questions:
"How comfortable are you…"

1. Speaking at a school assembly?

2. Being interviewed by the local radio station?

3. Riding a bike without a helmet?

4. Delegating tasks?

5. Asking for help?

6. Voicing your opinions?

7. Drawing your Stupid Line?

8. Jumping off a 10-metre diving board?

9. Taking the keys away from a friend who has been drinking?

10. Writing an article for the school newspaper or yearbook?

11. Asking for donations?

12. Leaving lit candles unattended?

13. Managing conflict?

14. Taking a break when you need it?

15. Removing your seatbelt in the back seat of a car?

After the last question, have everyone form a circle outside of the danger zone and debrief the activity with the group. Consider asking:

• What surprised you or struck you as interesting in this activity?

• How does this activity relate to your Stupid Line?

• How do you see what we did in this activity about comfort zones and understanding limits (both your own and others) relevant to the No Regrets program at our school?