

# Don't Gossip

## What does it mean to not gossip?

- \* **I speak the truth** - information is substantiated.
- \* **I speak from a kind, thoughtful place** - with the intention to be helpful.
- \* **I speak what is necessary** to the person involved - not behind his or her back!

Gossip is unconstrained and often derogatory conversation about other people. It can involve betraying a confidence, spreading sensitive information and/or hurtful judgments and can have unintended negative impacts. Gossip may be spread verbally or through the printed word.

Research shows that people who gossip the most have very high levels of anxiety and are not particularly popular because they cannot be trusted. Spreading gossip or rumors is like buying attention; it's temporary and has little foundation.



# Don't Gossip

Looks like:

Sounds like:

Feels like:



# Don't Gossip

## Looks like:

- Purposeful conversation
- Respectful conversation
- Productive problem solving
- Walking away

## Sounds like:

Silence

"How do you know this to be true?"

"Let's take a look at it from \_\_\_\_\_'s side."

"I am more interested in what you are up to."

"Let's talk about something more positive."

"But that's just a rumor right?"

## Feels like:

Courageous

Empowering

Solution oriented

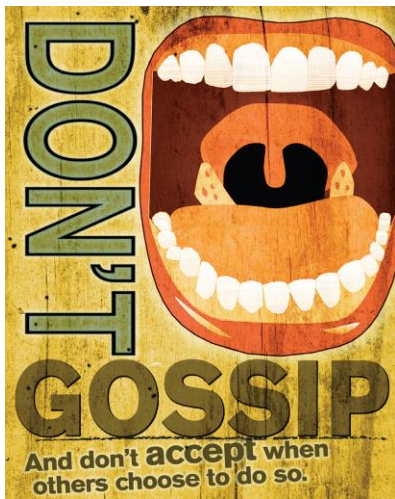
Respect for others

Taking a stand

Genuine

Resisting the juicy dish

Using your brain first and your mouth second



# Don't Gossip

## Discussion Starter Questions:

What does "not gossiping" look like? Sound like? Feel like?

What are gossipers trying to achieve? Some say people gossip in order to hurt those whose popularity, talents, or lifestyle they envy. Do you agree? Disagree? Why?

When you hear gossip how do you feel? What are the positives? What are the negatives?

When you hear gossip, how do you view the gossiper?

Can you think of a situation when you got caught up in gossip? If you could go back to the situation, how would you handle it today?

Is it ever okay to gossip?

What is the difference between gossiping and reporting?

## Situations to Discuss:

You think two students across the room have been talking about you because they keep looking over at you and whispering back and forth to each other. You decide to confront them about it. What do you say? Would you confront the whisperers if you thought they were talking about a fellow student?

You heard two kids talking about student X. They said he is the one to go to for drugs. You then hear other kids repeating this in the cafeteria. What do you do?

You see a group of student laughing at student X. When you get closer you hear them saying student X is drunk and has the alcohol in her water bottle. What do you say or do?

Sam and Taylor broke up. Students are talking about how Sam says "I don't want to live without Taylor". Some people think this is funny; others are concerned. No one seems to know the real story. What do you do?

You show up for practice and hear team mates sharing a story about the coach. It is pretty negative and you seriously question the validity. What might you say or do?

At one time you shared with a friend that you wet the bed until you were 11 years old. Now you are at a high school party. Your friend blurts that information out in the middle of a conversation. Everyone starts laughing. What do you do?

You are at the cafeteria table and a friend starts to gossip. You begin to get sucked in and start adding details. You suddenly realize this is gossip. What do you do? What might you say?