

Circle of Support

Teacher Notes

Description

If you are faced with a problem, who can you turn to? This interactive is designed to get the class thinking and discussing the possible scenarios which they, or someone close to them, could find uncomfortable – or, indeed, dangerous. The various characters allow them to explore which ‘responsible adult’ or organisation could help them in the particular situation.

Time to complete

Interactive game: About 15 minutes

Paper alternative: 25 minutes

How to use

- Choose your main character and play one of the scenarios.
- Drag and drop the supporting characters in your Circle of Support by their importance and discuss your decision with the class.
- If individual computer access is not available complete the game on interactive whiteboards in teams or individually.
- The paper alternative can be used if no computer equipment is available. These can be downloaded from the “Your Call” website.

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Scenarios

Randomly use these scenarios to set the scene for the children before they start the game. Each scenario is aimed around various road safety issues.

- 1. Your friend has got their first car and keeps showing off by going far too fast. You're worried that they will end up killing themselves. Who could you talk to about it?**
- 2. Some of your friends have been making snide comments about you getting a car. They say that you always get everything handed to you on a plate, but that's not fair because you work after school and paid for it yourself. Who can you talk to about how it's making you feel?**
- 3. You're out for dinner with your mum and dad. They both have a glass of wine with their meal. You tell them that they can't because one of them has to drive, but they say that one drink is ok and they won't be driving far. You know that they could be over the limit even after one drink. Who can you talk to about getting through to them?**
- 4. You're the first in your group of friends to have their own car and your friends expect lifts all the time. You don't mind, but petrol is really expensive and it's costing you a fortune. You want to talk to them about chipping in, but don't want them to think you're being mean. Who could you talk to about the best way to go about it?**

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5. One of your group of friends has just got a car - and now they are an absolute nightmare. Whenever anyone else is in the car they think it's funny to take corners really fast and jump lights. You tell them not, but your other friends tell you to shut up and say you're no fun. Who can you talk to about making your friends see that driving like that is dangerous and can kill?
6. You've just passed your test. Your parents say they will buy you a car but you're not allowed to give any of your friends a lift. You don't understand why they are being like this. You thought having a car would give you more freedom. Who can you talk to about it?
7. To get home from school you need to cross a main road but the lights take ages to change. Most of your friends never wait for the green man to come on and call you chicken for waiting until it does. You know they are taking a risk, but they are making you feel like you're the one in the wrong. Who can you talk to about it?

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8. There's a party on Saturday night. You really want to go but your mum insists on picking you up afterwards. Some of your friends have cars and you can't see why you can't get a lift from one of them. You think your mum's being unreasonable. Your mum thinks you're being unreasonable. Who could you talk to that might be able to help you see the other's point of view?

9. Your two best friends got driving lessons for their birthday. You didn't because your mum says it's too expensive and you'll have to wait until you're working so you can afford your own lessons. You feel like you're always the one who gets the rough deal. Who can you talk to about how you're feeling?

10. One of your friends refuses to wear a seatbelt when they're in your car. You've told them that seatbelts are there for a reason and that it's illegal not to wear one. But they still won't. You don't want to fall out with your friend over this, but who can you talk to about how unreasonable they're being?

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Discussion points

1. Everyone would hope to have a circle of support – people they could talk to if they had a problem or were feeling upset. If appropriate, pupils could be asked to share their ‘circle of support’ with a partner or be encouraged to discuss why they have gone to these people for advice/support eg. *good listener, always willing to help.*

- Why is it important to speak to someone about your feelings?
- How could you help someone deal with their reaction to a road accident?
- How can you make yourself someone who could support others?

2. Who do you talk to when you need support?

- Friends.
- Family.

3. When might you need someone’s help or support?

- Bereavement.
- Illness.
- Family problems.
- Bullying – including cyber bullying.
- Problems with schoolwork.
- Body image issues.
- When you feel lonely or upset.

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4. If we don't feel comfortable talking to our friends or family, who else could we turn to?

- Pastoral Care.
- Teacher.
- Medical Professional.
- Social Worker.
- Police Officer.
- Priest/Minister.
- Organisations - they are on your side and they want to make it easy for you. Just pick up the phone, email or private web message chat

5. How do we know who the best person to talk to is?

- A teacher/medical professional/social worker can point you in the right direction.
- You could ask at your local library for support groups in your area.
- Use the web to search for organisations like *ChildLine*. If they aren't the best people to help you, they will put you in touch with someone who is.

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Additional exercises:

1. Divide the class into groups. Give each group a 'set' of characters from the Circle of Support list.

Think of three different situations and decide which character would be most helpful (or not) in that situation. Would a professional organisation be able to help? If so, which one, why and how would you contact them?

2. In small groups or individually, talk about what people can do or say to avert an accident? Allow young people to practise responses to remove them from negative peer pressure.

***Example:** What if you're in a car with a friend and they are speeding? You might feel pressured and worried that you could lose your friend; think I don't want to look un-cool and keep quiet and hope you get home safely. But you could also feel worried about crashing and be scared; think this looks dangerous and don't want to be here; can tell the driver you feel sick and ask them to stop the car.*

You may want to discuss the type of body language that would help young people to get their message across assertively, eg. make eye contact, look confident, stand strong, speak firmly, stay calm and say how you feel.