

**Camfel Productions  
Presents**

***GO VIRAL!***

**Teacher's Discussion Guide**



## **Discussion Guide**

### **PROGRAM OVERVIEW:**

GO VIRAL! challenges student to make “real” connections. Students will be motivated to be “real” within the social media world. They’ll be inspired to take control of their social media usage. They’ll be motivated to post more encouraging and comforting comments and go viral with kind words and a smile. They’ll be given the tools needed to lift one another up and champion each others’ accomplishments.

### **GROUP DISCUSSION**

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

Our brains seem to be hardwired to desire connection with others. Social media makes those connections easier than ever before and provides many ways to connect with people, not only those around us, but around the world. However, research indicates, that despite all the advances in technology, people today feel less connected than 30 years ago. Let’s examine why people feel disconnected and what we can do to make our connections positive and meaningful.

1. **SECTION OF SHOW TO DISCUSS: BEGINNING STUDENT COMMENTS AND MESSAGE.** When we think of something as incredibly popular, we think of it as having gone viral. Generally, it is something that we can easily relate to. We feel a connection to those things that have gone viral and want to share that connection with others in our network of friends.

Talk about how participating in common activities develop relationships with those around us. For example, school clubs, sports teams, band, etc seem to create a bond. Talk about why this is and what it says about how people connect with others. Consider how common causes or events can bring connection with others. For example, music, movie or hobby interest can connect us with others. Discuss how or why these types of things create a social bond.

2. **SECTION OF SHOW TO DISCUSS: “REAL” CONNECTIONS AT SCHOOL** The program highlighted a student who has found connection with others via school activities. They have discovered how working or playing together toward a common goal creates an instant connection.

Discuss how working together with others to achieve a common goal can create a social connection. How deep are these types of connections? For example, would you consider these to be lifelong friendships or simply general acquaintances? Talk about how these types of connections make you feel like you belong even though they might not be deep heart-felt connections.

3. **SECTION OF SHOW TO DISCUSS: STUDENTS DISCUSS THE BENEFITS OF CELL PHONES AND SOCIAL MEDIA.** Making social connections is easier today than ever before. Cell phones and social media have given us instant access, information, and have become an essential part of just about all of our connections. We can connect instantly with those near us and those who may even be half way around the globe.

Talk about the benefit of various social media tools, such as snapchat, facebook, twitter, instagram, etc. How do you feel these social media platforms have improved your life? How does having a cell phone make you feel secure and connected with those you care about? Consider for a moment what life would be like if you didn't have these various technologies. How might your connections be different?

4. **SECTION OF SHOW TO DISCUSS: SONG – STUDENTS DISCUSS THE PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH CELL PHONES AND SOCIAL MEDIA.** Seems like just about anything that is good and beneficial can also be used to hurt others. Students discuss the various ways people use cell phones and social media to bully others, make poor posting choices, be disrespectful or negatively use these media resources.

Discuss how cell phones or social media can lead to feelings of disconnection. Consider how these tools can be used to hurt others. We hear too many stories of students feeling suicidal or committing suicide as a result of being cyberbullied. Talk about what makes cyberbullying difficult to handle. Consider why we may pass along photos or comments that cyberbully others. What should we do to help those who are being cyberbullied?

5. **SECTION OF SHOW TO DISCUSS: INTERVIEW WITH NIA WILLIAMS.** Nia desired to feel more connected with those around her. She started using Snapchat and Instagram. She liked the attention and became addicted to posting various images and reading and seeing others' posts. Unfortunately, she started getting negative feedback that crushed her spirit. She experienced so much despair that she had an emotional breakdown.

The cyberbullying Nia experienced didn't really stop until she decided to ignore it and focus on making face-to-face connections with others. She realizes that it is a brutal world out there and has taken measures to protect herself. Discuss what we can do or should do if we are being cyberbullied. Talk about what we can do to help those we know who are being cyberbullied so they don't have an emotional breakdown.

6. **SECTION OF SHOW TO DISCUSS: STUDENTS TALK ABOUT CELL PHONE AND SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION.** It's amazing how addicted we can be to that cell phone. Texting accidents, whether by walking or driving, are increasing at an alarming rate. That jingle that represents a new message is controlling our lives. Students talk about this addiction and how it has taken control of our lives.

Students talked about various methods they are using to avoid being too addicted to the cell phone or social media. Discuss how these technologies can capture our attention and distract us from doing things we need to be doing. Talk about when using a cell phone can be considered being rude at school, at home, or with our friends. How much time should we be devoting to various social media sites? How might or when is spending time on social media beneficial or harmful?

7. **SECTION OF SHOW TO DISCUSS: STUDENTS DISCUSS ADDICTIONS TO VAPING, ALCOHOL OR DRUGS.** Peer-pressure works in person and via social media. It's easy to find ourselves doing various wrong things to fit in with the "cool" crowd. Drugs, vaping, or alcohol are a few negative things we'll do to feel connected with those we want to be connected to.

Why do people forfeit their lives by succumbing to group pressure and getting involved with things like drugs, alcohol, vaping or smoking? Vaping on the surface appears to be less harmful but it's really is quite addicting. How do these types of activities reduce your chances for success? Too many alter their lives to avoid being bullied. What can or should we do to help those who are being bullied by those around them? How might getting a grip, recognizing that "it is my life" and "my responsibility" to do something about it help me overcome bullying or the desire to do drugs, alcohol, vaping or smoking?

- 8. SECTION OF SHOW TO DISCUSS: STUDENTS TALK ABOUT GOING VIRAL.** Peer-pressure could work toward the positive as well. Acts of kindness may have a ripple effect and go viral from one person to the next. Students talk about how their actions affect others. Students believe they can positively impact others by simply smiling and being considerate of others.

The lyrics from the song “When Seasons Change” state, “I won’t let you down when the seasons change. I’ll be there right by your side. I’ll never let them bring you down when the seasons change.” Talk about how knowing someone is there for you when things aren’t going your way can help you make it through a difficult time. Discuss how a simple smile, kind remark, or encouraging word can go viral in your life. Why don’t we do these types of things more often knowing how wonderful it makes us feel?

- 9. SECTION OF SHOW TO DISCUSS: INTERVIEW WITH JAMES JIMENEZ.** James is the quarterback for his high school football team. He knows that his success is tied to success of the others on the team. It’s a group effort. He’s challenging his teammates to go viral with helping and encouraging comments. Success for the team is based on eleven guys working together as one every single play of the game.

Talk about the importance of working together as a team to achieve a goal. How might negative talk or selfish actions go viral and cause a team to lose? Discuss the importance of surrounding yourself with people who will help support and build you up so you can make through difficult times. Everyone at your school has the same goal, graduation day. Talk about how we can work together and go viral with our positive words and actions to motivate and inspire each other to excel and achieve success.

- 10. SECTION OF SHOW TO DISCUSS: INTERVIEW WITH SIENA DANCSECS.** Siena is a co-founder of a non-profit called Once Upon a Room. They personalize hospital rooms for kids requiring long-term care. They decorate the hospital rooms to help these young people feel a bit more comfortable as they endure challenging health problems. Their goal is to be that one thing that makes a hurting child smile and survive another day.

Siena’s team works to help others feel better despite their difficult experiences. We can do that too. How might we be able to encourage and motivate those at school that we connect with each day? How might our actions be contagious and go viral around school? What would our school be like if kindness, smiles and encouraging words went viral each day? What can I do today to make a difference?

## **CONCLUDING THOUGHTS:**

It’s time to build authentic relationships. It’s time to motivate ourselves, inspire others, and seek to GO VIRAL with smiles and acts of kindness. We need to establish an identity, a reputation, that others will look up to, and will work hard to follow. GO VIRAL! Think about it. Imagine what the world could be like if we can go viral with our positive actions and attitudes. It doesn’t have to be simply a dream. We can get out there and work together with others to make our positive actions and words to not only be contagious but GO VIRAL!

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## Overview

### Program Description:

GO VIRAL is an interactive motivational program motivating students to make kindness and positive choices GO VIRAL in their lives and the lives of those around them. The presentation highlights the various challenges and distractions students encounter. The program gives them tools they can use to help them take control of the social media world, avoid distractions, say “no” to bullying and negative choices, and encourages them to build others up along the way.

- A. We want to feel connected, to feel like we belong.
- B. Common experiences or working toward a common goal seem to create a feeling of connection with those around us.
- C. Social media and cell phones have dramatically altered how we live and communicate with those around us. These powerful tools can be used to improve and help us feel connected with those near and far.
- D. However, social media and cell phones can be used to tease, taunt, and cyberbully others.
- E. Social media is being used to peer-pressure others into posting negative images or others and themselves, manipulating and taunting others to consume harmful drugs, smoke, vape, or drink alcohol.
- F. Social media use can be an addiction. Texting and driving is listed as the cause for over 25% of automobile accidents, killing or hurting over 400,000 each year.
- G. Taking responsibility and the control of your life is the first step toward success. Learning to manage the social media environment and usage of the cell phone will greatly improve our efforts to achieve our goals.
- H. We can work together with others and make positive words and kindness GO VIRAL at our school.

Imagine how our world may be different if everyone stopped looking for what is wrong or what they would have done differently and they appreciated what is right. Imagine how much easier attending school would be if everyone at your school practiced kindness and good citizenship. We may not be able to change the world but we can change the world around us. We don't need to imagine this if we decided to make positive words and actions become contagious and GO VIRAL in our lives.



## **Worksheet**

- 1) How has social media provided you a way to feel connected with others?
  
- 2) Why might some feel disconnected because of social media?
  
- 3) How might social media be used to peer-pressure others into making poor choices?
  
- 4) Why do people choose friends who pressure them to smoke, vape, use drugs, or consume alcohol? What can you do to help someone who is feeling this pressure?
  
- 5) 25% of traffic accidents are related to cell phone distractions. Why does a cell phone have so much power over our lives that we would risk being in an accident to send a text or read that message?
  
- 6) How might you be able to create connections with those around you that are built on being positive, seeking the good, or in helping others achieve a goal?