



## Addiction Awareness Activity: *The Wedding Reception Story*

• **Length:** 45 minutes

• **Set-up:** Any set-up will work

• **Type:** Teen and parent group

### **Instructions:**

1. Prior to the activity prepare and copy the *Wedding Guest Behavior Sheets* and make the *Ranking Posters*.
2. Tape *Ranking Posters* on walls around room in number order.
3. Hand out pencils or pens for all participants.
4. Hand out *Wedding Guest Behavior Sheets* to participants.

### **Trainer Script:**

I'm going to give each of you a handout which describes some behaviors that you and your children observed at a wedding reception you attended last weekend. For the sake of this activity, let's assume that the people on the sheet who attended the wedding with you are all family members or friends of yours. Read through the *Wedding Guest Behavior Sheet* silently. Don't go any further until I ask you to.

### **Materials needed:**

- *Wedding Guest Behavior Sheets*
- Pencils/pens and paper for all participants
- *Ranking Posters* on walls around room: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
- Flip chart and markers
- Allow time for participants to finish reading the sheets.



### ***Wedding Guest Behavior Sheet***

**Instructions:** Rank the actions of your family member and friends on a scale from one to six.

A number "1" indicates the behavior you find **most acceptable**.

A number "6" indicates the behavior you find **least acceptable**.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Grandma Helen**—Got drunk and drove home alone.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Gavin**—Drank too much, got into a fight with the bartender.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Monica**—Had too much to drink and vomited in the ladies room.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Uncle Peter**—Was drinking and offered several beers to his 14-year-old nephew.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Latisha**—After drinking and a public display of affection, left with someone other than the boyfriend she came with.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Martin**—After a few drinks, humiliated his wife on the dance floor.

***Trainer Script:***

Now I'm going to ask you to do something that may be hard since all of the people on the sheets are your family members and friends. I want you to think about how you have just reacted to them and rank your family members' and friends' behavior with the numbers 1 through 6. Each person should receive a different number. #1 should go to the person whose actions are the most acceptable to you. #6 should go to the person whose actions are the least acceptable to you.

Be sure to answer for yourself. I don't want you to put down what your parents might say, or would want you to say, etc. I'll give you a few minutes to complete your ranking. You may begin.

***Trainer Script:***

I'm anxious to hear your reactions to these family members and friends. You will notice that I have placed sheets of paper around the room marked 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. We are going to discuss these family members and friends one at a time. Let's start with Grandma Helen. Please look at the number you each gave Grandma Helen. When I say, "Go," I would like all of you who gave Grandma Helen a "1" to gather around that sign, all of you who gave Grandma Helen a "2" to gather there, a "3" to go to that sign, and so on with all the numbers. Remember we are only looking at Grandma Helen at present.

In your groups I want you to discuss the reasons why you gave Grandma Helen the number you did. We don't want the members of your group to debate with each other—just listen respectfully to each other's reasons. If you find yourself alone, give more thought as to why Grandma Helen deserves the number you assigned her. After a few moments we will have to opportunity to share our thoughts with the entire group. Ready? Ok, begin your discussion.

***Trainer Script:***

Would someone from Group #1 like to share some of the

- Allow 1-2 minutes for each participant to complete the ranking.



- Allow a few seconds for everyone to locate the poster with the number they assigned.



- Allow the groups a few minutes to discuss and then ask each group in turn to share with the entire group their reasons for ranking the person the way they did.



reasons members of that group gave for assigning Grandma Helen #1?

Would someone from Group #2 like to share some of the reasons members of that group gave for assigning Grandma Helen #2?

*Allow one person to speak for the group.*

Would someone from Group #3 like to share some of the reasons members of that group gave for assigning Grandma Helen #3?

*Allow one person to speak for the group.*

Would someone from Group #4 like to share some of the reasons members of that group gave for assigning Grandma Helen #4?

*Allow one person to speak for the group.*

Would someone from Group #5 like to share some of the reasons members of that group gave for assigning Grandma Helen #5?

*Allow one person to speak for the group.*

Would someone from Group #6 like to share some of the reasons members of that group gave for assigning Grandma Helen #6?

*Allow one person to speak for the group.*

***Trainer Script:***

That was a great discussion about Grandma Helen. Now I'd like you all to go to the number you gave Gavin.

*Continue this procedure until all characters are discussed.*

- Continue the same process with:

- Gavin
- Monica
- Uncle Peter
- Latisha
- Martin

***Trainer Script:***

I would like you to do one more thing. Look at your sheet describing these characters, fold to the back the ranking you gave each one, and rank them again #1 through #6. Write your rankings on the right side of the sheet this time. I'm asking you to do this because we've heard a lot of good discussion and I think it is important we all realize it's OK to change our minds based on additional input.

Did any of you change your mind? Would anyone like to share something you heard that helped you think in a new way?

*Take responses from as many persons as time allows.*

During this activity we have certainly heard a variety of viewpoints expressed regarding the characters in this story. How would you explain these differences of opinion?

*Take responses from as many persons as time allows.*

***Optional continuation of activity***

***Trainer Script:***

We have all probably met people like some of the ones who attended this wedding reception. Let's take some time to think of ways we could defuse these situation or to seize the opportunity for a teachable moment with our children. Let's talk about things we can learn from these wedding guests.

What can we learn from Grandma Helen?

- Give participants time to re-rank the persons on their Wedding Guest Behavior Sheets.



- Allow time for the participants to come up with lessons learned through Grandma Helen?



*If the participants don't bring up these points, add them to the flip chart under Lessons to be Learned from Grandma Helen:*

- *No drinking and driving.*
- *Go for help or stop Grandma Helen yourself.*
- *If you are a minor, tell an adult what is happening.*

### What can we learn from Gavin?

*If the participants don't bring up these points, add them to the flip chart under Lessons to be Learned from Gavin:*

- *Note the change of behavior having to do with violence (physical abuse) when drinking alcohol.*

### RESEARCH SAYS:

Alcohol is implicated in 1/2 to 2/3 of all serious assaults. Over 4,000 people die each year in the United States from alcohol related violence.

Alcohol is a factor in more than 1/2 of all domestic violence incidents.

—from FACE-Facing Alcohol Concerns Through Education Video: *Lift it Up*, 1996.

### What can we learn from Monica?

*If the participants don't bring up these points, add them to the flip chart under Lessons to be Learned from Monica:*

- Write down their thoughts on a flip chart under "Lessons to be Learned from Grandma Helen."



- Add bullet points listed on the left if not brought up.
- Allow time for the participants to come up with lessons learned through Gavin?



- Write down their thoughts on a flip chart under "Lessons to be Learned from Gavin."



- Add bullet points listed on the left if not brought up.
- Allow time for the participants to come up with lessons learned through Monica?

- *Alcohol poisoning—vomiting: a signal to the brain there has been too much to drink.*
- *Self control is lost.*
- *What would a person do about getting home or driving a car.*

**What can we learn from Uncle Peter?**

*If the participants don't bring up these points, add them to the flip chart under Lessons to be Learned from Uncle Peter:*

- *Contributing to the delinquency of minors—could be prosecuted in some states.*



- Write down their thoughts on a flip chart under "Lessons to be Learned from Monica."



- Add bullet points listed on the left if not brought up.
- Allow time for the participants to come up with lessons learned through Uncle Peter?



- Write down their thoughts on a flip chart under "Lessons to be Learned from Uncle Peter."



- Add bullet points listed on the left if not brought up.

### What can we learn from Latisha?

*If the participants don't bring up these points, add them to the flip chart under Lessons to be Learned from Latisha:*

- *Sexual (abuse) behavior changes when drinking.*
- *Risky behavior increases when drinking.*

### RESEARCH SAYS:

Alcohol is involved in 90% of all campus rapes and up to 75% of all other sexual assaults.

—from FACE-Facing Alcohol Concerns Through Education  
Video: *Lift it Up*, 1996.

### What can we learn from Martin?

*If the participants don't bring up these points, add them to the flip chart under Lessons to be Learned from Martin:*

- *Verbal abuse increases when drinking.*

- Allow time for the participants to come up with lessons learned through Latisha?



- Write down their thoughts on a flip chart under "Lessons to be Learned from Latisha."



- Add bullet points listed on the left if not brought up.

- Allow time for the participants to come up with lessons learned through Martin?



- Write down their thoughts on a flip chart under "Lessons to be Learned from Martin."



***Trainer Script:***

Are there any other comments about these six persons that anyone would like to make?

*Take responses from as many persons as time allows.*

Are there any comments anyone would like to make about this activity?

*Take responses from as many persons as time allows.*

During this activity we have certainly heard a variety of viewpoints and suggestions for teachable moments. We hope this has helped you. Thank you for your active involvement in this activity and for sticking to our policy of no debate—even though I know it wasn't easy at times!"

- Add bullet points listed on the left if not brought up.

- Closure.