

**Camfel Productions  
Presents**

**IT'S MY LIFE**

**Teacher's Discussion Guide**

# IT'S MY LIFE

## Discussion Guide

### PROGRAM OVERVIEW:

IT'S MY LIFE is a thought-provoking three-screen assembly presentation that focuses on the desire for control, our quest for independence, and the power to choose what we feel is best for our lives. Students will learn that the power to choose requires a heavy dose of personal responsibility, and that making the responsible choice isn't always easy. In fact, too often, the fun choices are in direct conflict with the responsible choices.

### GROUP DISCUSSION

#### OBJECTIVES:

From the moment we are born, we are told what to do, how to act, what's appropriate to wear, even what is healthy to eat. But as we grow up, we begin to feel the need to make our own decisions. We desire to choose what is right for us. After all, IT'S MY LIFE.

- 1. SECTION OF SHOW TO DISCUSS: SONG – IT'S MY LIFE BY BON JOVI.** The words of the song state, "It's my life. It's now or never. I'm not gonna live forever. I just want to live like I'm alive. It's my life! My heart is like an open highway. Like Frankie said I did it my way. I just want to live while I'm alive. It's my life!"

Talk about the desire we have to make our own choices. Discuss the reasons we are not living our lives the way we wish we could be living. What are some of the struggles your students are experiencing with their parents or school which may be stopping them from living life the way they desire? Why are there restrictions around us that inhibit us from doing what we desire? How might those restrictions be a good thing?

- 2. SECTION OF SHOW TO DISCUSS: "MY LIFE IS GOING NOWHERE."** Various students and film clips address how life "right now" isn't exactly what they hoped it would be. Some students had to adapt to a new school, divorced families, tragic accidents, hopeless situations, physical problems, and family drama.

We want to feel in control of our lives but during these school years we have to adapt to the needs of those in our families and communities. Talk about the various struggles your students have with family and how those struggles can seem overwhelming. Discuss the difficulty of being a new student at school and the challenge of making friends and feeling like you belong. What might be some of the challenges of being in a poor or affluent area of town?

- 3. SECTION OF SHOW TO DISCUSS: INTERVIEW WITH AJ - Part 1.** AJ's parents divorced when he was six years old. He struggled to understand life with parents split apart. In middle school, he started making poor decisions, such as skipping school, consuming drugs, and not doing homework or studying at school. His life lacked purpose and direction.

Talk about how various discouragements, such as home life, family drama, or difficulty making friends can impact the desire to do well in school. Discuss the negative things we may do when we feel this way. AJ started skipping school and doing drugs to adjust to the pain he felt inside. What do you think he should have done instead?

**4. SECTION OF SHOW TO DISCUSS: SONG – LOOK WHAT YOU MADE ME DO BY TAYLOR SWIFT.**

The lyrics of the song state, “Look what you made me do, look what you made me do.” Various student comments address how we have a tendency to make excuses, blame others or our circumstances for what we have done or not done.

Too often, rather than take responsibility for our lives we make excuses or blame others or circumstances for where our lives are at right now. Talk about why we do this and what we hope to gain from it. There are things in our lives that we didn’t choose, such as our families, living situations, or body styles. Some have more than others and some have less. Does making excuses or playing the blame game change anything? Why might taking responsibility for where our lives go from here be the right thing to do?

**5. SECTION OF SHOW TO DISCUSS: INTERVIEW WITH ALEXIS.** Alexis is a three-sport athlete. She could easily let the long hours of practice and the fatigue distract her from getting to her studies. However, she makes no time for excuses. Time management and doing the right things first are key to her success. She recognizes that good habits reduce stress and good time management leads to greater freedom and a healthy social life.

Taking responsibility for your life involves good time management skills. Blaming others or our circumstances are simply excuses for failure. Alexis believes success will come by wisely managing her time, working hard and being determined to achieve. Talk about why time management is critical to achieving a goal. What steps can you take today to better manage your time and those things that distract you from doing well in school? Discuss how good time management can reduce the stress you feel and increase the time you have to be social.

**6. SECTION OF SHOW TO DISCUSS: INTERVIEW WITH AJ – Part 2.** AJ’s life was a mess. His drug use was keeping him from getting what he really wanted in life. He finally decided that it was his life, his decision, and his time to make a change. He started taking responsibility for his life and how he felt. He began making the responsible choices. Surprisingly after he started taking responsibility for his future and making the right choices he gained the respect and freedom he really desired from his family.

Admitting that you have a problem and that it is your responsibility to do something about it is a good place to start. AJ had to find a new set of friends to turn his life around. How might those we hang out with regularly inhibit us from achieving our goals? Why might it be difficult to change or find new friends? What can we do to make this easier for those who are struggling in life? Discuss why we gain greater freedom and respect from those around us when we make the responsible choices.

**7. SECTION OF SHOW TO DISCUSS: GETTING A GRIP ON YOUR LIFE.** Several students and film clips address the need to take control of your life. Drugs, alcohol, smoking, and vaping are a few of the obstacles that keep us from achieving our best. Negative friends, peer-pressure, and stress can also dominate our choices. Taking control, being responsible, doing those difficult things now will help us develop into the best version of ourselves that we really desire to be now and in the future.

Why do people forfeit their lives by succumbing to group pressure and getting involved with things like drugs, alcohol, vaping or smoking? 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: INTERVIEW WITH QUETZAL.** Quetzal is a little self-conscious about how she looks. She’s insecure about her height, weight, and looks. At the same time, she enjoys being involved in all sorts of school activities. She constantly has to overcome her insecurities to enjoy the various activities of school she has chosen to participate in doing. Her determination to be involved has

helped her gain confidence in herself and her abilities. She has decided to take control of her life. She is developing her life, learning what she likes and dislikes, and becoming the person others will respect and admire.

Peer-pressure, bullies, and our own insecurities can be challenging obstacles to really “living life.” Talk about what you can learn from Quetzal’s experiences. Discuss how we can help those around us overcome peer-pressure, bully situations or their various insecurities. How does working to overcome these situations lead to greater self-confidence, skills, and achievements in life?

- 9. SECTION OF SHOW TO DISCUSS: INTERVIEW WITH HAILEY.** Hailey enjoys drawing and painting. She has encountered critics through the years who don’t appreciate her artwork. She has learned to recognize the difference between those who are being mean, and those offering constructive criticism. And even though those comments may be hurtful she uses that criticism to excel and improve her skills.

Taking control of your life may mean taking steps or making decisions that won’t please everyone. It’s important to be able to discern between those who are simply being critical and those who are constructively helping you. Talk about the difficulty we may face when others are critical of our achievements. Why is it important to be open to the criticisms of others?

- 9. SECTION OF SHOW TO DISCUSS: INTERVIEW WITH ZAQUAND.** Zaquand is now an outstanding high school athlete and has hopes of playing college football but it wasn’t always this way. His freshman year he was skipping classes, chasing girls, and not studying for school. His first report card was filled with failing grades. Zaquand was focused on having fun rather than being responsible. He finally realized that “It’s My Life” when his uncle took him to visit the homeless people in another part of town. Zaquand realized that this was where his life was headed if he didn’t make a change.

How about you? Are you focused on having fun or are you making responsible choices that will lead to a fun and fulfilling life? The choices we are making today will dramatically affect the future we will live in. Talk about why doing well in school today will help you tomorrow? Discuss what we learn about ourselves when we persevere through difficult classes today. How might taking responsibility for your life and your actions help you develop and create the life you really want to live?

### **CONCLUDING THOUGHTS:**

You will gain the respect and trust of those around you when you stop making excuses and start taking responsibility for your life. Take a look around. We admire those who can be counted on to work hard and persevere to improve their lives. Sure, there will be critical voices, bullies, self-doubt, and obstacles along the way. But we can make the right choices – the responsible ones – to reduce the stress we feel and go on to achieve and create a life that is totally worth it!

# IT'S MY LIFE

## Overview

### Program Description:

IT'S MY LIFE is an interactive motivational program motivating students to make responsible choices. The presentation highlights the various challenges and distractions students encounter. The program gives them tools they can use to help them feel better about themselves, avoid distractions, say "no" to bullying and negative choices, and encourages them to build others up along the way.

- A. There are so many choices for students to make each day. The stress and pressure to make the right choices is complicated by the desire to feel good and be accepted by those around them.
- B. Too many seek to blame others or their circumstances for their failure rather than take responsibility for where their life is going.
- C. Many students make the wrong choices to avoid being bullied or because of peer-pressure.
- D. A lot of students start using drugs, alcohol, vaping or smoking to fit in with the crowd or to avoid be criticized.
- E. Realizing that "IT'S MY LIFE" is a critical step toward making the right decisions. Taking responsibility and the control of your life is the first step toward success.
- F. Successful people are still criticized and bullied but they overcome these challenges by being focused on where they wish to go in their lives. They discern between mean and constructive criticism to develop and create the life they desire to live.

Being responsible and choosing between what you want now and what is truly worth it will take self-discipline. There will always be critical voices, bullies, self-doubt, and obstacles along the way but we can take responsibility for our lives, make the rights choices and work together with others to achieve and create a life that is truly worth it!

# IT'S MY LIFE

## Worksheet

- 1) What stress or pressure are you feeling?
- 2) Why might we feel tempted to blame others or our circumstances for our failures?
- 3) Why is it important to realize that "It's My Life?" How might taking responsibility for your words and actions give you greater control over your life?
- 4) What can you do to help those who are criticized or bullied through social media to discern between negative comments and constructive criticism?
- 5) 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?
- 6) How might taking control of your life and managing your time wisely lead to a reduced stress level in your life?
- 7) Why does taking responsibility for your life and making the right choices lead others to trust you more and provide you with greater freedoms?