



The Kids on the Block Program on Coping with Crisis and Making a Difference

Featuring: Brenda Dubrowski, Salimah Rahman and Melody James

The Kids on the Block Program on Coping with Crisis and Making a Difference began as an effort to provide children with a forum to discuss their feelings about the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 and the resulting "war on terrorism." Many children, particularly in the New York and Washington D.C. areas experienced the loss of a parent, relative or close family friend. Children throughout the United States and other countries suffered a loss of innocence, and they continue to struggle in their attempts to make sense of a world that now feels frightening and unsafe. When a tragedy occurs, it can create intensely emotional reactions even in children and adolescents who are geographically removed from the event. Besides feelings of fear and uncertainty, the September 11 attacks created a climate of anger, which in some communities, has been misdirected towards members of particular ethnic groups or religious affiliations.

Focusing on a variety of issues, the program includes four scripts suitable for older elementary school audiences. Script material addresses terrorism, the deployment of a loved one during times of military conflict, avoiding prejudiced thinking and getting involved in one's community to improve the lives of others. **The Kids on the Block Program on Coping with Crisis and Making a Difference** consists of large hand-crafted puppets, four scripts, props, follow-up activities, and resources.



**CALL OR WRITE TODAY
THE KIDS ON THE BLOCK, INC.**

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Script Summaries

Wait Till the War Is Over

Melody James is excited to be going to the movies with her friend, Brenda. When Melody arrives at Brenda's house, Brenda tells her she is not going to the movies or doing any fun things until her aunt returns from overseas, where she is serving in the war on terrorism. Melody understands Brenda's concerns as her father is currently serving in the military, too. Melody tells Brenda about how "family readiness" helps her family when Melody's dad has to be away from home. Through their discussion, Brenda begins to understand the importance of finding healthy and realistic ways to react to her aunt's deployment. **(Brenda, Melody)**

An All American Girl

Salimah Rahman has just received a scarf as a gift from her grandmother. When she shows it to her friend, Brenda, she is surprised by Brenda's reaction. Brenda is concerned that if Salimah publicly identifies herself as Muslim and wears the scarf people will treat her differently. The two friends discuss the problems of prejudice and misunderstanding as well as some important things about being an American. **(Salimah, Brenda)**

Helping to Heal

Brenda and Melody are part of a committee of kids working on the Woodburn Community Cares Project. Local businesses, organizations, schools and community groups have all chosen to do service projects to aid victims of terrorism. As the committee debates which group should benefit from their philanthropic endeavors, the kids realize, "Just because we want to help the victims of terrorism, that doesn't mean we have to stop helping other people in need." **(Brenda, Melody)**

Times of Trouble

(This script has been written in a "non-specific" fashion, designed to help children cope with either a local traumatic event such as a natural disaster or an event with broader impact such as an act of terrorism.) Brenda is feeling upset and anxious thinking about recent traumatic events. She remembers her teacher's advice and decides to talk to Melody. Melody explains that discussion is a healthy way to deal fears and concerns. **(Brenda, Melody)**

NOTE: After each script the children in the audience are given the opportunity to make suggestions or ask their own questions directly to the puppet characters.

The Kids on the Block, created in 1977, features life-sized puppets who, through the magic of live puppet theatre, teach children and adults about disabilities, medical and educational differences, and social concerns. Through the hard work and dedication of many community-based groups, **The Kids on the Block** puppets are able to touch the lives of people all over the world.