



Why Try

How do you **motivate** and build resilience in **every student**?



“The culture has transformed from pessimism to optimism, from stuck and decaying to flowing peacefully, from resistance to acceptance, and from no hope to a renewed feeling of power and new ideas.”

-Lyndsay Morris, School Counselor, Washington



What is WhyTry?

The WhyTry Program was created to provide simple, hands-on solutions for dropout prevention, violence prevention, truancy reduction, and increased academic success.

The idea is straightforward: Teach social and emotional principles to youth in a way they can understand and remember. WhyTry is based on sound empirical principles, including solution-focused brief therapy, social and emotional intelligence, and multi-sensory learning.

The WhyTry curriculum utilizes a series of ten visual analogies that teach important life skills (e.g., decisions have consequences; dealing with peer pressure; obeying laws and rules; plugging in to support systems).

The visual analogies are reinforced through creative use of music, hands-on activities, and multimedia. WhyTry curriculum engages all major learning styles (visual, auditory, and body-kinesthetic).

WhyTry programs are generally grant-funded through local community grants and federal funds like Title 1, Title 4, and Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative. WhyTry is often used for RTI and PBIS.



Our Mission:

To help people achieve opportunity, freedom, and self-respect using education and interventions that motivate and create positive change. We offer hope and an answer to the question “Why Try in life?”

To achieve its mission, WhyTry counts on the support of professionals who share our commitment to helping youth reach their potential. The key to the WhyTry program’s success in changing lives is the power in the relationship between someone who cares and a youth who needs help.

Who uses WhyTry?

WhyTry is currently at work in over 16,000 organizations in all 50 of the United States, as well as Canada, the UK, and Australia. WhyTry is used one-on-one and in groups at K–12 schools, alternative education programs, mental health organizations, and correctional facilities.

WhyTry programs are led by thousands of professionals around the world:

- Teachers
- Administrators
- Special ed instructors
- School counselors
- School psychologists
- Social workers
- Mental health professionals
- Probation officers
- Corrections staff
- After-school workers

The WhyTry Approach

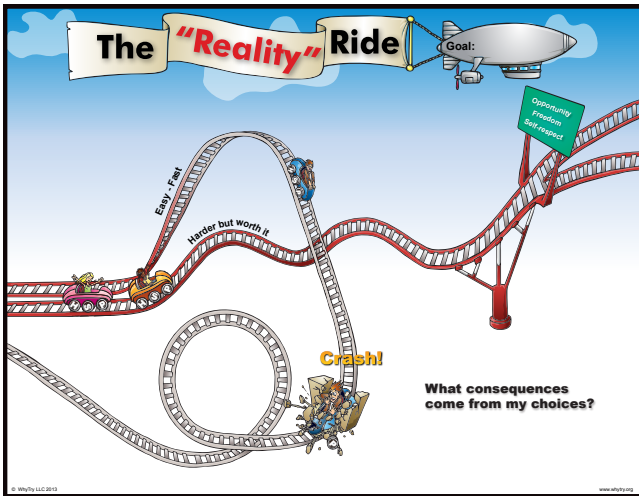


Relationship + Relevancy + Resiliency

The WhyTry Approach combines current research in mental health with current research in youth learning development to create a relevant, relationship-based, multisensory intervention that enables every student to become resilient in the face of life's challenges.

10 Strategies Proven to Inspire *Every* Student

With visual learners in mind, the WhyTry Program uses pictures to teach important life principles to youth. These ten "visual analogies" are explained below:



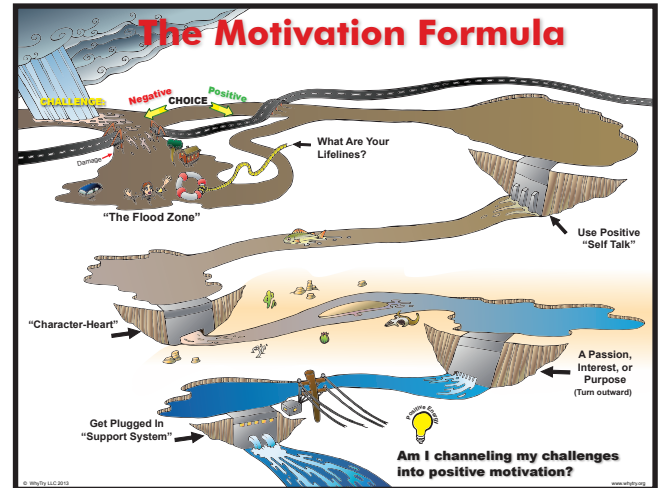
1. Show them that decisions have consequences.

"The Reality Ride" uses a picture of a roller coaster to demonstrate that each decision we make has a consequence. The decisions we make today directly affect the future.



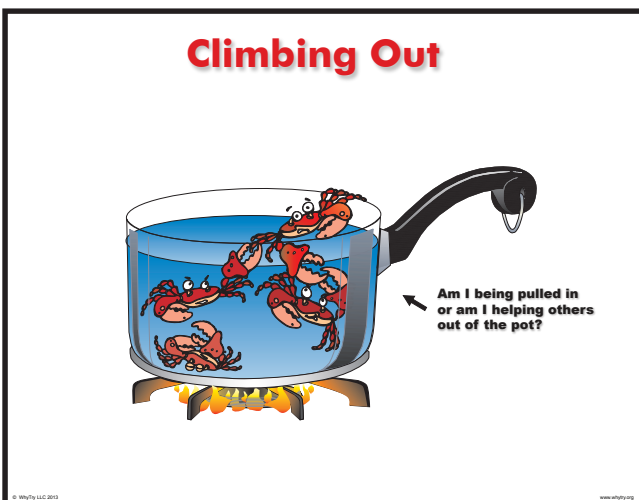
2. Help them tear off their labels.

"Tearing Off Your Label" teaches that negative labels can hurt your future, and positive labels can help you achieve your goals and attain better opportunities. Ultimately, the label you wear depends on you: you can change your negative labels by changing your actions and showing others your positive traits.



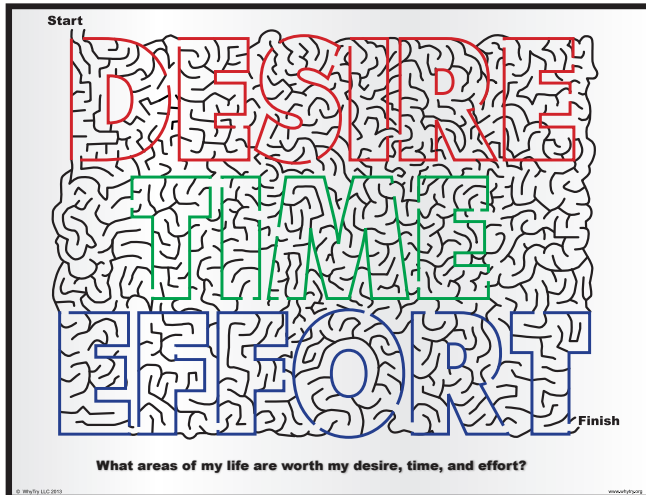
3. Teach them how to control their defense mechanisms.
 “Defense Mechanisms” teaches that pressure situations are best handled by maintaining control of our emotions and selecting positive defense mechanisms (those that don’t hurt yourself or others).

4. Show them how to use their challenges as positive fuel.
 “The Motivation Formula” uses a picture of a river running through dams to show how you can take your challenges and channel them into positive motivation: first to better yourself, then to turn outward and help others.



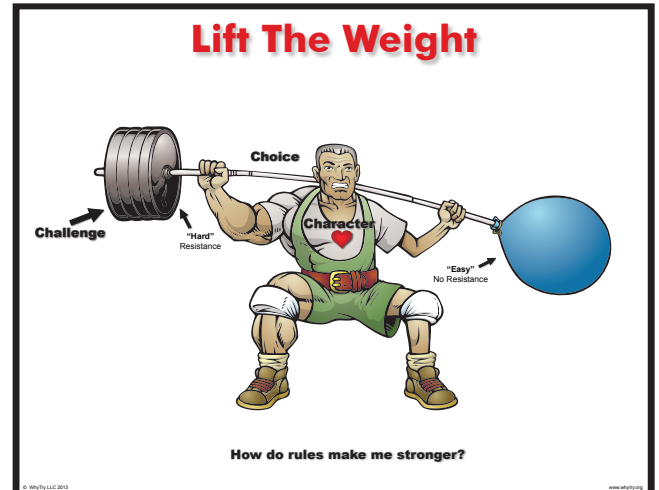
5. Compare peer pressure to crabs in a pot.
 “Climbing Out” teaches that when you put the tools from the visual metaphors into action, and when you develop an awareness of the positive and negative ways that others can influence you, you will be prepared to avoid negative behaviors and their consequences.

6. Tell them, “You only lose if you give up!”
 “Jumping Your Hurdles” teaches that while everyone experiences setbacks, successful people “jump back up” and keep trying. They know that there are certain steps they can use to help them overcome their challenges and achieve success.



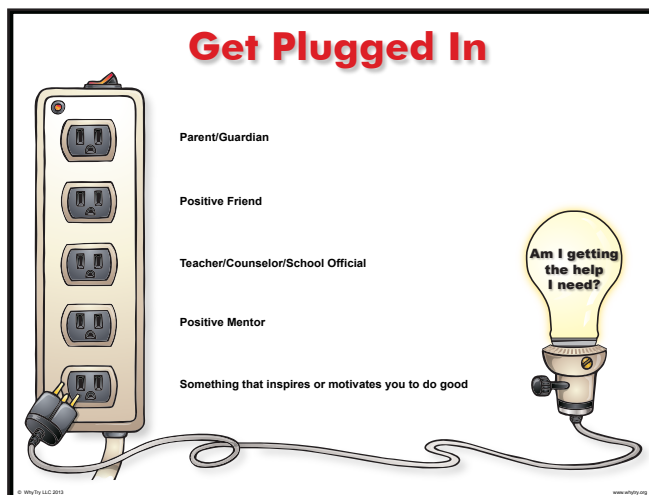
7. Teach them that hard work goes further than natural talent.

“Desire, Time, and Effort” teaches that anything worthwhile in life requires desire, time, and effort. There are no shortcuts to achieving success. You will get much further in life by working hard than by simply relying on your talents or abilities.



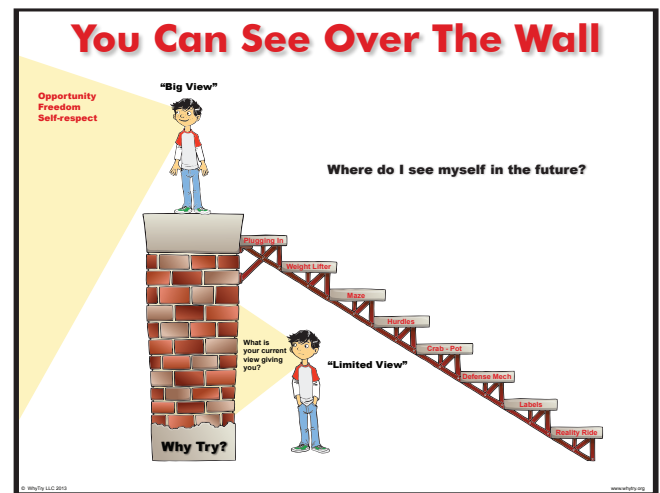
8. Explain the long-term benefits of keeping laws and rules.

“Lift the Weight” teaches that living by laws and rules and developing self-discipline will make you stronger, opening the doors of opportunity for the future.



9. Show them where to find support systems.

“Get Plugged In” teaches that getting help is not a weakness, it is a strength! Challenges become easier when you have a positive support system to help you overcome them. YOU have the power to create a support system if you don’t have one. YOU have the power to strengthen that support system if yours is weak.



10. Help them “See the big picture.”

“The Wall” is a summary of the entire WhyTry Program. It teaches that when you have a clear vision of your future, you have hope for something better, and life’s challenges become nothing but temporary obstacles. When you have a limited perspective, however, it is hard to see beyond the day-to-day challenges. Each step to the top of the wall represents one of the principles taught in WhyTry Program.

WhyTry Research

WhyTry has proven to be a successful intervention tool in a variety of settings, populations, and age groups. It has changed the lives of 6-year-olds and 18-year-olds, rural and inner city youth, males and females, and youth from a variety of races, ethnicities, and cultural backgrounds.

Across multiple third party studies, researchers have seen significant positive changes using WhyTry. Below are highlights of a few of the studies. Further statistical details are also available online at www.whytry.org.

Effects of the WhyTry Social Skills Program on Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders at an Alternative Campus (Wilhite, S., Bullock, L. “Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties” (2012))

Group: Alternative high school campus, North Texas

Results:

- Students receiving WhyTry had significantly less disciplinary referrals, reduced fighting/aggressive behavior and harrassment/bullying behavior.
- Students emotionally showed more internal control and less social stress and anxiety.
- Students had a greater ability to initiate and sustain action toward goals and an increased capacity to find a means to carry out goals.

Making the Invisible Visible: School Counselors Empowering Students with Disabilities Through Self-Advocacy Training (Hatch, T., Shelton, T., Monk, G. Journal of School Counseling, 7(14) (2009))

Group: Students with high-incidence disabilities in diverse, urban high school in San Diego, CA

Results:

- Students increased attendance at IEP meetings by more than 30%
- At IEP meetings, students gave more input, and reported feeling more comfortable asking questions.

PRIDE: 28-day Summer Program for At-Risk Students (Mortensen, B. Ph.D. and Rush, K. Ph.D. Research Committee at Towson University (2007))

Group: Elementary Summer Program

Results:

- Teachers reported significantly improved positive social behavior and overall improved emotional health as reported on the BASC.

Examining Effectiveness of WhyTry Program for Children Receiving Residentially Based Services and Attending a Non-Public School (Baker. Doctoral Dissertation, University of California (2008))

Group: Residential setting for foster care youth with mental health diagnoses, ages 12-18

Results:

- Youth, teachers, and caregivers reported improved emotional functioning, and youth perceived themselves as being more capable of learning and accomplishing tasks or actions.
- Teachers and youth reported fewer emotional problems, depression symptoms, attention problems, rule-breaking behaviors, and aggressive behaviors.

WhyTry Training Opportunities

The WhyTry Program is designed to be easy to use, but to increase your effectiveness, consider a WhyTry Training for your organization.

Learn how to get started with WhyTry in your school or organization by attending one of our training events. See a list of all of our scheduled training events on our website: www.whytry.org.

If you don't see an event scheduled in your area, please call us or contact info@whytry.org and we will see about getting something scheduled near you!



"I've attended tons of training seminars and often feel the ulterior motive is to "sell stuff." This was different; I felt this had a higher purpose. . . I got some answers to my own "Why Try?" issues."

Carol Lark, K-6 Counselor

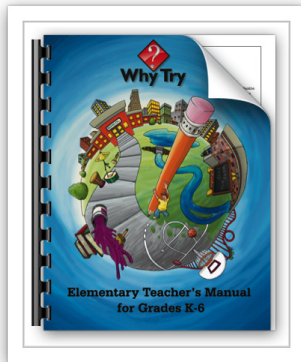
Hosting a WhyTry Training or Staff Development

We are looking for people interested in hosting a WhyTry Training or staff development event at their school or facility. Hosting an event is a good way to get your staff trained when you are on a tight budget—you may receive several discounts and benefits for hosting a training session.

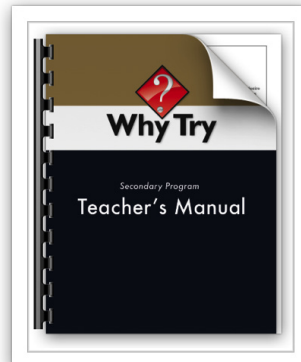
To learn more about hosting an event, please email info@whytry.org or call us (toll free) at **1-866-949-8791**.



WhyTry Program Materials



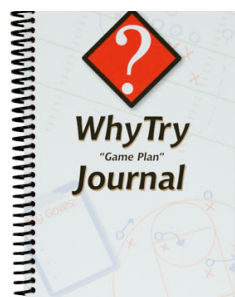
The WhyTry Elementary Curriculum Set provides you with everything you need to teach WhyTry to elementary students. The complete set includes a teacher's manual, WhyTry Music CD, WhyTry Poster Set, and the WhyTry PowerPoint, all geared toward the teaching needs of a younger audience.



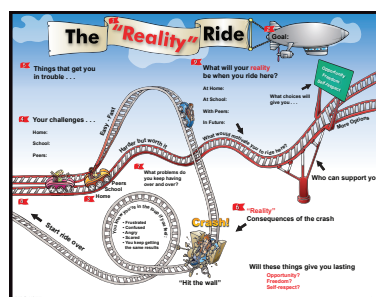
The WhyTry Secondary Curriculum Set provides you with everything you need to teach WhyTry to secondary age students. The complete set includes a teacher's manual, WhyTry Music CD, WhyTry Poster Set, and the WhyTry PowerPoint, all geared toward the teaching needs of a middle to secondary audience.



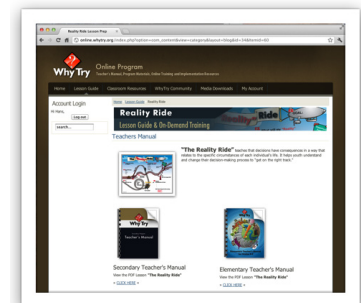
The WhyTry Learning Activity Expansion Pack includes over 150 learning activities for students K-12. Includes diagrams, picture illustrations, and online resources to make it as simple as possible for you to implement the WhyTry learning activities with your youth.



The WhyTry Student Journal is a book of activities and personal reflections for use by youth going through the WhyTry Program. The journals provide students with something tangible from their WhyTry experience that they can refer back to again and again.



The WhyTry Poster Set contains an 18" x 24" copy of each visual analogy contained in the curriculum sets. Each poster has been beautifully printed and sprayed with a special water-resistant laminate coating.



The WhyTry Online Curriculum provides you with instant access to all of WhyTry's favorite products, including journals, elementary and secondary curriculum materials, learning activities, video tutorials, music downloads, access to the WhyTry Professional Learning Community, and other online resources.

To order these products or see the other items in the WhyTry catalog, visit whytry.org/products.

Try it Free

We appreciate the great work you do to serve youth in your area. As a special thank you for attending this workshop, WhyTry offers you a free sample lesson complete with a video demonstration, music, and experiential activities. On the back of this page, you'll see an image of The Reality Ride visual metaphor to use with the lesson. Access the entire lesson content online by downloading a free copy of this chapter of our Teacher's Manual at whytry.org/overview, or use the QR code at right.



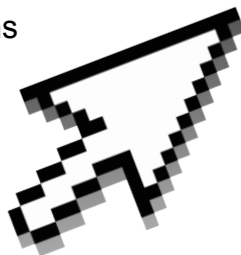
"Since incorporating WhyTry, our graduation rate has tripled, our state scores on California Star Tests have gone up, our API scores – that's our annual index of performance – have gone up double digits in all four years. We had a 60-point gain this year. Part of it is because we have a great staff who really believe in our kids, and we have tools like WhyTry to motivate our kids and to help build resiliency in them and motivate them to have goals."

Regina Awtry, Principal, California

Try it today!

The WhyTry website also includes:

- Assessment tools
- Teacher helps
- Video and music resources
- Images of the visual metaphors
- Learning activities
- Reading suggestions
- Grant-writing tips



www.whytry.org

Try WhyTry Free

WhyTry In Your Setting

How WhyTry Fits

See how WhyTry fits in your setting

Whether you're a teacher, counselor, corrections professional, or youth mentor, the WhyTry Program has proven effective in your setting. See research, testimonials, and alignment with PTL, PBIS, and ASCA.

Video Resources

WhyTry Blog

WhyTry Trainings

WhyTry's multisensory approach has built resilience in millions of youth in schools worldwide.

Watch a brief introduction video to learn more.

Classroom Management

School Climate

Academic Success

Academic Success

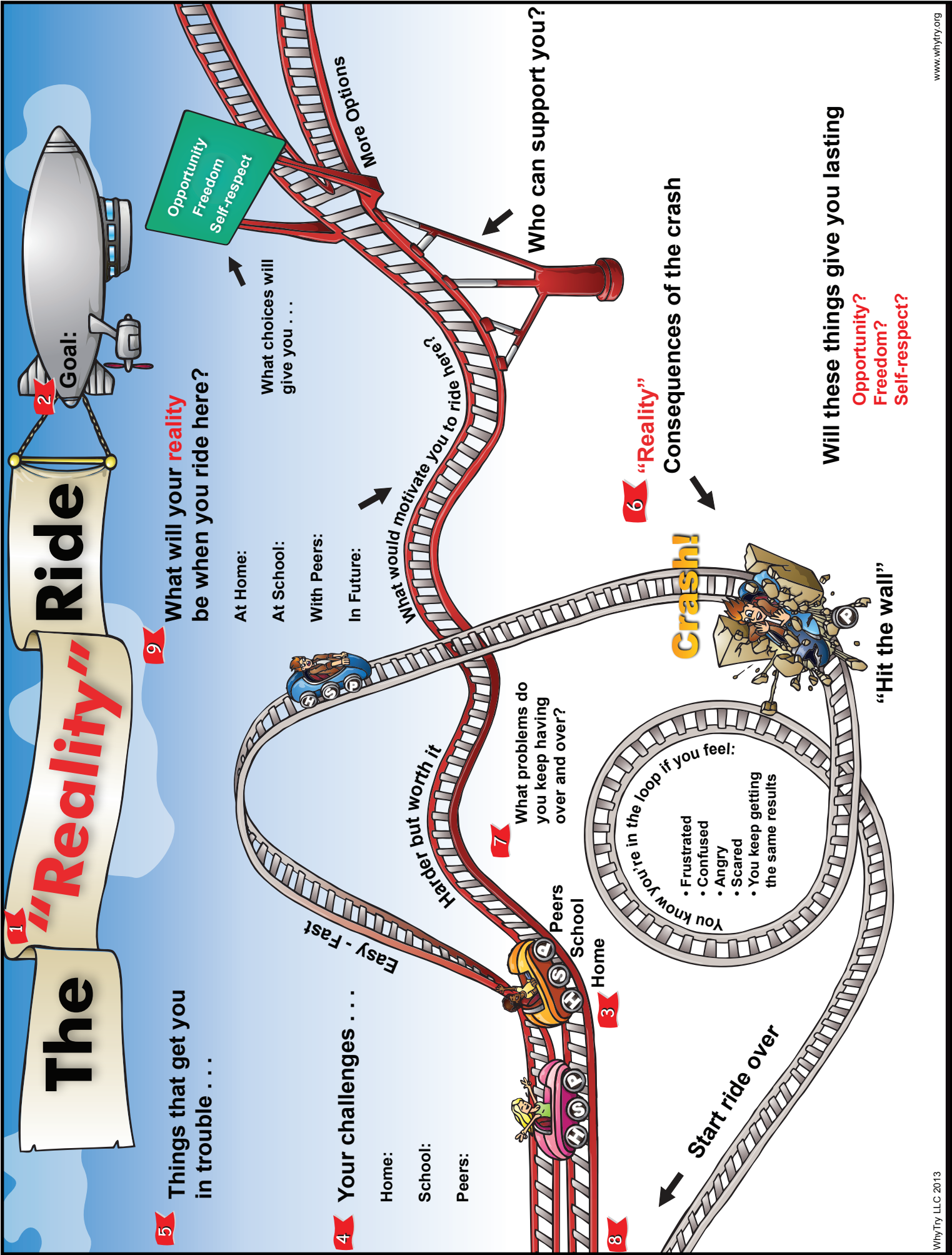
Help students see the relevance in everyday education

"You give these kids... the tools to know and believe that they can be world changers. That no matter the situation, they can rise above and make the decision to become better than their circumstances." -Allishia Edmonds, ONE by ONE Outreach Coordinator

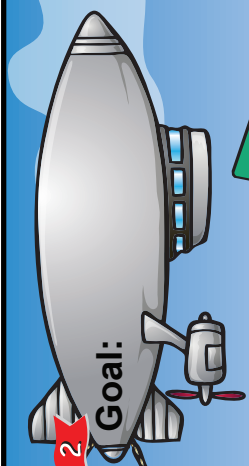
Read More

Bullying Prevention

Dropout Prevention



The Ride "Reality"



2 **Goal:**
What will your reality be when you ride here?

- Opportunity
- Freedom
- Self-respect

5 **Things that get you in trouble . . .**

- At Home:
- At School:
- With Peers:
- In Future:

What choices will give you . . .

4 **Your challenges . . .**

- Home:
- School:
- Peers:

7 **Harder but worth it**

What problems do you keep having over and over?

- You know you're in the loop if you feel:
- Frustrated
 - Confused
 - Angry
 - Scared
 - You keep getting the same results

3 **Home**

Peers

School

Home

Peers

School

Home

Peers

School

Home

Peers

School

Home

Peers

School

Home

Peers

School

Home

Peers

School

Home

Peers

School

Home

6 **"Reality"**

Consequences of the crash

Crash!

"Hit the wall"

Will these things give you lasting

- Opportunity?
- Freedom?
- Self-respect?

Join the WhyTry mailing list to find out about upcoming trainings and to access additional resources. (WhyTry will not share your information.)

Name: _____ Position: _____

School or Organization: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____ Email: _____

I am most interested in the following:

- Free lesson plan
- A video overview of what you saw in this workshop
- WhyTry elementary curriculum information
- WhyTry secondary curriculum information
- Attending a training
- Hosting a training
- Evidence-based research on WhyTry
- Funding and grant resources

How else can WhyTry meet your needs?

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