

## ACTIVITY 1

# BEWARE THE STINK'N THINK'N GANG

**ADVANCE PREPARATION:** *Make photocopies of the gang members descriptions on pages 5 and 6 for each student in the class. Also photocopy the newscaster scripts below for each assigned newscaster. Assign three individuals to be newscasters and coach them on when to read their assigned scripts.*

*Give descriptions of the Stink'n Think'n Gang to class members so they may follow along as newscaster #3 reads each description.*

## Newscaster Scripts

### **Newscaster 1:**

Folks, I need to interrupt our regular programming. We have a breaking news story. Let's go to our reporter at the White House. (Name of newscaster 2), are you there?

### **Newscaster 2:**

Yes, (name of newscaster 1). The president has just issued a warning that a vicious band of thieves called The Stink'n Think'n Gang is on the loose. Every citizen is at risk. No one is safe. If you are not careful, the Stink'n Think'n Gang will steal everything of importance to you. They will rob you of your ability to make good choices. First, they steal your common sense and good judgment. They sneak in when you're not looking. They make you believe things that aren't true and want things that aren't good for you. They make things seem more important or less important than they really are. If they succeed, they will rob you of your feelings of responsibility and fairness. They will steal your ability to be trustworthy and strip you of self-respect and respect for others. They will rob you of kindness and caring. They will even take away your desire to be a good person. Again, their goal is to rob you of your ability to think clearly and to make good choices. Now let's go to (name of newscaster #3) who has been closely following the situation.

### **Newscaster 3:**

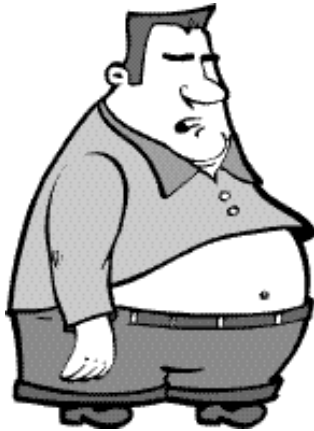
Thank you, (name of newscaster #2). *(Handout STG description to class members)* We now have pictures of each member of the Stink'n Think'n Gang and their descriptions. I can also tell you something about how they operate and each gang member's specialty. Let me give you a rundown on each of these sinister characters. *(Read from the handout.)*

## THE STINK'N THINK'N GANG

### Your Worst Enemies



**Iwannit Now** – The leader of the Stink'n Think'n Gang tries to get you to make bad choices by influencing your wants. If he can get you to want things that are not good for you and not want things that are good, he can rob you of your ability to think clearly. Once Iwannit Now gets a good hold on you—Biggs Bigger, Li Fib and other members of the gang can pretty much get you to do most anything, no matter how foolish or hurtful it may be.



**Biggs Bigger** – Is like the mirror in the fun house that makes you look bigger than you really are. Biggs Bigger works closely with Iwannit Now. His job is to make you think things are more important, more valuable, more attractive, more desirable, more necessary, more urgent, and even more frightening than they really are. He tries to get you to blow things so far out of proportion you can no longer properly judge their true value or worth. In doing so he robs you of your ability to make good choices.



**Eency Wency Tiny Too** – Tries to make you think things are less important than they really are. He's like the fun house mirror that makes you look really small. He will try to make you think things are less less necessary, less desirable, less valuable, less urgent, less serious than they really are. He and Biggs Bigger work closely together. While Biggs tries to get you exaggerate the importance of one thing, Eency Wency tries to convince you something else is less important to you than it really is. For example, a thief thinks that what he wants is more important than what other people want. A drug user thinks pleasure is more important than health. Iwannit Now, Biggs Bigger and Eency Wency Tiny Too are all involved in these kinds of thinking.



**Li Fib** – Tries to make you believe things that aren't true. She will try to get you to lie to others and others to lie to you so neither of you know what to believe or do. She's at her best when she gets you to lie to yourself. She is most successful when she can get you to justify doing things you know are wrong or to believe things that will hurt you.



**Nameit Blameit** – Tries to make you think something is better or worse than it really is by how it is named. Nameit Blameit will try to get you to put labels on people or ideas and make you believe that if you know the name, you know the person or understand the idea. He uses names to make friends seem like enemies and enemies seem like friends. If you let him, he will make it nearly impossible for you to think clearly.



**Judge B. Fore** – Works closely with Nameit Blameit. He tries to get you to judge the worth of things before you know much about them. He will encourage you to form strong opinions with little or no information. His goal is to convince you that you are qualified to judge the value of a person or thing without making any real effort to know much about them.

### Hindsight Questions

- What does the Stink'n Think'n Gang want to take from you?
- Who do you think is the leader of the gang?

### Insight Questions

- Why do you suppose Iwannit Now is the leader of the Stink'n Think'n Gang?
- Why are these six thinking habits so dangerous?
- Have you had any experiences with any of these thinking habits?

### Foresight Questions

- Why do you want to avoid these forms of thinking?
- What can you do to avoid being influenced by the Stink'n Think'n Gang?

**Discussion Opportunity:** Explain that the Stink'n Think'n Gang wants to rob people of their ability to think clearly and make good choices. Iwannit Now may be considered the leader of the gang. When someone really wants something, it is easier for them to exaggerate the advantages and minimize the disadvantages of having it. It is easier for them to lie and to say mean things about others. It is easier for them to form judgments without getting all the facts and easier to make choices based on faulty thinking. Introduce the idea that to avoid faulty thinking, it is necessary to develop several thinking skills. Since faulty thinking almost always leads to poor choices, developing one's thinking skills is one of the most important things a person can do. Character Traits: PR ownership

## ACTIVITY 2

### BELIEVING IMPOSSIBLE THINGS

The queen remarked. . . .Now I'll give you something to believe. I'm just one hundred and one, five months, and a day."

"I can't believe that!" said Alice.

"Can't you?" the Queen said in a pitying tone. "Try again; draw a long breath, and shut your eyes."

Alice laughed. "There's no use trying," she said; "one can't believe impossible things."

"I dare say you haven't had much practice," said the Queen. "When I was your age I always did it for half an hour a day. Why, sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast."

*From Through the Looking Glass by Lewis Carrol*

**Discussion Opportunity:** Ask: Is it possible to believe impossible things? When you were little, what were some impossible things you believed? Do grownups ever believe impossible things? When people don't tell the truth (Li Fib), when they form opinions without correct information (Judge B. Fore) or when they exaggerate or minimize the importance of things (BB & EWTT), it becomes easy to believe impossible things. Character Traits: PR duty; T honesty.