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binding
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AVOID VIOLENCE WITH CONFLICT DE-ESCALATION

If you volunteer in situations where people around you are frustrated or angry, you may witness or experience violence. It can make you feel scared and helpless, especially if you're in an unfamiliar neighborhood.

It's important to know that no matter what environment you are in, there are strategies you can use to catch the cues and address potentially dangerous situations *before* they escalate.

The Facts: What you need to **KNOW**

1. You can learn and practice **strategies to de-escalate conflict** and defuse potentially dangerous situations.
2. There are **non-verbal cues** that tell you conflict is escalating. These include clenching fists or tightening the jaw, changes in body language or tone, starting to pace or fidget, or a change in eye contact.
3. **Verbal signs of conflict escalation** include yelling, bullying, refusing to comply with rules, or defiance.
4. The key to de-escalation is for you to **remain calm and practice empathy**. If you become upset or angry, it will most likely escalate the conflict.

Next, flip this card over to learn what you need to do to stay safe & healthy while volunteering.

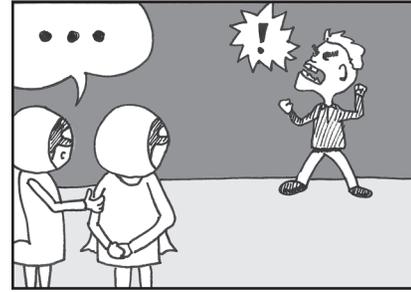
#12

Fold here to make a double-sided card.

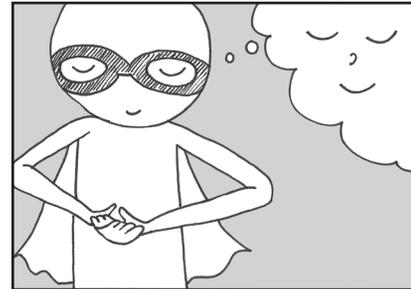
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Avoid Violence With Conflict De-Escalation

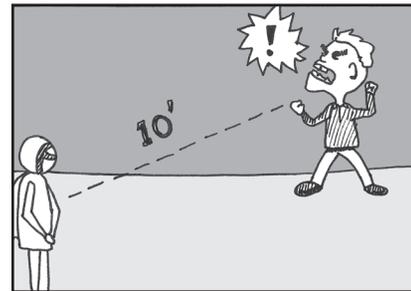
The Actions: What you need to **DO**



Recognize the signs of conflict before they escalate. **Calmly communicate the situation** to a staff member so they can take over the management of the conflict. If the situation feels unsafe, **leave and call** for help.



Take a deep breath. **Calm yourself and remain calm**. Use a neutral tone of voice and **don't get defensive**, even if insults are directed at you. If you start to become upset and can't calm yourself, leave the situation.



Look as non-threatening as possible. Avoid body language that might be misinterpreted, such as shrugging, gesturing, or pointing. **Slowly back away** to reduce perceptions of threat and draw the person away from public areas. **Maintain distance** of 10 feet or more.



Listen actively and acknowledge the person's feelings, whether or not you agree. Use their name, or ask them their name. Ask for their ideas. Repeat what you have heard, to let them know you heard them.



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