

# WAGING WAR

1. Do you know someone who has fought in a war? Which one?

2. Rank the following social problems from your **biggest concern (1)** to your **smallest concern (10)**.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crime                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Child abuse           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hunger                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Discrimination        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poverty                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual abuse and rape |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol or drug abuse    | <input type="checkbox"/> Family breakdown      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> War or the threat of war | <input type="checkbox"/> Environment           |

3. What do you think? Do you **A (agree)** or **D (disagree)**?

- Some video games promote war.
- War is exciting.
- There's nothing good about war.
- It's patriotic to support war.
- War is avoidable.
- People should have the right to protest against a war.
- War is never right.
- My generation will fight in a war.
- War promotes peace.
- Resisting a military draft is a sin.
- Small children should be discouraged from playing with war-type toys.
- Young people should be willing to die for their country.



4. If your country were to go to war, what would you do?

- Never fight, no matter what the reason for the war.
- Fight, but only if I thought the war was justified.
- Fight, whether or not I thought the war was right.

5. Pick one of the following passages from the Bible to rewrite in your own words.

Proverbs 12:20

Matthew 5:9

James 3:17, 18



## THIS WEEK

Teenagers play war-related video games, watch war movies, and see news coverage of wars around the world. They generally have a distorted and glorified picture of war. This TalkSheet gives your kids the chance to examine a realistic, biblical view of war. An additional TalkSheet covering the topic of nuclear war can be found on page 49.

If you or your church takes a strong position on either side of the war and peace issue, you may use this discussion as a way to help your kids understand your view as well as to form one of their own.

## OPENER

For a fun and fast-paced opener, break your kids into small groups. Give each group a piece of paper and something to write with. Then give each group one minute to write down as many war movie titles as possible. For each correct war movie title, each team gets a point. The team with the most correct titles and points gets a prize (of your choice). Compare these titles and ask the kids what each movie is about. How does each portray war? What was the theme of the movie? Do they remember which war the movie was about? Do your kids think these movies accurately portray war?

For an extensive list of all war movie titles, check out The Internet Movie Database at <http://us.imdb.com/>.

## THE DISCUSSION, BY NUMBERS

1. How many people do your kids know who have been in a war? What stories have they heard? What impression about war have they gotten from these people? Allow time for the students to share stories of individuals they may know who have been wounded or killed as a result of war.
2. What social problems are the worst? Are these problems worth fighting in war for? Make a list and rank them as a group. Is there currently a war going on because of any of these issues?
3. Read the statements aloud and ask for some kids to express their opinions. Ask the students to explain their answers—not everyone will agree, but all should be allowed to air their opinions.
4. This personalizes the war issue in a way that forces kids to consider their beliefs about war. Offer different potential war scenarios and see how students respond.
5. Divide the teens into small groups and have each interpret one of these verses regarding war and peace. Ask the groups how consistent the verses

are with the way their government creates and maintains policy. What can they do to be peacemakers?

## THE CLOSE

War is sometimes inevitable to keep world peace and protect the countries of the world. War is the price people pay for freedom and justice. Christians, in particular, should fight for and promote peace, acceptance, and love.

Don't leave this discussion in a negative light. God is still on the throne and in control of what happens in today's world. Christians can find hope in Christ as they spread his love—and they can begin right here where they live—on the school bus or in the cafeteria. Emphasize that each of them can be a peacemaker.

Conclude the discussion by examining James 4:1-3 and a time of prayer for world peace and situations of war that may be going on.

## MORE

- Some of your kids may not have an accurate picture of what war is. You may want to ask someone that you know—possibly a member of your church—who has been involved in war to come in and talk to your group. Encourage your kids to ask questions about what is involved in war and the tragedies that occur.
  - One cause of war is the persecution of certain ethnic or religious groups and conflict among members of one country. You may want to try a role-play game called Romans and Christians (going way back to the days after Christ, when the Christians were intensely persecuted...and killed). Split your group up into two groups—one of Romans and the other as Christians. It works best to play this game at night in a field, large building, or wooded area. Plant a light (a torch, candle, or fire) somewhere unknown to both groups and give each of the Romans a flashlight. The goal of the Christians is to get to the light—and the Romans want to stop them. The Romans must hunt the Christians down and if they find one, they must put them in a jail. And only way for the Christians to get out of jail is to try to “convert” the Roman jail guard by quoting Bible passages, telling a story about Christ, or singing a song. The game ends when all the Christians have made it to the light (or if you've played for a long time!).
- Debrief the game and talk about how each group felt. What was scary about being hunted down? For more information on persecution within the church, check out *Student Underground* (Youth Specialties).