

APPENDIX 4

Examples of Dilemmas

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SAM'S DILEMMA

Sam opened the door. Paul was waiting for him. They always went to school together. Sam was just about to set off when Kylie, his little sister, shouted to him. She had lost her favourite teddy. Sam thought he had seen it somewhere upstairs but he wasn't quite sure where. If he didn't hurry he would be late for school. He knew she would not be able to find the teddy. He looked in the kitchen. Mum was really busy with the baby. She seemed very tired.

Sam started to leave but Kylie started to cry. She was going to work herself up into a real temper. Sam said, "I've got to go back ...," but Paul was getting fed up with waiting. "I'm going then ...," he said.

PAULA'S DILEMMA

Paula was on her way home from school. She was a bit late as she had stayed behind to finish some work to go up on the wall. Her mum wanted to go out and had asked her to be back in time to look after her little sister.

As she went round the corner she saw her friend Sara with a group of older girls. They seemed to be teasing Sara. Paula thought Sara looked scared but she wasn't sure. Paula had a choice. She could turn down her street and run home, or stop to check if Sara was OK. Sara hadn't seen her and would never know.

CHRIS'S DILEMMA

Chris's older sister Maxine had a flat in town with her boyfriend, Adam. She was only seventeen. Chris's mum and dad wanted Maxine to come back home. They'd made it clear that they didn't like Adam but Chris couldn't understand why they didn't. Adam seemed very kind and friendly. He even came round to help them with the garden and to do jobs round the house.

Chris sometimes went to stay with Maxine and Adam when his parents went out. He thought that he was too old for a babysitter but his mum and dad won't let him stay alone. He liked going to Adam and Maxine's because Adam was great fun and they'd play computer games together or just chat about this and that.

One night, when he was staying with Maxine and Adam, Chris went to bed early. He had the beginnings of a cold. Maxine and Adam stayed up to watch TV. Chris couldn't sleep and decided he would go and watch the film after all. Chris knew that Adam smoked even though he avoided smoking in front of him, so Chris wasn't surprised to smell cigarette smoke. The door was slightly open and he noticed that what Maxine was smoking was no ordinary cigarette. Chris was shocked to realise that his sister was smoking weed. He coughed and gave them a little time to get sorted. He saw Maxine quickly hide a tin in a bag of washing that had been left out ready to be taken to the launderette.

Chris looked at the film for a while but then went to bed. In the morning Adam went to work early and Maxine was sleeping late. Chris's mum arrived to pick Chris up. She saw the bag of washing and picked it up. "I'm going past the launderette and will take it in for Maxine," she said.

CLAIRE'S DILEMMA

Everyone said that Claire was really lucky. She seemed to be good at everything. She played the violin, she danced and she played tennis. She was really good at school. Her teacher said that she could be very successful if she really tried. Claire's life was very busy. She had to practise her violin every night. Her weekends involved her tennis class and her dance class. Each holiday she went to a special dance workshop.

At the end of year 6, Claire was entered for an audition to go to a dance school. She passed the audition, and was offered a scholarship. Her mum wanted her to go to the dance school, saying that it was an amazing opportunity – one that would never happen again. Her mum had been an excellent dancer herself as a child, but had never had the opportunity to go to dance school and to become a professional dancer. If Claire went to the school she would have to go away and only see her parents at weekends. This would mean living away from home and leaving her friends. She thought she'd like to be a doctor when she grew up, and though she enjoyed dancing, she didn't want to dedicate her whole life to dancing.

MARJORY'S DILEMMA

Marjory had just retired from work and she lived alone. She had a daughter, Rosemary and grandson, Kevin. One day Rosemary phoned. She said, "Mum, can you do me a favour? Can you have Kevin for a few days? I've got to go to hospital to have my veins done. I'll only be four days."

Two weeks later Rosemary phoned to make the final arrangements. At the end of the conversation she said, "You'll never guess what? Kevin had this silly idea of bringing Charlie – his hamster. Of course I told him not to – I know how you hate mice and things like that. He went on a bit but I still said no – he must learn he can't always have his own way."

Marjory wanted to tell her to let Kevin bring the hamster. She knew he would be lonely and miss his mum. She could cope with a hamster as long as it was in the cage. But she had to support Rosemary.

When Kevin arrived he rushed upstairs and when Marjory went to see if he wanted a drink she could hear him talking. When she peeped round the door she noticed that he had the hamster. She crept downstairs without letting him know she had seen him. She enjoyed Kevin's stay. When he had gone she went up to the room. He'd tried to tidy up and when she looked in the bin she noticed a bundle of newspaper – and inside were the remnants of a hamster nest. She smiled to herself. He was such a good boy – always trying so hard to please.

Then she noticed that the bed had been moved and that there was a loose floorboard. She lifted the floorboard and saw that there were some chewed wires. She went downstairs and turned off the power. She would normally phone Kevin's dad for help when things needed doing in the house. But this time she wasn't sure this was such a good idea

MRS CLARKE'S DILEMMA

Mrs Clarke was the head teacher. She loved her school more than anything and was very proud of all the children. She knew that children sometimes made mistakes. It had come as a shock to her the other day when one of the parents had come into school to complain that her son was being bullied because he was from Pakistan.

She knew that all the classes had been learning about tolerance and respect and she was disappointed to think that it might not be working. Mrs Clarke got all the teachers together and they agreed that they would have a real blitz on anything they heard that might be racist. She talked to the school in assembly and all the teachers said they would focus on this in circle time.

At the end of the first week, Mrs Clarke was walking past one of the classes when she heard someone shouting, "You Paki, ..." in a really loud voice across the room.

She was furious and ran into the classroom and said, "Molly. How could you? After all the work we have been doing at school - you make a racist comment like that.

This can't be tolerated. Come to my office.