OPENING ACTIVITY
Toothpaste Back in the Tube
Invite a volunteer to participate. Place some paper towels down on the table. Give the volunteer a tube of toothpaste and ask them to squeeze out some onto the paper towel. Once they are done ask them to put the toothpaste back into the tube.

The person will not be able to do this and will make a mess. Ask them to place the tube onto the towels. You will want some extra towels for the volunteer to clean their hands as they should get messy also.

GOSSIP PROVERB
An old proverb relates the story of a person who repeated gossip—some rumor about a neighbor. Soon, the whole community had heard the rumor. Later, the person who spread the gossip learned that the rumor was untrue. The person was very sorry and went to seek advice from an elder in the community who had a reputation for great wisdom.

The elder told the person, "Go to your home and take a feather pillow outside. Rip it open and scatter the feathers, then return to me tomorrow." The person did as the elder had instructed. The next day, the person visited the elder. The elder said, "Go and collect the feathers you scattered yesterday and bring them back to me."

The person went home and searched for the feathers, but the wind had carried them all away. The person returned to the elder and said, "I could find none of the feathers I scattered yesterday."

"You see," said the elder, "it's easy to scatter the feathers but impossible to get them back." So it is with gossip; it doesn't take much to spread hurtful words, but once we do, we can never completely undo the damage.

FOR USE WITH SHEET FOLLOWING:
What is gossip?
Go through each one and ask youth to state which box they chose. Ask for volunteers to share why they chose that one.
Follow up Questions: Which ones were obvious? Which ones were not so clearly one or the other? Why?

I gossip...
Why did you place your “X” where you did?

Why do you think people gossip? What are the advantages/rewards?
### Hey, Did you hear about...?

**What is gossip?**

*Check the one you feel best describes the statements below.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Gossip</th>
<th>Not Gossip</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your friend tells you he has started drinking. You tell your parents to get their advice on what to do.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>You see a guy and a girl who are “just friends” kissing in the parking lot. You tell your best friend about it.</td>
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<td>You get a text from a friend saying that they heard Mr. Green your English teacher is getting a divorce, you forward the text along to another friend.</td>
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<td>You hack an ex-friends facebook page and make their status a secret they told you when you were still friends.</td>
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<td>You overhear two people at youth group talking about how they do not like the new youth director. You go tell the youth director what you heard.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A guy you do not know well is absent from class. You hear two others say that some cops came for him and that he probably had drugs on him. You tell your friends at lunch that he was arrested for selling drugs.</td>
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What comes to mind when you hear the word “gossip?” How do you define gossip?

**I gossip...**

*Place an “X” on the line where you believe you belong.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a lot</th>
<th>sometimes</th>
<th>not much</th>
<th>rarely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

*“Sticks and stones can break my bones, but words will never hurt me.”*

Do you agree or disagree with this statement? ___ AGREE ___ DISAGREE

**SCRIPTURES ON GOSSIP:** In small groups, read the scripture assigned to your group and write what it says about gossip.


What does this scripture say about gossip?

*A good test of most gossip: Would I be happy to tell this story if the person who is the subject of the story was listening also?*