

What Would You Do?

By Laura Gryb, associate editor

Jennifer is the National Honor Society president, and her two best friends want in. Cherie and Jill both have great GPAs but fall short of the required service hours. The three friends dream of going to the University of Florida together and being roomies, so NHS membership would help make that dream a reality.

Knowing that they'll never get in without the required hours, Jennifer tells them to add a few to meet the requirement. Besides, the girls were very busy these past few months with school and family matters, and they almost have the necessary hours.

The club secretary, Janice, discovers the false information while checking references for the NHS advisor. She tells Jennifer that the girls lied about their hours before reporting it to the advisor. Jennifer confesses and asks Janice not to tell.

Janice is torn over what to do. She respects Jennifer and would feel like a traitor for telling, but she also has an obligation to do her job. She decides to keep the information to herself, and the two girls are approved. Regretting her decision, Janice turns her frustration towards Jennifer and the other two girls. She makes snide remarks and tends to ignore requests made by the three. Cherie and Jill start to complain about her attitude and job performance to Jennifer and others. Now, everyone has taken notice and is talking about losing Janice next term.

1. Who do you think is more at fault in this situation? Why?

Stacy: "I feel Jennifer, Cherie, Jill, and Janice are all equally at fault.

Jennifer shouldn't have let her friends into the club simply because they were her friends. Cherie and Jill should not have pressed Jennifer to let them in when they knew they didn't deserve the privilege. And Janice shouldn't have kept the secret simply to not look like a narc."

Rebecca: "I believe that Janice is more at fault. First of all, she shouldn't have agreed to keep the false service hours a secret. Even though the president thought it was the right thing to do, that doesn't mean that she had to go along with it. Also, Janice let this secret interfere with her duties and responsibilities. When Janice decided to keep it a secret, she should have tried to forget about it instead of taking it out on everybody. The fact that it did effect her so much proves to her that it was the wrong decision."

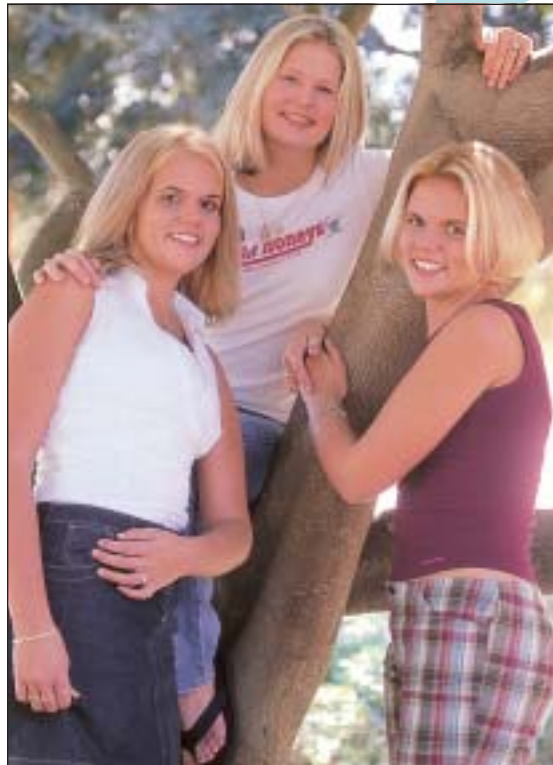
Lindsey: "As president of NHS, Jennifer

should have known that it wasn't right for her to lie for them, even though they were her friends. She was obviously elected president because they thought she was responsible and could trust her to do her job right."

2. How would you fix the situation?

Stacy: "If I were Janice, I would confront Jennifer about my feelings of regret to give her a fair warning of my intentions of going to the advisor."

Rebecca: "In either role, Jennifer or Janice, I would confess to the rest of the members



National Honor Society members (l to r) Lindsey Anderson, treasurer; Stacy LeeAnn Thornhill, member; and Rebecca Anderson, president, of Dixie Hollins High School.

what was going on. I'm sure that the members would agree to let Janice remain a member. Then, what would happen to Cherie, Jill, and Jennifer would depend on what the sponsor and the rest of the club decides is the appropriate action to take."

3. Can you understand why Jennifer altered the forms?

Stacy: "Even though I don't agree with what Jennifer did, I can understand why she did it. She didn't want to seem disloyal to her friends just as Janice didn't want to seem disloyal to Jennifer."

Lindsey: "I don't really understand why Jennifer altered the forms. There are other ways she could have worked this out, like talking to the advisor to see if there was anything else they could do to be in NHS."

4. Would you have altered the forms?

Rebecca: "I wouldn't have altered the forms. Instead, I would have encouraged my friends to go out and earn the service hours themselves."

Lindsey: "I can honestly say that I wouldn't have altered the forms. I would have tried to work things out for them, perhaps talked with the advisor. Maybe an extension or something could have been given."

5. If you knew about Jennifer's actions, would you have reported her?

Rebecca: "I would ask her to change the false information first, and I would agree not to tell anyone. However, if she refused to correct it, I would probably go to the NHS sponsor and make her aware of the situation."

Lindsey: "No, I would have tried to convince her to come clean and confess about what she did, so the situation could have been fixed appropriately."

6. As president, would you ask the secretary not to tell?

Stacy: "No. I would thank her for watching out for me and helping me keep friendship issues out of business matters. I would also let her know that she's essentially helping Cherie and Jill. If they can't get enough community service hours, then how will they be able to balance a demanding school such as UF?"

Lindsey: "I would realize at that point that it was getting too deep, it's not right to involve another person in wrong doings. I would have to come up with another solution, even if that meant coming forward with what I had done."

7. Would you turn your friends in to save your own skin?

Stacy: "I would turn them in to do my job correctly. I was voted into that office for a reason. Part of that reason was probably because people trusted me to do the job correctly."

Rebecca: "No, because if I'm the one that agreed to go along with it, even though my friends provoked it, I'm as equally to blame as they are. I would take the blame for my own actions."

8. What should Janice have done?

Stacy: "I think she should have warned Jennifer but not agreed to lie for her to help Cherie and Jill get accepted into the club."

Rebecca: "Janice should have asked Jennifer to change the information making it correct, and if she wouldn't, then she should have told the sponsor. If she chose to go along with it, she shouldn't have let it interfere with her performance."

Lindsey: "Ask Jennifer to confess. If she chose not to, I'd talk to the advisor and tell her to talk to Jennifer about what's going on." 🐦