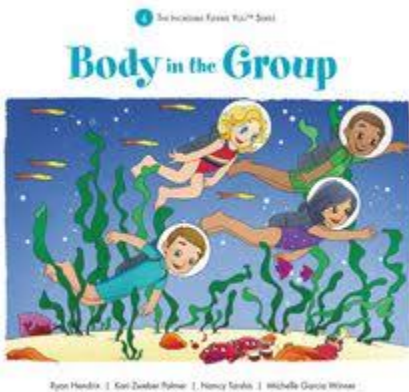


Social Thinking Concept 4: Body in the Group



Why do We Teach this Concept?

We often realize the importance of verbal language and what to say in conversation, but it is important to understand that physical proximity is also a key ingredient for successful social interactions. When we share space with others, we show we are engaged and interested in the group through our physical presence.

Materials:

- Book 4: Body in the Group and Unit 4 Plan
- Family Letter and At Home Activities
- Optional Music Activity: music CD track 5 “Body in the Group” Thinking bubbles - continued from previous concepts
- Defined spaces with borders or barriers (e.g., carpet, gym floor lines, reading corner, Explorations/Centres groups...)

Caution! The body in the group language is sometimes used as a command rather than as a concept to help students observe the physical presence of others as well as have self-awareness about their own physical presence. Like the other Social Thinking concepts, this language should be used to teach, not redirect or scold.

Activities:

- Read Book 4 Body in the Group and see Unit Plan handout for ideas on what to discuss at each “stop and notice” icon
- Connect the concept to Zones of Regulation: Green Zone = body in the group and following the Group plan; Blue/Yellow Zone = body out of the group and following your own plan
- Island Game - Obstacle course with paper ship or rope
 - Use hoola hoops (or what you have to use as a space) as islands and have students or small groups travel together holding onto a ship or rope.
 - Set up islands with coordinating materials or actions.
 - Pretend to swim together to get to the island and upon arrival provide times for students to “explore” and play with the materials/games/actions.
 - Remind students that when their body is in the group it lets everyone know they are thinking about others and interested in playing

- Structured Activity: Freeze!
 - Start music and have a dance party!
 - Pause the song briefly throughout and have the children “Freeze!”
 - Discuss the physical presence of everyone:
 - Is it still a group or are there kids all over the room?
 - Whose body is still in the group?
 - Who danced out?

Language to Reinforce the Concept:

After teaching this concept, use these words with your class in everyday activities:

- While getting ready for group time:
 - “Put your bodies in the group and sit down for circle time”
 - “I will know we are ready to start when I see everyone’s body in the group”
 - “Hang up your backpacks and put your body in the group”
- For transitions:
 - “Put your body in the group so we can eat our snack”
 - “When your body is out of the group, it looks like you are not ready to play our next game”
 - “I love how everyone’s body is in the line group walking in the hall!”
- When group time is ending:
 - “Put your body in the group by the door”
 - Put your body in the group with mom. This shows her you are ready to go home.”
 - “Keep your body in the group when you walk to the car”

Teachable Moments:

- Discuss how one student's actions can impact another student's thoughts and feelings *in the moment*. This helps to teach **empathy**. When a behaviour issue comes up in class (e.g. when a student is not in the line up or in the circle for sharing time), discuss how our actions and choices can impact our friends' feelings. For example “when you are not in the group/line, we all have to wait and it makes us feel frustrated for missing Gym time”.
- Note when you are out of the group and make it an “Oops Moment”. Have the students give you corrective feedback

Books:

- Wombat Walkabout - Sophie Blackall
- Personal Space Camp - Julia Cook
- Mushroom in the Rain - Mirra Ginsburg
- A Tower of Giraffes - Anna Wright