

Children's Connection Curriculum

Session Topic: Social Skills – Peer/Peer, Peer/Adult (Clothespin Count)

Developmental Level: Elementary or Middle School

Purpose: To become aware of different communication skills and how these skills affect the way we speak and listen to others.

Materials Needed: A bag of clothespins, Game materials - varied

Description of Session: Select a game for the group to play (a sit-down game, card game, or guessing game works best). Before explaining the rules, give each person two clothespins to put anywhere on their clothes. Inform the group that each person's job during the game is to try to keep their own clothespins. A clothespin may be taken away by anyone who catches someone else using poor communication skills: interrupting someone who is talking, blurting out of turn, making rude or inappropriate comments, not showing good listening skills (for those who pay more attention to getting clothespins than they do to the rules of the game), etc. You may add more things to the list based on the skills your group needs to work on. (The leader may have to determine if a clothespin should be lost or not).

After explaining the clothespin rules, explain the rules of the game you have selected (a good opportunity for people to lose clothespins). Play the game and continue with the clothespin rule on into the discussion part as well. You may wish to give a prize to the person/s with the most clothespins at the end for added incentive.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why did you lose or keep your clothespins?
2. Why do people interrupt others who are talking?
3. How do you feel when others interrupt you when you are talking?
4. Why is it bad to interrupt others while they are talking?
5. What can you do to keep yourself from blurting out or interrupting people when they are talking?
6. How can you show others that you are listening to them when they are talking?

Reference: 104 Activities That Build by Alanna Jones, p. 132-133