

Session Topic: Social Skills – Peer/Peer, Peer/Adult (What's Different?)

Developmental Level: Elementary or Middle School

Purpose: To practice using eye contact and observation skills when listening to others.

Materials Needed: None

Description of Session: Gather the group into a circle and ask for a volunteer to stand in the middle. Everyone must look closely at this person and try to remember what he or she is wearing and looks like. This person leaves the room and changes something observable about his or her appearance (e.g., roll up the sleeves of a shirt, take out earrings, switch a watch from one arm to the other, etc.) When he or she returns to the room, everyone tries to guess what is different. Whoever guesses is the next person to leave the room and change something about his or her appearance.

Emphasize the need to look carefully at the person to determine what is different. When people are distracted by other things in the room and not being observant, this activity is much more difficult, just as paying attention to someone who is talking is difficult when the listener is distracted by something else.

Discussion Questions:

1. What did you have to do if you wanted to be able to guess what was different?
2. How does this compare to what you have to do when you are listening to someone who is speaking to you?
3. How do you feel when you are talking to someone and they are not looking at you?
4. Do you give others good eye contact when they are talking to you? Why is it important to give good eye contact?
5. Can observing people help you listen to them better? If so, how?

Reference: 104 Activities That Build by Alanna Jones, p. 146-147