

Children's Connection Curriculum

Session Topic: Self-Esteem – Feelings; Social Skills/Interactions – Family, Friendships, Peer/Peer, Peer/Adult (People in My World)

Developmental Level: Elementary and Middle School

Purpose: Assess family relationships and available support networks; enable verbalization of feelings.

Materials Needed: “Feeling Good” handout. Copy of Soccer ball for each child, four kinds of stickers (e.g., hearts, bees, spiders, and teddy bears), Optional: Paper and a variety of stickers to make a sticker book (for optional closing activity)

Description of Session: Discuss the Feeling Good handout, ask how the people in their world make them feel good. Discuss why it's important to have people in their world that make them happy and the importance of a support system. Then introduce the Soccer ball handout activity by asking group members if they like stickers. (Most children will respond with great enthusiasm!) The therapist explains that the group members are going to use different kinds of stickers to show how he or she feels about the important people in his or her life. The therapist then guides the child through the following exercise:

SOCCEBALL HANDOUT

The first step is to fill in the picture of the soccer ball by writing the names of the people who are important to you. Write each person's name in a different section. You may want to include the following people: mother, father, step parent, foster parent, brother, sister, grandparents, aunt, uncle, cousin, therapist, group leader, social worker, counselor, teacher, doctor, police, lawyer, baby-sitter, coach, religious leader, friends, or pets.

Next, use the stickers to show how you feel about the people in your world. Put a heart sticker on the people in your world who you love. Put a bee sticker on the people in your world who make you angry. Put a spider sticker on the people in your world who frighten you. Put a teddy bear sticker on the people in your world who help you.

As the children are completing the activity, the therapist can ask open-ended discussion questions such as those listed below. As a closing activity, the child can make a sticker book to take home.

Discussion Questions:

1. Can you tell me about why you chose that sticker for that person?
2. Can you tell me:
 - What you love about that person (if child chose a heart sticker)?
 - What that person does that makes you angry (if child chose a bee sticker)?
 - What that person does that frightens you (if child chose a spider sticker)?
 - How that person helps you (if child chose a teddy bear sticker)?
3. What can you do to help yourself in dealing with these feelings?
4. Who are people in your life you can talk to about these feelings?

Reference: Creative Interventions for Troubled Children & Youth by Liana Lowenstein, MSW p. 6-8