

## Children's Connection Curriculum

**Session Topic:** Self-Esteem – Feelings (Butterflies in My Stomach)

**Developmental Level:** Elementary and Middle School

**Purpose:** To assess presenting problems and concerns, to facilitate awareness of how the body reacts to stress, to assess and promote problem-solving abilities, and to enable the verbalization of feelings.

**Materials Needed:** Butterfly outlines handout, Scissors, Glue sticks, Banner paper

**Description of Session:** The therapist introduces the activity by pointing out that everyone has problems and worries. The therapist outlines the different ways the body reacts to stress. For example, when a person is scared, his heart might pound faster, or when a person is sad and about to cry, he might feel like he has a lump in his throat. The therapist then asks the group members if they have ever heard of the expression, "I have butterflies in my stomach." If group members are unfamiliar with the expression, the therapist can offer an explanation such as, "When you are worried or nervous about something, your stomach might feel funny or jittery, as if you have butterflies in your stomach. You don't really have butterflies in your stomach; it just feels like you do." Next, spread the banner paper on the floor. Each child lies down on it, while the therapist outlines the child's body. Then the therapist gives the child the paper butterfly outlines, on which he writes his worries. Bigger worries are written on larger butterflies, smaller worries on the smaller ones. The butterflies are then glued onto the child's body outline, inside the stomach. As the child identifies each worry, the therapist can facilitate further discussion by asking open-ended questions as listed below. At the end of the exercise, the child can decorate the body outline.

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. What can you share with the group about each worry?
2. Is it ok to have worries?
3. Does it surprise you that other people have worries, too?
4. What could you do about this worry to help yourself feel better?
5. Is there anyone who can help you with this worry?

Reference: Creative Interventions for Troubled Children and Youth by Liana Lowenstein MSW, p. 9-11