

GETTING TO KNOW OURSELVES

(60mins; 16 children*)

BEHAVIOR GOALS:

1. Initiate the process of getting to know oneself.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. Children will learn the behavioral expectations (limits) of the leaders.
2. Children will learn to communicate in a group setting.
3. Children will begin to work together as a group by creating a group name that includes the individuals with their unique qualities and strengths.
4. Children will begin to express their thoughts and feelings through art.

TOTAL TIME: 1 hour (without advanced prep)

Time	Activity
5 minutes	Children enter room and are immediately directed to circular arrangement of chairs. Playing quiet or soothing music can help to set a quieter mood than usual after-school activities. Lights could also be off when the children enter. Group leader administers Pre-test to children.
10 minutes	Establish ground rules and expectations.
15 minutes	Children verbalize a positive personal strength word, and connect these words to their names.
5 minutes	Children select colored paper and write their strength word and name on this paper. Return to circle.
7 minutes	Brainstorm group name, and write on poster board.
13 minutes	Children decorate strength word paper. Decorated pieces are affixed to "group name" poster board. Children are allowed to take water and bathroom breaks then return to the group.
5 minutes	Clean-up and good job! Group Leader administers Post-test to children.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR INSTRUCTOR:

This lesson is based on the Kwanza principle "Umoja" which means unity. "Umoja" stresses the importance of togetherness for the family and the community, which is reflected in the African sayings, "I am We, I am because we are."

- In unity there is strength.
- By affirming and recognizing the strengths we see in each other, we can learn to develop our individual and group strengths.
- The words we use to define ourselves have an impact on us as a collective.

*Can be adapted to accommodate 10-24 children by changing the number of leaders and supplies.

Strong families, strong groups and strong communities are made up of strong members. This lesson is designed to help participants tap into what they already know from their own experiences about their individual strengths and values. Since participants in the After School Program are not necessarily members of each others biological family, it is really important to set the tone for what is acceptable and unacceptable when they are participating in the After School group. Each child possibly has different rules that they each abide by within their individual family structures. Setting boundaries and establishing guidelines & rules, with consistent methods of enforcement provides children with "protective factors." Children need to feel safe, secure, loved and part of a family, community or group in order to gain the foundation from which they can explore the world. "Protective factors" are qualities that safeguard children against becoming involved in activities that can hurt them. Children who have protective factors are sometimes referred to as "resilient children." In order to foster caring, responsible and strong children, adults need to have a positive view of themselves (self-concept) and serve as role models for children.

A sense of self-worth is critical for developing resiliency, adaptability and an "I can do it!" attitude that helps us learn, grow, and cope with life's frustrations and inevitable problems. Self-awareness is another key part of a child's development. Self-awareness is how much we know about ourselves, our beliefs about who we are, and what we think our capabilities are. As a child's sense of self develops, so does the child's ability to blossom in school, with peers and in other environments.

Give children the chance to choose whenever possible. For example, during art projects ask children "Which do you prefer for this project - colored pencils, crayons or markers?" This helps them find out what they like and dislike. It also helps them learn how to make decisions. Be sure to ask questions in a way where children aren't left making choices that aren't available to them. For example, if you simply ask them "What do you want to use for your art project?" they could say "paint", when paint is not really an option for them at the time.

EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES:

- 1 flip chart on easel or self-adhesive to wall.
- 1 felt-tip writing marker (black or other dark color)
- 20-30 pieces of 8x11" colored paper
- 4 packs of 16 colored Pencils (1 pack per table of 4)
- 4 packs of 16 crayons (1 pack per table of 4)
- 4 packs of 16 colored markers (1 pack per table of 4)
- 4 - 8 ounce bags of sequins and feathers (1 bag per table of 4)
- 8 glue sticks (2 per table of 4)
- 4 double-sided tape (or fast acting glue) (1 per table of 4)
- 1 large piece of poster board
- 20 nametags (one for each child and adult present)
- 4 sponges for cleaning tables (1 per table of 4)
- 1 trash bag
- Pre- and Post-Tests (one copy of each per child)
- 1 sharpened pencil per child
- 1 pencil sharpener

PERSONNEL: 2 adults or more

1. Adult Leader (1)
 - Oversees advanced preparation and lesson
 - Facilitates discussion
 - Administers Pre- and Post-tests to children
2. Assistant (1 or more per 16 children)
 - Acquires supplies and does advanced preparation as described
 - Oversees child behavior during discussion, intervening as needed
 - Participates in discussion
 - Instructs children to assist with clean-up following lesson

ADVANCED Preparations: 15 Minutes

- Hang poster paper for recording classroom rules and group name & for brainstorming ideas
- Prepare nametags for children and adult leaders
- Set up chairs in circle
- Set up art & crafts supplies on tables
- Hang "group name" poster board for children to add their decorated name pages

ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS:

1. If children are not already wearing nametags, provide these along with a marker and ask that they write their name on nametag and then affix it to their shirt in a place where everyone will be able to see it (adults must do the same thing).
2. Administer Pre-test after children are seated. As the assistant passes out the questions the leader will tell children that they should answer the two questions the best they can. Tell them that it is ok if they don't know the answer because we will cover the information in today's lesson. Tell them that they will get to answer these questions again at the end of the lesson.
3. Since this is the first meeting of these children in a self-esteem session, begin by establishing rules and expectations. Brainstorm with the children about what these should be. One of the activity leaders should write these ideas on a flip chart. Ferret out the following:
 - Quiet hands
 - Listen while others are talking
 - Be respectful to others
 - Trash goes in the waste bin not on the floor
 - Write & draw on paper, not anywhere else
 - Leave the work space as clean as (or cleaner than) you found it
 - Have fun
4. Arrange the children in a circle and ask each child to pick one positive 'word of strength' which helps describe/define who she or he is. Brainstorm for a few minutes about what those words might be.

5. Begin this brainstorm by saying something positive that defines who you are, "I am (e.g. an athlete)". The person to your right says, "I accept you as (an athlete). I am (creative)." This second person turns to the person on his/her right, and continues this process.
6. To initiate the process of getting to know each others names, go around the circle one more time. This time, the person who began turns to the person on his/her left and says (reading name tag if necessary), "John (person's name) I accept you as (an athlete)" (memory prompts might be needed). Continue in this way until every person's name has been put into the same sentence as that person's defining word.
7. Provide each child with a piece of paper (if colored paper available, allow each to select his/her color) and, on that paper invite the children to write this word, along with his/her name. Tell the children that they will have a chance later in this session to decorate this page.
8. Share with the children that we all have a need to belong to something that is larger than what we are as individuals. This grouping can be a family, or a classroom, or a sports team. Share that we'll be spending quite a lot of time together over the school year, and that we can all derive comfort and pleasure from working together. (Concept: the whole is greater than the sum of its parts).
9. Return to a circle configuration and have the children hold their word up so that others can see and read it. (This helps members of the group remember what the words have been. If the group is too big for this, the activity leader can review the words for everyone to hear).
10. Considering the words that describe the individuals of the group, have the group decide on a group name. This will involve considerable discussion. Let this take its time as this is a group-building exercise. Eventually the activity leader should write on a piece of poster board - "We are the (e.g.: Cougars)."
11. End the session by providing arts and craft supplies that the children can use to decorate the paper on which they have written their strength word and their name (unless they'd prefer not to add their name). Encourage them to decorate it in a way that reinforces these words. Have the group leaders help to tape/glue these to the poster board that has the group's name on it. Invite the children to also decorate any remaining spaces on the poster board.
12. Have children clean their work area.
13. The Group Leader should tell children that they will get to try again to answer the questions they were given at the beginning of the lesson. While handing out the questions, tell children to see if they have the same or different answers based on what they have learned today. Children should quickly answer the questions. The assistant will collect them when everyone is done. There is no need for children to sign their names to these papers, as these "data" are not to be connected to the child - rather, the results are tallied as percent of children who answered with the correct answer for Pre- versus Post-test interval (e.g. 20% of children answered correctly in Pre-test; 70% answered correctly in Post-test).
14. As the children leave this session, praise them for their good behavior and ability to share with others in the group. Tell them that their poster board will be placed in a place for others to admire. (This can be the responsibility of the Group Leaders).

EVALUATION: To be completed by activity leaders following delivery of exercise.

	GETTING TO KNOW OURSELVES & OTHERS	
	Rating*	Specific recommendations to improve
Timing		
Equipment / supplies		
Personnel / staffing		
General response of <u>children</u> to activities		
General response of <u>adult</u> leaders to activities		

*Rating of 1 for poor to 5 for excellent.

Other comments:

_____ Date

_____ Name (Optional)

PRE-TEST QUESTIONS

1. When someone in our group is called on to speak, we should:
 - a) Whisper and talk to our neighbor
 - b) Take the chance to go throw away trash
 - c) Show respect by listening to the speaker

 2. Strong groups are made up of strong individuals.
 - a) True
 - b) False
-

POST-TEST QUESTIONS

1. When someone in our group is called on to speak, we should:
 - a) Whisper and talk to our neighbor
 - b) Take the chance to go throw away trash
 - c) Show respect by listening to the speaker

2. Strong groups are made up of strong individuals.
 - a) True
 - b) False