

## **Family Support & Education Youth Program**

**Name of the Topic Area:** Session Five – Some Building blocks to Friendships

**Duration:** 60 Minutes

**Module learning objectives:**

Participants will be able to:

1. Describe basic premise of personal space.
2. Identify their own preferences of personal space depending on individual situations.
3. Describe their individual tendencies regarding eye contact.
4. Describe how asking questions can help conversation skills.
5. Identify nonverbal communication methods.
6. Practice giving a gift to their neighbor.

**Methodologies:**

1. “Personal Space,” “Personal Space Rainbow: do you know how close to stand to people?” “Personal Space Rainbow: here are some examples to help you think about how close to stand from people!” “How can your rainbow work for you?” handouts. *Prepare index cards with several types of people that members can consider determining distance issues, e.g. friend, classmate, teacher, coach, store clerk, people on a bus, etc.*
2. “Look at me when I am talking to you!” handout. Paper and pens.
3. “Here are a few more skills to make and keep friends!” and “Understanding Nonverbal Communication” handouts.
4. Bracelet / necklace making and gifting to each other.
5. Sentence completion exercise.

**Facilitator’s Actions:**

1. Facilitate discussion around personal space and figuring out how to respect the boundaries of others.
  - a. Use “Personal Space,” “Personal Space Rainbow: do you know how close to stand to people?” “Personal Space Rainbow: here are some examples to help you think about how close to stand from people!” “How can your rainbow work for you?” handouts.
  - b. Encourage members to stand up and practice with each other how to decide how close to stand from others. Use index cards for members to put down at each distance they want to maintain depending on the other person and situation.

2. Facilitate discussion on the importance of eye contact in many cultures. Emphasis to members that everyone is different with how they maintain eye contact. This is very much related to how people process information. Some people are sensitive to sensory input. For example, it may be too much input to have to LISTEN to someone talk to them AND look at the person at the same time. Review other variations of this e.g. it may be over stimulating for a person to try to talk and look at the other person at the same time. Use “Look at me when I am talking to you!” handout.
  - a. Break members into groups of THREE (A,B & C).
    - i. C is the observer and recorder. Have A tell B about their favorite video game. C records the eye contact of A & B during this time.
    - ii. C reports results to the group.
    - iii. The facilitator can model how adults have these processing issues as well. You may want to use self-deprecating humor and exaggeration to show how you might have difficulty in one variation of eye contact.
3. Facilitate discussion around how to engage others in conversations.
  - a. Use “Here are a few more skills to make and keep friends!”
  - b. Encourage members to generate ideas of how to let others know they are interested in what others have to say.
    - i. For each appropriate idea (ideas can be somewhat goofy as facilitator determines for the fun of it and to increase group cohesion) toss or hand a small reinforcer to the respective member.
4. Facilitate discussion around other forms of nonverbal communication. It is a combination of our individual processing abilities (wiring) and practice that can help to improve these skills!
  - a. Use “Understanding Nonverbal Communication” handouts.
  - b. As the facilitator, give each member the opportunity to have a feigned conversation with you in front of the group. Each member can practice exaggerated forms of showing discomfort. You may want to use self-deprecating humor, e.g. pretending to stab yourself in the chest because you are so hurt when a member shows their exaggerated discomfort.
5. Direct bracelet / necklace making activity. Choose the type of string based on the physical ability and manual dexterity of your group members, e.g. yarn or string with larger beads and needles for threading are easier to manipulate. Fishing wire may not require a needle for threading beads. If the group consists of males and females, you may want to pre-select non-

gender specific colors e.g. pinks, pastels, etc, so that boys receiving from girls will be more likely to like and wear the piece. Encourage members to add their own sense of style or flare as they make the bracelet / necklace Let them know right away, they are making this for someone in the group (but they will not choose who they give it to – as to reduce chance of hurt feelings). When they have finished (facilitator should make jewelry or not depending on the number of members in the group so that each member will give and receive a gift) have members count off by two's. Ask the 1's to give to the 2's to their left. Encourage the 2's to first enjoy having received this gift, and then to thank their giver. Then repeat the process where 2's give to the 1's.

6. Facilitate sentence completion closure activity. Each member states “What I liked most about today’s group was \_\_\_\_\_ because I \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_.” The facilitator can model this for members by saying what you liked most and link it to your behavior or thoughts about it.

**Materials:**

Handouts, index cards, pens, assorted small reinforcers, string/fishing wire/ yarn and assorted beads, and safe non-sharp sewing needles to thread beads; assorted snack foods and beverages.