



TRICK OR TREAT



Translating Group Process & Dynamics Into Children's Language

ACES Conference

8:00-9:00am Saturday Oct 17th 2009

Room: Pacific 1 (presentation # 375)





PRESENTERS

Joseph Wehrman, Ph.D., University of Colorado at Colorado Springs

Grace Ann Mims, Ph.D., University of Nebraska at Kearny

Duane Halbur, Ph.D., Minnesota State University at Moorehead

Rhonda Williams, Ed.D., University of Colorado at Colorado Springs



What you will learn today...

- **Group process & dynamics for groups with children**
- **How to incorporate games, activities, art, & metaphors into group**

Note: If group development is understood it can help children cope



Activity Schedule

1. **Orientation to Group: Group Sequential Drawing**
2. **Orientation to Group: Swimmy**
3. **Orientation to Members: Pick a Toy Activity**
4. **Diversity: Chex Mix**
5. **Diversity: Someone Like Me**
6. **Group Norms & Rules: Swimming Pool Metaphor**
7. **Confidentiality: I've Got a Secret**
8. **Sparking Communication: The Rubber Band Circle**
9. **Sparking Communication: Questions Ball**
10. **Communication: Tag (Off Focus)**
11. **Communication Norms: Hot Potato**
12. **Communication Norms: Parachute**
13. **Self Disclosure: Nut Activity**
14. **Feedback: Mirror Activity**
15. **Group Participation: Little Red Hen Story**
16. **Inclusion/Exclusion: Musical Chairs**
17. **Termination: Bubble Blowing Activity**



1. Orientation to Group: Group Sequential Drawing

- **Activity Instructions**
 - Draw a circle (facilitator)
 - Allow each child in the group to add something to the picture
- **Process Questions**
 - What did we have to do to complete the activity?
 - How might it have been different if just one of us drew the picture?
 - What was easy or difficult about the activity?
 - How do you think this is like group? (working together, each adding something, different than if we were by ourselves vs. in a group)



2. Orientation to Working Together: Swimmy by Leo Lionni

- **Activity Instructions**
 - Have children sit in a semi-circle on the floor
 - Read the story to children (Swimmy is a story to convey what groups can do that individuals cannot)
 - Be as active and engaging as possible when reading the story.
 - Puppets or other fish props can be used to enhance the telling of the story.
- **Process Questions**
 - What happened to Swimmy in the story?
 - What did the other fish learn?
 - How is this similar to our group?
 - What can we learn from Swimmy to use in our group?



3. Orientation to Members: Pick a Toy Activity

- **Activity Instructions**
 - Pick two toys (one that most represents who you are and one that represents who you want to be).
- **Process Questions**
 - What did you learn about yourself?
 - What did you learn about others in the group?
 - What was the most challenging part?
 - How might this activity help the group in the future (if age appropriate)?



4. Diversity: Chex Mix

- **Activity Instructions**
 - Give each child in the group a cup with Chex Mix in it.
 - Ask the following questions:
 - What do you notice about the pieces in the cup?
 - How are they different?
 - How are they similar?
 - How would the Chex Mix be different if one type of the Mix was not there?
- **Process Comments**
 - Just like the Chex Mix we are all different in some ways and similar in some ways.
 - We are all important to the makeup of the group.
- **Cooking Metaphor could be used also**
 - Different ingredients go together to make a recipe



5. Diversity

Someone Like Me

- **Activity Instructions**
 - **Materials:** chairs for every person, minus one. (You can also use construction paper or tape on the floor if you don't have chairs.)
 - Organize the chairs into a circle with one less chair than participants.
 - The facilitator begins the activity by standing in the center of the circle and says; "I'm looking for someone, someone like me, who _____."
 - Anyone who shares the interest or characteristic the facilitator says must stand up and run to an open seat. They cannot return to their own seat or the one next to it. The person standing without a chair then stands in the middle of the circle and repeats the statement, "I'm looking for someone..."
- **Process Questions**
 - What was it like to find a person like you?
 - What was is like when you were different?
 - What can we do in our group to include everyone with differences?



6. Group Norms & Rules: Swimming Pool Metaphor

- **Activity Instructions**
 - Ask the following questions to the group:
 - What are the rules at the swimming pool?
 - What is the purpose of the rules?
 - What would happen if we didn't have the rules?
 - Who enforces the rules?
 - What happens if a rule is not followed?
 - Are there exceptions to the rules?
- **Process Comments**
 - Just as there are rules posed to inform swimmers of acceptable and unacceptable behavior and to create a safe place to swim, a group also needs rules to inform participants of their responsibilities and to provide a safe environment for sharing.
- **Further Activity Instructions**
 - Creating Group Rules with Children, Ask the following questions:
 - What should the rules of our group be?
 - Who will enforce the rules?
 - What will happen if a rule is not followed?



7. Confidentiality: I've Got a Secret

- **Activity Instructions**
 - This is the classic activity of creating a story and whispering it in a person's ear.
 - The facilitator creates a silly story and whispers it into the first person's ear.
 - The story is passed on through all members of the group and the last person says, out loud, what he or she heard.
- **Process Questions**
 - Why do you think it's important for things we talk about in group to stay in group?
 - What is confidentiality?
 - Explain confidentiality and the importance of it, as well as the exceptions.



8. Sparking Communication: The Rubber Band Circle

- **Activity Instructions**

- Get an oversized stretchy band and mark a section with a marker or tape.
- Have each member place his or her hand on the rubber band.
- Have the group rotate the band clockwise or counter clockwise.
- The group leader or a selected member says “STOP”.
- The person with his or her hand on the marked area shares “something” with the group.
- The group leader can define what “something” is before the activity starts (tell us something about yourself, tell us something that went well this week or was difficult)
 - Example, in an anger management group each child could share a time they got angry and used something they have learned in group to help them



9. Sparking Communication: Questions Ball Activity

- **Activity Instructions**
 - Use a ball with statements or actions written on it.
 - The facilitator tosses the ball to a member.
 - When the ball is caught by a member, he or she responds to the first statement or question they see on the ball and then tosses the ball to another member.



10. Communication

Norms: Tag: Off Focus

- **Activity Instructions**
 - Play the classic game of tag with a base being the same location
- **Process Comments**
 - Just like in the game of tag, sometimes members are off focus and trying to determine when they feel comfortable to share.
 - What was it like to be on the base?
 - What was it like to be it?
 - How might this be like group?



11. Communication Norms: Hot Potato

- **Activity Instructions**
 - Explain to the group that one person begins with the potato tossing it to another member and saying a “you statement.” The object is to pretend the potato is extremely hot.
- **Process Questions**
 - How does it feel to get rid of the hot potato?
 - How does it feel to hope the potato doesn't come to you next or to be dodging the potato?



12. Communication Norms: Parachute

- **Activity Instructions**
 - Have everyone hold the parachute and pull it tight at about waist level.
 - Explain to the group that one person begins with rolling a ball to another member using the parachute and saying an “I statement.”
 - For example, “Billy, I like it when you listen to me.”
- **Process Questions**
 - How does it feel to use an “I” statement vs. a “You” statement?
 - How can “I” statements help our group?



13. Self Disclosure: Nut Activity

- **Activity Instructions**

- Use plastic eggs if someone has a peanut allergy
- What purpose does the shell serve?
- What would happen without the shell?
- What do you notice about the shells (differences, hard, soft, easy to break into, some need a tool)
- Have tools that could be used to crack open the nuts
- Ask the group how they would go about cracking open the peanut. What are some different ways of cracking the shell? (gently vs. hammer smashing)

- **Process Questions**

- Compare the nut shells to our “outer shell” as we protect ourselves
- There are different comfort levels in sharing in group
- Sharing is not forced but is welcomed
- Other group members shouldn't pick or pry at someone's “shell” if he or she is not ready or comfortable sharing





14. Feedback: Mirror Activity

- **Activity Instructions**
 - Put members into small groups and give each a small mirror.
 - Instruct each group to place the mirror so that all group members can see themselves and all other group members in the mirror.
- **Process Questions**
 - The activity can be processed discussing that feedback is required to complete the activity.



15. Group Participation: Little Red Hen Story

- **Activity Instructions**
 - Have children sit in a semi-circle on the floor
 - Read the story to children
 - Be as engaging as possible when reading the story.
 - Puppets or other animal props can be used to enhance the telling of the story.
- **Process Questions**
 - How do you think the story is like our group? (it is important to share in the group tasks, if one group member does all of the work others do not have the chance to benefit as much as if all participate in the process and tasks to reach the desired outcome)
 - What would happen in our group if just one person did all of the work?
 - How can we share in the group tasks?



16. Inclusion/Exclusion: Musical Chairs

- **Activity Instructions**
 - Play a game of musical chairs (can use chairs or carpet rugs).
- **Process Activity**
 - What was it like to be a person without a chair?
 - What was is like to be a person with a chair?
 - What can we do in our group to make sure everyone has a chair?
 - What are some things we do to exclude others (for older children)?



17. Termination: Bubble Blowing Activity

- **Activity Instructions**
 - Ensure it is age appropriate
 - To help children verbalize what they might miss or have learned or liked about group and each other
 - Place one group member (volunteer) at a time in the center of the group circle. Group members can take turns saying what they liked about the group member or learned from them in group.
 - As they share something with the member in the center of the circle, they blow bubbles over them symbolizing their words falling on them.
 - Another method is to have each member go around and share what they learned or liked or will miss about group.



Questions??

- **Have a SPOOKTACULAR Halloween!!!!**

