

Circle Time to promote a sense of belonging 2



Opening round

'I think a friend is someone who'



Selection of child



Group sculptures

Three volunteers go into the middle of the circle and are asked to form an interesting shape together (their bodies must be touching). The rest of the group (in triads) then make up their shapes. Afterwards the triads discuss the shapes they have made. Suggest that the triads try and make several different sculptures. Once everyone is regrouped in the circle, the triads can perform their shapes to the large group.

This activity should end with a whole group sculpture. The Special Day child can start the sculpture by going into the centre of the circle. He then names another child who joins to him in some way. This continues until the whole group, in a multitude of positions, is joined.

It is a good idea to take pictures of this activity. The display of such photos can help the growth of self-esteem.



I like to hear

Ask the children to look around the circle and count the number of children they have already spoken to today. Ask for examples of what they said to each other.

'Today I'm going to group you into triads by splitting up the circle like cutting a cake.' Go round counting off threes. Make sure each group has paper and a pen or pencil.

'Find a good space for your triad and sit down please. I would like you to write down a list of things you would like to hear people say to you. For example, what would you like to hear from your classmates, your teachers or parents, your brothers and sisters, relatives and shopkeepers?'

Bring the group back together and ask each triad to repeat their lists. Ask for volunteers to make up the lists into a well-decorated book, which can then be displayed as a reminder.

Suggest that from today, and for the rest of the week, they should try to say the things to others that they themselves would like to hear. Next week ask if they did this, and if so, whether they noticed anything different?

†††† Circle squeeze

Standing in a circle, holding hands, a coded message is sent round the circle by a number of short or long but always gentle squeezes. See if the originator receives the same message that he or she sent.



Lighthouse

All hold hands and do a Lighthouse. Remind children that the light from a Lighthouse shines in order to help people. It shines in a friendly way, helping everyone that is near it. Ask everyone to look around the circle, make eye contact with some, and smile. This should be a quick activity and done silently. It stops when the hands are parted, which the teacher initiates.



Plan for the day

At the end of each Circle Time (if it's done at the beginning of the day) before anyone gets up, take the opportunity to announce what the plan for the rest of the day will be, to involve the children in the organisation, to remind them of equipment needed and where to find it, to tell them where they need to be at particular times, for example, appointments for doctors or swimming lessons. Wish everyone a happy and productive day. Do the children have any questions or comments?