SESSION 1: What is Impulse Control?

MATERIALS: pencils, worksheet, game (examples: Look Before You Leap, Remote Control Impulse Control, The Impulse Control Game or Stop, Relax and Think), play TV

✓ Fun introductions
  • Alliteration game – ask children to stand in a circle. One at a time have them say their name with an adjective that starts with the same letter as the first letter of their name. For example, Joe might say, “I’m Jumpin’ Joe.” Everyone would then say, “Hi, Jumpin’ Joe!” Then Beth might say, “I’m Bubbly Beth.” The groups would then say “Hi” to both children, “Hi, Bubbly Beth; hi, Jumpin’ Joe!” Each time someone introduces themselves, everyone says, “Hi” to everyone who has introduced themselves thus far.

  OR

  • Toilet paper game – Introduce the group to a roll of toilet paper. Explain, “Everyone knows what this is and what you are supposed to do with it. I’m going to pass it around and I want you take as much as you need to get the job done.” After everyone has torn off a section of the toilet paper, explain that for each toilet paper square, they must tell one thing about themselves. (Those kids who have impulsively taken a lot of toilet paper end up having to tell a lot about themselves!)

✓ Introduction to impulse control concept
  • Definition – Define an impulse (an urge, feeling or temptation to do something). Give examples such as
    • the impulse to sneak a cookie before dinner if you are hungry
    • the impulse to blurt out the answer to the teacher’s questions w/o raising your hand if you know the answer
    • the impulse to hit someone if you are angry at her/him
Then explain that impulse **control** is the ability to be the boss of my impulses rather than having my impulses be the boss of me. Explain that the secret to having impulse control, or being the boss of impulses, is to **SLOW DOWN** and **THINK**.

**Discussion:**
- What are some impulses that you have had?
- Have you ever had consequences for acting on your impulses? What were these?
- Have you ever stopped yourself from doing an impulse? How did you do that?

**Worksheet**
- Impulse Control Gradecard

**Exercises**
- **STOP exercise** - After explaining that impulse control is the ability to SLOW DOWN and THINK, tell them that they are going to practice stopping. Tell them to do various physical and verbal tasks and to stop doing it when you say, “STOP!” Some of these tasks can be humming, nodding their heads yes or no, clapping, jumping, tapping, saying, “no, no, no...” over and over again, etc.
- **Simon Says** - Playing the traditional game of **Simon Says** children must slow down and think whether or not “Simon” is giving the command. Kids don’t have to be out of the game if they mess up. Just do it over and over for awhile.

**Game (any of the following if there is time)**
- Look Before You Leap,
- Remote Control Impulse Control,
- The Impulse Control Game
- Stop, Relax and Think

**Introduction to TV & Impulse Control Successes**
- Explain that in future sessions children will be able to announce their week’s impulse control success inside a play TV using the statement, “I had the impulse to _____________ but I stopped and thought ______________ and decided to _____________ instead.”
SESSION 2 Benefits of Good Impulse Control and
Consequences of Poor Impulse Control

Materials: play TV, pencils, candy, balloons, worksheets, game
(examples: Look Before You Leap, Remote Control Impulse Control,
The Impulse Control Game or Stop, Relax and Think)

✓ Quick review
✓ Television' interviews of “When I Used Impulse Control this Week”
  o Everyone gets an opportunity to get inside of the TV to describe
    an impulse control success using the sentence, “I had the impulse
to ____________ but I stopped and thought ___________ and
decided to _____________ instead.” Participation is not
  mandatory but it is highly encouraged. Everyone applauds loudly
  after each success.
✓ Discussion
  o How does acting on your impulses control hurt you (i.e. low
   grades, get in trouble, friends get mad, etc.)?
  o How does having impulse control help you (i.e. make good choices,
   have a good reputation, get good grades, etc.)?
  o Who do you know with impulse control? How can you tell that
    they have impulse control?
  o Help the children identify that not having impulse control might
    cause them to get into trouble, lose friends, get poor grades,
    feel guilty, have more conflicts, etc.
✓ Worksheet
  o Pros and Cons
✓ Exercise
  • Candy exercise - Put one piece of candy in front of each child
    and tell them that they can either have this candy now or they
    can have 5 pieces of candy if they can wait 5 minutes. Then
    “torture” them a bit by saying how good the candy looks and how
    they must really feel the impulse to eat it. After the 5 minutes
    give them each 5 pieces of candy and ask how they were able to
    be the boss of their impulses to eat the candy. Discuss how using
impulse control benefitted them (got more candy!) and what impulse control techniques worked for them.

✓ **Game (any of the following if there is time)**
  - Look Before You Leap,
  - Remote Control Impulse Control,
  - The Impulse Control Game
  - Stop, Relax and Think

**SESSION 3: Slow Down and THINK**

Materials – play TV, mazes, Checker games, worksheets, pencils, scissors, glue stick

✓ Quick review
✓ 'Television' interviews of "When I Used Impulse Control this Week"
✓ Discussion
  - How does stopping yourself help you to think better?
  - Is it easier to think when you are calm or when you are wild and crazy?
  - What can you tell yourself to calm yourself and go slowly?
✓ Worksheet (leave time to put these together and play with them)
  - Impulse Control Dice
✓ Exercises
  - Mazes - Collect several mazes and make copies. Direct children use their pencils to go through the maze slowly and carefully, saying out loud, "I am working slowly and carefully while looking ahead" over and over again.
  - Checkers game - Put students in pairs to play checkers. Instruct them to "think out loud" before they make any move. For example, someone might say, "I'm thinking about moving here but, if I do, you will jump me so I had better move this other checker."
SESSION 4: Using Impulse Control for Listening

MATERIALS: play TV, worksheets, paper and pencils

✓ Quick review
✓ 'Television' interviews of “When I Used Impulse Control this Week”

✓ Discussion
  • What impulses do people have when they are supposed to be listening?
  • Why is it important to be a good listener (i.e. learn more, liked better, etc.)?
  • How does it feel to have others listen to you? How do you think others feel when you listen to them?

✓ Describe steps for being a good listener
  • Look at the speaker
  • Think about what the speaker is saying
  • Look and sound interested
  • Ask questions

✓ Worksheet
  o Listening and Feelings

✓ Exercises
  • Role-plays - Role play good listening skills
  • Follow directions - Give all of the children a piece of paper and a pencil. Explain that you will be giving instructions for how to draw something. You will only give the instructions one time and they must draw EXACTLY what you say in order to end up with something that is recognizable. Here is an example:
    o Draw a line that goes up and down about 2 inches long; about an inch to the right of the first line, draw another line that goes up and down about 2 inches long; put a dot between the bottom points of the 2 lines; draw a line from the top of the left line to the dot; draw a line from the top of the right line to the dot. What do you have? (M)
  • Getting all the information - Read several scenarios and then ask a question about the content. Here is an example:
Sharon needed help with her math homework so she called Tremeca but Tremeca wasn’t home so she called Maria and got the help that she needed. QUESTION: What kind of homework was Sharon having trouble with?

SESSION 5: Developing Patience with Impulse Control

MATERIALS: play TV, paper, markers, pencils, stapler or string (to tie books together with)

✓ Quick review
✓ 'Television' interviews of “When I Used Impulse Control this Week”
✓ Discussion
  • How does impulse control help you to be patient?
  • Why is important to have patience? How does it help you in your life?
  • When is it easy to be patient? When is it hard to be patient?
  • What are some of things that you do to help you be patient?
  • How were you able to be patient waiting for the candy several weeks ago? (i.e. thought about the reward!)

✓ Instruction -
  • Explain that there are 2 ways to practice patience: (1) Do something to distract yourself (i.e. read a book, count the holes in the ceiling, play tic-tac-toe, etc.) and (2) Talk to yourself - tell yourself that its OK to wait; its going to be OK; etc (self-soothing kinds of statements).

✓ Worksheet
  • Patience, Patience

✓ Exercises
  • Make a Patience workbook - This is a book of activities that kids can use when they are having to wait. They can create mazes, word searches, games, etc.
• Role play being patient while waiting in the lunch line, at the doctor’s office, etc. using the When using the self-talk technique, direct the child to say it out loud.

SESSION 6: Using Impulse Control with Anger

MATERIALS - play TV, worksheet, pencils, Angry Monster Machine

✓ Quick review
✓ ‘Television’ interviews of “When I Used Impulse Control this Week”
✓ Discussion
  • Explain that one of the hardest times to use impulse control is when feeling angry.
  • What are some of the things that make you feel angry?
  • What are some impulses that you might have if you are feeling angry (hit, yell, name-calling, etc.)?
  • What might happen if you gave in to those impulses (i.e. get in trouble, hurt a friend, lose a friend, etc.)?
  • How do you calm down your angry feelings?
✓ Worksheet
  • Finding Successful Anger Strategies
✓ Exercises
  • Role-play various anger-producing scenarios where kids can practice walking away, counting to 10, talking it out, etc.
✓ Game (Angry Monster Machine)

SESSION 7: Impulse Control with Decision Making and Problem Solving

MATERIALS - dry erase board or flip chart, markers, worksheet, pencils, music, chairs
✓ 'Quick review
✓ 'Television' interviews of “When I Used Impulse Control this Week”
✓ Discussion
  o Ask the students to raise their hands if they have ever had a problem (hopefully, everyone will raise their hands - certainly you can raise your hand as the facilitator). Explain that it is normal to have problems - everyone does - and so it is important to learn how to be good problem-solvers. But it takes lots of SLOWING DOWN and THINKING to learn how to think of solutions to problems.
  o Teach the steps to being a good problem-solver using an example of a problem (i.e. both you and your friend want to go first; someone keeps bumping your desk when they walk by, etc.)
    ▪ Identify the problem
    ▪ Think of several solutions
    ▪ Think about the pros and cons (good things and bad things) of each solution
    ▪ Choose the best solution
✓ Worksheet
  • Problem-solve Your Own Problem
✓ Exercise
  o Musical chairs Problem-solving - Prior to meeting with the kids, tape several solutions to a problem on the bottoms of several chairs (use the same number of chairs that you have students). Play some music and ask the kids to walk around the chairs until the music stops. When the music stops they each sit in a chair. One at a time students pull off the solution paper from under their chair and read it, giving an advantage and a disadvantage for that solution. Example:
    ▪ PROBLEM: You are getting ready for school and the shoelace on your favorite pair shoes just broke. You do not have an extra.
    ▪ SOLUTION #1: Wear a different pair of shoes
    ▪ SOLUTION #2: Take the laces out of both shoes and just wear then without laces
- SOLUTION #3: Find some yarn and use that for a shoelace
- SOLUTION #4: Ask your mother to buy another shoelace on the way to school
- SOLUTION #5: Take a shoelace out of your brother’s shoe

**SESSION 8: Impulse Control and Empathy**

**MATERIALS:** play TV, pencils, worksheets, a ball, a deck of cards, a puzzle

✓ ‘Quick review
✓ ‘Television’ interviews of “When I Used Impulse Control this Week”
✓ Explanation of empathy
   - Explain that empathy is sharing other peoples’ feelings. The steps involved are:
     - “Read” the other person’s feeling
     - Let yourself feel that feeling (except for anger)
     - Say or do something supportive
✓ Discussion
   - How does empathy require impulse control?
   - Why is empathy important?
   - How would empathy help you to make more friends?
   - How would empathy improve your reputation?
   - What makes it hard to feel empathy?
✓ Worksheet
   - Thinking about Others
✓ Exercises
   - Mirroring – Ask children to find a partner and to sit facing one another. Direct one of the partners to make various facial expressions while the other partner “mirrors” it. Reverse roles.
   - Feelings charades – Have each child demonstrate a feeling without using words. See if the other students can guess what the feeling is. Ideas for feelings include: happy, sad, angry,
scared, proud, shy, excited, bored, confused, etc. Be sure everyone gets a turn who wants one.

- Role-play - Set up a role-play where one student shows a feeling expression (i.e. sad, happy - NOT angry). Another student stands back and identifies the feeling and says out loud, "He looks _<feeling word>_." Then pauses, lets himself feel some of the same feeling and then approaches the first student with an appropriate, supportive statement or question.

**SESSION 9: Impulse Control and Social Skills**

**MATERIALS:** play TV, pencils, worksheet, playing cards, ball, puzzle

- Quick review
- ‘Television’ interviews of “When I Used Impulse Control this Week”
- Discussion
  - Do you think you need impulse control with friends? Why? In what situations would you need it?
  - How do some of these social skills need impulse control - conversations (i.e. have to stop yourself from interrupting and be a good listener), joining in (i.e. have to go slowly so as not to interrupt the game), playing games (i.e. have to be patient for your turn and think about others’ feelings), handling disagreements (i.e. have to control your temper and remember the consequences of being rude), etc.?
- Explanation of how to join in -
  - Do a demonstration where some of the students are playing cards and you suddenly jump in and deal yourself a hand. Ask, how did I do joining in? What did I do wrong? Usually the kids can tell you exactly what you did wrong so simply confirm that they are correct and that the **BEST** way to join is to:
    - Stand back and figure out what the group is doing
    - Approach the group and say something nice (i.e. “That looks fun” or “Good shot!”)
- Ask to join in

✓ Worksheet
  - Ranking my Social Skills

✓ Exercises
  - Role-play - Set up several scenarios where kids are playing something and someone joins in using the 3 steps described above. You can have the kids playing cards, ball, putting a puzzle together, etc.
  - Balloon exercise - Have the children pair up and sit on the floor facing each other. Hand each pair a single blown-up balloon and instruct them to see how many times they can bat it back and forth to one another without it hitting the ground and without moving their bottoms off of the floor. At the end discuss how they had to think about the other person in order to be successful in keeping the balloon in the air.

SESSION 10: Review

MATERIALS - TV, worksheets, pencils, certificates

✓ 'Television' interviews of “When I've Learned about Impulse Control in My Life During these 10 weeks"

✓ Discussion
  - How have the last 10 weeks been helpful to you?
  - What has been the most helpful?
  - What have you enjoyed the most?
  - Have you noticed any of the benefits that we talked about in Session 2?

✓ Worksheet (leave time to make and play with it)
  - Impulse Control Flipper

✓ Party or celebration

✓ Presentation of Certificates of Completion