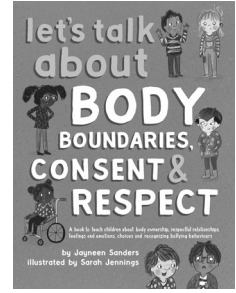


5 Lessons in Understanding Boundaries, Consent and Respect



FOCUS TEXT: *Let's Talk About Body Boundaries, Consent and Respect* (ages 4–10 years)

Depending on the age of the children, the following lessons will take place over five sessions. Please adapt the lessons to suit the needs and ages of the children.

KEY OBJECTIVES

Children will understand that:

- we each have a body boundary — the space around us that belongs to only us
- consent is saying 'yes' or agreeing wholeheartedly to something happening
- we require consent before entering another person's body boundary
- when we feel worried or unsafe, it is important to tell someone on their Safety Network
- we show respect by listening to others and taking their needs into account.

In these lessons children will:

- understand that we each have a body boundary and require personal space
- realise that if other people want to enter our personal body boundary, they require our consent
- identify words and body language that give consent, and those that do not
- understand that everyone has the right to say 'No'

- role-play situations that require consent and respect, examining various options and possible outcomes
- appreciate the importance of a Safety Network and identify the adults within their own Safety Network
- realise that respect is a crucial component of negotiating a fair solution.

For the lessons you will need:

- soft toy as a 'talking stick'
- two puppets (or soft toys)
- music and speakers
- digital cameras/ipads
- large sheet of poster paper, A3 paper
- coloured pencils, textas
- whiteboard and markers
- MS PowerPoint (optional)
- resource masters: 'Feelings Cards', 'Understanding Consent', 'My Safety Network'

Note: each of the lessons in this series begins with ‘circle time’. This is where students sit in a circle, and use the soft toy as a ‘talking stick’. Only the person holding the toy is allowed to speak; other students must listen but cannot comment or ask questions. This offers a chance for students to ‘settle in’ to the lesson in regards to a relevant discussion topic, and also provides them with the opportunity to practise their listening skills and respect for their classmates’ ideas. Students may use the sentence starter provided, and can be prompted with suggestions from the teacher, especially in the beginning as they get used to the idea of ‘circle time’. You may decide to limit the number of words students are allowed to use, e.g. ‘In less than 20 words, tell me...’ This may be because you are short on time or you have students who have a lot to say and find it hard to allow others their turn. Students are encouraged to take their turn, but are entitled to pass if they feel uncomfortable or aren’t sure what to say. See ‘Circle Time’ Communication Skills for Kids poster on page 10 for more ideas.

Lesson 1: Body Boundaries

Circle Time: I’m Special Because...

You will need: a soft toy as a ‘talking stick’

For this circle time, have students think about something that makes them who they are — it might be something they can do, e.g. cartwheels, play guitar, etc. or something about their family heritage, an extracurricular activity, the number of pets they have at home or anything about themselves. It doesn’t have to be a ‘big’ thing as it’s all the ‘little’ things about us that make each of us unique!

Warm-up Game: Body Boundaries

You will need: an open space, music and speakers

As the music plays, have students move around the classroom. When the music stops ask them to listen to the instructions and perform the task. Have students attempt to find a different partner each time so they are not always working with their friends. If a child feels uncomfortable with any of the scenarios, allow them to watch rather than take part.

Options may include, but are not limited to:

- make a group of three and put your toes together
- find a partner and stand side-to-side, shoulders touching
- make a group of four and put your hands together, so that each person is touching the other three group members’ hands
- stand back to back with a partner
- make a group of three and put your elbows together
- stand face-to-face with a partner (not touching*).

***Note:** observe students’ differences in distance during this scenario; also look at each student’s body language as to whether they feel comfortable being face-to-face. This is the most confronting of the scenarios; while it will be good for discussion and follow-up activities, leave it out if you are feeling unsure about this with your class.

Following the game, ask, 'How did you feel with each situation? Which situations did you feel okay about? Did any make you feel uncomfortable or make you feel like you wanted to move away? Why do you think you felt like that?' Discussion may include the need for 'personal space' — if so, refer to this as your 'body boundary' or 'body bubble'.

Whole Class Focus: Body Boundaries

You will need: *Let's Talk About Body Boundaries, Consent and Respect by Jayneen Sanders*

Introduce the text to the class. Look at the cover and read the title. Ask, 'What do you think this book has to do with the game we just played?' Discuss. Read pages 4 to 7. Have students stand up and trace their invisible body boundary with their finger — observe the direction in which students move their finger — to the sides of their body or in front of their body? Ask, 'Where do you think your body boundary/bubble would be the biggest? At the front, sides or back of your body?' Discuss.

Select two students to come to the front of the class and stand close (but not touching) in the following positions. For each position, ask how each student feels in the position and have the class give real-life examples of when we would be in these positions.

1. Side-by-side.
2. One student behind the other, facing the same way (as if lining up). Ask, 'Would this be different if they were touching? Why? How would that make you feel?' It is common to have students line up his way at school, often in pairs holding hands and in lines — because they are not face-to-face kids are usually okay with this, but if the person behind them starts pushing, getting too close or running into them, this can be an invasion of their body boundary/bubble, and may make them feel uncomfortable.
3. Face-to-face, as close as they will allow. Have students observe the body language of the two students — are they comfortable? Are they trying to move away, looking unsure, giggling?

Note: giggling or nervous laughing is often a sign of feeling unsure. Have students reflect on how they felt in the warm-up game when they were face-to-face with their partner.

4. Face-to-face with an arm's length apart. Observe changes in each student's body language and facial expression. Discuss the importance of our body boundary/bubble, particularly in front of our body where we can feel most exposed.

Individual Task: My Body Boundary

You will need: *paper, coloured pencils/textas*

Have students draw a picture of themselves, with the outline of their body boundary/bubble around it. Ask them to write a statement about their body boundary next to their drawing, e.g. 'Nobody comes inside my body boundary unless I say it's okay!' or 'My body bubble is the space that belongs only to me!'

Reflection

Have students share their drawings with the class. Ask; ‘Why is it important that we respect each person’s body boundary/bubble?’

Lesson 2: Consent

Circle Time: What Is Consent?

You will need: a soft toy as a ‘talking stick’

For this circle time, explain that today’s lesson is about consent. Ask, ‘What do you think “consent” means? When should we ask for consent?’ Move around the circle, giving each child the opportunity to have their say.

Role-play: We Have Options!

You will need: two puppets (or soft toys)

Use the puppets to play out the scenario below (replace names ‘Dog’ and ‘Bear’ as appropriate to the class puppets/toys).

‘Dog and Bear are really good friends. Every morning, when Dog arrives at school, Bear is waiting to give her a great big hug! Bear just runs up and hugs her without asking, and sometimes Dog doesn’t like it very much. What should Dog do?’

As a class, make a list of all of Dog’s options — from ‘Just put up with it because Bear is just trying to be nice’ to ‘Tell Bear to stop, and that he needs to ask for permission before he comes inside her body boundary/bubble.’ List all of the options on the whiteboard and discuss the pros and cons for each. Then ask, ‘What should Bear have done differently? Would the outcome have been different if Bear had asked, “Can I have a hug please?” How?’ Discuss.

Whole Class Focus: Consent

You will need: Let’s Talk About Body Boundaries, Consent and Respect by Jayneen Sanders, poster paper, markers

Read pages 8 to 17 of the text. Discuss as required with the class, linking back to the role-play scenario and the students’ responses. Write the heading ‘Consent’ on poster paper. (This will be used in Lesson 3, so poster paper is preferable to the whiteboard.) Draw a T-chart — on one side write the word ‘consent ✓’ and on the other side ‘no consent ×’. Ask, ‘How do you know when someone has given their consent for you to do something? What words might they use to give consent?’ Make a list of words/phrases in the ‘consent’ column that, **without any doubt**, give consent, e.g. ‘yes’, ‘absolutely’, ‘definitely’, ‘for sure’,

and so on. Then ask, 'What words can you think of that **do not** give consent?' Make a list of words/phrases that mean 'no consent', e.g. 'no', 'no thanks', 'not today', and so on. If it hasn't already come up, ask, 'How about, "I'm not sure or no answer at all", where does that fit?' It is important for students to recognise that only a **definite** 'yes' provides consent; anything that indicates indecisiveness or even saying nothing at all, goes into the 'no consent' column.

Individual Task: Understanding Consent

You will need: resource master 'Understanding Consent'

Have students complete resource master 'Understanding Consent'.

Reflection

Repeat the 'circle time' activity and encourage students to demonstrate their new understanding of consent and providing new examples of situations where consent is required.

Lesson 3: Body Language and Consent

Circle Time: Copy the Emotion — Facial Expressions

You will need: a soft toy as a 'talking stick', resource master 'Feelings Cards' or the Feeling Cards poster free to download from www.e2epublishing.info/posters

Display the Feeling Cards poster (uncut) for all to see. Have students select an emotion, which they can express silently, using just their facial expressions only. Move around the circle, giving each child the chance to make a facial expression, while everyone else copies them without speaking. After a few seconds, have the student say what their emotion was, and then move to the next student. It doesn't matter if the same emotion is repeated, but if students need help thinking of an emotion, they may refer to the 'Feelings Cards' poster displayed.

Whole Class Activity: Using Body Language

You will need: 'consent T-chart' from Lesson 2, Let's Talk About Body Boundaries, Consent and Respect by Jayneen Sanders

As a class, look at the words used in the 'consent T-chart' from Lesson 2. Have students stand up, and as each word is read out, ask them to demonstrate the response non-verbally by using body language (including facial expressions) only. Move through all words in the list, even those that are similar, to give students a good understanding of body language that gives consent and body language that does not give consent. Have students think about how they are standing — Straight and tall or slumped down? Is their head up or down? How are their shoulders positioned?, and so on.

Note: studies by Dr Mehrabian have shown that 55% of our communication is portrayed through body language, 38% is tone of voice and only 7% attributed to the actual words we say. Being able to read body language accurately is crucial to our communication.

Look at the illustrations on pages 18 and 19 of the text. Have students examine the body language of the baby and discuss how the baby might be feeling. Ask, 'What do you think the baby is trying to communicate?' Discuss.

Read pages 18 to 21. Before reading page 22, have students look at the body language of the boy on page 23. Ask, 'How is the boy feeling? What kind of body language is he showing? What message is he communicating?' Discuss. Read page 22 and discuss as required.

Partner Task: Body Language Photographs (or Drawings)

You will need: digital cameras/ipads, A3 paper, coloured pencils or textas, resource master 'Feelings Cards' or the Feeling Cards poster free to download from www.e2epublishing.info/posters, MS PowerPoint (optional)

In pairs, have students create a series of photos to show different feelings through body language — if cameras are not available, students could draw their partner showing a selected emotion.

Depending on the age of your students, they may then:

- create a PowerPoint presentation showing a variety of feelings through body language
- print their photograph out and use it to create a poster on body language or consent to display in the classroom
- create a 'feelings wall' in the classroom featuring photographs of students displaying a range of different emotions.

Reflection

Ask, 'Are some emotions easier to read than others? Which emotions are harder to express and/or read with your body language?' Discuss.

Lesson 4: Safety Network

Circle Time: What Does It Mean to Be Safe?

You will need: soft toy as a 'talking stick'

For this circle time, have students think about the word 'safe' and what it means to them. Move around the circle, giving each child the opportunity to have their say. Remind students that there are no right or wrong answers, and that no one is to comment negatively on anyone else's ideas as this is a chance to share thoughts in a respectful environment.

Warm-up Game: 4 Corners of Support (older students only: 10 + years)

You will need: a large open space

Have students form groups of five (or six if required). Select one group to demonstrate this activity while other groups sit and watch. Have one student stand in the middle, while the other four group members form a square around them (about an arm's length away from the student in the middle). The student in the middle stands straight, with their feet together, arms by their side. To begin, one of the corner students lightly pushes the middle student towards another side of the square — the middle student's aim is to keep their body straight and stiff, while the four 'corners' catch them and push them back up and in another direction. If they feel comfortable, the middle person may close their eyes, completely trusting their four classmates to catch them and hold them up. Following the demonstration, all groups select their first middle student and complete the activity. Rotate through five rounds, until all students have had a turn in the middle.

Variation for younger students: play a game of 'robot directions' where one student is blindfolded (or eyes closed tightly) and the other student directs them around the classroom with simple directional language, e.g. a half turn to the left, two steps forward, three steps back, and so on; ensuring that their partner doesn't run into anyone or anything!

Whole Class Activity: Safety Network

You will need: Let's Talk About Body Boundaries, Consent and Respect by Jayneen Sanders, whiteboard, markers

Open the text to page 22 where Lesson 3 finished. Re-read page 22, then read pages 24 to 27. Discuss the idea of a Safety Network as introduced in the text — focussing on the idea that these are people you trust and that they will believe you and will listen to you. Provide the students with an example of the adults who might have been on your Safety Network when you were a child. Ensure that students know that it is **always** their choice who they put on their Safety Network, and one should not be a family member.

Note: it is important that students know that you are willing to be on their Safety Network. However, do not offer any specific suggestions as to who should go on their Safety Network, as the people they choose may not be who you would expect.

Discuss the kind of traits that adults who are part of a Safety Network would hold; linking back to the discussion around body boundaries and consent from the previous lessons. Make a list of these traits on the whiteboard, e.g. honest, good listener, helpful, present, and so on. Have students think about the people they will choose to be on their personal Safety Network. Remind them that they are aiming for three to five adults.

Note: for students who are experiencing difficulty choosing adults to be on their Safety Network, remind them that you are happy to be part of their Safety Network. You could also suggest Kids Helpline (1800 55 1800, <https://kidshelpline.com.au>).

Individual Task: My Safety Network

You will need: coloured pencils/textas, blank paper, resource master 'My Safety Network' (optional)

On a blank piece of paper, have students write the heading 'My Safety Network' then trace around their hand in the middle of the page. On the palm of their hand, have them write 'When I feel worried or unsafe, I can talk to...' and have them fill in the three to five names they have chosen, using one finger for each person. Remind students to include the Kids Helpline if they are having difficulty.

Extension for younger students: have students draw pictures of the people on their Support Network around the outside of their outline.

Extension for older students: have students write the special traits of their support people in bubbles/stars around the outside of their outline.

Note: resource master 'My Safety Network' could be used as an alternative to students tracing around their hand.

Reflection

Ask, 'Why do you think it is important to have three to five adults on your Safety Network, not just one or two?' Discuss.

Note: for further lessons on Safety Networks, refer to Lesson 4 in the lesson plan sequence for 'My Body! What I Say Goes!' and Lesson 3 in the lesson plan sequence for 'Some Secrets Should Never Be Kept'. For younger children, Lesson 2 in the lesson plan sequence for 'Resilience' may be useful.

Lesson 5: Respect

Circle Time: What Is Respect?

You will need: soft toy as a 'talking stick'

In turn, have students share their thoughts on respect, and how we can show respect. Students may provide examples of times where they have shown respect, or when they have felt respected by others.

Role-play: Playground Negotiations

You will need: two puppets (or soft toys), a toy car (small enough to be the puppets toy)

Use the puppets to play out the scenario (replace names 'Dog' and 'Bear' as appropriate to the class puppets/toys):

'Dog was given a brand new toy car for her birthday! She is so excited as she has been waiting for the car for a long time! It is sparkly red and just what she has always wanted. She takes the car to school to show her friends at playtime. At playtime, before she even starts to play with her new car, Bear comes over and says, "Hey! What a cool car! I want a turn to play with it!" Before Dog can answer, Bear grabs the car out of Dog's hands!'

Discuss the likely outcome of this scenario, i.e. Is Bear happy? Is Dog happy? Did Bear show respect towards Dog? Why/why not? What should Bear have done?

Replay the scenario, taking into account suggestions from the students. Have Bear ask Dog nicely, and wait for a reply. Ask students, 'Should Dog give her toy to Bear to play with? What else could she do?' Discuss the concepts of being fair and respectful. Have students think of things that Dog could say, e.g. 'You can have a turn after me' or 'Sure, I'll give the car to you when I'm finished' or 'I want to play with it today but you can have a turn tomorrow.' Alternatively, they could play together with the car. Make a list of the possible options on the whiteboard, reinforcing the need to respect each other's choices.

Whole Class Activity: Respect

You will need: Let's Talk About Body Boundaries, Consent and Respect by Jayneen Sanders, whiteboard, markers

Read pages 28 to 31 of the text. Link the discussion back to the role-play. If students think of anything they would like to add to their role-play responses, write them on the whiteboard. Look at the illustrations on pages 32 to 33. Encourage students to look at the children's body language and ask, 'What do you think is happening? How are the girls on this page feeling? Have you ever felt like that? What can you do when you feel this way? Who is the girl talking to in the last picture?' Discuss, then read the text on these pages. Read pages 34 to 37, discuss as required.

Partner Task: Showing Respect

You will need: A3 paper, coloured pencils/textas

In pairs, have students create a brainstorm diagram of the ways they can show respect to others; have them think about showing respect at school, at home and when they are out in public.

Reflection

Read the whole text to the class or simply revisit specific pages that are relevant to the class. Once finished, you may wish to have a final circle time with students to discuss what they have learnt from this book.

Note: for further lessons on boundaries, consent and respect, refer to the lesson plan sequence for the book *No Means No!*

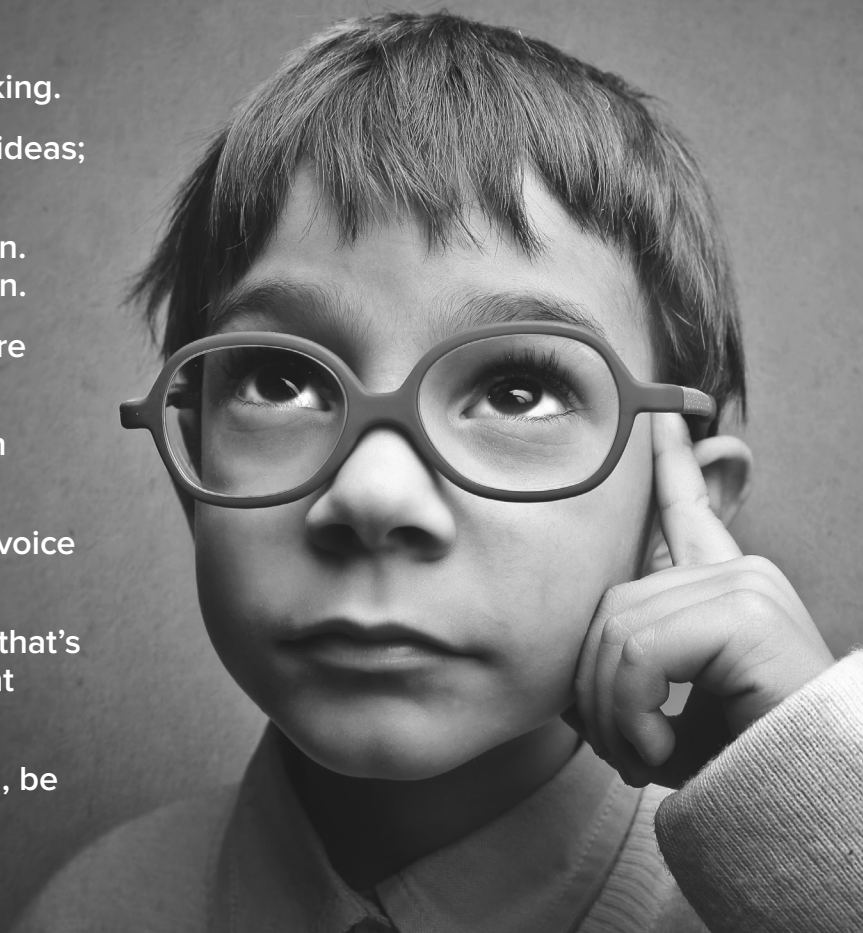
Teaching notes written by Yale Mercieca

‘Circle Time’

Communication Skills for Kids

Here are 8 KEY communication skills to unpack with young children before exploring stories through discussion questions.

- 1** Let everyone have a turn at speaking.
- 2** Don't make fun of other people's ideas; be respectful.
- 3** Listen to others when it's their turn. Listening to others is how we learn.
- 4** Take time to talk about and explore new ideas.
- 5** Ask questions of others and listen carefully to their answers.
- 6** Don't be afraid to speak up; your voice matters.
- 7** If you don't agree with someone, that's okay, but don't carry the argument with you into other activities.
- 8** Be kind, be friendly, be interested, be respectful and have fun!



Feelings Cards



worried



proud



calm



happy



sad



brave



angry



scared



disappointed



confused



lonely



shame



guilty



embarrassed



excited

Understanding Consent

We all have choices, and I am in control of what happens to my body!

Consent means that I have **agreed** to something happening — that the person has my **permission** to hold my hand, hug me or even give me a high-five!

These words mean '**yes**' — that I **have** given my consent for something to happen.



And here are some words that mean '**no**' — I **have not** given my consent for something to happen.

If I say nothing,
look worried,
or am not sure, I
have not given my
consent.

Sometimes I might say 'yes', but then realise I don't really want to do something and that's okay! We all change our minds sometimes! I have the right to take away my consent at any time.

My Safety Network

