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SMALL GROUP PROBLEM-CENTERED SKILL BUILDING ACTIVITIES

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ACTIVITY 3

What to Do When I Make a Mistake

Purpose: To help students realize that mistakes happen and that our mistakes can be useful if we learn from them.

Materials Needed:

- Copy of the Mistake Picture Sheet for each student
- Small ball to toss
- Crayons and pencils
- Copy the Home Connections and the Student Skill Reinforcement Form for the student and his/her parent(s) and a copy for the teacher

Procedures:

1. Introduction/Discussion: Lead a discussion of “mistakes” using the following questions:

- *What do you think the word “mistake” means?*
Define a mistake as something that accidentally turned out wrong.
- *Does everybody make mistakes?*
- *What are some examples of mistakes we make?*
(i.e. mistakes are made when we are learning something new because we don’t know it as well, mistakes are made when we may not be trying our best or thinking clearly, and mistakes are made just because... accidents happen.)
- *How might we feel when we make a mistake?*
(accept all answers, acknowledging there is a wide range of feelings that can be associated with mistakes)
- *What do we sometimes do that doesn’t help when we make a mistake?*
Encourage such answers as: get mad and quit, feel down on ourselves that we are not capable, try to cover the mistake up, or perhaps we even try to blame others, etc.)
- *What can we do to help when we make a mistake?*
(include answers such as: accept that it’s normal and okay to make mistakes, learn from the mistake, keep trying, etc.)

2. Ball Talk: Hold up the ball and explain to the group that we will take turns tossing the ball to each person. Explain that when a person catches the ball you will read one of the following statements for the student to complete telling a helpful way to handle the mistake.

- If I made the mistake of knocking books off of the shelf I could...
- If I made the mistake of tearing a page in a schoolbook I could...
- If I made a mistake while learning to play baseball I could...
- If I were “goofing around” in Art class and I spilled the paint I could...
- If on the first day of school I made the mistake of walking into the wrong classroom I could...
- If I made several mistakes on my math paper I could...
- If I made the mistake of not looking where I was going in the hall and bumped into someone I could...
- If I made the mistake of spilling my lunch tray I could...
- If I took home someone else’s coat by mistake I could...
- If I made a mistake reading a word wrong I could...

continued

Take time to discuss the above examples deciding if it were a mistake in learning something new, a mistake from when we may not be trying our best or thinking clearly, or a mistake just because... accidents happen. Discuss the feeling involved and perhaps an unhelpful way we may be tempted to handle the mistake.

- 3. Mistake Picture:** Pass out pencils and crayons and hand to each student a copy of the Mistake Picture sheet. Explain that they need to draw/color 2 pictures. The top picture reads, "Oh!oh! One day I made the mistake of..." Students are to draw/color a picture of a mistake. The bottom picture reads, "This is what I did to help the situation." Students are then to draw/color a helpful way they handled the mistake. When students have finished their pictures allow them to share with the group and discuss.
- 4. Summary:** Remind students that mistakes are normal and okay, however when we make mistakes we need to learn from them.

Hand out the Home Connections and the Student Skill Reinforcement Form to the student to take home to share with their parents. If time allows, review the Student Skill Reinforcement Form with the students emphasizing what to think, say, or do in order to strengthen the skill. Send a copy of the Home Connections and the Student Skill Reinforcement Form to the teacher for information so that the teacher can also reinforce the skills.

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Mistake Picture

Directions: Draw/color a picture in each box below sharing about a mistake and a helpful way to handle that mistake.

“Oh! Oh” One day I made the mistake of...

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“This is what I did to help the situation.”

ACTIVITY 3: What to Do When I Make a Mistake

Date _____

Dear Parent of _____,

In small group counseling today we:

- Helped students realize that mistakes happen, they are normal. We talked about the importance of learning from our mistakes and finding helpful ways to deal with our mistakes.

You can help reinforce this lesson by:

- Acknowledging with your child that mistakes are okay and normal – everyone makes mistakes.
- Emphasizing with your child that once a mistake is made you need to focus on a helpful way to deal with the mistake.
- Reviewing the Student Skill Reinforcement Form with your child.

Thank you for your support as we work together,

Sincerely,
Your School Counselor

STUDENT SKILL REINFORCEMENT FORM

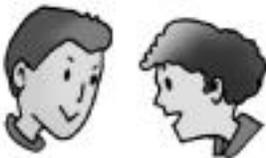
ACTIVITY 3: What to Do When I Make a Mistake

Summary: Mistakes are something that accidentally turned out wrong. Mistakes can be made when we are learning something new because we don't know it as well, mistakes can be made when we may not be trying our best or thinking clearly, and mistakes are made just because... accidents happen.



What to THINK

Everyone makes mistakes. Mistakes are okay if we learn from them. I need to accept responsibility for my mistake and find a helpful way to handle the mistake.



What to SAY

If my mistake caused a problem for someone I need to say, "I'm sorry."



What to DO

If the mistake was in something I am learning I need to keep on trying until I get it right. I need to find a helpful way to handle the mistake.