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SESSION ONE

THE BUCKET SQUAD KICK OFF

Skill Learned
What it means to fill buckets.

OBJECTIVES:

Participants will:

- Get to know each other's names
- Create group rules and guidelines
- Learn about the bucketfilling concept
- Decorate their very own bucket

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

- A small ball
- The book, *Have You Filled a Bucket Today?*, by Carol McCloud (available through YouthLight, Inc.)
- Poster paper
- Markers, pencils or pens
- A bucket for each student (can be commonly found at a dollar store or other discount retailer OR use large plastic cups and pipe cleaners to make buckets)
- Decorating supplies (markers, paint pens, stickers)
- Letter for parents/teacher (Bucket Squad News)
- Camera

PREPARATION:

Before the group meeting, gather supplies and read through the curriculum. This is the first group session and it is important to be prepared. The session will establish expectations, build enthusiasm, and develop rapport among group members. It is helpful to:

- Have bucket-making supplies visible.
- Make copies of the Bucket Squad News ahead of time. (page 21)

OPENING ACTIVITY: (5 – 10 minutes)

After welcoming everyone to the Bucket Squad's first meeting, play a name game to help ensure all participants learn each other's names. Depending on the age of the children in your group, you have a choice of two versions of this game to play. Younger children may need your help coming up with words to go along with their names.

K-2nd Grades

- Sit in a circle
- Explain to everyone that you are going to practice each others' names by saying a word that starts with the same letter sound as your name. For example, if your name is Jack, you might say, "Hi, my name is Jumping Jack!"
- You begin, say your name, and then give a ball to the person on the left. The next student says your description and name, his description and name, and then hands the ball off to the next student in the circle. For example, "This is Jumping Jack, and my name is Smiley Sarah." That student repeats your description and name, the previous participant's description and name, and then her description and name. You continue this pattern around the circle until the ball comes back to you. At that time, you repeat all the descriptions and names in the circle.

3rd-5th Grades

- First, play the game above either with descriptions or without.
- Then, have students stand up and scramble the circle.
- Replay the original name game with a new order or play using the option below.
- This time, roll the ball to a student across from you in the circle. She should say your name and then her name. She should then roll the ball towards another student, saying that student's name. Continue this until everyone has had a turn and been named.

GROUP GUIDELINES: (5 minutes)

Explain to the students that the group needs guidelines on how they treat one another while they are together. It can help to say to the students, "I want to make sure you look forward to coming to the Bucket Squad each week. How should we treat each other for this to be a fun, comfortable and helpful time together?" Allow the kids to come up with their own ideas and help them to paraphrase the rules. For example, if a student said "no hitting," you might write "keep your hands to yourself." Write the rules on poster paper and have the students sign their names signifying their commitment to the group guidelines. Here is a suggested list to guide you through the process:

- Be kind, no put-downs
- Keep your hands to yourself/respect each other's space
- Take turns talking and listening
- Participate in activities
- Right to Pass—each student has the right to "pass" if s/he is uncomfortable answering a question.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES: WHAT IS BUCKETFILLING? (20 minutes)

PART 1: Read one of the following books by Carol McCloud:

K-1st: *Fill a Bucket*

2nd-5th: *Have You Filled a Bucket Today?*

PART 2: Decorate and Discuss!

Explain to the Bucket Squad that they are going to have the chance to make their own bucket. Their buckets are an important tool and the Squad will use them each week. (The group leader should keep the buckets after this session to use during future weekly sessions.)

- Have students sit at a table
- Cover the table if using paint pens or permanent markers
- Give a bucket to each group member

Notes:

1. Plastic buckets can often be found at dollar stores or discount stores.
2. Buckets can be made from large plastic cups/containers and pipe cleaners.
 - a. Use a push pin to poke two holes on opposite sides of the cup/container.
 - b. Thread the pipe cleaner through the holes and twist to form a handle.
 - c. Lay out supplies like markers, paint pens, and stickers to decorate the buckets.

