THE BEST OF

INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING

Activities For Use In Individual Counseling

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THE BEST OF INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING

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INTRODUCTION

There's an ongoing, undeniable need for individual counseling. No matter how many groups counselors advise, classroom programs they conduct, or meetings they attend, there will always be students who require individual attention.

Although each counselor uses special techniques when working with individuals, we compiled this book with the realization that counselors are always looking for ideas that will enhance their work with students. Any one of the contributors has the experience and expertise to author such a publication, but Mar∗co wanted something unique. Consequently, each of these published authors selected a few of the most effective techniques she uses in individual counseling. This book includes those techniques.

PREPARE FOR TESTING DAY

Purpose:

To remind the student of the important skills test preparation requires

Suggested Students:

Students referred because of test anxiety

Grades 3–5

Materials Needed:

For The Leader:
None

For The Student:
☐ Copy of *Prepare For Testing Day* (page 19)

Activity:

Give the student a copy of *Prepare For Testing Day.*

Tell him/her to listen to what you say, then follow the directions on the sheet. Teach the student the importance of getting a good night's rest before a test by saying:

> ***Don't stay up late to watch your favorite show or come home late from visiting someone. If you're tired on testing day, you won't do your best.***

Have the student look at #1 on the activity sheet and put his/her head in his/her hands.

Leader asks: ***What do you do the night before a test?***

Student says: ***Sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep.***

Remind the student to go to bed on time. Stress the importance of eating a good breakfast by saying:

> ***Food gives you the energy you need to take the test. Even if you don't usually eat breakfast, eat something on the morning of the test. A piece of toast, glass of juice,***

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I RESPECTFULLY DISAGREE

Purpose:

To help students learn how to disagree with adults in a respectful manner

Suggested Students:

Students who have been referred for arguing with adults and students who feel an adult has falsely accused them

Grade Levels 4-6

Materials Needed:

For The Leader:

- ☐ Office referral or a statement from the adult involved
- ☐ Copy of *How To Disagree Respectfully* (page 30)

For The Student:

- ☐ Copy of *How To Disagree Respectfully* (page 30)

Activity:

Ask the student to define *respect* and *disrespect*. If the student is misguided assist with the definitions.

Have the student tell his/her version of the incident for which he/she was referred.

Read the office referral or statement from the adult involved in the incident to the student.

Ask the student what he/she wanted to convey to the adult before the situation got out of hand.

Give the student a copy of *How To Disagree Respectfully*. Review the handout with the student.

Reenact the conflict having the student play the role of the adult and the leader the role of the student.

A Note From Kathie Guild

I use the following books, art projects, and learning games to address common school behaviors and teach social skills. I use them to work with individual students on a variety of issues. Teaching to different learning styles improves students' attention and retention, and the lessons may be broken down into smaller segments. Each of the lessons includes a take-home component as a visual reminder of the topic discussed.

Kathie Guild is a counselor in North Carolina and is the author of *Everyone Is Included, Froggy And Friends, Froggy And Friends II, More Froggy And Friends,* and *How To Stop Before You Pop.*

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INITIAL INTERVIEW

Purpose:

To develop the counselor/student relationship and help the counselor better understand the student

To help the student understand that someone cares and is interested in his/her life and feelings

Suggested Students:

Any referred students

Grades: K–12

Materials Needed:

For The Leader:

- ☐ Copy of *Interview Form* (pages 83-85)
- ☐ Pen or pencil

For The Student:

None

(*Note to the leader:* This interview helps break the ice and provides insight regarding the student and his/her feelings and support systems. It can help you decide how best to help the child succeed in school and with friends. These questions are meant to be conversation starters. Encourage the student to elaborate and let him/her know you're listening. The interview may be conducted at any point during the year and repeated months later as a follow-up. It's sometimes useful to jot notes in different colors on the original sheet to indicate any change.)

Activity:

Invite the student into your office. Explain that the purpose of the meeting is for you to develop an understanding of each other.

Tell the student that you're going to ask questions. Invite him/her to ask you questions.

Read the questions on the *Interview Form* and record the student's answers.

Conclusion:

Thank the student for cooperating. Evaluate the answers and record them on the comment portion of the *Interview Form*.

I CAN BE ANYTHING I WANT!

Purpose:

To demonstrate that even though there are some things the student can't do well, he/she can do other things very well

Suggested Students:

Students referred because of low self-esteem, anger, regression, or friendship issues (See *General Referral For Individual And Group Goals* [pages 93-94] for desired outcomes of referral.)

Grades 3–6

Materials Needed:

For The Leader:
- ☐ Pictures and/or names from the list of *Famous People With Disabilities* (pages 112-113)
- ☐ Student's folder, if using one

For The Student:
- ☐ Copy of *I Can Be Anything I Want!* (page 114)
- ☐ Pencil or crayons or markers

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Activity:

Ask the student:

> ***Do you know why you're visiting with me today?***
>
> ***Are there things that make you feel bad?***

Have the child talk about feeling bad as a result of not being able to do things well.

Explain that lots of famous people who did poorly in grade school did well in life. Ask:

> ***Do you know who the creator of* Mickey Mouse *and* Donald Duck *was?*** (Walt Disney)
> ***Walt Disney was fired from his first job because "he didn't have any good ideas."***

INITIAL INTERVIEW TECHNIQUE

Purpose:

To help the counselor understand what the student thinks of him/herself

Suggested Students:

Students referred because of low self-esteem or inappropriate behaviors

Grades K–8

Materials Needed:

For The Leader:

- ☐ 18 x 24" construction paper (white and various colors)
- ☐ Crayons or markers
- ☐ Table

For The Student:

None

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Activity:

Place the art materials on a table. Have the student select markers/crayons and one piece of paper. (*Note:* Colored paper makes it easier for some students to begin, as they feel they've been given a starting point.)

Ask:

> ***Will you write your name on the paper?*** (The words "will you write" tell the child that he/she is not *expected* to write. A child who can't write will be discouraged by hearing that he/she should be able to write. So that wording should be avoided.)
>
> ***What kind of girl/boy are you?*** (If the student isn't sure what you mean, provide clues such as "Are you happy?" You may need to write the words on the paper for younger students. Older students can write the words themselves. If you've written the words, read them aloud to make sure what you've written is what the student means.)

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Purpose:

To resolve school conflicts that cause distress and disrupt class

Suggested Students:

Students who need assistance resolving a conflict

Grades K–5

Materials Needed:

For The Leader:

☐ Copy of the *I-Message* poster (page 143)

For The Students:

None

Activity:

(*Note:* Spending time a student who has asked for help resolving a conflict helps the counselor understand the problem and the student's feelings. Open-ended questions can elicit details of the conflict. Students often want to recount only what the other person did. If that's the case, ask, "What would NAME OF OTHER CHILD say about what happened?" This encourages the child to divulge the whole story.)

Ask for details from an adult who refers a student for conflict-resolution assistance. Understanding the general details of the conflict allows you to make sure the session addresses all elements of it. Unfinished business will lead to further conflict.

Once you have a general understanding of the conflict, meet in a private area with those involved. Explain that you've called the students together to resolve the conflict. Emphasize that each person will get a turn to talk, that there will be no interrupting or name-calling, and that you're confident the conflict will be resolved. Display the *I-Message* poster and explain that you'll be using *I-Messages* to discuss the conflict.

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BUILDING TRUST

Purpose:

To enable the counselor to become better acquainted with the student

Suggested Students:

Any referred student

Grades K–8

Materials Needed:

For The Leader:

- ☐ Optional: Copy of *Building Trust* (page 193)
- ☐ Optional: Pencil

For The Student:

None

Activity:

Begin by saying:

> ***I have several questions for you. These questions are mostly about the things you like best. I'll be telling you some of the things I like best, too.***

As you discuss the *Building Trust* questions with the student, voice your reactions. This will help build the child's trust in you. Ask the following questions, one at a time, allowing time for the student's reaction and any counselor reaction. (*Note:* If desired, make a copy of *Building Trust* for future reference and write the student's answers on the lines provided.

> ***What do you like to be called?***
> ***What is your favorite color?***
> ***What is your favorite food?***
> ***What is your favorite book?***
> ***What is your favorite movie?***
> ***What is your favorite TV show?***

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CHECKBOOK CHECKUP

Purpose:

To help the student feel comfortable about coming to school

Suggested Students:

Students referred because of school refusal, separation anxiety, or school phobia

Grades K–6

Materials Needed:

For The Leader:

- ☐ Small prizes or certificates for free time (shoot hoops with the counselor for 10 minutes, work on an art project, play a game etc.)
- ☐ Free student checkbooks from a bank or check-printing company (Checks usually come in a box of 100.)

For The Student:

- ☐ A safe place to keep the checkbook

Activity:

Tell the student that kids usually feel better about school if they simply come to school and that you would like him/her to try it and see if it's true. Then ask:

> ***Are you willing to try to begin each morning with fewer tears and tummy aches? If so, I'll give you a checkbook and explain the rules.*** (*Note:* I've never had a child refuse the checkbook.)

Give the child a checkbook and say:

> ***Each morning after the flag salute, if you haven't cried or been sick, you may take your checkbook to your teacher. Your teacher will enter the amount of $1.00 in the check register.***
>
> ***After five days, you may write a check to the counselor for $5.00 and buy a prize.*** (Each prize or coupon should cost $5.00, but most are worth about a quarter.)

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THE FOLLOWING SAMPLES
ARE REPRODUCIBLE/PRINTABLE PAGES
INCLUDED ON THE CD-ROM

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HOW TO DISAGREE RESPECTFULLY

Stay calm and listen to the adult's accusation

When the time is right ask to speak

Use a calm voice and state your view

Wait for the adult to respond

Pay attention when the adult is speaking

Do not interrupt even if you disagree

Read the adult's body language

Decide if it is the right time to continue the discussion or to remain silent

Follow the adult's instructions

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HOW RUMORS AND GOSSIP ARE SPREAD

Gossiper

The Gossiper gives information to the runner or runners.

Runner(s)

The Runner(s) may decide to take the information directly to the victim or pass it on to an instigator.

Instigator

The instigator takes pleasure in passing the information on to the victim. It is not uncommon for the instigator to add statements to provoke action such as:

"She said she wants to fight you."
"He said that he can beat you."
"I would not take that if I were you."

Victim

The victim will choose to retaliate, seek help, or internalize what has been said.

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IS IT SQUEALING OR REPORTING? SITUATIONS

You are walking in the hall at school when a classmate passes you and rolls his eyes. Your feelings are hurt, so you decide to tell the teacher.	On the playground, you see two students breaking sticks into pieces and throwing them at other kids. You approach the students and tell them to stop. They say the sticks are too small to hurt anyone and they aren't throwing them far. You decide to tell the teacher.
A student sits so close to you during circle time that you feel squished. When you ask her to scoot over, she tells you she won't. You decide to tell the teacher.	At lunch, a student asks for some of your chips. You say she can't have any. She says, she's going to tell the teacher you won't share. Is the student tattling or reporting?
During morning work, you notice a student has forgotten to put his name on his paper. You remind him. The student tells you, "Mind your own beeswax." You tell the teacher.	When you go to sit down at lunch, a student tells you she's saving the seat and you'll have to sit somewhere else. You remind her that students aren't supposed to save seats. She argues and calls you mean. You tell the teacher.
Some kids are playing basketball at recess. Your team thinks the other team is cheating. You decide to tell the teacher.	At recess, you approach a group of kids who are standing and talking. You ask what they're doing and one of them tells you they're busy. You suspect they don't want you to join them. You tell the teacher they're leaving you out.
When you go to the boys bathroom, you see a boy from another class writing on the walls. You tell the custodian.	Two students sitting in the back of the bus leave their seats, slide under the seats of other students, and grab their legs. When you get off the bus, you tell the bus driver what you saw.
You pass a kindergarten student carrying a tray down the hall. The student spills food on the floor. You tell the front office.	In the bathroom, you notice students throwing wads of paper into the toilet, trying to stop it up. You tell the custodian.
Over the weekend, you went to a restaurant and a movie. You're telling the students at your table about it when a student from another table says you're making it all up. You tell the teacher.	You have a new haircut. Two students in your class tell you they liked your hair better the way it was before. You tell the teacher.

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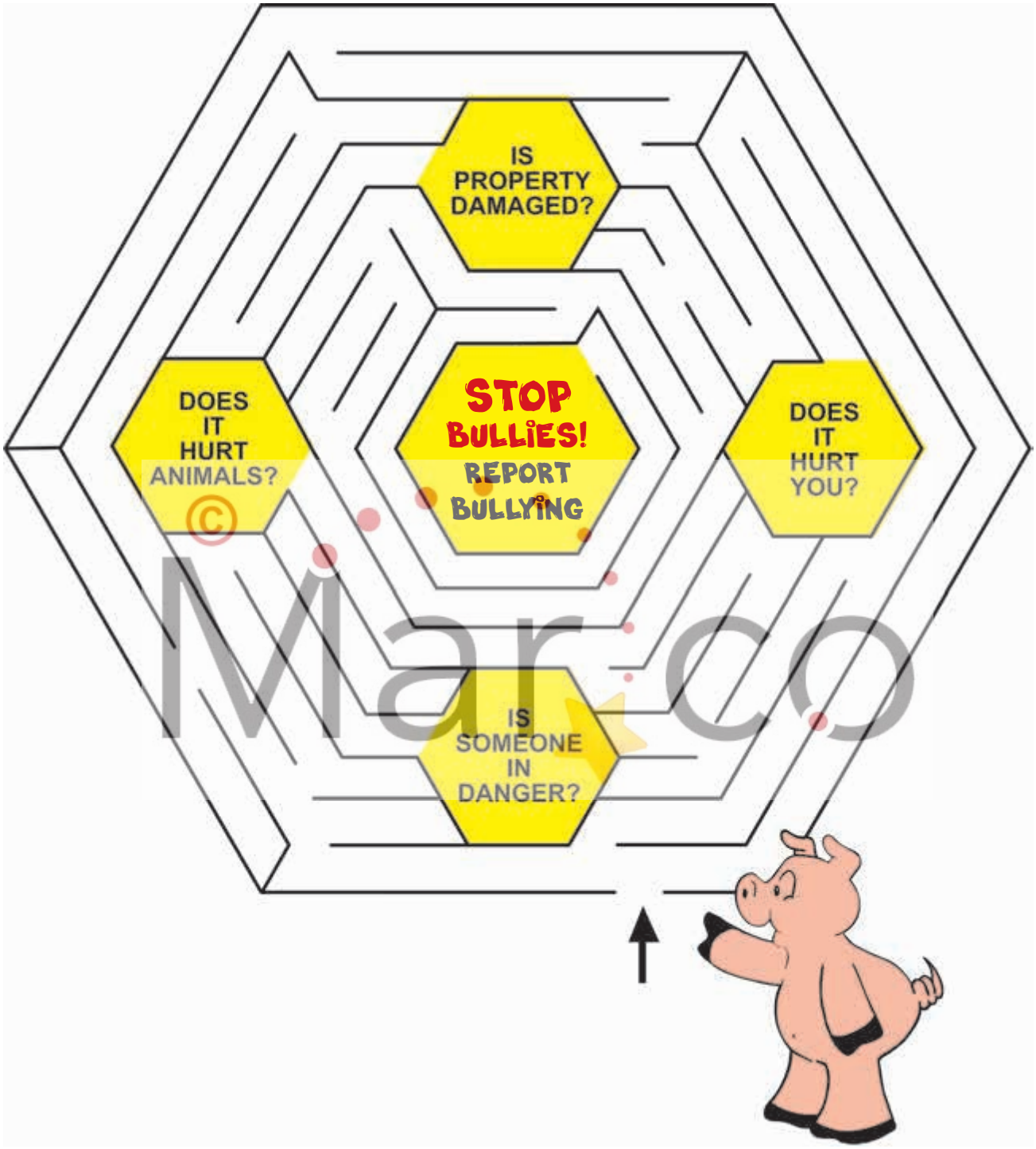
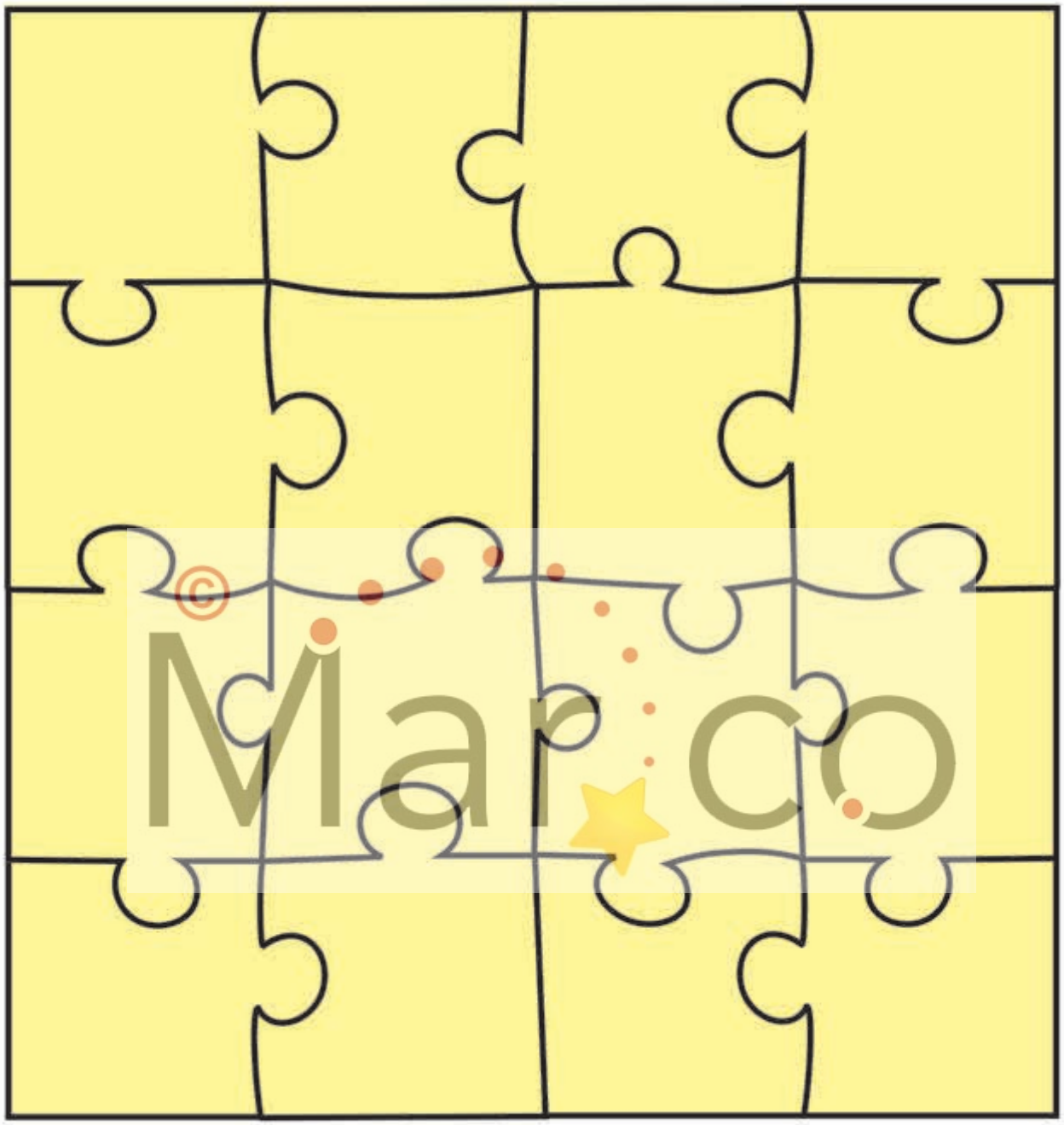
SQUEALING/REPORTING MAZE



EMOTION PUZZLE



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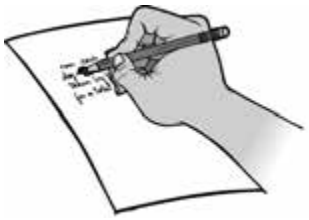

SENTENCE COMPLETION #4

(For Use With Interpersonal Relationship Referrals)

Name _____ **Grade** _____

Class _____ **Date** _____

1. I wish _____ .
2. A friend should _____ .
3. It's important to _____ .
4. I feel bad when _____ .
5. Other kids _____ .
6. Tattling makes _____ .
7. I can't understand why _____ .
8. I don't like _____ .
9. If I could have only one friend, he/she would be _____ .
10. One thing I would do for a friend is _____ .
11. One thing I would not do for a friend is _____ .
12. Friends _____ .
13. If my friend was sad, I would _____ .
14. I feel left out when _____ .
15. I wish _____ .

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I-MESSAGE

I feel _____

when you _____

_____

_____.

I want _____

_____

_____.

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BUILDING TRUST

Name _____ Date _____

What do you like to be called? _____

What is your favorite color? _____

What is your favorite food? _____

What is your favorite book? _____

What is your favorite movie? _____

What is your favorite TV show? _____

What is your favorite car? _____

What is your favorite sport? _____

Who is your best friend? _____

What is your favorite subject in school? _____

Why? _____

_____

Tell me about your pets and/or hobbies. _____

_____

_____

Tell me about your heroes. _____

_____

What's the best day of the week for you? _____

Why? _____

_____

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