

MORE CREATIVE COPING SKILLS **FOR CHILDREN**

ACTIVITIES, GAMES, STORIES, AND HANDOUTS
TO HELP CHILDREN SELF REGULATE

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Introduction

More Creative Coping Skills for Children is a comprehensive resource for professionals who work with children. It is also a resource for parents and guardians. The book provides interventions that encourage children to learn and use coping strategies regarding relationships, emotions, behaviors, and life experiences. Each chapter highlights a group of mild to moderately challenging behaviors that children might experience, and that commonly occur together. For example, one chapter will focus on basic manners and interpersonal skills. Another chapter will focus on paying attention and listening. Throughout the book you will find activities, stories, affirmations, and parent/child handouts to help you address particular behaviors and challenges, as well as the following features:



Challenges

This defines the situation, feeling, or behavior that the child is struggling with.



Goals

This section provides one or more goals that a child might be working toward. The goals are written primarily for counselors who write treatment plans with their clients, but they also provide parents with a framework for defining goals.



Skills

The activities and interventions provided in each chapter promote skill building specific to the challenges noted. For example, Chapter 4 on Anger Management has activities and interventions that build on skills such as recognizing triggers and diffusing anger safely and respectfully.



Interventions

Interventions in the book include creative play, arts and crafts activities, games, coloring pages, and/or worksheets. All of the activities in this book encourage skill-building related to the behaviors and challenges featured in each chapter.

Handouts contain lists of interventions to try and/or other helpful pieces of information pertaining to a chapter. If you are a professional who works with children and families, the handouts provide something concrete that clients can take home for their own use.



An accompanying story

The stories in each chapter focus on a character's behavior or challenge that the child might also be struggling with. The stories provide a means for children to learn about their own behaviors or experiences in a child-friendly manner, via storytelling. Stories are a gentle way to approach issues with children because it is easier for some children to talk about a character in a story rather than themselves.



An activity to go along with the story

I have included an activity to go along with each story. The activities reinforce some of the skills noted in the story and/or provide a quick and easy craft to engage the child in further discussion about the story.



Affirmations

Affirmations are brief empowering statements that a child can use for "self-talk," mantras, or reminders (e.g. "I can do this"). When used consistently, affirmations can help to increase positive thinking and confidence.

CHAPTER 1

Building Interpersonal and Social Skills



Challenges

The child has difficulty making and keeping friends.

The child struggles with general social skills.



Goals

The child will gain new skills in making and keeping friends.

The child will sustain a friendship for more than a month.



Skill: Using basic manners

Manners are important for children to practice and use because manners are a way to show respect to others. When children do not use their manners it can negatively impact their relationships. Role model the manners you want the child to use and praise the child when they use them. Praise will reinforce the child's desire to continue using good manners.

+ Interventions

TEA PARTIES

Tea parties are a wonderful way to practice manners. Have pretend tea parties with children to practice the basics in saying please and thank you, using table manners, and showing kind regard to others. As the child masters the use of manners, move on to the reward of having “real” tea parties with actual tea and treats.

CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS GAME

Captain's Quarters is a game where players become pirates at a meal where they must use their best manners. The game has silly scenarios that make talking about manners fun. The game board features pirates sitting at the Captain's table with empty dinner plates in front of them. Players take turns answering the cards (youngest player goes first). Each time a player answers a card correctly, the player puts a coin or bottle cap on one of the empty dinner plates. Fill all of the dinner plates at the table to finish the game. This is a cooperative game, so everybody wins when all of the plates are full.

Number of players: 1

Object of the game: To get through dinner using your best manners

Materials

- Captain's Quarters Game sheet
- Pirate Cards
- Various coins or bottle caps

Directions

Your game board features pirates sitting at the Captain's table with empty dinner plates in front of them. Each time you answer one of the cards, put a coin or bottle cap on the dinner plate. Fill all of the dinner plates to finish the game.

Pirate Cards

Bramblebeard accidentally lets out a loud burp at the table. What should he say afterwards?

1. "Oh my! That was a loud one!"
2. "Argh!!!! Now that's the sound of a well-fed pirate!"
3. "Excuse me. Pardon me. My apologies."

Cabinlass Jilly would like some buttered biscuits, but they are way down at the other end of the table. What's the most polite way she can ask for them?

1. "For the love of gravy, get those biscuits down at my end of the table!"
2. "Blackbeard, would you be so kind as to pass the biscuits this way, please?"
3. Toss a goblet at the person closest to the biscuits to get their attention and then yell, "I want some biscuits!"

Pricklebeard Pete is drinking too much rum at the table and he is starting to get loud and rude. What is something you and the other pirates could do to keep this situation from getting out of control?



Silverblade Samuel has arrived and he is looking for a place to sit at the table.

Should you:

1. Scoot over and make room for him?
2. Ignore him and hope someone else makes room for him?
3. Tell him there is no room at the table for any more guests.

Ravenheart loves roasted carrots. There is a small bowl of roasted carrots for everybody to share. How do you think the other pirates will respond if Ravenheart takes more than his share of the carrots?

Grim O'Malley starts to tell jokes and stories at the table that are not appropriate for company. What should you or the other pirates do?

Salty Bones starts to tease One Tooth Eddie about having only one tooth. What do you think One Tooth Eddie and/or the other pirates should do?

Darkbeard has a gazillion biscuit crumbs stuck in his beard. Do you

1. Try to get his attention and discreetly let him know?
2. Laugh at him?
3. Fill your own beard with crumbs and say, "Look at me! I'm Darkbeard!"

Rapscallion Red has a terrible cold. What should he do if he needs to cough or sneeze?

1. Sneeze and cough into his sleeve.
2. Sneeze and cough into the sleeve of the pirate sitting next to him.
3. Sneeze and cough all over the dinner table.

One Tooth Eddie wants to know whether it's polite to talk with food in your mouth.

Davey Dreggs needs to use the bathroom during dinner. When he gets to the bathroom, the door is closed. Should Davey

1. Walk right in?
2. Knock on the door and then only go into the bathroom if no one answers?
3. Yell: "Hey—if someone is in there, hurry up!!!!"

On your way to the dinner table you accidentally bump into Scallywag Scott. Do you say

1. "Hey! Get out of my way!"
2. "Excuse me—sorry I bumped into you!"
3. "Argh, Matey! I wouldn't bump into you if you weren't in my way!"

Barnacle Bob opens the cabin door for other pirates when they come into the cabin. Is this a polite thing to do?