

# *I Count*

## Developmental Perspective

Middle childhood is an important formative period with regard to self-concept. Parents have great influence over their children's view of themselves. Unfortunately, many children grow up in dysfunctional families where parents don't validate their children. It is therefore important to help children see that they are important or special to many people in their lives, including themselves.

## Objectives

- ▷ To identify ways each person is important to others
- ▷ To learn to accept oneself regardless of others' views

## Materials

- ▷ A copy of the I Count–Chart (Handout 1) and a pencil for each child
- ▷ The following master list on poster paper or the chalkboard:
  - A: Is a good helper
  - B: Tries hard to learn things
  - C: Gets along well with brothers and/or sisters
  - D: Is a good listener
  - E: Shares toys, books, or games with other children
  - F: Takes turns when playing
  - G: Says nice things about other people
  - H: Uses good manners (says “please” and “thank-you”)
  - I: Does things when asked to do so (such as pick up toys, go to bed)
  - J: Tells the truth
  - K: Is fun to play with

## Procedure

1. Introduce the lesson by explaining that there are many different people in children's lives who think they are important or special, and that the purpose of this lesson is to help them identify how they are important to others.
2. Give each child an I Count–Chart (Handout 1). Read the categories to familiarize children with what they will be marking on the chart.

3. Explain that you will read the first item: “Is a good helper” (alphabet letter *A*). Children are to think about who on that chart would think they are a good helper and put an *X* beside each of these people’s names under the alphabet letter *A* (there may be more than one). Continue with the second item (alphabet letter *B*). Proceed until all items have been read and children have completed their charts.
4. To process the activity, ask the Content and Personalization Questions.

## Discussion

### CONTENT QUESTIONS

1. Was it hard for you to identify people who might think you were good in these areas? Were some areas more difficult than others to do? (Invite sharing.)
2. Which item did you have the most *X*’s for (count down the page under each alphabet letter)? Which item did you have the least *X*’s for?

### PERSONALIZATION QUESTIONS

1. Do you now think you are more important to lots of people than you thought you were before doing this activity?
2. Do you think it is possible to be special or important in all areas to everyone?
3. Even if someone else thinks you are not important or special, does that mean that you are not OK? What does it mean?
4. What did you learn about yourself from this lesson?

## Follow-up Activity

Invite children to ask parents, stepparents, grandparents, or siblings to tell children how they are special or important.

# I Count

## CHART

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

|             | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mom         |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Dad         |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Stepmom     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Stepdad     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Brother     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Sister      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Grandma     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Grandpa     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Uncle       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Aunt        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Teacher     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Baby-sitter |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Friend      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |

# *Solutions for Sad Feelings*

## Developmental Perspective

Depending on their circumstances, children this age may frequently experience sad feelings. Because they are still in the process of developing a feelings vocabulary and learning ways to express feelings, they may not be able to identify effective ways to deal with their sadness. The lessons learned in this activity will help children identify specific things they can do to help themselves feel less sad.

## Objectives

- ▷ To identify specific ways to deal with sad feelings

## Materials

- ▷ A Solutions for Sad Feelings–Worksheet (Handout 10) and a pencil for every two children
- ▷ Poster paper and a marker

## Procedure

1. Divide children into pairs.
2. Distribute the Solutions for Sad Feelings–Worksheet (Handout 10) to each pair of children. Explain that you will be reading some sad situations, and their job is to think of ways to help the child in the situation feel less sad. After reading the first situation, allow partners a short amount of time to discuss what they could do to deal with the sad feelings (they can write this on the worksheet or just talk about ideas). Then ask them to share these ideas with the total group. As they share, write their suggestions on the poster paper.
3. Read the next situation and follow the same procedure until all have been addressed, then discuss the Content and Personalization Questions.

## Discussion

### CONTENT QUESTIONS

1. Do you think everyone feels sad about the same things? If not, why do you think they don't?
2. Were you surprised at the number of different ideas you came up with to deal with sad feelings?
3. Do you think it is possible to feel less sad about sad situations if you find some good ways to help you deal with them?

**PERSONALIZATION QUESTIONS**

1. Have you tried any of the ideas that were suggested today? If so, which ones have worked best for you?
2. Of the ideas presented today, which ones would you like to try the next time you feel sad?

**Follow-up Activity**

Keep the composite list posted where children can see it. At the end of the day, ask children if they felt sad and, if so, which suggestions they tried.

# *Solutions for Sad Feelings*

## WORKSHEET

**SITUATION 1**

Carlos's dog, who was 8 years old, just got run over by a car. What could you suggest that might help Carlos feel less sad?

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**SITUATION 2**

Annie's grandmother fell and broke her leg. She is in the hospital. What could you suggest that might help Annie feel less sad?

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**SITUATION 3**

Miguel's sister ran away from home. She called her parents and told them she got a job in another city and wasn't ever coming back. What could you suggest that might help Miguel feel less sad?

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**SITUATION 4**

Theresa's best friend is moving to another town. What could you suggest that might help Theresa feel less sad?

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**SITUATION 5**

Demi's dad is in prison. She hasn't seen him for a long time. What could you suggest to help Demi feel less sad?

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**SITUATION 6**

Daryl's family has to move because they can't afford to live in the house they are living in now. Daryl doesn't want to move out of his neighborhood. What could you suggest that might help Daryl feel less sad?

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