



Understanding Personal Space

Autism & ABA Therapy Social Skills

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Activity Title:

"Space Bubble: Learning About Personal Space"

Objective:

To help the child with autism understand the concept of personal space and practice maintaining appropriate physical boundaries with others.

Materials Needed:

- Personal Space Visuals: Circles or 'space bubbles' made of rope or tape on the floor.
- Social Distance Cards: Cards depicting various social situations with appropriate and inappropriate spacing.
- Scenario Role-Play Props: Props relevant to the scenarios (e.g., toys, chairs, tables).

Activity Setup:

Create Personal Space Visuals:

- Lay out circles or 'space bubbles' on the floor using rope or tape to visually represent personal space.

Prepare Social Distance Cards:

- Select or create cards that show different social interactions, emphasizing the distance between people.

Activity Steps with Examples:

Introducing Personal Space:

- Begin with a simple explanation: "Everyone has a space bubble around them. It's important to stay in our own bubble and not get too close unless it's okay."

Using Personal Space Visuals:

- Have the child stand inside a 'space bubble.'
- Example 1: Invite another person to gradually step into the child's space, and discuss how it feels when someone is too close.

Exploring Social Distance Cards:

- Show a card and talk about the spacing between people.
- Example 2: A card showing someone standing very close to another person in a line. Discuss why it's important to give others space.

Role-Playing Scenarios:

- Act out scenarios using the props.
- Example Scenario 1: Pretend to wait in a queue, practicing staying in the space bubble.
- Example Scenario 2: Sit at a table and demonstrate appropriate spacing while interacting.

Feedback and Reinforcement:

- Provide feedback on the child's understanding and respect for personal space.
- Praise appropriate behavior: "You did a great job staying in your space bubble while we waited in line!"

Skills Targeted:

- Spatial Awareness: Understanding and maintaining a comfortable distance in social situations.
- Respect for Others' Boundaries: Recognizing and respecting others' need for personal space.
- Social Cue Recognition: Identifying non-verbal cues that indicate when someone needs more space.
- Self-regulation: Managing one's own movements and respecting boundaries.