

Feeling Good About Myself: The Balloon Bounce Game

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Recommended Age Range: Seven to Twelve

Goals

- Promote positive self-talk through verbalizations of positive self-qualities
- Improve self-esteem by identifying and expressing positive qualities about oneself

Materials

- Four balloons
- Pen

Description

Introduce the activity as follows:

“Today we are going to talk about self-esteem. Self-esteem means how you feel about yourself. If you have good feelings about yourself, it means you have high self-esteem. You can help yourself have high self-esteem by thinking about the good things, like things you do well and your proud moments. The *Balloon Bounce Game* will help us talk about these good things. To play, blow up 4 balloons and knot each one. (Many kids have trouble blowing up and knotting balloons so I can help if you need.) Write the four questions from the list below, each onto a separate balloon. (Use a pen as markers will smudge.) Now try to keep two balloons up in the air for one minute without them touching the ground. When one minute is up, or a balloon touches the ground, choose one balloon, read the question written on it, and answer the question. Repeat until all questions have been answered. At the end, you can burst the balloons!”

Questions

Tell about a time you felt proud of yourself

Tell about a time you were able to do something difficult

Tell about a time you helped yourself feel better

Tell about a time you did something kind for someone

A variation of the activity is to set a stopwatch and time how long the client can keep two balloons in the air. The client can then try to beat his/her record in subsequent rounds.

Discussion

Many children struggle with poor self-esteem. This active and engaging intervention can be useful in helping clients focus on positive attributes. The activity can serve as a foundation for further discussion on the clients' tendency to minimize their own strengths and to focus on their negative attributes. The practitioner can help the client recognize that thinking positive thoughts about self can elevate mood and lead to improved emotional functioning.

About The Author

Liana Lowenstein, MSW, CPT-S, is a therapist, lecturer, and author who has been working with children and families since 1988. She is internationally recognized for her innovative work including numerous books on child and family therapy. She is winner of the Monica Herbert award for outstanding contribution to play therapy in Canada.