Stop, Slow, Go
Source: Kathren L. Johnson

Treatment Issue: Social Skills
Recommended Age Range: Six to Ten
Modality: Individual, Group

Goals
- Learn to differentiate between acceptable and unacceptable behaviors
- Identify behaviors that have an appropriate time or place
- Identify and discuss black and white thinking

Materials
- White cardboard
- Markers or crayon (red, yellow, and green)
- Stop, Slow, Go behaviors (included)

Advance Preparation
Make the traffic lights: Cut out three cardboard circles. Color one red, one yellow, and one green. Spread out the traffic lights on the floor (Red at the top, yellow in the middle, green on the bottom).

Description
Discuss the traffic lights and the meaning of the red light for stop, the yellow light for slow, and the green light for go. Then explain that some behaviors are always appropriate (go behaviors), some behaviors are never appropriate (stop behaviors), and some behaviors require special permission or need the right timing (slow behaviors).

Read the list of stop, slow, and go behaviors one at a time, and have the client stand beside the appropriate traffic light. For example, sharpening a pencil would be a slow behavior, because a client should only sharpen his/her pencil during free time or with permission from the teacher.

Process the activity by asking the following questions:

1. Name one go behavior that was identified in the game.
2. Name one stop behavior that was identified in the game.
3. What should you do if you are unsure if it is a stop or go behavior?
4. What did you learn through this activity?

Discussion
Clients with impulse control problems sometimes need help thinking through the appropriate timing for a behavior. Clients can also have problems with black or white thinking; a behavior is either right or wrong. This activity helps children,
especially those new to the structured environment of school, understand that some behaviors, such as using the restroom, are okay at the right time.

**About The Author**
Kathren L. Johnson, MS, ALC, attended Lee University and completed an internship at Kid’s Talk Play Therapy Center. She currently works at Mental Health Care of Cullman in Alabama. She collaborates with the local child welfare agency to provide mental health care to foster children as well as to other children with behavioral and emotional needs.
Stop, Slow, Go
Behaviors

STOP BEHAVIORS
HIT A PERSON BECAUSE HE/SHE SAID SOMETHING MEAN TO YOU.
INTERUPT THE TEACHER WHILE HE/SHE IS TALKING.
YELL AT SOMEONE BECAUSE YOU ARE ANGRY WITH HER/HIM.
CHEAT ON A TEST (LOOK AT SOMEONE ELSE’S PAPER).
HAVE A TANTRUM.
SWEAR AT YOUR PARENT.

SLOW BEHAVIORS
TALK TO YOUR FRIENDS.
GO OVER TO THE NEIGHBOR’S HOUSE.
TELL A FIB.
CHANGE THE CHANNEL ON THE TV.
GO OUTSIDE/PLAY IN YOUR YARD.
HUG SOMEONE.

GO BEHAVIORS
TREAT OTHERS WITH RESPECT.
RAISE YOUR HAND BEFORE TALKING IN CLASS.
APOLOGIZE WHEN YOU MAKE A MISTAKE.
BE POLITE.
TRY YOUR HARDEST.
TELL A SAFE ADULT IF SOMEONE IS BULLYING OR HURTING YOU.

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