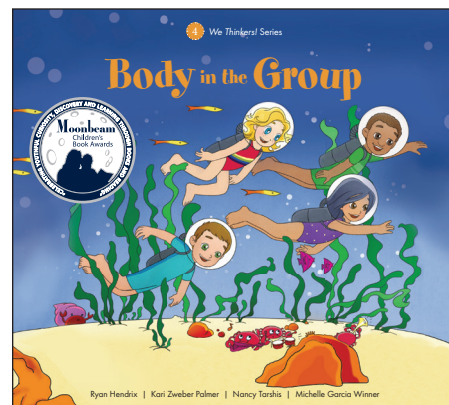


Body in the Group



Family Letter and At Home Activities

In the *Body in the Group* story, Evan, Ellie, Jesse and Molly take a trip to the ocean. The group plan is to find a shark tooth and they quickly realize they need to think about each other and keep their bodies in a group to find it. When they keep their bodies in the group they finally find the shark tooth ... and something they weren't expecting!

In our social thinking group we learned about the concept of **body in the group**. Keeping your body in the group means maintaining a comfortable physical presence around others – not too close, yet not too far away. When your body is in the group, it sends the nonverbal message that you are interested in others and that you are following the same plan. The opposite is also true. If your body is out of the group (too far away), it sends the message you are not thinking about the group. While we often realize the importance of language and what to say in a conversation, it is important to understand that physical proximity is also a key ingredient to successful social interactions.



Body in the group.



Body out of the group.

Activities to try at home

Activity 1

Use the body in the group vocabulary throughout your daily routines. Keep in mind that any time two people are sharing space, they are considered a group. Therefore, you can use the vocabulary when you and your child are alone, or when the family is together as a whole. Consider the following examples:

- “We can start our movie when all family members have their bodies in the group.”
- “It’s time for dinner. Everyone in the family has their body in the group, sitting at the table. We can start our meal together!”
- “When you leave the table, your body is out of the group. It makes me think you are finished with your meal.”
- “Remember to keep your body in the group when we shop together at the grocery store.”

Activity

2

Look through photo albums with your child. In the pictures, identify when people have their bodies in or out of a group.

Activity

3

Watch for opportunities outside the home to observe others with their bodies in or out of groups. At a restaurant, for example, many people have their body in the group. Don't restrict yourself to groups of people either! One preschooler, for example, took a trip to the aquarium with her family. As they watched the schools of fish, she said "Look mom, that fish has its body out of the group."

Activity

4

Music Activities

The Freeze

- Turn on some music and dance around. At random moments, pause the music and "FREEZE." Get the whole family involved.
- While "frozen" observe and discuss the physical presence of the people. Are you a group (about one arm's length away from each other) or is everyone all over the room? Whose body is still in the group? Who danced out? The object of the activity is not necessarily to stay in the group, but to observe and discuss what happened.

Hokey Pokey

Sing or listen to the "Hokey Pokey" together. In the song, each body part is placed in and out of the group! Sing and dance together while using the body in the group vocabulary.