
KIDS' COURT SAMPLE MATERIALS

Sample Contents of Parent's Packet

- King County Kids' Court Agenda
- King County Kids' Court Fact Sheet
- List of Support and Counseling Resources in the Community
- Handout that addresses how parents can support and respond to their sexually abused child
- Handout on what to bring to court (e.g., snacks, toys, favorite doll or animal, books, Kids' Court packet, etc.)
- Vocabulary list of court terminology
- Blank stationery (for writing affirmation note to child)
- King County Kids' Court Evaluation Form
- A variety of pamphlets produced locally:
 - *The Victim of Sexual Assault and the Law*. Harborview Sexual Assault Center, 325 Ninth Avenue, ZAO7, Seattle, WA 98104
 - *Especially for Parents*. King County Sexual Assault Resource Center, P.O. Box 300, Renton, WA 98057
 - *He Told Me Not To Tell*. King County Sexual Assault Resource Center, P.O. Box 300, Renton, WA 98057
 - *Child Victims' And Child Witnesses' Bill of Rights*

Sample Contents of Child's Packet

- Zip-lock bag with:
 - Colored markers
 - Gavel-shaped pencil (Source: novelty stores)
 - Pad of paper
 - Worry Dolls (Source: import stores- dolls from Guatemala)
"According to legend, Guatemalan children tell one worry to each doll when they go to bed at night, and place the dolls under their pillow. The dolls take care of your worries when you sleep."
- Book *Do You Know You Are Very Brave?* (See copy enclosed in manual)
- Relaxation audiotape *Relaxation Training for Children* (See Appendix: script reprinted with permission from Arlene S. Koeppen, *Elementary School Guidance and Counseling*, October, 1974)

January 8, 2010

Dear Parent/Guardian:

The Special Assault Unit is very pleased to offer you a program called King County Kids' Court. This program is designed to help children and preteens who are scheduled to testify in a court of law and their families deal with the fears and feelings about going to court.

We are aware that you and your child(ren) are involved in a misdemeanor or felony prosecution and a trial date may already be set. When your child(ren) enters the courtroom to testify in this criminal proceeding, s/he will enter an adult setting that is intimidating and often overwhelming. The goal of Kids' Court is to lessen this anxiety about going to court.

King County Kids' Court consists of two components: One is for your child and the other is for you, the parent or guardian. All participants will be familiarized with the people in the courtroom and the legal language used in court. In the children's session, art, music, role play and other activities will engage the children in discussions about testifying in court. Relaxation techniques especially geared to children will be introduced to help your child deal with stress. In the session for parents and guardians, you will have an opportunity to share with others in similar situations your feelings about what is happening to your child and learn how to better prepare him/her for court.

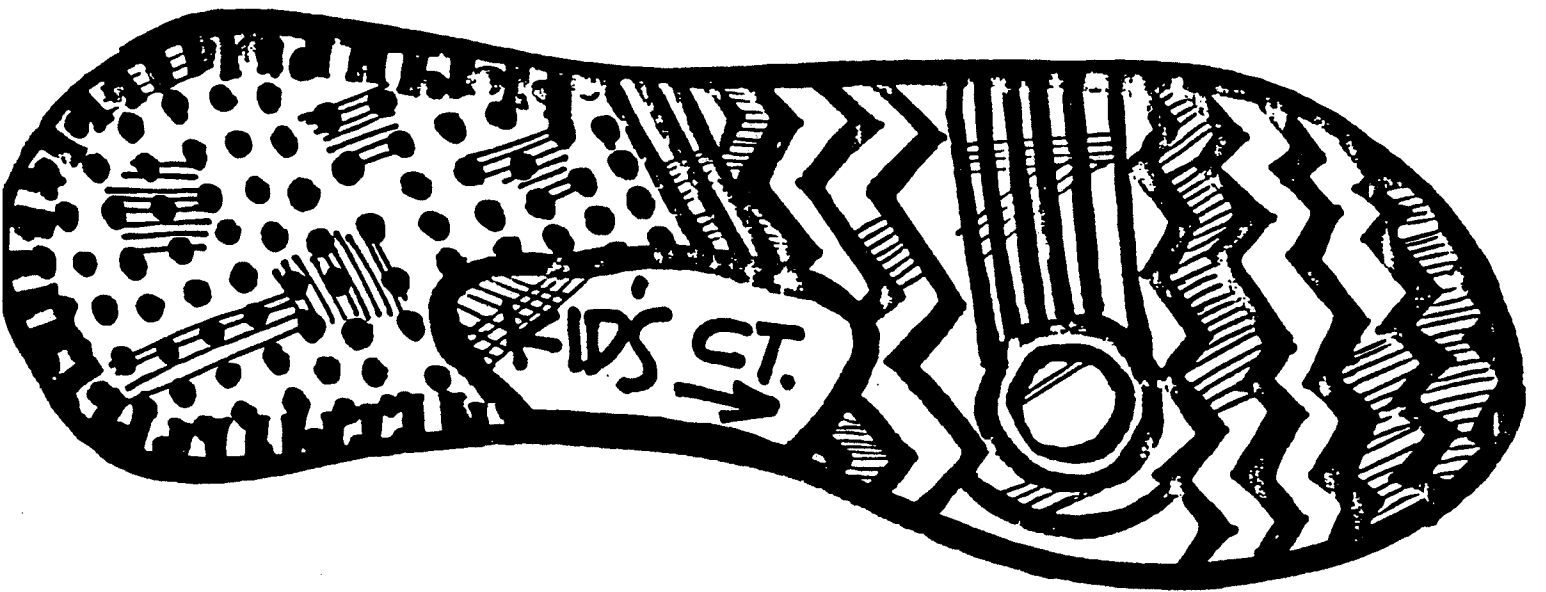
King County Kids' Court will take place at the Regional Justice Center, 401 Fourth Avenue North, Kent, WA on Saturday, January 23, 2010 from 9:45 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Signs will be posted near the elevators designating the courtroom assignment. A complimentary lunch and snack will be served and free parking is available in the garage next to the Regional Justice Center (see enclosed map). Please let us know if your child is allergic to any foods or if he or she has any special needs we should address at Kids' Court.

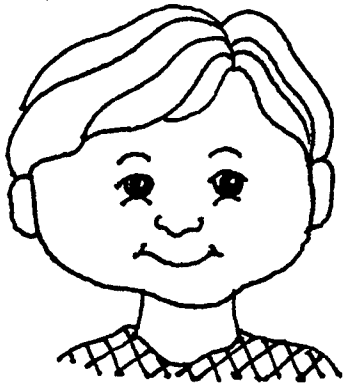
King County Kids' Court has been developed and implemented by concerned professionals in the fields of education, social work and criminal justice. We are hopeful that you will be able to participate in this outstanding program.

To register, please contact Donna Belin at 206-386-KIDS (206-386-5437) by January 19, 2010 (even if you have already discussed participation with your advocate). If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call. We look forward to hearing from you.

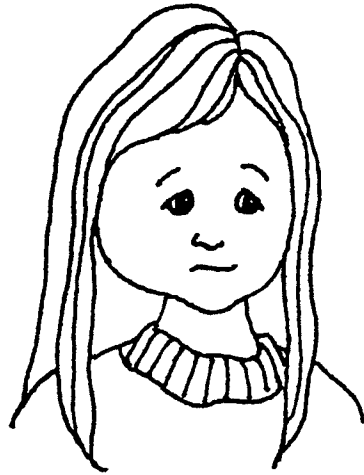
Sincerely,

Donna S. Belin, MEd
Executive Director

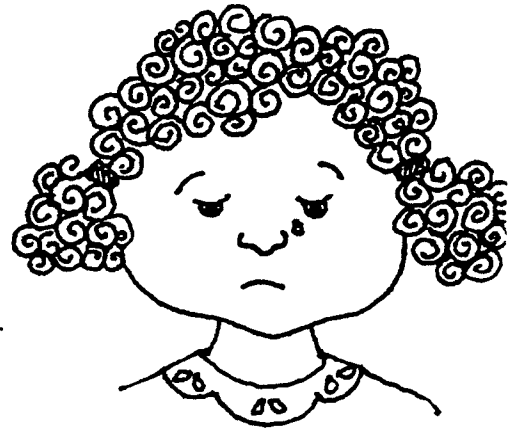




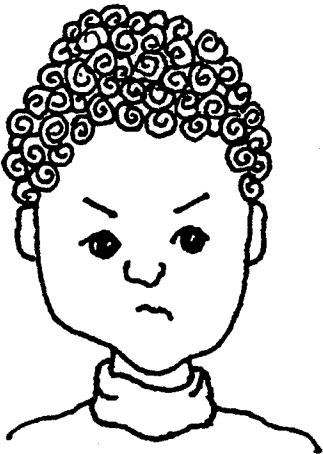
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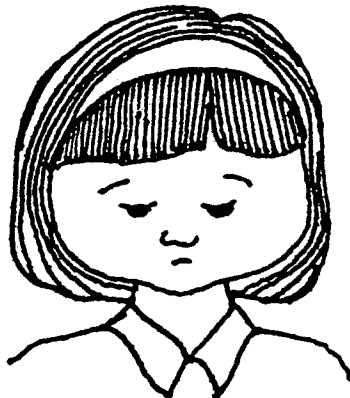
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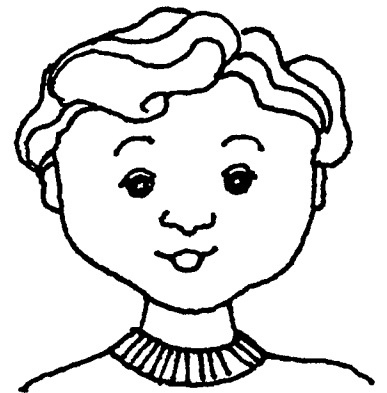
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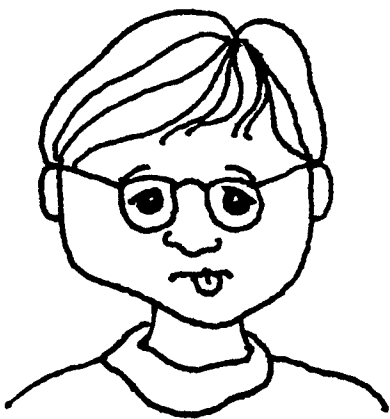
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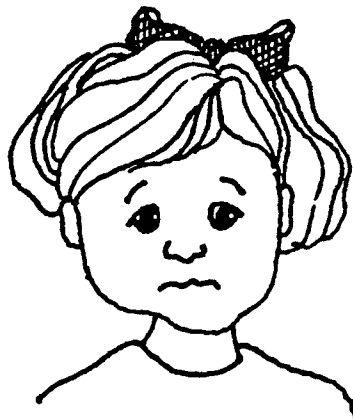
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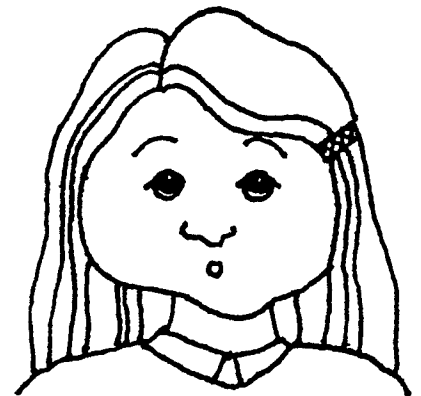
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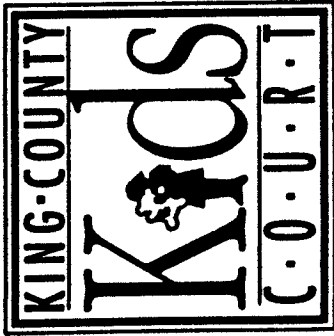
YUCKY



AFRAID



RELIEVED



CERTIFICATE OF GRADUATION

I, _____ have learned that

- I'm okay
- I'm in charge of me
- That telling the truth feels scary sometimes, but that's what court is all about
- I'm an important part of court

I GRADUATED from King County Kids Court

on this _____ day
of _____

relaxation training for children

Arlene S. Koeppen

Children experience some degree of tension at one time or another in the elementary grades. This tension can range from an "uptight" feeling right before an unprepared-for oral book report to a generalized tension and worry throughout the day. Some children experience discomfort during specific subject matter periods, others when beginning a new task, while others become upset after a correction from the teacher. Pressure to succeed, to always be right, to be liked, to have approval, or to cope with family problems can produce tension in a child.

School counselors are often called on to work with children whose academic or social development is hampered by similar kinds of pressures, and they deal with these problems in a variety of ways. Some provide individual or group counseling to improve "poor self-concept" or "poor peer relations" or to reduce "acting out behavior." Some consult with a child's teacher to bring about change in the educational setting or provide remedial instruction for diagnosed learning disabilities. Some counselors seek the parents' help in alleviating the problem. Others use various methods and combinations of methods to involve the home and school, as well as the child, in bringing about positive change.

A potentially significant contribution to the counselor's repertoire of skills in this area is the use of relaxation techniques. These techniques are often used as one method of preparing an individual for dealing with anxiety-producing material, but they can be an end to themselves. Lazarus (1971) and Carkhuff (1969) have published guides for conducting relaxation sessions. Woody (1971) has provided a review of literature citing studies using systematic desensitization, with relaxation as the first step. Further cases are cited by Krumboltz and Thoresen (1969) and Lazarus (1971). Lazarus has also recorded his relaxation model on tape. Most of the published materials on relaxation seem most applicable to adoles-

Arlene S. Koeppen is a psychologist, Richardson Independent School District, Dallas, Texas.

cents and adults, and no intentions are stated regarding the application of these models to children. While the use of these models with children is not proscribed, such an extension is not readily apparent. A script written just for children could conceivably enhance the process of helping children learn to relax.

Relaxation exercises designed especially for children can help them to become aware of the feelings of body tension and provide skills to reduce it. Children can be taught how to reduce their muscle tension, and this seems to reduce anxiety as well. There was one boy whose arms and legs seemed like perpetual motion machines, yet he showed no awareness of this manifest tension. He mentioned that his parents were considering "putting me on some kind of pills to help me pay attention better." Though he denied any feelings of tension, he agreed to try a few relaxation exercises. He worked hard on the exercises but said he didn't feel any different afterward. Five minutes later his puzzled expression became a grin as he said, "It worked!"

Relaxation training can take place during individual or group counseling sessions, in physical education classes, or in a regular classroom setting. Once children develop the skills, they can relax without instructions from a trainer and thereby implement a higher degree of self-control. If successful mastery of relaxation skills works like successful mastery of academic tasks, then perhaps a case could be made for improved self-concept as well.

In training children to relax various muscle groups, it is not necessary that they be able to identify and locate them. The use of the child's fantasy can be incorporated into the instructions in such a manner that the appropriate muscle groups will automatically be used. Some precedent for the use of fantasy in a similar context was set by Lazarus and Abramovitz (1962). The use of fantasy also serves to attract and maintain a child's interest. One child told his counselor that the exercises stopped the butterflies in his stomach. The butterfly imagery expressed a real feeling for him; it has been replaced by the feelings connoted by a lazy cat.

It has been noted that although children will agree that they want to learn how to relax, they don't want to practice their newly acquired skills under the watchful eyes of their classmates. Fortunately, several muscle groups can be relaxed without much gross motor activity, and practice can go unnoticed. It pleases some children to perform these exercises in class and relax themselves without drawing the attention of those around them. It seemed important to one little girl that the exercises be "our secret" that

"we won't tell the other kids." The effects of this type of training can extend beyond the classroom. A fourth-grade boy said that he used the exercises to help him get to sleep at night.

Below is a relaxation script designed for and used successfully with children in the intermediate grades. This script is similar in design to those used with adults (Carkhuff 1969; Lazarus 1971) but is intended to be more appealing to children. It is likely that the script is equally appropriate for children in the primary grades. Counselors are encouraged to experiment with it and to revise and extend it to include specific interests of children and incorporate other muscle groups. Eight muscle groups are included here. Other exercises can be developed to work with the upper thighs, upper arms, and different muscles around the face and neck as well as the flexing muscles in the feet and extending muscles in the hands.

In working with this script it is recommended that no more than fifteen minutes be devoted to the exercises at any one time and that no more than three muscle groups be introduced at one time. In the initial training sessions the children are learning a new concept and new material. Two or three short sessions per week will help to establish these new behaviors. Aside from theoretical considerations, it is just too hard for some children to keep their eyes closed for more than fifteen minutes. Later sessions serve more to maintain the skills and provide a foundation for work in other areas. This type session can follow a weekly pattern with ten or fifteen minutes devoted to relaxation, and the remainder of the time can be spent on other things.

It should be noted that many of the instructions should be repeated many more times than are indicated in the script and that such repetitions have been intentionally deleted. Each child or group of children is unique. Timing and pacing must follow the individual pattern created in the specific situation. One word of caution requires consideration: Children tend to "get into" this type of experience as much or more than adults, and they are likely to be a bit disoriented if the session ends abruptly. Preparing children to leave the relaxed state is just as important as proper introduction and timing.

A Relaxation Training Script

Introduction

Today we're going to do some special kinds of exercises called "relaxation exercises." These exercises help you learn how to relax

when you're feeling uptight and help you get rid of those butterflies-in-your-stomach kinds of feelings. They're also kind of neat, because you can do some of them in the classroom without anybody noticing.

In order for you to get the best feelings from these exercises, there are some rules you must follow. First, you must do exactly what I say, even if it seems kind of silly. Second, you must try hard to do what I say. Third, you must pay attention to your body. Throughout these exercises, pay attention to how your muscles feel when they are tight and when they are loose and relaxed. And, fourth, you must practice. The more you practice, the more relaxed you can get. Does anyone have any questions?

Are you ready to begin? Okay. First, get as comfortable as you can in your chair. Sit back, get both feet on the floor, and just let your arms hang loose. That's fine. Now close your eyes and don't open them until I say to. Remember to follow my instructions very carefully, try hard, and pay attention to your body. Here we go.

Hands and Arms

Pretend you have a whole lemon in your left hand. Now squeeze it hard. Try to squeeze all the juice out. Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Now drop the lemon. Notice how your muscles feel when they are relaxed. Take another lemon and squeeze it. Try to squeeze this one harder than you did the first one. That's right. Real hard. Now drop your lemon and relax. See how much better your hand and arm feel when they are relaxed. Once again, take a lemon in your left hand and squeeze all the juice out. Don't leave a single drop. Squeeze hard. Good. Now relax and let the lemon fall from your hand. [Repeat the process for the right hand and arm.]

Arms and Shoulders

Pretend you are a furry, lazy cat. You want to stretch. Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them up high over your head. Way back. Feel the pull in your shoulders. Stretch higher. Now just let your arms drop back to your side. Okay, kittens, let's stretch again. Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them over your head. Pull them back, way back. Pull hard. Now let them drop quickly. Good. Notice how your shoulders feel more relaxed. This time let's have a great big stretch. Try to touch the ceiling. Stretch your arms way out in front of you. Raise them way up high over your head. Push them way, way back. Notice the tension and pull

in your arms and shoulders. Hold tight, now. Great. Let them drop very quickly and feel how good it is to be relaxed. It feels good and warm and lazy.

Shoulder and Neck

Now pretend you are a turtle. You're sitting out on a rock by a nice, peaceful pond, just relaxing in the warm sun. It feels nice and warm and safe here. Oh-oh! You sense danger. Pull your head into your house. Try to pull your shoulders up to your ears and push your head down into your shoulders. Hold in tight. It isn't easy to be a turtle in a shell. The danger is past now. You can come out into the warm sunshine, and, once again, you can relax and feel the warm sunshine. Watch out now! More danger. Hurry, pull your head back into your house and hold it tight. You have to be closed in tight to protect yourself. Okay, you can relax now. Bring your head out and let your shoulders relax. Notice how much better it feels to be relaxed than to be all tight. One more time, now. Danger! Pull your head in. Push your shoulders way up to your ears and hold tight. Don't let even a tiny piece of your head show outside your shell. Hold it. Feel the tenseness in your neck and shoulders. Okay. You can come out now. It's safe again. Relax and feel comfortable in your safety. There's no more danger. Nothing to worry about. Nothing to be afraid of. You feel good.

Jaw

You have a giant jawbreaker bubble gum in your mouth. It's very hard to chew. Bite down on it. Hard! Let your neck muscles help you. Now relax. Just let your jaw hang loose. Notice how good it feels just to let your jaw drop. Okay, let's tackle that jawbreaker again now. Bite down. Hard! Try to squeeze it out between your teeth. That's good. You're really tearing that gum up. Now relax again. Just let your jaw drop off your face. It feels so good just to let go and not have to fight that bubble gum. Okay, one more time. We're really going to tear it up this time. Bite down. Hard as you can. Harder. Oh, you're really working hard. Good. Now relax. Try to relax your whole body. You've beaten the bubble gum. Let yourself go as loose as you can.

Face and Nose

Here comes a pesky old fly. He has landed on your nose. Try to get him off without using your hands. That's right, wrinkle up your nose. Make as many wrinkles in your nose as you can. Scrunch

your nose up real hard. Good. You've chased him away. Now you can relax your nose. Oops, here he comes back again. Right back in the middle of your nose. Wrinkle up your nose again. Shoo him off. Wrinkle it up hard. Hold it just as tight as you can. Okay, he flew away. You can relax your face. Notice that when you scrunch up your nose that your cheeks and your mouth and your forehead and your eyes all help you, and they get tight, too. So when you relax your nose, your whole face relaxes too, and that feels good. Oh-oh. This time that old fly has come back, but this time he's on your forehead. Make lots of wrinkles. Try to catch him between all those wrinkles. Hold it tight, now. Okay, you can let go. He's gone for good. Now you can just relax. Let your face go smooth, no wrinkles anywhere. Your face feels nice and smooth and relaxed.

Stomach

Hey! Here comes a cute baby elephant. But he's not watching where he's going. He doesn't see you lying there in the grass, and he's about to step on your stomach. Don't move. You don't have time to get out of the way. Just get ready for him. Make your stomach very hard. Tighten up your stomach muscles real tight. Hold it. It looks like he is going the other way. You can relax now. Let your stomach go soft. Let it be as relaxed as you can. That feels so much better. Oops, he's coming this way again. Get ready. Tighten up your stomach. Real hard. If he steps on you when your stomach is hard, it won't hurt. Make your stomach into a rock. Okay, he's moving away again. You can relax now. Kind of settle down, get comfortable, and relax. Notice the difference between a tight stomach and a relaxed one. That's how we want it to feel—nice and loose and relaxed. You won't believe this, but this time he's really coming your way and no turning around. He's headed straight for you. Tighten up. Tighten hard. Here he comes. This is really it. You've got to hold on tight. He's stepping on you. He's stepped over you. Now he's gone for good. You can relax completely. You're safe. Everything is okay, and you can feel nice and relaxed.

This time imagine that you want to squeeze through a narrow fence and the boards have splinters on them. You'll have to make yourself very skinny if you're going to make it through. Suck your stomach in. Try to squeeze it up against your backbone. Try to be as skinny as you can. You've got to get through. Now relax. You don't have to be skinny now. Just relax and feel your stomach being warm and loose. Okay, let's try to get through that fence now. Squeeze up your stomach. Make it touch your backbone. Get it real

small and tight. Get as skinny as you can. Hold tight, now. You've got to squeeze through. You got through that skinny little fence and no splinters. You can relax now. Settle back and let your stomach come back out where it belongs. You can feel really good now. You've done fine.

Legs and Feet

Now pretend that you are standing barefoot in a big, fat mud puddle. Squish your toes down deep into the mud. Try to get your feet down to the bottom of the mud puddle. You'll probably need your legs to help you push. Push down, spread your toes apart, and feel the mud squish up between your toes. Now step out of the mud puddle. Relax your feet. Let your toes go loose and feel how nice that is. It feels good to be relaxed. Back into the mud puddle. Squish your toes down. Let your leg muscles help push your feet down. Push your feet. Hard. Try to squeeze that mud puddle dry. Okay. Come back out now. Relax your feet, relax your legs, relax your toes. It feels so good to be relaxed. No tenseness anywhere. You feel kind of warm and tingly.

Conclusion

Stay as relaxed as you can. Let your whole body go limp and feel all your muscles relaxed. In a few minutes I will ask you to open your eyes, and that will be the end of this session. As you go through the day, remember how good it feels to be relaxed. Sometimes you have to make yourself tighter before you can be relaxed, just as we did in these exercises. Practice these exercises every day to get more and more relaxed. A good time to practice is at night, after you have gone to bed and the lights are out and you won't be disturbed. It will help you get to sleep. Then, when you are a really good relaxer, you can help yourself relax here at school. Just remember the elephant, or the jaw breaker, or the mud puddle, and you can do our exercises and nobody will know. Today is a good day, and you are ready to go back to class feeling very relaxed. You've worked hard in here, and it feels good to work hard. Very slowly, now, open your eyes and wiggle your muscles around a little. Very good. You've done a good job. You're going to be a super relaxer.

References

Carkhuff, R. R. *Helping and human relations, Vol. I.* New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1969.

Krumboltz, J. D., & Thoresen, C. E. *Behavioral counseling: Cases and techniques.* New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1969.
Lazarus, A. A. *Behavior therapy and beyond.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1971.
Lazarus, A. A., & Abramovitz, A. The use of emotive imagery in the treatment of children's phobias. *Journal of Mental Science*, 1962, 108, 191-195.
Woody, R. H. *Psychobehavioral counseling and therapy: Integrating behavioral and insight techniques.* New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1971.

Anybody There?

Is anybody there?
Does anybody care?
Does anybody care enough,
or any at all?
If someone does, why am I so lonely?
Is asking for a friend asking too much?
I live in a dark world.
Why? Because in my life
Nobody there.
Nobody cares.
I can only hope that a friendly hand will push away the dark
clouds of unhappiness.
Smile, and give me the wonderful sunshine of happiness
In my dark world,
there's only a little bit of hope left that
Someone's there
Someone cares.