

“Why do you think we played this game?”

(To help us learn more about each other; to understand each other better; to show that we don’t all have to be the same.)

“How might what we learned about ourselves and each other help us take responsibility to include and be kind to one another?”

“What did you learn about a friend? How might this help you be a better friend to him?”

“What did you learn about yourself? How might this help you with your friends?”

## ● COMPASSIONATE AND KIND Activity 2 *Of Course You Can Play!*

### PRACTICE

Including others in kind ways  
Getting yourself included to avoid left-out feelings

“Raise your hand and name people you admire for the way they always make room for others and include everyone, not just their close friends. Each of you can decide today to be a person who is inclusive. Inclusive people look for ways to be kind and make others feel good about themselves.

“Let’s practice the best ways to get yourself included and to include others who want to join you. The key to getting yourself included is to get the person’s attention before asking to play. You can do this by either calling their name or tapping their shoulder.” Ask two volunteers to help you demonstrate.

- Have the volunteers pretend they are playing a game.
- Approach with friendly body language. Watch for a few seconds before asking to join.
- Call the players by name or tap the shoulder of the person you know best or who is most likely to say you can join.
- In a friendly voice and with a friendly face, ask to join. (“Kelly, that looks fun. Can I play?”)

“Now let’s consider how we include people.”

Have a student ask to play with you. When the student approaches and asks to play, respond by saying “Sure” with a tone of voice and facial expression that makes it clear you really do not want the person to play. Then ask your students, “When I said ‘Sure,’ how do you think that made (student) feel?”

Next, have several students ask you if they can join your game. This time, respond with a positive face and voice: “Sure” ... “Of course” ... “Yeah” ... “That’d be great.”

Ask your students, “How does it make you feel when people look and sound happy that you want to join?”

Students with social-emotional challenges may need simplified steps if feeling anxious and forgetting what to do and say. A small “I’d Like to Play Too” cue card with the following reminders in their pocket might help.

1. Approach.
2. Watch.
3. Say a name or tap the shoulder of one kid.
4. Say, “Can I play too?” with friendly face and voice.

## ● COMPASSIONATE AND KIND Activity 3 *Looking to Include You*

### PRACTICE

Using eyes and ears to think and act kindly

Materials: Bug, activity ball

“Everyone wants to be included at recess. Some kids don’t feel comfortable asking if they can join in because they feel shy and cautious like Bug. Bug is like many students at our school who need others to notice that they would like to be invited to join in.”

“Raise your hand if you like it when people ask you if you want to play. Let’s name some games that you like to play at recess.” (This is a great way to find out which games are hot so you can make sure everyone knows the rules for these games. It also gives you a quick read on who is playing with whom and what games they are playing.)

“In this game, you are going to practice using your eyes and ears to notice that someone wants to play. Then you need to be inclusive and invite them to join you using friendly signals.”

Invite two students to join you bouncing a ball. Then tell the other students, “When I give you Kimochis™ Bug, come stand near the game but do not talk. Just use a friendly face that says, ‘That looks like fun. Can I play?’ ” As you are bouncing the ball, give Bug to a student who is not playing. When she comes near the game, smile and say in a friendly way, “Do you want to play? We are playing with the ball.” Make room for her and include her in your play.

Then step out of the ball game while the three students play. Give Bug to a new student and have him approach the ball game without talking. The players are to use their eyes, ears, and compassionate hearts to include the new student who is holding Bug. This is a chance for the players to be kind.

Keep the game going (passing Bug to each person so they have a turn joining the game) until your entire class has joined.

Your students will be in a very happy mood after this inclusive game! “How did it feel to make room and let others join your game?” Challenge your students to look for ways to be a person who is friendly and inclusive.

**Sometimes students with social-emotional challenges do not know the rules or even how to play common recess games. After students give the names of games, ask the group who knows how to play each game. If students with social-emotional challenges don’t seem to know how to play, this is a good opportunity to find peers who would be good buddies and be willing to teach those students how to play the popular games. You can also talk to the PE teacher about teaching the games in gym class.**

## ● COMPASSIONATE AND KIND Activity 4

### *Want to Join Us?*

#### PRACTICE

Including others who want to join your conversation

*Materials:* all feeling pillows

“Clap your hands if you like it when people let you know what they are talking about when you join a conversation.” Invite a group to stand together with you and have a casual conversation. Choose a student to stand near and look on as if she wants to join in. Do not make eye contact with her or send friendly signals.

Call “Freeze” and say to your students, “We missed a chance to be friendly. Who can name what we did not do?”

Then put students in threesomes and give them a topic to have a conversation about (birthday party, favorite animals, hobbies, etc.). Write these friendly words on the board. “Hi, (name person). We’re talking about (topic). Do you want to join us?”

Tell students to begin their conversations. “When I tap your shoulder, say good-bye to your group and move toward another group. Stand on the outside of the group and look like you want to join.”

Each group’s job is to see the new person and to choose to include him in the conversation using friendly words, face, and tone of voice. Keep the game going until the students have rotated enough times to feel comfortable with this skill.

Wrap up the activity by asking your students:

“How do you feel about yourself when you choose to be friendly?”

“How do you feel about others when they are friendly with you?”

“How might our school look, sound, and feel different if everyone chooses to be friendly, even to those who are not their close friends?”