

Therapeutic Interventions Using Non-Therapeutic Games:

BEHAVIOR BASICS FOR K-8

*42 Dynamic Behavior Learning Activities
for K-8 That Can Be Applied To Games You
Probably Already Have In Your Closet*

SAMPLE PAGE
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About This Book

Necessity often breeds creativity, which was the case for us. As mental health professionals, we are constantly seeking innovative, yet practical ideas for sessions. *Therapeutic Interventions Using Non-Therapeutic Games: Behavior Basics for K-8* is such a tool. By taking recreational games, which are readily available to everyone and structuring the play of the game to a therapeutic nature, we utilized a fun and effective modality of therapy that focuses on eight behavior areas. The games included in each session are inexpensive, and some are probably in your closet already! By using recreational games, students are already familiar with some, if not all of the games, as well as the instructions for play. The use of games provides hands-on learning, and gives the student a concrete example of the concept that is being taught. The activities are useful with children and adolescents in individual, group, or family therapies.

Anyone who is a mental health professional, school counselor, social worker, psychologist, psychiatrist, juvenile counselor, or pastoral counselor will find this book useful. Because of the easy access to the materials, these activities can be used in almost any setting such as a school, mental health facility, mental health hospital, youth detention setting, child services / welfare agencies, and private counseling offices.

By eliminating some of the more clinical discussion topics, parents can also use this book to reinforce what their child is learning in therapy. The games and activities can assist parents in teaching life skills (such as thinking before speaking) to their child in a fun, non-threatening way. Mental health professionals can use the activity covered during the session as “homework” for the family between sessions. An added bonus is that by playing these games as a family, more time will be spent together, which will hopefully strengthen the family unit.

So, grab some games and activity sheets, and get started!





Rush Hour

Objective

To identify times and/or situations in which one wants to rush through things

Grades

K-8

SAMPLE PAGE

Game

Ants in the Pants™

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Participants try to make their ants jump into the pants. This game can be played with two – eight people.

Directions

1. Give each player an equal number of ants.
2. Allow the participants to try to make their ants jump in the pants while engaged in discussion.
3. Offer positive feedback as often as possible.
4. If one is unable to talk and play the game at the same time, have him or her try to make the ants jump after offering an answer or comment.

Discussion

1. What does it mean when someone says you act like you have ants in your pants? Describe times when you feel like you have ants in your pants.





Rush Hour

...Continued

- Engage in a discussion about how sometimes we feel like we have ants in our pants when we are excited or when we feel bored. Describe a time when you were so excited about something that you did not want to take your time doing anything else. (For example, one may have rushed through an assignment in order to be able to watch a movie in class).
 - What happened as a result of you rushing through the task?
 - What do you usually do when you get bored with a particular task?
- Reinforce that feeling excited and/or bored (or having “ants in your pants”) is not “bad.” One just needs to recognize that when these situations occur he or she should be aware that special steps may need to be made in order to get the outcome he or she desires.

Follow-Up Activity

Provide a copy of the “Rush Hour” worksheet (on the following page) for each student.



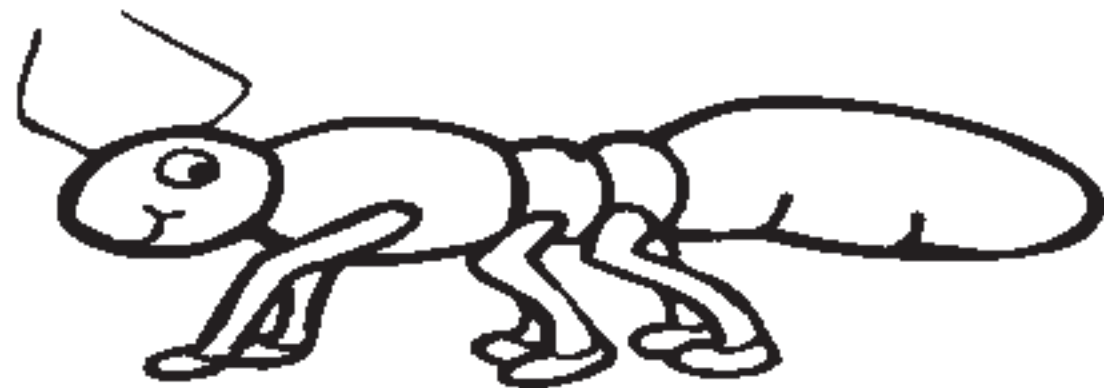


Rush Hour

On each ant's tail, write times when you feel the need to rush. On the large ant on the bottom, write a reminder for yourself to take time to enjoy things and do your best, without rushing! Cut out the large ant, and put it somewhere that it will serve as a reminder of today's lesson.



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Slow & Steady

Color the pictures that apply to you.

These are situations that I rush through at home:



Chores



Homework



Time with My Family



Personal Care

Other: _____

These are situations that I rush through at school:



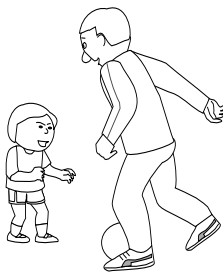
Classwork



Tests



Study Time



Activity Time



Other: _____

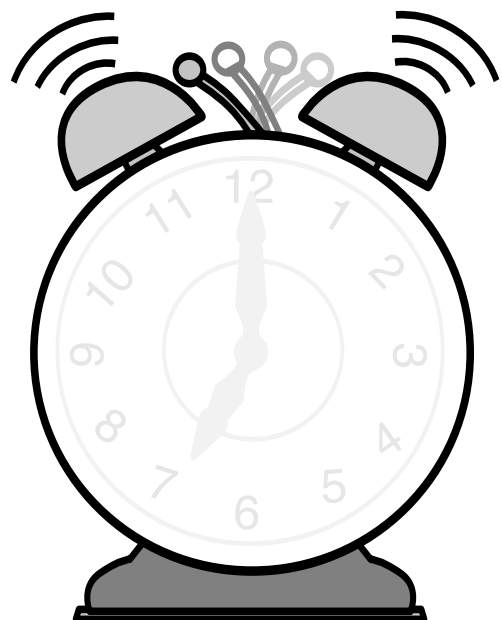
This week, I will slow down, and take my time when I _____.



Just a Reminder

I have trouble completing _____ on time.

List in the clocks things that you can do to help you finish on time.



When I finish something on time, I feel _____!



Mine + Yours = More

Objective

To demonstrate how working as a team can sometimes produce better results than working alone

Grades

2-8

Game

Boggle®

Participants try to find as many words as possible on the board during a three minute time period. This game can be played with two – eight people.

Directions

1. Play the game according to the instructions included with the game. Remember to set a score that will determine when there is a winner.
2. After playing 3 rounds keeping track of individual scores or after a winner is determined, discuss that everyone will now play as a team. Use the same score identified in the first rounds of play as the target score. At the end of the round, have the participants add their scores together.
3. Offer continual praise and feedback during the course of play.

