

Operation Snowflurry



Co-Facilitator Manual

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Operation Snowball, Inc. would like to thank
Marlene Berman of District U-46 Operation Snowball,
Jim Coleman of Addison Operation Snowball and
Rochester High School Operation Snowball
InTouch PSA #5
for their assistance in compiling this manual.

OPERATION SNOWBALL, INC.

MISSION STATEMENT:

Through the development of leadership skills, Operation Snowball shall be a youth and adult partnership, providing awareness and prevention of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use, while encouraging healthy decision-making in an active community of caring.

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY:

Operation Snowball is an ongoing youth and adult cooperative process, focusing on prevention, and founded on the belief that every person has the capacity to make sound decisions regarding life and behavior, based on accurate information and an understanding of self, attitudes and motivations. This process is designed to promote personal and interpersonal growth, leadership skills and healthy decision-making, regarding a broad range of life concerns. Operation Snowball is a PREVENTION program and does not provide individual or group treatment.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

Operation Snowball shall be an ongoing support system for youth and adults, providing community-based prevention and health promotion activities with an emphasis on youth involvement. Such activities should include: staff development/training, experiential events, leadership skills training and follow-up educational and support programs for communities. Such activities should be designed and delivered by youth and adults together in response to community needs.

Snowflurry Staff Training Agenda

Registration

Welcome/Introductions

Goals of the Training – OS process

Pairing co-facilitators

Ice breaker

What is Operation Snowflurry/Snowball and why do we take part?

History, background, school or community-based, youth & adult partnership, program models

Event Particulars

Snowflurry staff introductions

Walk through agenda

Building tour and pick outdoor small group location

What you need to know about working with 4th and 5th graders

Characteristics, attention span, energy level

Activity: Divide into small groups. Each small group draws their 5th grader on a large sheet of paper and surround the 5th grader with its environment. Report out to large group.

New games and teambuilding and why we do them. (group juggle)

Processing activities (How & why? What? So what? Now what?)

OS traditions

Warm Fuzzies

Songs (banana song, car song, etc.)

M&M Game

Hand goes up – mouth goes shut

IALAC

Small group rights (said here, stays here)

Co-Facilitation

What is facilitation? (guidance, keep focus, keep on task, not judgmental)

Role models

Drug free contract

Role of the co-facilitator

Disclosure/Mandated reporting/3-hurts rule

Small group simulation (note cards)

Small group preparation with co-facilitator

Questions/Wrap-up/Closing

Goals of Staff Training

Help volunteer staff...

Develop a good understanding of staff roles and responsibilities at the event.

Develop team cooperation.

Enhance self awareness, communication, facilitation and leadership skills.

Become familiar with the program and prepare for small group sessions.

Make sure the facilitator role is comfortable.

Have fun!!

Sample Snowflurry Agenda

9:00-9:45 a.m.	Opening General Session <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome• Rules for the day• Theme• IALAC Story
9:45-10:00 a.m.	Break – travel to first discussion group
10:00-10:30 a.m.	General Session <ul style="list-style-type: none">Being kind to othersWarm fuzzy story
10:30-10:40 a.m.	Break – travel to general session
10:40-11:10 a.m.	Small group #1
11:10-11:50 a.m.	Lunch (jungle picnic)
11:50-1:00 p.m.	Wacky Olympics
1:00-1:15 p.m.	Water break
1:15-1:45 p.m.	General Session <ul style="list-style-type: none">Just Say No – Loving Self
1:50-2:30 p.m.	Small Group #2
2:30-3:00 p.m.	Closing General Session <ul style="list-style-type: none">EnergizerParents invitedSmall groups present banner
3:00 p.m.	Dismiss back to classrooms

Sample Small Group Agendas

Small Group #1 10:00 – 10:30 a.m.

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 10:00-10:05 a.m. | Icebreaker (choose activity i.e. M&M Game) |
| 10:05-10:15 a.m. | Establish rules for small group
Brainstorm |
| 10:15-10:25 a.m. | Discuss general session presentation
Read Warm Fuzzy story and distribute warm fuzzies |
| 10:25-10:30 a.m. | Group closing (choose activity) |

Small Group #2 1:50 – 2:30 p.m.

- | | |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1:50-2:00 p.m. | Team building game (choose activity) |
| 2:00-2:20 p.m. | Construct group banner |
| 2:20-2:30 p.m. | Group closing (choose activity) |

History: “A Community of Caring”

Operation Snowball began in 1977 through the efforts of several Rockford area youths and adults who had attended the Illinois Teen Institute on Substance Abuse (ITI) sponsored by the Illinois Alcoholism and Drug Dependence Association (IADDA). This group saw an opportunity to develop a prevention program focused on youth leadership and empowerment through adapting the ITI model to local community needs.

The Rockford group decided to hold a weekend training experience using the ITI agenda as a model. From the beginning, Operation Snowball was planned and implemented entirely by youth – with adults serving in advisory roles. They chose the name Operation Snowball from the belief that “If I have a positive impact on you, you can have a positive impact on someone else, and the effect snowballs.” And, just as they envisioned it, the program picked up speed, like a snowball rolling downhill.

The first Operation Snowball training experience was held nearly a year later and built the foundation of “A Community of Caring.” Operation Snowball Chapters began to develop all over the state of Illinois, from community to community, and IADDA supported its expansion. The first efforts were directed toward high school age youth. Then Chapters began to ask high schoolers to serve as facilitators and presenters in events for middle and elementary school students. These programs are Operation Snowflake, for junior high age youths and Operation Snowflurry, for elementary school age youth.

In 1981, with the help of IADDA, the Operation Snowball name and logo were registered as service trademarks. A statewide steering committee began approving franchises for groups and IADDA kept records of the Chapters that were developing across the state. IADDA provided staff and technical assistance to support the growth and development of Operation Snowball with funding from the Illinois Department of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse.

In 1987, the steering committee incorporated as a not-for-profit organization affiliated with IADDA, using the corporate name Operation Snowball, Inc. The Board of Directors of Operation Snowball, Inc. grandfathered in current Chapters and began a process of accrediting new groups to ensure the program’s integrity. While this was occurring, Operation Snowball began to expand to surrounding states.

Operation Snowball currently has accredited Chapters in Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, New York, Lithuania, and Poland.

Program Models

Operation Snowball creates an environment that actively supports the decision of youth not to use alcohol and other drugs. We believe that youth are our most important resource and, rather than being part of the problem, our youth are at the heart of the solution. Operation Snowball includes the following program models:

- **Operation Snowflurry** – Preschool and elementary age youth
- **Operation Snowflake** – Middle school and junior high age youth
- **Operation Snowball** – High school age youth
- **Segue** – Young adults age 18-24
- **Operation Blizzard** – Families and adults
- **Operation Snowcap** – Senior citizens

Each program model focuses on the issues resulting from alcohol and other drug use and abuse in a manner appropriate for each age group. The concept of cross-age teaching and peer helping is an integral part of the Operation Snowball program. Together youth and adults can implement comprehensive prevention programs that are effective. It is this youth and adult partnership that makes Operation Snowball such a success.

Your Role as a Facilitator

We are here on staff to help participants go through a very special program. In order to effectively bring participants through this program we must be sure to:

1. Prepare

Part of your responsibility as a staff member and group facilitator is to spend time before the training experience getting to know your co-facilitator and planning your discussion group. This includes learning about you co-facilitator's strengths and weaknesses, likes and dislikes and facilitation style. It will be a disservice to your discussion group if you as co-facilitators come into the training experience unorganized and unprepared.

2. Keep your focus

As staff, we need to make sure we spend as much time with the participants as possible and spend time searching out students that are off by themselves. This will mean that we won't get to spend as much time with old friends and other staff, but we can always catch up on that later. Also, if you have personal issues that come up throughout the training experience, it is best to share them with your co-facilitator or with your Chapter's staff support system. This doesn't mean that you can't share or show emotion in group. All we ask is that you be a healthy role model, which includes using the appropriate resources to deal with personal issues.

3. Be a good role model

Someone is watching us ALL the time. It is not fair for us to do things as staff that we tell the participants they shouldn't do. For example, it is very important that you attend all general sessions and as many of the mini-workshops as possible. This is true even if you have heard the speaker before. We can all use a refresher course and many speakers change their material periodically.

**Operation Snowball's philosophy is to learn
and have fun at the same time!!!**

Role of the Facilitator

Registration

- Carry out your assigned “job” and don’t leave your “post” without checking with the event director.
- Assist participants with registration, making them feel comfortable.
- Spot “loners” and try to introduce them to other participants.
- Mingle
- Watch for anything that needs to be done, and pitch-in!

General Sessions

- Be a role model, by sitting with the participants, by listening to the presenter, by thinking about how to reinforce the session in group discussions, by watching your discussion group to see who is tired or who are bothered by issues raised in the session, by being on time, and by not bringing food to the session.
- Supervise participants seated near you—no sleeping, talking and so on.
- Follow the instructions for group activities (if any).

Meals

- Be a role model, by attending.
- Sit with participants and talk with them.
- Answer questions and initiate discussion.
- Remind participants to clean up after themselves.

Entertainment/Free Time

- Be available to support whatever activities are planned.
- Feel free to share your talents.
- Be on the lookout for rule violators and “loners.”
- Be available and approachable to participants, BUT if you are not assigned specific responsibilities, you may take care of “you” be it resting, taking time alone, reading or otherwise doing what you need to do to rest and recharge—pace yourself.

Small Group Sessions

- Review the small group agendas.
- Follow all mandatory directions in the small group agendas.
- Use suggested activities where needed.
- Practice all those fantastic facilitator skills you learned at the staff training.
- Be creative and have fun!

What we mean by Facilitation

When we use the term facilitation we are referring to the ability to *lead a group that has no leader!* The art of group facilitation is designed to help groups perform more effectively by soliciting the leadership skills and potential of all group members. Facilitation, as we describe it, works best when certain concepts are accepted and practiced not only by the facilitator, but by the entire group. These concepts are the basis behind which the O.S. discussion group is designed. As facilitator, it is your responsibility not only to demonstrate these concepts in your own behavior, but to foster them in the group you are facilitating.

Democracy

Each person has the opportunity to participate in the group. The agenda for each discussion group meeting should be designed to meet both the objectives of the training experience itself, and the needs of the participants. Allow the participants the opportunity to decide how the group is run.

Egalitarianism

Each person is unique and has something to share. Each person is equal in the discussion group, and each should be given a fair opportunity to contribute. This concept applies to youth and adults, group facilitators and participants, female/male and people of different cultures (that means all of us).

Responsibility

Every person is responsible for his or her own life, behavior and experiences. As a facilitator you should attempt to get the participants to own the discussion group. They are responsible for it and the group facilitators can't and shouldn't do it all. Remember the old line, "You'll only get out of the experience what you are willing to put into it."

Cooperation

The facilitator and the participants work together to achieve their collective goals. One might say that leadership is something you do TO people, facilitation is something you do WITH people.

Honesty

A discussion group will only succeed if the members are honest with each other and with themselves. As a facilitator, you should represent honestly your own values, feelings, concerns and priorities in working with the group. You must set the tone with an expectation of honesty from all of the participants. In addition, you must represent yourself fairly and not go beyond your capabilities as a group facilitator.

Respect

Obviously, not all participants have the same values and opinions, and that is normal. All values and opinions of individuals should be respected. Please remember that it is possible to agree to disagree – you can respect another person and his or her opinions

without implying that you agree with those opinions. (The example that follows demonstrates this concept.)

What do You See ?



- Some people see a young lady while others see an elderly one.
- If you look closely you can see them both.
- Can't see it, look at the next page.



* People see things from their own perspective. Remind participants that we will not always see things from the same point of view as others, and need to respect other's points of view.

* Even when we can not see the other person's point of view, we can "agree to disagree agreeably".

Listening

As a group facilitator it is your job to listen, but not give advice. Good listening habits are based on the philosophy that by listening we can help people find words for their feelings. The act of verbalizing feelings about a problem can be the first step in the solution of the problem. As a role model, you should encourage participants to listen to each other.

Confidentiality

A major responsibility of every group member is to maintain trust and promote the “Community of Caring” concept. Maintaining confidentiality applies to staff as well.

Exceptions to confidentiality:

If someone is going to harm themselves

If someone is going to harm another

If someone discloses child abuse or neglect

The process for reporting these cases should be explained by your director or chapter advisor!

Foundations for Small Groups

As you begin your small group you will have to come up with some guidelines. These guidelines will set the standard for what is expected of the group. Each group should come up with their own guidelines, which may include the following. Everyone has the right to...

Begin On Time

This is very important, since time for group discussion is usually very limited. People who are late hold up the entire group

Be Recognized (and Recognizable)

Participants are responsible for having their folders/packets with them and their OWN nametag on at all times.

Confidentiality

What is said here stays here, with the exception of situations involving child abuse or neglect, or a desire to harm themselves or another. Discussion group is meant to be a safety zone, and what is said or done should not become table talk at dinner or dorm room gossip at bedtime. Also, discourage the use of real names when sharing situations that have occurred in the past. It is not fair to the person who isn't present to discuss an issue related specifically to them.

Respected

Put-downs (even stated in a joking or sarcastic manner) can tear down trust that has been built in your group and hurt individuals.

An Opinion

Participants should be encouraged to share their opinions and ideas without the threat of being put down or criticized.

Be Heard

This should be modeled by giving everyone a chance to speak. A gentle and subtle approach is usually enough to shut off the monopolizer. If not, then seek them out and discuss the situation outside of group. (Another option is to use a koosh ball or bean bag, which can be passed to the person talking, allowing only that person to have the floor.)

Pass

Everyone has the right to pass on a topic of activity if they so choose. This will help create a safe atmosphere and help people feel respected.

Show Emotion

Participants should understand that showing emotion or crying is okay.

Be Normal

Participants should understand that it is okay to not have problems. It is quite possible for participants who come from strong families and backgrounds to feel guilty if others in the group are disclosing personal issues. These participants with few problems should not be left out or made to feel uncomfortable. Encourage the group to discuss openly, explaining that we can all grow and learn from each other.

Experience the Process

Second timers go slowly. Participants who have been to a Snowball or Snowflake should try not to rush the group process and create “instant trust”. This kind never lasts. It is the right of every participant; old and new, to experience Operation Snowball as it was meant to be. Don’t rush the group process!

* There is nothing mystical about facilitating a discussion group. Most of the work involves using common sense – following the concepts and values listed previously in this guide, and trusting your instincts. You can be a successful group facilitator because you already possess the necessary qualities to accomplish the task at hand. If you did not possess these skills, you would not have been chosen as a staff member!

Stages in Group Development

Getting Acquainted

The purpose of this stage is to get to know one another, learn each other's names, ease tension, be silly and laugh. Activities, at this level, should be low-impact, non-threatening, and all-inclusive. It may be necessary to use this type of activity at the beginning of each group meeting to get things started and create the right atmosphere.

Trust-Building

At this stage group members begin to express individual values, accept others thoughts, and work together cooperatively. Activities should focus on allowing individuals to assert their personal beliefs.

Team-Building

Group members learn to share a bond of caring that calls forth the unique qualities of each individual. In this stage, group members begin to realize their potential for working as a team. Thus, participants may feel able to reveal more personal experiences and/or feelings. Activities should promote and enhance the teamwork concept.

Closure

At this stage members realize the group as it currently exists is ending, and they must choose how they will take what they have gained at Snowball with them. It is important to allow time for group members to share how they have felt about the group and begin saying good-byes. However, good-byes, should not be the focus of the entire last session. The activities should focus on how they can take what they shared and learned "back home". This type of focus will help the group to see the last session not as the end, but as a segue – a transition from one place or thought to another place or thought. In addition it is important to bring closure to each small group session. (This may be done through a group cheer or group hug.)

Small Group Activities

Activities are an integral part of the small group experience. As you plan and facilitate these activities it is important to remember their purpose.

- Each group will have its own unique personality and will progress through the stages of development in its own way. Some groups never progress to the self-disclosure stage. **THIS IS OKAY!!!** Don't try to drag the group through the stages. You will waste your time and energy as a facilitator, and will not be able to meet the needs of the group.
- Do not be concerned if you do not get to all of the exercises that you planned. The purpose of activities is to get your group to talk and interact. Your goal is not to go through as many exercises as you can.
- Activities can be useful after the group has been dealing with heavy topics and needs lightening up.

Processing Activities

After the participants have been interacting for a while, the interaction is stopped and the members "process" what has been taking place – that is, they try to examine the nature of the interaction.

The Key:

The key to processing is to take the experience of the activity and see what we can learn from it. We then want to take the lessons learned in the activity and relate them to real life.

Processing Cycle Overview:

- Experience – Discuss what happened
(At this phase you want to get people thinking and talking about what is going on.)
- Share – Discuss how it felt
(At this stage you want people to think and talk about what they are feeling.)
- Interpret – Discuss what the experience meant

(Here you want to encourage the group to think about what the activity meant, and what can be learned for the experience.)

- Generalize – Discuss how it fits in the scheme of things
(Now you want to encourage the group to identify some general lessons that can be taken from the activity.)
- Apply – Discuss how it can be applied in real life
(Encourage participants to identify ways they can apply the general knowledge gained into their life.)

Processing Questions For Each Phase

- Experience Phase:

What is going on?
Would you be willing to try?
Will you be more specific?
Can you say more about that?
- Sharing and Interpreting Phase:

How did you feel about that?
Who else had the same experience?
What surprises were there for you?
What did you observe?
What does that mean to you?
How was that significant?
- Generalizing Phase:

What might we conclude from that?
What did you learn?
Does this remind you of anything?
How does this relate to other experiences?
What do you associate with that?
- Applying Phase:

How might you apply that to your situation?

What will you do with that information?
What are your options?
How could you make that better?
What would be the consequences of doing that?
How can you use what you have learned?

Communication

Communication is the essential ingredient of the small group. It is like the cement that holds the individual bricks together. However, the words you speak, account for only 7% of what you communicate. Let's look at some other aspects of communication...

- Words: the things you say
- Tone: the way you say it
- Non-Verbal:
 - Eye Contact
 - Body Posture
 - Fidgeting
 - Body Proximity
 - Facial Expressions
 - Body Movement

Pre-Event Check List for Planning

Please use this list during staff training or shortly after to plan before the event. This checklist will help you divide up small group responsibilities with your co-leader. The Small Group Planning worksheet will be helpful if you use it during the event.

My Small Group Co-Leader is _____

Address _____

Work/School Phone _____

Home Phone _____

We will get together to plan over all small group strategy on Day _____

Time _____

Place _____

Check here when completed.

_____ We have discussed our views of small group and understand the roles we will play.

_____ We've decided on who will start the first small group and how we will cover small group expectations.

_____ We have picked out which ice breaking activity we'll use in the first small group.

_____ We have chosen the other warm-up exercises and games that we want to have on hand. (Remember it is better to plan too much.)

_____ We have decided who will be in charge of getting supplies and materials for games and activities.

Small Group #1: Day _____ Time _____

Must Do: _____

Other Activities: _____

Small Group #2: Day _____ Time _____

Must Do: _____

Other Activities: _____

Small Group #3: Day _____ Time _____

Must Do: _____

Other Activities: _____

Small Group #4: Day _____ Time _____

Must Do: _____

Other Activities: _____

List any handouts or supplies you may need for your small group on this sheet.

Leaders' names

Supplies we will need are:

If you like an activity that requires photocopying of a hand-out for you small group, please attach or list below.

Warm Fuzzy Story

From: Monica Quijada – Arizona Cactus-Pine Girl Scout Council

Once upon a time there was a beautiful valley, impossible for tourists to reach. It was not on the maps and tourists sped by. There were no motels, no golf courses, no TVs, no restaurant chains, but the people of the valley didn't miss any of these things.

They were just ordinary people, just like people you'll find anywhere, except for two things, they were happy and they had "Warm Fuzzies"! Some people are happy only when they are at a party or when they win a contest, but Happy Valley people were happy almost ALL the time. They enjoyed Monday mornings, a blizzard, and even spinach! They were so simple, and they didn't know it takes THINGS to make some people happy, or that some people could make you unhappy.

And they liked people! They never mistrusted or were suspicious of other people. They went out of their way to do each other favors. Most of all, they enjoyed meeting and greeting each other. When they met people, they gave each other a "Warm Fuzzy." It always made the village people feel better to give them away to others. It meant, "I care about you. You are wonderful. You make my day brighter."

So the custom of giving "Warm Fuzzies" grew over the years. They gave them to sick people, to young couples starting a new home, everyone! The "Warm Fuzzies" brought lots of cheer to every single person. Everybody looked forward to exchanging "Warm Fuzzies" and it kept everyone happy.

One day a wicked old witch flew over the valley of the "Warm Fuzzies" and saw what was going on. "This is ridiculous," she said. "I have got to do something about these people! They are so simple that they may spend their whole lives thinking they are happy! They need to be like the rest of the world."

So she whipped up a plan to help Happy Valley people get rid of the notion that they were happy. She flew down to the village and pretended she was sick. Sure enough, a kind lady came up with a "Warm Fuzzy" in her hand and gave it to the witch. The wicked old witch asked her how many "Fuzzies" she had. She began to put evil thoughts into the lady's head, such as "Some day you are going to run out of 'Fuzzies' and no one will give them back" and "Did it ever occur to you that other people may be deliberately inviting you to come so that you have to give away your 'Warm Fuzzies' just so they can hoard more of them instead of sharing them?"

Well, the wicked witch's plan worked! The village people started hoarding "Fuzzies" instead of sharing them! The people would cross the street to avoid a friend. They stayed home and worried about people stealing their "Fuzzies."

The fuzziless months turned into fuzziless years, and soon there were quite a few people in Happy Valley who had never even heard of a "Warm Fuzzy."

Then one day a great-grandmother was telling her grandchildren about the good old days when everybody was happy and everybody gave away "Warm Fuzzies" and how good it made you feel to get one. And the children got so excited that they all went out and gathered up all the "Warm Fuzzies" they could find and THEY began giving them away to each other. It brought much happiness back to the Valley people and they realized how selfish they had been. They all lived happily ever after!

Making a Difference

One day a man was walking along the seashore. He noticed that during the night many seashells and starfish had washed upon the shore. Thoroughly enjoying the morning sun and cool sea air, the man strolled for miles along the sand.

Far off in the distance, he saw a small figure dancing. The man was joyous that someone was celebrating life in such a grand and uninhibited manner. As he drew closer, however, it became apparent that the figure was not dancing, but perhaps repeatedly performing some ritual.

Approaching the small figure, a man noticed that it was a child. The girl was methodically picking up starfish from the shore and tossing them back into the surf. The man paused for a moment, puzzled, then asked, "Why are you throwing those starfish?"

"If I leave these starfish on the beach," she replied, "the sun will dry them up, and they will die. So I'm throwing them back into the ocean because I want them to live."

The man was thoughtful for a moment, impressed with the child's thoughtfulness. Then he motioned up and down the miles and miles of beach and said, "There must be *millions* of starfish along here! How can you possibly expect to make a difference?"

The young girl pondered the man's words for a moment, then she slowly leaned over, reached down, and carefully picked up another starfish from the sand. Pulling back, she arched the starfish gently into the surf.

She then turned to the man and smiled. "You may be right," she said, "but I made a difference for that one!"

The IALAC Story

Think of the boy who gets up in the morning with a big IALAC sign showing right straight across his chest. The first voice he hears is his father's, "Get out of bed lazy bones, or you'll never amount to anything." He goes on, "Did you get your homework done last night? If you only planned your studies better, you might get grades as good as your sister."

The boy gets out of bed, looks for his homework, finds it rumpled up on the floor. He looks for his shoes and can't find them. His mother calls for him to hurry. He has to put on some old worn-out tennis shoes with no shoe laces. He hurries down to breakfast. "What's for breakfast, Mom?" She says, "You don't have time for anything but cereal. You're going to miss the bus." He gulps down the cereal and runs down the street to the bus stop.

The boy joins the other children waiting for the bus. One of the boys comes up behind him and knocks the books out of his hands. His homework, already rumpled, now ends up in a mud puddle. Quickly he gathers up his papers and books, gets on the bus and sits all alone, as the other children have all found someone else to sit with.

In school the teacher announces that there will be a spelling test. The boy feels okay about this because he did study spelling the night before, but he can't find his pencil – it must have dropped at the bus stop! He turns to the girl next to him, "May I borrow one of your pencils?" She turns to him and says, "Bring your own pencils to school. I'm not giving you mine."

Later on when the children line up for recess, the teacher says, "I like the way the girls are lining up." On the playground, two boys have been selected to choose up sides for a kick-ball game. The boy waits to be chosen, but when everyone else is on a team, one of the boys says, "You take him. He's no good. He can't kick very well, or catch either."

During lunch, the boy is carefully caring his tray to the table, when he trips and the tray goes clanging to the floor. No one helps. Everyone laughs.

After school, when the boy gets home, he calls out "Mom, how about some milk and cookies?" But mom isn't home. He remembers she had an appointment. He goes in to watch his favorite program on TV, settles down to be comfortable when his big brother comes in and changes the station.

At supper, when everyone is eating and talking about the events of the day, he tries to get in a word about what happened to him during the day, but it seems that what everyone else has to say is more important and no one will listen.

By the time he gets ready for bed, the only thing remaining of his IALAC sign is a tiny piece just about big enough to cover the juice stain on his pajamas. The next morning when he wakes up, his IALAC is smaller than the last. Will it get torn away again?

Adapted and reprinted with permission from Sidney Simon.

Small Group Rights

Below, you will find a list of small group rights that you might consider. You and your co-facilitator should discuss this list and decide which of the items are the most important to you. **DO NOT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES READ THIS LIST TO YOUR GROUP.** Instead, you should model the desired behavior for the group. Some of the items on this list should be verbalized. Concerns such as confidentiality and other expectations should be discussed during the very first small group. It is helpful if the teen and adult leader share the responsibility of discussing these expectations.

Right To Be On Time - Explain why being on time is very important since our time is limited. People who are late hold up the entire group.

Right To Have Necessary Materials- Participants are responsible for having their folders with them at all times.

Right To Be Known- Encourage participants to wear their name tags at all times. This enables people to get to know each other.

Right To Confidentiality- Emphasize that small group is a safety zone where people can share their thoughts without fear.

Right To Not Be Put Down- This is an item along with confidentiality that probably should be talked about in the very first small group. (see on evil, hear no evil, speak no evil of others)

Right To Have Self Respect- Discourage participants from putting themselves down. Modeling positive self-regard can help group members break old patterns of self-defeating attitudes.

Right To Speak In The Present- (No war stories) These are stories that seem to brag or glorify past alcohol or drug use. Be aware that there's a difference between relating an experience for a purpose and a "war story."

Right To Anonymity- Discourage the use of real names in describing situations. It is unfair to the person who is not there to talk about them.

Right To Have A Chance To Hear Others - This should be modeled by giving all a chance to speak. A gentle and subtle approach is usually enough to shut off the monopolizer. If not, then seek them out and discuss it outside of the small group.

Right To Pass- Participants will feel safer if they are aware that they don't have to speak about each topic.

Right To An Opinion- Participants should be encouraged to express their opinion without being criticized or put down for it.

Right To Show Emotion- Small group members should understand that showing emotion or crying is ok.

Right To Be Normal- Participants with few problems should not be left out. Encourage small group members with the idea that we all grow and learn from each other.

Right To Respect Others Property- We are using facilities that do not belong to us. We are responsible for the safety and cleanliness of the rooms we use. Leave it as you found it. Also, respect the property of staff and participants.

Also Remember:

Participants must check in with you at the beginning of the general sessions. Every co-facilitator will be responsible for attendance for their group.

Remind the second timers to go slow. Those who have been to other Operation Snowball events are encouraged to let the "newcomers" catch up. Remember!!! All small groups are different-don't be discouraged if this group is not like the last one.

Ultimately, this is the participants small group. It might be necessary to remind the participants that you are the facilitator-it is their small group. We talk about ourselves to illustrate a point, model self-disclosure (in order to establish trust). Or "break the ice." Members should learn to own the group and share the responsibility for this success.

Small Group Activities

The following lists of small group activities are included for your consideration. They are by no means conclusive, but will hopefully motivate you to research other sources for similar types of activities. Consideration should be given to the appropriateness of the activities as they relate to the age of the participants in your small group. When selecting activities for any small group, your main consideration should be the safety of the children. All activity decisions should be based on this factor. Some activities such as the “Trust Walk” or “Trust Fall” might not be considered safe for Operation Snowflurry participants. We encourage you to use activities you have learned in other youth camp or school settings. The activities are presented to you in the order that you would probably use them during the event, from “ice breakers” to “group building” activities.

Getting to know you – Introductions

1. *Name Game* – Identify an adjective (descriptive word) that begins with the first letter of your name. Introduce yourself using the descriptive word and a motion. Circle around the group reciting all adjectives, motions, and names until the entire circle is introduced. Change the order of the circle and give someone a “test.” Try it again using non-verbal cues only.
2. *Paired Introductions* – Each person gets time to interview another (either open or responding to questions.) The partner introduces the person to the group. Sample questions:
 - How would your friends/parents describe you to us if they were here?
 - What do you like to do in your free time?
 - How would you like to be different?
 - What is an unusual or “neat” thing about you?
 - What is your reason for coming to Operation Snowball?
 - What are you willing to give today? (i.e. What is your goal for today?)
3. *Toilet Paper/Spool of thread Introductions* – Pass around toilet paper or the spool. Tell everyone to take “however much you think you will need for the day.” (Answer no questions) After everyone has taken some, they are to talk about themselves. Using toilet paper, tell one fact or “good thing” about yourself for every square you took. Using thread, talk continually while winding the thread around your finger. Also, you can use a match, talking fast until the match is too hot to hold!
4. *Autobiography in Five Minutes* – Using a timer, every person gets five minutes: Three minutes to tell what brought them to this point in their life, one minute to describe the happiest moment, and one minute to receive feedback or questions from the group. Rules may restrict what can or cannot be talked about (i.e., nothing about where you were born, how old you are, trivia, etc.) in order to promote more attitude and value disclosure.
5. *Life Line* – Have students draw a time line beginning with birth to current age. On a horizontal line, mark off years. Students plot “highs and lows” (happy, content vs. unhappy, depressed) with peaks and valleys. Students share whatever part of their lifeline they may desire.

6. *One Special Thing* – Each person is asked to think of one unique characteristic experience or fact that they think no one else in the room would “own” or know. The facts may be very unimportant (I won a bubble gum blowing contest in second grade) or an “embarrassing moment” or even a significant self-disclosure. The leader should model first.
7. *My Favorite Place* – Each person is to image their most favorite situation and environment. Have them imagine where, with whom, what time of year or day, and what they would be doing, hearing, seeing, smelling, saying, etc. Describe their place to others.
8. *“Able”/“Ing” Name Tags* – Write on your name tag three words ending in “able” and three words ending with “ing” that describe you and/or things you enjoy doing. For example: reasonable, likeable, caring, or interesting. Be creative; Make up words if necessary (angerable, improvable).

Group members will then be asked to introduce themselves to the group describing their “able and “ing” traits

Alternative uses: Group members may select a partner with whom they share their “ables” and “ings” after which they will introduce each other to the total group. You may also want to announce that any group member may add to the “able” or “ing” description of another group member by suggesting additional positive qualities based on a previous acquaintance with that person or on recent observations made during the group session.

9. *Identify Yourself as...* -- Have group members write notes on an index card to identify themselves as:
 - Weather forecast (i.e. stormy, chance of rain in the a.m., partly sunny)
 - A car
 - An animal
 - A season of the year
 - A food

Have them explain to the group their choices and why.

Exercises to Form Dyads or Small Groups

1. *Sounds*: Members can pick a number that “feels right” (i.e. 1, 2, or 3 to form three small groups) or the leader can secretly assign a number to members. The leader then assigns a sound to each number. Examples:

Using Animals

“1’s” sound of a pig
 “2’s” sound of a donkey
 “3’s” sound of a horse

Using Songs

“1’s” Yankee Doodle
 “2’s” Take Me Out to the ballgame
 “3’s” I’ve been working on the railroad

At the count of three, members close their eyes, call out their sound, and try to find others of the same group. Continue until the leader can see members have been found and calls time to stop.

Ice Breakers/Energizers/Warm-Ups

1. *People Machine* – In this exercise, members of the group make themselves into machines with as many gears and levers as they can devise. One member starts by repeatedly doing a movement, like shaking a leg and making a sound. Another member joins to the first and starts his/her own motion. A third attaches on, and so on...ultimately, the group looks like a well oiled machine.

Alternative: Assign a “machine” to be made. Example: Washing machine, blender, car, motorcycle. Allow all members to be a part, or allow one or two to guess at what is being demonstrated.

2. *Zip-Zap* – The leader stands in the center of the circle and turns around. He/she suddenly stops, points to a member of the circle and says “zip” or “zap.” If the leader says “zip,” the person must name the person to the right before the leader can count from one to ten. If the leader says “zap,” the person pointed to must name the person to the left before the leader can count from one to ten. If he fails to do so, the member must take the place of the leader in the center of the circle.
3. *Mirroring* – In dyads with pairs squarely facing each other, one partner begins to move (arms, hands, head, etc.) slowly, and the other partner “mirrors” him. Use all positions, making sure the exercise is non-verbal. Partners change places, allowing the other person to “lead”
4. *Motion Mimic* – To begin the meeting, the leader can use “Motion Mimic” to free up expressions of feelings. Everyone in the group lines up against one wall. You begin to exercise them with a motion like skipping, hopping, rolling, etc. Then, pick someone to follow you back across the room mimicking your motion. You stay back where you started originally, and the other person picks a motion of their choice and continues the process until everyone has gone.
5. *Picnic* – Each person begins with “I’m going on a picnic, and I’m taking _____.” The leader then tells them if they can go. The catch is that the item taken must begin with the first letter of the participant’s name. Next time around the circle, people must pick a different item and repeat what the people preceding them are taking.
6. *Line-Up* – Members imagine a graph on the floor with numbers 1 through 10 on it. When a question is asked, the members must place themselves at the number they identify with the most. One is “Not at all” and 10 is “A lot.” Examples:
 - How do you like school?
 - How well do you get along with your parents?
 - How close do you feel to God?
 - How happy are you with yourself?

Other line-ups: Line up according to shoe size, birthday, age, height. (Do this non-verbally and blindfolded)

7. *Floating Zoo* – Using animals of bird, elephant, kangaroo, penguin, teach gestures using three bodies. Standing in a circle, the leader turns and points to a person and calls out an animal. They must quickly assume the gestures as a group of three. The person who “goofs” or hesitates is required to be the next person in the middle.

8. *Musical Chairs* – Sit in a circle with one less chair available than participants. The leader begins a sentence like, “If you have tennis shoes on...move.” Everyone must get up and change seats. The last one standing makes up a new sentence. Statements can get more or less threatening as the leader chooses. For example, “If you have smoked dope...move.”
9. *People to People* – Pair up, stand in a circle, and face partners. The leader makes a directive like “back to back,” and bodies must follow the directions. Others include elbow to elbow, hip to hip, toe to toe, knee to knee, hip to toe, elbow to knee, etc. After a few, the leader says “people to people” at which time people leave their partner and scamper for another. The left out person is the next leader.
10. *Forming Sentences* – Sitting in a circle, the object is to form a collective sentence. The first person says a word, next person add a word, and so on until someone ends the sentence by saying “period.”
11. *What’s Changed?* – Break into partners and look at your partner for one minute. Partners then turn around and change three things. Face each other again and figure out what they have changed. (Good observation exercise)
12. *Ha ha...Belly Laughs* – Group members lie on the floor with their head on another person’s stomach. Number one person begins with one “Ha,” number two: two “Ha’s”, etc. When laughing breaks out, all must start over.
13. *Invisible Object* – The group leader creates an invisible object (non-verbally). He instructs his members that the object will be passed on, and the “can do with it whatever they want” and pass it on. Continue to pass on until everyone has had a chance to create.

Trust Builders

1. *Trust Walk* – Done in pairs, one person closes his eyes. The other is his guide. The guide’s role is to help the partner to experience a variety of body motions (walking, turning, sitting) or objects to touch, feel, or smell. Suggested objects include flowers, rough and smooth stones, an orange, a tomato, velvet, sandpaper, mint. The purpose is to identify or classify, but to experience what is happening and how you feel about it. After 10-20 minutes, switch roles.
2. *Body Pass* – In pairs, one member puts his back to the other and, when ready, “falls” in a stiff form to his partner who catches him under his armpits. When trust develops, the “catcher” can step back further or the “faller” can fall from a chair. The whole group can catch a person from a table fall if they line up facing each other and use their arms to form a trough.

Union Builders

1. *Group Feeling Mural* – A large sheet of butcher’s paper (white) is fixed to a wall, and group members are encouraged to express “here and now” feelings by using magic markers, magazine pictures, etc. to express feelings of joy, anger, hope, fear, etc.

2. *Group Name, Slogan, Hug, Yell, etc.* – allow all in the group to contribute ideas.
3. *Nourishing Game* – Ask each member to think of one or two members who make them feel good and why. Each member takes his turn in the group to share his feelings.
4. *Word Building* – Using bodies, choose a word and make the word. Have one or two people guess the word.
5. *Group Message* – Stand closely in a circle, all facing ahead, right shoulders toward the center. At a given count, all members attempt to “sit” on the member’s knee behind them. If this is done carefully, and slowly, it works.

Also: *Group Stand-Up* – Have students sit back to back in a circle, elbows locked, knees bent, and raise to a stand together.

6. *Group Gift Giving* – Have a wrapped box ready with a slit in it and several small pieces of paper. During the day, encourage group members to give a “gift” (positive comment/feedback) to a person in the group by writing anonymously. The leader should stuff the box to make sure everyone gets some positive feedback. At the last group, have a “Santa” read the comments aloud. It’s great closure exercise.
7. *Group Poem* – In the final group, have the group develop a group poem by having each member contribute one line.
8. *Doctor’s Orders (RX)* – As a final group exercise, have each member write out a prescription for each other using an index card or previously prepared pharmacy-like labels. Example: Tracy is to reduce stress by caring more about herself than her friends’ problems; Tom will take two relaxation pills (hypothetical) per day when he feels like getting into an argument with his mom.

Loveables

Affirmation Stories

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1.

Pedro Panda lives in an enchanting bamboo forest in Tibet. He loves to wrestle and frolic with his family of panda bears, and munch on delicious bamboo leaves. Pedro learned to love himself just the way he is by watching nature. He noticed that the trees and the birds seemed happy to be the way that they were. The birds weren't spending time wishing that they were trees; they were just enjoying the freedom of being birds! The trees weren't sad because they didn't have wings to soar through the air like the birds; they were enjoying the way that their leaves danced in the wind! Pedro noticed that many of the living things in the forest around him accepted themselves for what they were.

One day, while Pedro was drinking some water, he saw his own reflection in the water. He noticed his soft, white fur and he liked the way that his black fur grew in circles around his eyes. His face was kind and he realized that he was special and lovable just the way he was. He was proud to be a panda bear.

Pedro is grown up now, but he will keep growing inside of himself for a long time. As long as he loves himself, he will never stop growing.

2.

Oscar Ostrich is a special and unique bird. He is very large and he has long, skinny legs that help him to run fast. Some of the desert animals that live near Oscar used to laugh at him and say, "Look at funny, long legged Oscar run!" At first, Oscar was so embarrassed that he would bury his head in the sand and hide. His father, Ozzie Ostrich told him that being different was something to be proud of. He said that if everybody were the same, things would get pretty boring.

Oscar thought about this for a long time and he decided that it wasn't so bad to be different after all. He noticed that none of the animals were exactly alike. All of them had something special about them. When Oscar realized that there wasn't an animal anywhere in the world who was just like him, he decided not to be embarrassed anymore. Now when he runs through the desert, he holds his head up proudly and he greets his friends fanning his ostrich feathers. He likes the fact that he is unique!

3.

Cornelia Cow feels happy while she grazes in a shady pasture near a farm where she lives. Cornelia's grandmother, Cornflower Cow, taught her when she was a little calf that being happy was a habit. So Cornelia decides that she is going to have a happy day every morning even if it is cloudy or rainy outside.

Being happy helps Cornelia to feel like cooperating with the other animals. When she finds a very special grazing area with lots of delicious grass, she cooperates by telling the other cows about it too. When Farmer Finnigan brings a wheelbarrow full of silage for her and the other cows to eat, Cornelia waits until it is her turn to eat instead of bumping into all of the other cows so that she can be first.

Farmer Finnigan is glad that Cornelia cooperates. When he is milking her each morning, she stands very still so that he can get the job done quickly and easily. Farmer Finnigan gave Cornelia a big copper cowbell for her birthday that she likes to wear around her neck. As she walks through the pasture, she enjoys listening to the bell clang. The sound helps her put a smile on her face and enjoy her day!

4.

Pierre Peacock feels beautiful not only because of the bright colorful feathers he wears, but also because he knows that he is a beautiful bird inside of himself too. Pierre has friends who think that he is more beautiful than other birds since he has such brilliant feathers. Pierre doesn't feel this way because he has seen so much beauty in all of his friends, that he knows that it is best to look on the inside for beauty.

One of Pierre's best friends is a gray bird named Bernard. Bernard doesn't have any colorful feathers at all, but he is always ready to help another bird to gather a twig or two, to repair a nest, or to help find a lost bird. Pierre feels that Bernard is one of the most beautiful birds he knows because he is so loving and caring. One day Pierre was feeling sad. Bernard came over to visit him and sang the most beautiful songs that Pierre had ever heard! Before long, Pierre was feeling much better. He was thankful to have a friend like Bernard. Bernard has helped Pierre to understand that real beauty comes from within.

5.

Wong Whale swims through the deep blue waters of his home in the Pacific Ocean. Wong is a humpback whale and he loves to sing to other humpback whales who can hear him under water even when he is several miles away. Wong sings many songs to his friends about being gentle and strong. Wong has a friend named Sailor Sam who taught him the song, A Sailor Went to Sea. Wong liked the tune so much he put his own words to the song. Here are the words:

I am a gentle whale you see,
And so I'm always kind to me.
I'm gentle with you too, you see,
Cause I care about you and me.

I am a strong whale too you see,
I show my feelings inside of me.
I am not rough or mean you see,
I'm gentle with you and with me.

Wong and his friends sing this song together and sometimes schools of fish swim along and join in on the song. Would you like to sing along?

6.

Terry Turtle enjoys quiet time alone, especially when she first wakes up in the morning. Her shell is a perfect place for her to be alone because it is quiet and private like a tent. She can go inside of her shell and be alone for as long as she needs.

Terry usually breathes very slowly when she first enters her shell. This helps her relax her whole body. Sometimes she hums one of her favorite tunes over and over again. She likes the sound of her own voice. Other times, she uses her imagination to daydream about nice things, like hugging her baby brother Tommy Turtle, or swimming in her favorite pond of cool water. Sometimes Terry just quiets her mind and feels peaceful and still inside. When this happens Terry feels calm and realizes that she is a very special turtle.

Terry's quiet time each day helps her to stay relaxed and easygoing around other turtles. She seems to enjoy them more too. One of the nicest things about Terry's shell is that she knows it is there whenever she needs to have a few quiet moments to herself.

7.

Lawrence Lion learned when he was a cub that there was nothing to fear because love always surrounds him. When he was young, growing up in the jungle wasn't easy. Sometimes late at night when the sky was dark and all of his brother cubs lying there were fast asleep, Lawrence felt scared. He wasn't used to some of the strange animal sounds that he would hear. The jet-black sky frightened him and he felt small and very much alone.

One night, he met an older lion named Leo who talked to him about the power love. He told Lawrence that love was stronger than fear could ever be. Leo told Lawrence that he could feel protected by since it was all around him. Lawrence was happy to learn that even in the dark, love didn't go away. Leo told him that whenever he felt scared, he could look up in the sky and see bright star shining. The star could help Lawrence remember that love is the greatest power in the universe! Lawrence began to look up at a star whenever he felt fear, and he found that it helped him to relax and trust to that love was with him. Since he has been doing this he doesn't get scared anymore.

8.

Gino Giraffe enjoys living on a vast African veldt with many other giraffes. As Gino has grown up, he has become a giraffe who is able to handle things in a calm and relaxed way. Gino wasn't always this way. When he was first learning how to find tasty leaves from the treetops for a meal, he use to feel upset if he couldn't find any leaves right away. Sometimes he would stomp his feet and stop looking, even though he was hungry. When Gino would calm down, he found that it was easier to find leaves, and it was a lot better than being hungry!

Gino has a little brother named Gerard Giraffe. When they run together, Gerard runs slower than Gino. Gino use to tell Gerard to hurry up all of the time, and once in a while, he would run ahead of Gerard and leave him behind by himself. Now that Gino is growing up, he is learning that everything becomes easier and more enjoyable for him when he is calm. He is teaching his brother how to run faster by moving his limbs in a more relaxed way. He gives his brother a head start too, so that he doesn't have to wait for him. Gerard is glad that Gino is helping him. Pretty soon, Gerard will be running as fast as Gino!

9.

Petunia Pig likes to squeal and play with all the other pigs that she lives with on a large farm. She feels that it's great to be alive because there are so many things to do, and Petunia puts forth her best effort at everything that she does. When she is sliding around in the soft gooey mud, she does her best to cover herself all the way up to her ears in mud!

Petunia has a special friend named Peter Pig. They like to share ears of corn together and run through the smooth grasses, laughing and playing. Petunia does her best at being a good friend to Peter. The two of them like to take turns rolling a great big red ball up the hill with their noses. Petunia has so much fun with the ball, that sometimes it is hard for her to give it back to Peter when it's his turn. But she wants to be fair, so she always gives it back to him.

Ever since Petunia was a little curly tailed piglet, she has been doing her best at everything she does. She doesn't do everything perfectly, but as long as she does her best, she is happy.

10.

Farah Fawn lives in a beautiful green forest near a cool river. She has a comfortable bed made of soft green grass that she sleeps in near a large willow tree. Farah learned to be patient and kind when a mother duck and all of her little ducklings made a nest near Farah's bed of grass. The ducklings liked Farah's bed better than their own nest. Before long, Farah had fuzzy little ducks walking all through her bed. Daffodil Duckling, the tiniest duck of all, liked to perch right on top of Farah's head!

At first, Farah wanted to tell all of the ducklings to go back to their own nest and leave her alone. But she began to enjoy the little ducklings. They loved to roll through the grass and play with one another. When they saw Farah coming through the forest, they would quack a special quack to let her know they were glad to see her.

As time went by, the ducklings began to waddle off and spread the news that Farah was very kind. The forest animals began to come and visit Farah, and even the flowers turned to smile at Farah as she walked by! Farah enjoyed being near the other animals and she liked the way that she felt when she was kind to those around her.

11.

Kika Koala lives in the beautiful land of Australia. She likes to play with her baby, Kilo Koala, and eat the leaves that grow on eucalyptus trees. Kika loves to have a good time and enjoy herself! She rolls somersaults and she plays hide and go seek with other koala bears. She hides very quietly until one of the bears spots her in her hiding place. When they find her, sometimes they laugh so hard that their bellies almost ache!

Kika likes to give baby Kilo koala back rides. He snuggles up against her warm fur and hangs on to her back while she climbs trees and looks for leaves. Kika makes everything that she does more fun by whistling cheerful tunes and thinking happy thoughts. She believes that a job worth doing should be done with laughter and fun, so she taught Kilo this poem:

I can make work fun for a long while,
By laughing a lot and wearing a smile.
When I have a job to do, I sing,
And soon I'm enjoying everything.!

12.

Orel Owl likes to perch on his favorite oak tree at night and count the thousands of stars that he sees shining in the dark sky. Orel has an intelligent mind and he likes to learn new things and challenge himself. Orel's mind is capable of learning and understanding an incredible amount of information! His mother, Olivia Owl, told him that his brain works better and faster than any computer that has ever been made! Orel's brain is so capable, that no matter how much he learns, he will still have a large part of his brain left to keep using and developing.

Orel likes to fly through the midnight sky, spotting food as he flies and using his ears to listen to all of the other nocturnal animals. Orel knows that he is capable of learning just about anything that he wants to learn, as long as he is willing to listen and practice. Orel and his friends like to sing a song together called *If You're Intelligent*. Here are the words:

If you're intelligent and you know it,
Flap your wing!
If you're capable and you know it,
Fly and sing!
If you're learning and you know it, then
You're really gonna show it,
If you're smart and you know it,
Dance and sing!

13.

Tara Tiger loves to explore the wonders of the African jungle where she lives. She discovers new things to learn about every day. Tara likes to learn about how insects live and there's lots of them living in the trees, the ground, and on the backsides of leaves for her to study. She enjoys counting the ants as quickly as she can as she watches them scurry by. She likes to watch tree spiders spin their webs, too.

Tara enjoys learning about the foliage growing around her. She discovers new leaves almost every day and she is surprised to find so many different tastes, shapes, and sizes in the leaves. She likes to build secret hideouts with big leaves that she finds!

One of Tara's favorite adventures is learning how to walk backwards on branches. When Tara was first learning to do this, she once fell off a branch and into a pond of water below with a loud splash! She was surprised and a little bit scared at first, but she learned quickly that with a little extra balance, she could walk on the branch backwards without falling. Tara loves to learn, so she finds at least one new thing to learn about every day!

14.

Camille Camel lives in the dry windblown land of the Sahara Desert. She enjoys getting better and better every day at the things that she likes doing the most. She often runs through the desert with her parents, Cory and Connie Camel, and her older sister, Carla Camel. They like to race through the sand and practice together. Camille used to run so fast, that sometimes she would bump into cactus plants, or she would fall into small sand holes. Her sister taught her to keep her eyes ahead of her when she ran so that she would know where she was going. Now she is careful when she turns and she runs around the cactus plants and jumps over the sand holes.

Getting better every day takes practice, but Camille and her family enjoy it. They carry packages on their backs for people who are traveling on foot across the desert. They practice walking slowly enough so that they can balance all of the packages without dropping any of them. They are so good at it, that sometimes the people that they are helping give them special treats like clovered hay from Persia!

Camille and her family will keep getting better every day because they believe that they are winners!

15.

Mona Monkey is a happy little monkey who loves to swing through the trees with glee and act silly with all of the other monkeys. They spend long carefree days together in the jungle chasing each other from tree to tree, and hunting for bananas. Mona knows that she and all of her friends are very lovable! They like to hug and tickle one another whenever they meet in the jungle.

Mona has two cousins named Mandy and Marlo who sometimes forget how lovable they are. They fight and squeal with each other and they don't like to share their toys very often. Mona is their monkey sitter and when she is taking care of them, she helps them to realize that they are both special and lovable. She wrote a song for them that they love to sing with her. Mona put the words to the tune of *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star*. Here are the words:

“You shine brighter than a star; I love you the way you are.
You are special; you're OK; you are lovable every day.
You shine brighter than a star; I love you the way you are!”

16.

Carlos Caterpillar is very fond of the world around him. He loves to feel the damp earth beneath him as he moves inch by inch over the ground early in the morning. Carlos eats silky grasses for breakfast and they taste very good in the morning when they are covered with dew. Carlos spends most of his day crawling over the stems and leaves of many different kinds of plants. He notices how special each and every leaf tastes, and he loves to take short naps on the big leaves that he finds.

Carlos lives with several other caterpillars who are fuzzy and warm like he is. They like to crawl together and gather grass and leaves for their caterpillar house. Sometimes they say this poem together:

Inch by inch, we'll appreciate the Earth.
We will love it for all we're worth.
When we work and when we play,
We'll care for Earth in the very best way.

When the caterpillars go to sleep at night, they sleep close to one another and they feel thankful to be in such a beautiful world. As they drift to sleep, they dream about becoming butterflies!

17.

Elana Elephant lives in the midst of the lively tropics. She likes to roam through the jungle with other elephants, singing and calling to them. Elana loves her friends for who they are. She takes special time with each and every one of them so that they will know how much they mean to her. Sometimes, she sprays gallons and gallons of water over her elephant friend's backs with her trunk. They love to play for hours in the water!

Elana has a few bird friends who like to come and play with her. She lets them perch on her back and she tells them jungle stories, which they enjoy very much. They take turns sliding down her long trunk, chirping and laughing all the way! When the birds get tired, Elana rocks them to sleep with her trunk and she carries them back to their nest. She often sings them this lullaby song:

Rockabye birdies, sleep in your nest.
You are terrific, you are the best.
Whether you fly nearby or afar,
I'll always accept you just as you are.

18.

Bernie Buffalo often roams through the sunny plains feeling strong and healthy. His muscles are firm and he can move across the land with ease. When Bernie wakes up in the morning, he stretches all of his muscles in his body to limber up for another active and exciting day. He eats a variety of grasses for breakfast, and he drinks a lot of water so that he will have all of the energy that he needs to start his day in a happy way.

Bernie likes to have running races with his good friend Barbara Buffalo. Sometimes she runs faster than him and sometimes he runs faster than her. But it doesn't matter much who wins. They run for the fun of it and having a good time is more important to them than winning.

Sometimes when they need to relax, they spend a quiet afternoon lying around the bluffs. They both appreciate their health and strength very much. They know that their bodies need time to exercise and time to relax to stay healthy and strong. Bernie treats his body the best way that he knows how to because having good health is a gift Bernie doesn't ever want to lose.

19.

Bohala Bird likes to fly through the blue breezy skies of Canada where she lives. She likes to share with her two baby birds, Bianca and Benjamin. She shares her cozy warm nest with them and she makes sure that they are covered with her feathers when it's cold outside. When Bohala has a delicious worm to eat, she shares it with Bianca and Benjamin. Sharing with others helps Bohala to feel good about herself and the world around her.

When Bohala was younger, she didn't understand much about sharing. She didn't like it when other birds would fly by for a visit because she wanted her nest all to herself. She would wait until the other birds were gone to eat her supper so that she would not have to share any of it.

Now Bohala enjoys sharing. Recently, she found a long piece of red yarn that she thought would look very nice weaved into her nest. She was going to keep it all for herself, but she decided to share some of it with her friends since she knew that they liked bright red yarn too. They sang happily when she gave them some of the yarn, and Bohala sang too. When she shares, she always has a lot to sing about!

20.

Hilda Hippo is full of joy inside of herself. When she is looking up at the sky and the sun begins to peek through the billowy clouds, she feels a happiness inside of herself that is bubbling over! Hilda lives in Happy Hippoland, and all of the hippos who live there like to spread their joy around as much as possible. They surprised Hilda on her last birthday by having a huge birthday party for her on a beautiful day. They danced and played lively music all afternoon. Hilda played her tuba, Hank played his trombone, and Henrietta sang and played bass.

They baked Hilda the biggest poppy seed birthday cake that she'd ever seen and it was delicious! They gave her a great big hippo hammock for her birthday present. They all took turns joyfully swinging through the air in the hammock. What a happy day this was for Hilda! She still enjoys lounging around in her hammock humming happy tunes now and then. Hilda is a big hippopotamus and she has lots of room inside herself for joy. In fact, she says that she always has more than enough to go around!

