

Colored Candy Go Around

Source: Katherine Arkell

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Treatment Modality: Family, Group

Goals:

- Gather information about the client and family/group
- Increase open communication
- Identify areas of change or improvement to be addressed

Materials:

- Packs of candy with assorted colors such as SKITTLES or jelly beans

Description:

- Distribute 10-15 candies to each group or family member. Have each member sort their candy by color with instructions not to eat them. Ask one member to pick a color and tell how many they have (i.e., two greens). Ask them to give two responses to the following questions or make up ones more relevant for current family/group goals or issues (i.e., anger management, social skills, etc.):

| | |
|---------|--|
| Green: | Words to describe self |
| Purple: | Ways to have fun |
| Orange: | Things you'd like to change/improve about yourself or family |
| Red: | Things you worry about |
| Yellow: | Good things about your family |

After one person has answered a question, have them choose the next person to answer the same question based on the number of candies that person has. The activity is complete when each person has answered all questions. If a person does not have a particular color candy, they use the number of candies the person who went before them had. Candies can only be eaten after a question is answered.

Be sure each person has the floor when speaking and there is no interrupting or side conversation. Open the floor for discussion after each person has responded to all questions. Possible discussion questions are as follows:

- What did you learn?
- Did anything surprise you?
- How will you work towards making changes/improvements?

Discussion

This activity facilitates open communication and provides insight into individual and family dynamics. The family can be encouraged to try the activity at home with questions they generate either in session or on their own. A variation is to use colored beads or Lego's rather than candy.

About the Author

Katherine Arkell, MSW, RPT-S, works as an outpatient therapist at Vista Health in Bentonville, Arkansas, serving children ages 6 to 18 and their families. She is a Registered Play Therapist Supervisor with the Association for Play Therapy. Her practice areas of interest include anxiety, depression, grief, and blended families.