

WITS IN MOTION

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE



CREDITS: Suddenly Dance Theatre respectfully acknowledges WITS IN MOTION was created on the traditional and unceded territories of the Lekwungen People, now known as the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations. The WITS IN MOTION dance-film was produced by Suddenly Dance Theatre as Artist-in-Residence for the City of Victoria with Producing Partners: the WITS PROGRAMS Foundation, the University of Victoria, Suddenly Media Productions; Associate Producer: Maureen Bradley; Thanks to Daniel Hogg. Produced with the assistance of the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Victoria, and the CFI Hi-Def Story Incubator Laboratory. Created with support from Dance Victoria’s Residency Program. A special thanks to Kim Breiland and Stages Performing Arts School. The WITS IN MOTION guide was created by University of Victoria educators Drs. Bonnie Leadbeater and Donna McGhie-Richmond, and Suddenly Dance Theatre artists David Ferguson and Miles Lowry. Partial funding came from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Created with support from the Hamber Foundation.

SUDDENLY DANCE THEATRE

www.suddenlydance.ca

The WITS PROGRAMS

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Walk away, Ignore, Talk it Out & Seek Help are the everyday strategies the WITS Programs promote to help children to build healthy relationships and to peacefully disengage from or resolve conflicts with their peers.

The WITS Programs provide online resources for elementary school children (Grades 1 to 6), have been extensively evaluated, and show positive results. The WITS Programs were developed in Victoria, British Columbia by educators, parents, and police officers who wanted to promote healthy relationships and prevent bullying and peer victimization. The program resources help create safe and responsive communities where children can live, learn, and play.

For more information, please visit: www.witsprograms.ca

WITS IN MOTION uses dance and drama to show children “using their WITS” to solve common peer problems. This guide focuses on practicing the social and emotional skills that are fundamental to healthy relationships.

There are no words in the dance-film so it speaks to everyone!

This education initiative aims to engage and include diverse learners in diverse settings. The dance-film and Facilitator’s Guide are ideal for parents, teachers, drama and music educators, school counsellors, psychologist, child and youth care workers and for YOU!



WHAT HAPPENS IN THE VIDEO?

WITS IN MOTION shows four two minute episodes, each one illustrates a strategy: **W**alk away, **I**gnore, **T**alk it Out & **S**eek Help.

You can pause between each episode and talk about what's happening. Discussion can focus on the changing story content, the emotions and perspectives of each child, or even the changing musical mood or expressive dancing.

These conversations and activities can assist children in resolving common peer conflicts and promote healthy relationships.

☑ The guide offers ideas and activities to get you started. Share your ideas with the WITS Programs by posting them on [our Facebook page](#).

LET'S GO! PICK YOUR FOCUS!

1. Focus on: [WHAT HAPPENS](#)
2. Focus on: [LABELING EMOTIONS](#)
3. Focus on: [EXPLORING HOW EMOTIONS CHANGE](#)
4. Focus on: [DRAMATIC ARTS, DANCE, AND MUSIC](#)



1. Focus on what happens:

The story lines for the episodes were influenced by the children in the video. Each represents the kind of peer conflicts that children experience every day:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Episode 1 	<p>WALK AWAY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One child won't take turns or share the chair
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Episode 2 	<p>IGNORE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children "have fun" teasing another child
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Episode 3 	<p>TALK IT OUT</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A fight almost happens after one child gets hurt accidentally
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Episode 4 	<p>SEEK HELP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A fun game of tossing ping pong balls turns mean

 **DISCUSSION:**

For each episode Walk away, Ignore, Talk it Out & Seek Help you can ask children about the following things that happen:

- What happened in the story?
- What was the conflict about? How was it resolved?
- How did the children in each episode resolve the problem? For example, what did the girl find out who wouldn't share the chair? (the others walked away and made their own game). What happens when the girl in sun glasses keeps ignoring the boys' silly teasing?
- What role does each child play in solving the conflict in the episode? For example, what did each child do in response to being turned away from the chair and what happened when all the children joined in throwing ping pong balls?
- What was the "success"? The children avoided (walk away, ignore) or resolved (talk it out or seek help) having the conflicts, the children found someone else to play with, nobody got hurt and when they did the adult helped, etc.).
- How else could each of the scenarios end?



2. Focus on Labeling Emotions:

Each of the scenarios expresses shifting moods and common emotions (happy, sad, angry) as well as more complex emotional expressions (disappointed, hurt, indifferent, bored, worried, scared, aggressive, puzzled, calm, silly, playful, friendly, curious, welcoming, content, relieved).

ACTIVITY:

Stop the video five different places and name the emotions you see in the frame. What emotions do you see? Each emotion has a name! You can write these names on the chalkboard/wipeboard or print out the video stills and write on top of them.



FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES:

1. Use our online resource **"Faces Tell Stories"**. Have children label all of the emotions they see in each picture.
 - ☑ There are many "right" answers. Children do not all see the same emotion in faces. Some children see neutral faces as angry. Have the children you are working with discuss what they see in the faces.



2. Have the children take each other's pictures making emotion faces, print them out and make a collective poster on the wall. Can all the images be organised in a way that shows a progression of emotion? i.e.: From happy to sad to mad.
3. Find pictures in magazines or online and make a collage. Label the emotions expressed. Share.
4. How are you feeling now? Ask children to point to the picture on the collage that best shows how they are feeling right now. Ask children to tell a story that goes with the feeling they choose!

TIPS FOR FACILITATORS:

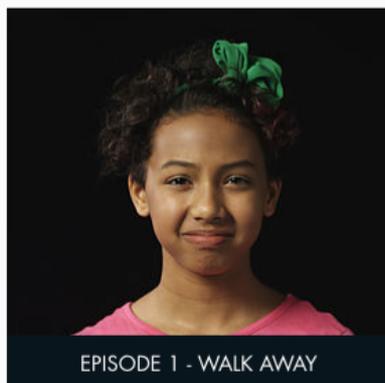
- ☑ Children require opportunities to recognize, label, and understand emotions. This also helps them to learn to manage their own complex feelings. Those who have challenges in communicating feelings can use face pictures and posters as aids to point to the face that describes how they are feeling right now.
- ☑ Children learn about emotions and the perspectives of others at different rates. Working with media provides opportunities to advance each child's understanding of complex emotion; including their labels, expressions, and meanings.



3. Focus on How Emotions Change:

ACTIVITY:

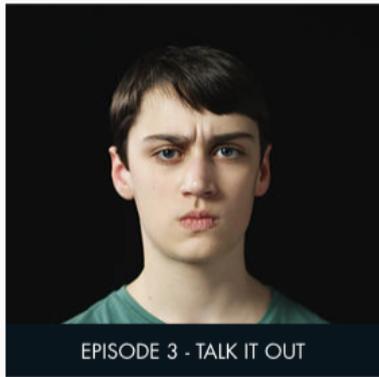
Emotions are not static and children can feel more than one emotion at the same time. Look at the WITS IN MOTION dance-film again and see the emotions in motion! How do the emotions change across the episode?



- How did the girl's feelings change through the episode (powerful, puzzled, sad and bored, welcoming, happy)?
- How did the other children's feelings change (curious, disappointed, indifferent, happy)?
- Can children have two feelings at the same time (the little girl was happy to have the chair all to herself but sad to be all alone)?
- What tells us how the children are feeling (face, body posture, music)?



- Why are the boys making silly faces?
- What is the girl in the sun glasses doing?
- What does the girl in the sun glasses do to show she doesn't care about the teasing (looks bored and ignores)?
- What happens next?
- When can ignoring be the best solutions to a conflict? (When it isn't a big deal and no one is getting hurt or left out.)



- The boys get very angry. Why? (One gets hurt. Have children think about a time they felt very angry, what happened, what did they do?)
- Was it an accident or intentional that one boy got hurt?
- What do the boys do to calm themselves down? (big breath, puts his hands up to indicate stop!)
- What kinds of strategies can your children think of to help calm down when they are angry? (big breath, pause and STOP (Stop-Now-And-Plan), leave until you feel calm).

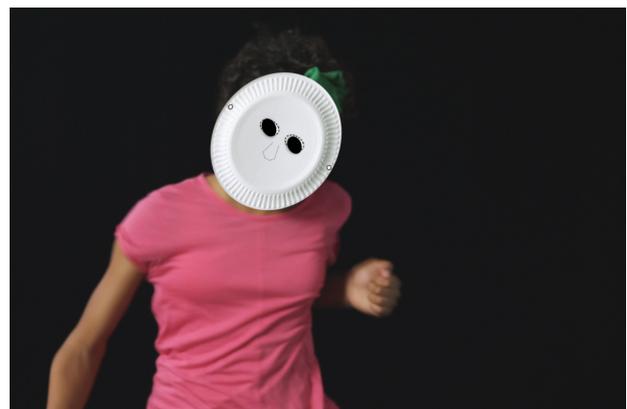
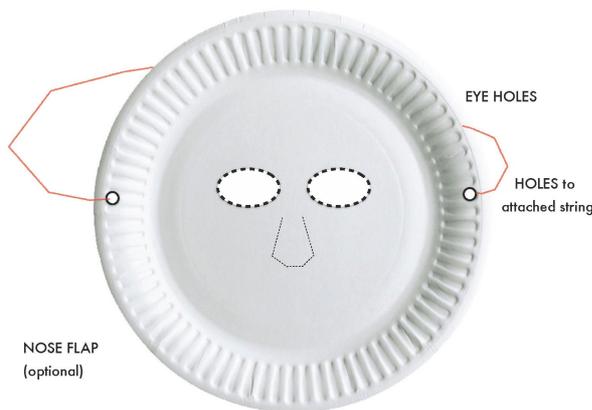


- How does the lead boy feel at first (calm, content)?
- How does this change? What are the other children feeling (playful, funny)?
- How do their feelings change (aggressive, mean)?
- Why does the littlest girl get help?
- What do the children feel like when the adult comes?
- What will happen next?
- When is it a good idea to get an adults' help? (If someone is getting hurt, if you don't know what to do, if what you tried to do didn't work.)



FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES:

USE YOUR BODY ONLY! Cover faces with a (neutral) paper plate mask or head covering. Use body poses that express excitement (fist in the air) , cheers (both hands up!) , pride (standing straight) , fear (cowering) , anger (fist punching), etc.. Have students guess the emotion from the body only. Take or draw pictures for your bulletin board!



TIPS FOR FACILITATORS:

- ☑ Remember emotional expressions range from vague to strong and may be simple or difficult to label - so have fun with guessing what the children's faces are trying to say.
- ☑ Emotions are more than just faces. Remind children that emotions may be seen in body language also. Talk about how really looking at someone's face and body helps you know how they are feeling.



4. Focus on Dramatic Arts, Dance, and Music:

Music plays an important part in the dance-film in conveying how the children are feeling. The episodes also use dance, movement and action to exaggerate the feelings so we identify them easily.

ACTIVITIES:

1. Emotions are music: Pause/Stop the video often: Focus on helping children to hear how the music expresses the changes in the emotions? TIP: Light and quick sounds are happy deeper sounds can be scary.
2. Emotions are actions: Pause/Stop the video often: Focus on how movement conveys emotions
 - What do happy children do? (jump up and down, summersaults)
 - What do we do when our team scores a goal (hands in the air)
 - What do we do when we describe a strange object or animal? (move hands for emphasis)
 - What does a sad body do (stays still, looks down)

FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES:

1. Have the children put their heads down, close their eyes, or drop their gaze and listen to just the music in one of the WITS IN MOTION scenarios. What do they hear? Talk about what emotions sound like in music! There are many changes and no right answers but the chart below will get you started with ideas!



- When does the happy music start? (the fun music starts each time a friend invites her to play)
- What does the loud boom mean each time? (when the girl does something mean to the other children)
- How does the music sound at the end? (happy excited)



- The music at the beginning is silly and fast. Do you hear the change to animal sounds? What kinds of animals might the boys be imitating? (lizards?)
- What does the music for the girls' talking sound like (chattering birds?)
- What does the music sound like at the end? (happy, fun)



- What does the music sound like at first? (a thunderstorm with wind)
- What does the crash tell you? (there has been an accident)
- Can you hear the angry music? (a brief ominous sound before they start speed-arguing)
- Can you hear two voices? How do they differ? (one is very fast, the other is lower calmer)
- How does the episode end – with a bang!



- What is the music like at the beginning (light calm, flowing)?
- What happens when the children come in? (A drum starts up)
- How do the drums change? They keep getting louder?
- How does the music sound after help comes (light, happy)

2. Use the WITS IN MOTION soundtrack or play your own favourite music! Have children keep their eyes shut or lowered. Talk about what stories the music tells. Have children draw out the musical story to create a cartoon.

3. Create your own happy song and play it on a musical instrument.

4. Help the children to add music to their own videos by following the simple instructions in our *Make Your Own Video* section (*below*).



WORKBOOK - MAKE YOUR OWN VIDEO:

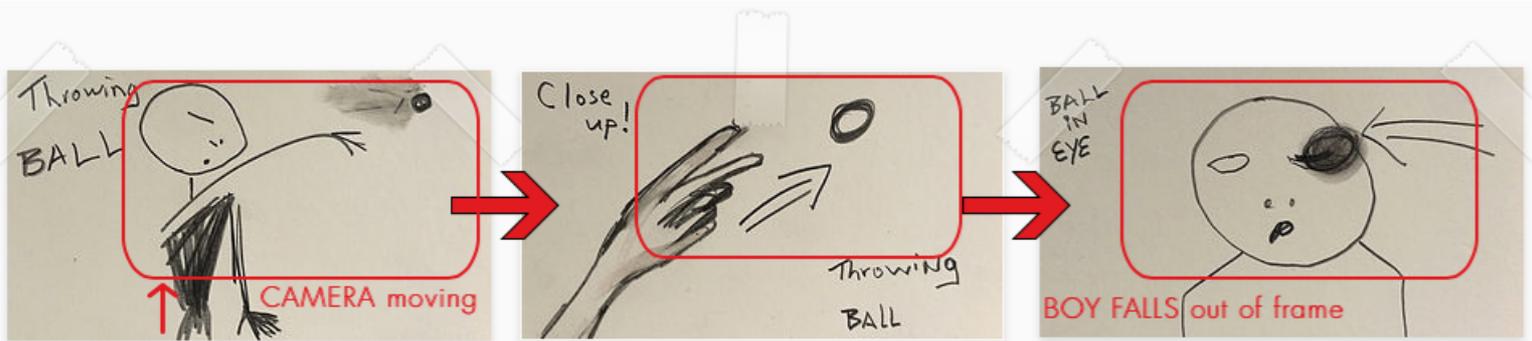
1. ACT IT OUT and find the story! What kinds of peer conflicts and problems do the children you are working with say they have? How do they fix these problems?
 - Have small groups of children think about their own concerns and create solutions.
 - Encourage the children to act out their “conflict” without words within a time limit. This can include dance, pantomime, sign language, or simple pedestrian movement.
 - Share these short scenes as a larger group; identify and discuss the nature of the conflict. Have the players repeat the scene - but this time offering a solution for an ending.
 - Have additional children join in to practice solutions created by their peers or to offer more solutions to the conflict.

2. DRAW IT! Before making a film, it is important to make a “storyboard”. What is a storyboard? A storyboard is like a comic strip that sets out in frames the action of a story as imagined from the point of view of the camera. A storyboard helps to remember a story and to organise it visually.
 - Have the children “tell the story” by drawing their rehearsed scenes (*as above*) or imagine new scenes. Use recipe cards or cut rectangular pieces of paper for each frame of action (or shot). It’s not a drawing contest, so simple stick figures are ok!
 - Tape the cards onto the wall to see the storyboard in a line. Rearrange or redraw as necessary so the story becomes more clear. Share.



3. MAKE YOUR OWN VIDEO! Framing children's behaviors in motion helps them to observe and regulate their behaviors by receiving instant visual replay. Videos can be easily made using iPads, phones, or other devices.

- Using the storyboards (as above) have the children draw with a coloured pencil the framing of the camera on each card. Use arrows to indicate if the camera is moving forward or pulling back or sideways. Is it a top shot? Or is it a close-up? Words can be added for things that are hard to describe.
- Following the storyboard and camera directions, have the children capture their stories using a digital recording device (Ipad, phone, video camera).
- To make a video edited 'in the camera': Record only once (no retakes!) the action in the order of the storyboard. Watch, share, redo.
- For children who may know how to video edit on a computer (ie: iMovie) - titles, credits and music may be added!



TIPS FOR FACILITATORS:

- ☑ The children in the videos had a great time making their faces and bodies speak. They warmed up as a group with light stretches and spent a lot of time jumping, rolling on mats, and making up games and dances.
- ☑ Children learn quickly how to regulate their behaviors to be in the video, especially if they take turns also being the videographer and playing back what they have recorded.
- ☑ Help each video group to include the ideas of each child and take turns in the role plays.
- ☑ Remember: Walk away and Ignore are active strategies that help to get children out of conflicts.

Suddenly Dance Theatre

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