

## PARENT INFORMATION 2

### The ICE of SPICE

The ICE of the friendliness package of SPICE has been the focus of learning.

**Invite** – asking to join in a game or activity.

**Chat** – finding common ground of interest to both parties.

**Enjoy** – whole body communication of friendliness.

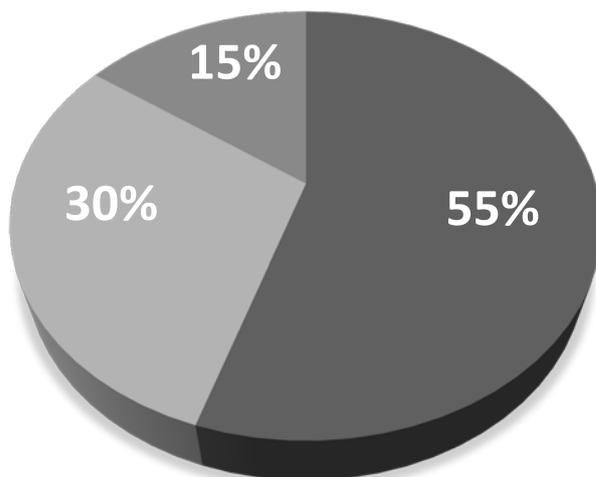
Being included in games – rather than excluded – is an entry into friendship groups and belonging. However, an invitation to join in may not always be forthcoming, and so knowing how to get into others' games, and also invite others into your games, is a must-have skill. In Lesson 2 the children have been introduced to a new HIGHWAY TOOL - a variety of different Joining In Questions, such as:

- “That looks fun, any room for me?”
- “When you’ve finished that round, could I join in?”

This is in contrast to the standard and bland question of, “Can I play (please)?”

Chat and Enjoy are Friendliness factors that are often implied but not often taught explicitly. Think about your own friendships: that friend who appears to be unaware that their conversation is limited to their own interests and life events. Or the friend who seems to endlessly complain about their life circumstances.

As well as the powerful influence of words, the children have also learned about the even more powerful impact of body language. Consider this: communication is made up of:



55% body language.  
30% tone of voice.  
15% the words used.

Children may choose the right words. However, if spoken with an angry or whiney tone, and coupled with ‘unfriendly’ body language - like limited eye contact, or slumped shoulders - their chances of establishing a friendship diminishes. Children who are

aware of the contribution of their tone of voice and body language, in addition to being taught the right words, are generally more successful both socially and emotionally.

Think about the opportunities you might have this week to talk to your child about what their tone of voice or body language is saying. A simple task like being asked to empty the dishwasher, can turn into a drama if the child replies, "Yes, I'm coming!" - but their tone of voice implies otherwise.

It is the rare parent who hasn't asked their child to say it again without whining. If that is you, please take a moment to pat yourself on the back, because if their attention is not drawn to it, children will take the same tone of voice and body language into their friendships.

'Opposite Body Mirrors' is a useful game to play with younger children - and to discuss with older children. One person takes on the shape and tone of anger, whilst the other reflects the opposite body shape and a calm tone of voice.

There is also value in teaching a child - from your own experiences and reflections - what it is that *your* words, tone and body language communicate. Conversations that explore this might sound like, "I had coffee with a friend this morning, and she asked if I feeling a little bit sad. I was talking about the football game on the weekend, so I asked her how she knew. She said my voice sounded a little bit flat, and my shoulders looked tired." We often tell children about their tone of voice, and the effect of their body language, without taking the time to reflect out aloud about our own.

Wherever possible in this, and other Modules, role plays are done for the 'active practise' of the skills, and to assist the students to transfer the lesson's teaching into 'real life.' In Lesson 2, role plays have replicated a game, with the children using scripted Joining In Questions using confident body language. Practise makes progress, so any opportunities for more role playing with parents, siblings or peers is beneficial.

**REFLECTION POINT:**

*Body language is 'read' unconsciously. For example, crossed arms in a school meeting might indicate to the teacher that you are not open to the ideas and discussion. Saying, "Yes" to looking after a friend's child whilst shaking your head 'No', communicates a different message. Become aware of the complete communication 'package' you present to others this week - and the impact of that on your friendships and relationships. Perhaps you could share your learning with your child.*