



4-H Briefs

Fun ideas to help members and families explore 4-H projects

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service 4-H Youth Development

Actions Speak Louder Than Words

FOCUS:

Observing- being attentive to and interpreting non-verbal communications, such as body language and gestures.

LEARNER OBJECTIVE:

To recognize and develop non-verbal communication skills.

BACKGROUND:

Messages are sent in many different ways. Your expressions, eye contact, posture and movements all send messages. Sometimes your body language says something different than the words you speak.

MATERIALS:

- Group of 4-6 people
- Paper
- Pencil

ACTIVITY:

Working in pairs, with each partner acting out a message while the other partner tries to guess the intended message. In acting out the message, each person should involve his or her partner in a way necessary to convey the message.

DISCOVERY:

1. Did your partner understand the message you were sending? What did you do to help your partner understand the message?
2. Which message was the most difficult to communicate? Why?
3. Which message was the easiest to communicate? Why?

PIECING IT TOGETHER:

- If your partner had trouble understanding the message you were sending did you become frustrated? How is this similar to situations in life when you are trying to communicate a message that someone else misunderstands?
- Some of the messages were easier to communicate than others. How is this like the feelings you communicate non-verbally with people everyday?
- What other kinds of feelings do people communicate through body language?
- Give some examples when you communicate with others without talking.

TRY THIS:

Demonstrate how you can communicate friendship without talking. (Examples: pat on the back, hug, handshake, etc.)

Watch a television show or movie with the sound turned off, then make up your own story based on the non-verbal communication between the actors.

While you are watching your favorite television program, look for and record messages sent with gestures and other forms of body language.

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