What is Body Talk?

Body Talk/Body is non-verbal communication. It is any action someone does to which someone else assigns meaning. Body Talk can and often is used with verbal communication.

The following activity is adapted from:

Age Suitability: Suitable for older children in Primary who may be academically able but have difficulties with social and communication skills.

Subject Area: SPHE/English

Lesson: Using different parts of your body to communicate clearly

Method: Activities/discussions

Put the following aspects of body talk on an overhead or on the board - discuss and demonstrate

- Eye contact - Looking at people when talking to them
- Tone of voice - Sounding interested/bored/excited etc.
- Posture - Standing straight
- Hygiene - Showering and putting on clean clothes
- Voice volume - Not too loud and not too low
- Facial expression - Happy/sad/excited etc.
- Personal space - Not too close and not too far when talking to people

Review with students what each of these aspects of body talk is and why it’s important
Ask students for examples of when they have used each of these aspects of body talk
Discussion can take place as a whole class lesson followed by role play starting with the most able while the rest of the class observe. After each role play, discussion can take place. The pupil with ASD can take part in the role play when they have observed others.

Body Talk – Social Skills Role Play for Children

Cast: Three characters – Dad, Son (Seth) & Daughter (Amber)

Scene: The family have been invited to a BBQ at the home of the mother’s boss, Mr. Harris. The father is helping his son and daughter to prepare to meet the guests.
**Skill 9**

**Body Talk**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAD</th>
<th>Are you almost ready? We have to leave in five minutes.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SETH</td>
<td>I'm ready!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAD</td>
<td>Did you put on clean clothes after you took a shower?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SETH</td>
<td>Yeah.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAD</td>
<td>And did you wash your hair in the shower?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SETH</td>
<td>Yes, and I cleaned under my fingernails, too.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAD</td>
<td>Great job, Seth! Amber, you look neat and clean. How are you going to stand when you're introduced to Mr. Harris?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMBER</td>
<td>Not too close and not too far.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAD</td>
<td>Right. Anything else?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMBER</td>
<td>I'll stand up straight, too.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAD</td>
<td>Yes. Good job. Seth, what are you going to do with your eyes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SETH</td>
<td>I'm going to look at him when he talks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAD</td>
<td>Yes! And how will you use your voice?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SETH</td>
<td>I won't yell.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAD</td>
<td>[Smiles.] That's good news. One more thing. What about your faces?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMBER</td>
<td>We should look happy to meet him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAD</td>
<td>How will that look?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[Seth and Amber show him happy faces.]</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Continued on next page*
DAD  OK, let's role-play. Seth, you pretend I'm Mr. Harris. Amber, you introduce us.

AMBER  [Looks at Seth's Dad.] Mr. Harris, this is Seth. [Turns to Seth.] Seth, this is Mr. Harris.

SETH  [Looks at Dad with a pleasant expression on his face. Uses an appropriate volume and tone of voice.] How do you do, Mr. Harris. I'm pleased to meet you.

DAD  [Pretending to be Mr. Harris] Hello, Seth. It's nice to meet you, too.

DAD  Nice, job, Seth. [Turns to Amber.] Amber, do you want to try it out, too?

AMBER  I think I know what to do. It helped to watch you, Seth.

DAD  OK, I think we're ready to go. Let's get Mom.
It's Nice To Meet You

Directions: Please review this scene with your child and complete the checked (✓) items.

Dad was out shopping with his boys, Louis and Dennis. He told them that if they meet someone and he introduces them, it's polite to say, "It's nice to meet you." Mrs. Grumplestump, from Dad's office, was also in the store. Dad introduced the boys to her. Louis didn't remember, but Dennis held out his hand and said, "It's nice to meet you."

☐ All Questions:
1. What did Dad tell the boys to say if he introduces them to someone?
2. What did Dennis do (point to boy on right)? Should he have done this?
3. What did Louis do (point to boy on left)? Should he have done this? What could he do differently?
4. What could you say to someone you've just met?
5. Think of a time when you met someone new. What did you say?

☐ Activities:
1. Circle the child who did not say, "It's nice to meet you."
2. Draw a star above the child who did say, "It's nice to meet you."
3. Draw a picture of yourself in this scene, and tell what you would do. Color the picture.

There's No Arguing in the Car

Directions: Please review this scene with your child and complete the checked (✓) items.

After everyone got into the car and had their seat belts on, Mom told the kids, "There's no arguing in the car." After about a half hour, Audra and Thackery started arguing about the radio. Gina remembered what Mom had said and sat quietly.

☐ All Questions:
1. What did Mom tell the children when they got in the car?
2. What did Gina do (point to girl in front)? Should she have done this?
3. What did Audra and Thackery do (point to children in back)? Should they have done this? What could they do differently?
4. How should you behave when traveling with family and friends in the car?
5. What are some fair ways to share the radio in a car? What are some fun things to do in a car so that you aren't arguing? Why is arguing in the car dangerous for the driver?

☐ Activities:
1. Point to a child who is arguing in the car. Write the number "5" over him/her for five minutes of time out.
2. Point to the child who is not arguing in the car. Circle him/her.
3. Draw a picture of yourself in this scene, and tell what you would do. Color the picture.

Name   Homework Partner   Date

Name   Homework Partner   Date
SPEAKING......
WITHOUT WORDS?!

Human beings have many different ways of communicating their feelings without necessarily having to use the spoken word. We can give clear messages to others by the way we stand or sit, by our movements, through our eyes and by the tone of our voice. Look through newspaper photographs and study the faces and positions of the people caught by the camera.

What do they tell us, without having to read the stories attached?

Have a go at filling in the grid below, trying to work out how we are able to tell the particular mood that somebody is in.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MOOD</th>
<th>EYES</th>
<th>BODY POSITION/MOVEMENTS</th>
<th>TONE OF VOICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SHY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGGRESSIVE/ANGRY</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONFIDENT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SURPRISED</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
BODY LANGUAGE/ TONE OF VOICE

Here are a few useful ideas about the ideas about the sort of phrases that you might use to fill in your grid.

UPRIGHT AND RELAXED      HUNCHED SHOULDERS      LOOKING DOWN      STARING

FROWNING       SMILING       RAISING EYEBROWS       CLEARING THROAT

WHINING VOICE       HEAD ON HANDS       COVERING MOUTH WITH HANDS       POINTING FINGERS

SHAKING FIST       SNEERING       EYES WIDE OPEN       SHOUTING       LEANING FORWARD

TALKING FAST       STUMBLING OVER WORDS       PACING AROUND       ARMS FOLDED

VOICE COLD AND HARSH       VERY QUIET VOICE       BITING NAILS

PICKING AT CLOTHES       LOUNGING IN CHAIR       HANDS CLASPED BEHIND BACK

See if you can think of any other phrases. Try some of these things out - how do they make you feel? During the following week look carefully at the body language of other people and listen to their tone of voice. Also, take time to think about how you are sitting, standing and speaking when you are with other people.