

Skill Area(s): Stress Feelings/Emotions

When My Autism Gets Too Big

By: Kari Dunn Buron

Level: intermediate, advanced

Goal: to help child with autism understand his/her stress levels and use relaxation techniques to help reduce stress. This could also easily be adapted to children without autism and that have stress issues.

Materials needed: The Incredible 5-Point Scale, Kari Dunn Buron and Mitzi Curtis and When My Autism Gets Too Big, Kari Dunn Buron, and blank paper and markers to create a scale.

Activity:

For this activity explain to the children what the 5-point scale is and how you can use it to rate your levels of stress. You may have already used this in other lessons with them. If you haven't make sure you explain it to them and either have them create a blank 5-point scale or provide a blank one for them to use. Make sure the one you provide includes columns for what it looks like, what it feels like, and what I can try. Now start reading the book and have the children follow along. After each situation that the boy in the book goes through, have the children fill out their scale according to how they would feel in that situation. Make sure to include what it looks like, feels like, and what they can try to help themselves relax if needed in certain situations. Follow along with the activities in the book. The book provides some really easy suggestions to help the children learn self-calming strategies.

If you have students that do not have autism or who do not like to use that word in relation to themselves you can modify this book and use it with them. I suggest that instead of rating autism like it says in the book, rate stress levels instead and don't even use the word autism if the children are freaked out by it.