



The body

Aims and outcomes of the body unit

- Naming body parts
- Recognising and regulating tension and relaxation
- Recognising and expressing needs
- Recognising and feeling physical boundaries
- Differentiating pleasant and unpleasant contact
- Observing and setting contact boundaries

What physical competence means

A person who feels their needs and physical boundaries and can learn to differentiate between pleasant and unpleasant physical contact is better able to set clear boundaries with other people. This improves conflict resolution abilities and also serves to protect children. Therefore, in addition to promoting social and emotional skills and competence, promoting physical competence is also very important.

Dear parents,

In the second unit of the ReSi children's programme, the focus is on the body. The children will learn general information about their body, e.g., the names of body parts.

A central aspect of the unit is dealing with physical contact and, in turn, setting and observing physical boundaries. The differentiation between pleasant and unpleasant contact with other children and adults is another central theme. Using picture stories and exercises, the group will discuss how tickling, cuddling, and hugging, for example, can be a positive experience with important people or playmates in their lives. The children are guided to recognise when their boundaries have been violated and what they can do in such situations. The message that every child has a right to maintain their boundaries will be communicated clearly and received and anchored within the children.

It is also important that the children are made aware of how to take care that others' boundaries are also observed.

In cases of boundary violations by other people, children often need support from adults. In conjunction with elements from the unit on linguistic and narrative skills, the children are encouraged to get help and support from trusted people when they need it.



Letter to parents about the ReSi programme

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Examples of ReSi children's programme exercises

Congestion at the traffic light: A small group of children are walking through a narrow hallway in their *Kindergarten* and meet another group traveling in the opposite direction. All of the children must pass through the hallway silently and without touching and definitely without jostling each other. In this exercise, respect is as important as estimating distance from and proximity to other people.

Relaxed cats: Cats are particularly good at lounging and relaxing. So, in this exercise, the children are led through gentle motion sequences that are reminiscent of cat postures. The whole body is flexed and stretched. The calming effect of the exercise provides beneficial breaks between activating games.

Tips for parents

In the following you will find a few suggestions for how you can support your child to develop their physical competence at home.

Take note of...

...signs that your child finds physical contact with you or other people unpleasant. This can happen during roughhousing or horsing around, but it can also be possible while cuddling or during rituals like greetings and farewells. Speak with your child about how they feel in such situations. Take your child's feelings seriously and refrain from convincing your child to engage in physical contact with others against their will ("Now give Grandma a kiss!"). It is important for your child's development and protection that they are allowed to decide if they want to engage in physical contact with other people.

Something to try

"Stop!": Practice with your child. Have them try to notice feeling boundary violations during play or roughhousing with you, their siblings, or their friends and communicating that a boundary has been violated, e.g., with a loud "Stop!". This "Stop" applies of course in the other direction - if they hear it from another.

Relaxing together: Do you have cat or a dog? If so, then try imitating their relaxing postures together with your child. You can also find suggestions from self-help or advice literature on relaxation or "invent" your own postures with your child and try them out.