

# Relationship Skills

## ABOUT CENTER FOR THE COLLABORATIVE CLASSROOM

The Caring School Community (CSC) program is a nationally recognized, research-based program for grades K–6 that builds classroom and schoolwide community while developing students' social and emotional (SEL) skills and competencies.

# Teambuilder, Inside-Outside Circle

By: The Caring School Community

# Inside-Outside Circle

## ABOUT TEAMBUILDERS

Beginning-of-the-year team-building activities give the students a chance to learn their classmates' names and get to know one another. In addition, Teambuilders:

- Help the students begin to appreciate one another
- Bring the students together around a common purpose
- Help the students develop a sense of belonging and acceptance

It is important to do Teambuilders periodically throughout the year during transition times, such as when the students switch to new groups, when new students enter the class, and when students return to school after vacations. Over the next two weeks, the students will work with partners and groups to get to know one another. The Teambuilders are “Inside-Outside Circle,” in which the students rotate in two concentric circles to meet and talk to different partners; “Line-ups,” in which the students line up according to various criteria and talk to their neighbors; “Find Someone Who . . .,” in which the students search for classmates who can answer “yes” to various questions; and “Groups of Four,” in which the students work together to write true statements about their group.

## Lesson Purpose

### Students:

- Learn one another's names
- Get to know one another
- Listen to one another
- Move responsibly around the room

## Materials

- Space for the class to form two concentric circles
- Scratch paper and a pencil for teacher notes

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## The Lesson

### 1 INTRODUCE THE INSIDE-OUTSIDE CIRCLE

Explain that over the next two weeks the students will participate in several team-building activities to get to know one another. These activities will help them learn their classmates' names and begin to build a classroom community where everyone feels safe and comfortable. Introduce today's activity, "Inside-Outside Circle," and explain that the students will form two circles, an inside circle facing out and an outside circle facing in, to meet and talk to different partners. Point out that as they work with their partners, it will be important to be good listeners. Ask and briefly discuss:

**Q** What are some things that you can do to show your partner that you are listening?

Explain your expectations for the way you would like the students to move to the circles. (For example, "When I point to your table, you will get up quietly, walk to the rug carefully, and stand in the circle. We will form the inside circle first, then the outside circle.") Ask:

**Q** What are some things you can do to make sure moving to the circles goes smoothly and safely?

Have a few students share their thinking with the class.

**Students might say:**

"Be careful not to bump into people."

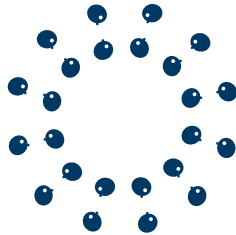
"Don't run."

"Watch where you're walking."

# Class Meeting Lessons

## 2 DO THE INSIDE-OUTSIDE CIRCLE ACTIVITY

Have one table of students at a time move to the circles. Ask half of the class to form the inside circle, facing out. Ask the other half of the class to form the outside circle and face in, so that every student is facing a student in the other circle. Explain that the students standing across from each other will be the first partners.



On a signal from you, have partners tell each other their names and take turns answering:

**Q What is something fun you did over the summer?**

Give them time to ask each other questions about what they shared.

Signal for their attention; then have the students in the outside circle step one student to the right (the inside circle does not move). Explain that the person standing across from them is their new partner. On a signal from you, have partners tell each other their names and take turns answering:

**Q What is something fun you did over the summer?**

Give them time to ask each other questions about what they shared.

Signal for their attention and repeat this process once or twice more. Questions you can have them discuss include:

**Q What is a good book you have read recently?**

**Q Who are the people in your family?**

**Q What is something you hope to learn this year?**

At each stop, remind the partners to tell each other their names.



**If you have an odd number of students, you will need to join one of the circles.**



**Remind the students to listen carefully and be ready to share some things they learn about their partners later.**

### 3 SHARE WHAT THE STUDENTS LEARNED

Have the students return to their seats and ask several volunteers to share something they learned about a classmate. As the students share, help them connect their experiences to those of others by asking questions such as:

**Q Who else [went camping] over the summer? Tell us about it.**

**Q Who else shared something similar to what [Rava] said? Tell us about it.**

Ask:

**Q What are some other things you would you like to know about your classmates?**

Encourage the students to continue to learn the names of their classmates during the day and let them know that they will do more Teambuilders over the next two weeks.



Jot notes of the students' ideas to use in the next Teambuilder, "Line-ups."