**Personal space ice breaker activities**

Space Bubble

**Materials:** 1 hula hoop per child, open space

**Objective:** This activity gives children an opportunity to move throughout the room/area without touching others while using an object (hula hoop) to help them understand the concept of personal space.

**Instructions:**

* Ask each child to choose a hula hoop.
* Using masking tape and a marker, label each hula hoop with the child’s name. This way you can use the same hula hoop for a variety of activities.
* Ask the children to find a space in the room and place the hula hoop on the ground.  Jump into the middle of your own hoop and ask the children to jump into their hoop.
* Tell the children that they are going to transform this hula hoop into our own personal space bubble.  With the children, transform the hula hoop by lifting it up waist high and slowly stepping one foot forward, backwards and jumping up and down while remaining in the same spot.
* Explain how it is important to keep the hula hoop from touching others and to try not to bump into another hula hoop when you move through the room as this could pop your bubble.
* Before you start moving around the room, decide as a group, what happens if my bubble pops. How can we fix the bubble to help that person rejoin the game?
* Use music to enhance the experience. When the music is ‘on,’ they can move freely and stop moving when the music is off.

Six Foot Freeze Game

**Materials:** one hula hoop per child, a six foot length of string or rope

**Objective:** This activity gives children an opportunity to move throughout the room/area without touching others while using an object (hula hoop) to help them understand the concept of personal space.

**Instructions:**

* Place hula hoops around the room, 6 feet apart.
* Explain to the children that, when you call out “unfreeze” they may walk around the room and keep six feet apart, outside of the hoops. When you call out “Six Foot Freeze” they need to find a hoop, stand inside and not move.
* Have the children find a hoop and ‘freeze’ like a statue in a hoop, one child per hoop.
* Call out “Unfreeze!” The children slowly start moving around the room, making sure not to bump into any other hula hoops or objects and keeping six feet apart.
* Call out “Six Foot Freeze!” All children need to find a hoop.
* Repeat this several times.
* Once the children understand the game, remove the hoops and have them move around the room keeping six feet apart.
* Call out “Six Foot Freeze!” All children need to freeze on the spot.
* Use a six-foot string to measure the distance between one child and another.
* If anyone froze within 6 feet of another person, they become a “frozen statue” and cannot move.
* Repeat these steps one or two more times.
* Call out “unfreeze everyone” to start the game again.

**Variations:** Have the children pretend to be certain animals when moving around and coordinate with music to match the themes. For example, have the children pretend to be butterflies, bunnies or cats. Ask the children how they want to move around the room and follow their lead. You can also take this activity outside and add more imagination by flying through space while trying not to bump into any meteors.

Airplane Arms

**Materials:** An open area/space

**Objective:** This activity gives the children an opportunity to move throughout the room/area without touching others while using the length of their arms to help guide them in understanding the concept of personal space. By using their arms as a guide, children can become more aware of their body in relation to other people and objects.

**Instructions:**

* Ask the children to each find a space to stand where they are not touching anyone else.
* Show the children how you spread your legs and arms wide and ask them to do the same. Ask them to notice if they are touching anything or anyone. If they are too close they may take a step further apart until they cannot touch anyone else.
* Time to go on an airplane ride! Holding your arms straight up above your head and then straight out to the sides, ask the children to join you in pretending to be airplanes flying high in the air using your arms as wings. For now, stay in one spot, try bending and dive like an airplane.
* Next let the children know that they are going to begin to fly around the room. Ask them to be sure to keep a safe distance away from others so that they don’t damage their wings and fall to the ground!
* Ready, set, go! Ask the children to start their engines and begin to move around the room making sure the wings of the airplane do not touch.
* What happens if hands do touch? At the end of the game, have everyone wash their hands. You can use the hand wash area as a “landing pad” and, one by one have each of the “airplanes” clean up after the flight.

Once the children have practiced using their airplane arms, you can talk to them about using the words “airplane arms” when they are feeling the need for more space. Practice by calling out “airplane arms” at different times during the day. This will help the children remember the concept.

**Personal Space Dance**  
Play some music and have the participants dance freely. Encourage them to move around the space while being mindful of their own personal space bubble. Remind them not to bump into others or invade their personal space. This activity helps kids develop body awareness and spatial boundaries.

**Personal Space Freeze Dance**This is a variation of the previous activity. Randomly pause the music and shout, “Personal Space Freeze!”. When the music stops, participants must freeze and maintain their personal space bubbles until the music starts again. This game reinforces the idea of respecting personal boundaries even during active play.

**Personal Space Obstacle Course**  
Set up an obstacle course using cones, hula hoops, and other objects. Participants must navigate the course while staying within their personal space boundaries. Encourage them to move carefully and avoid touching any obstacles.