



Sooper Puppy: That's Trouble

Theme

Staying alert to trouble

Background

Children often get into trouble because they do not think ahead to possible consequences. In this videotape, Baxter (alias Sooper Puppy) gets carried away while playing with his friends and lands in trouble. Thanks to Grandpaw's advice, Baxter learns to think ahead, decide if a situation looks like trouble, and choose to do something else instead if it does. Baxter discovers he can be safe and happy if he resists peer pressure. Using his new knowledge, Baxter not only succeeds in avoiding further trouble, but also helps his friends Pickles and Big John avoid trouble, too.

Outcomes

Viewers will

- identify potentially dangerous or troublesome situations
- discover the importance of thinking ahead
- understand that it's OK to say No rather than get into trouble
- learn that it's possible to have fun and stay out of trouble

Before Viewing

Invite discussion of getting into trouble. Use questions such as the following to get started:

1. Have you ever done something you were afraid to do just because someone else wanted to do it?
2. Have you ever done something that got you into trouble? Tell about it if you like.
3. How do you know if something will get you into trouble?
4. What could happen if you light firecrackers? If you get into a leaky boat? If you steal something from a store? Why are these things that you should never do?
5. What should you say to your friends when they do something that makes you uneasy or afraid?

After Viewing

Encourage discussion of the videotape, perhaps by using questions like these:

1. Why did Baxter dig up the vegetable garden? Why was his owner so angry?
2. Where was Baxter when Grizzle and Stoops came into the yard to paint the graffiti on the wall? Why didn't Baxter do what he was supposed to do?
3. How did Baxter know that playing with someone else's clothes would cause trouble? What did he decide to do instead?
4. Why did Big John decide not to roast his marshmallows?
5. Why did Pickles come over to play with Baxter and Big John after she said she wouldn't?
6. Do you think that getting into trouble makes other people like you better? Why or why not?
7. What can you do the next time you think something will get you into trouble?

School Activities

- Discuss graffiti with children, inviting them to talk about why people make graffiti on walls and why they should not do so. Then tell them you will give them permission to make some graffiti. Provide large mural paper and tape it along one wall. Let children decorate it with "nice graffiti" they like. Label it an "OK Graffiti Wall" and tape it up outside your classroom for all to see.
- Suggest that children try using their "snuzulators" to let them know when they might get into trouble. Ask volunteers to report how their snuzulators worked.

Home Activities

Give each child a copy of Home Activities 13 and 14 to take home. Encourage families to carry out the activities with their children. It is not necessary to have children return the worksheets; they should not feel pressured if their families choose not to participate.

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To the Family from Your Child's Teacher:

We have seen a videotape called "Sooper Puppy: That's Trouble." It has helped us realize we need to think ahead to help ourselves keep out of trouble. Below is part of the story from the videotape that your child will probably remember. In it, Grandpaw helps Sooper Puppy (whose real name is Baxter) realize how to sniff out trouble ahead of time. Read the story aloud with your child. Encourage your child to tell you more details about the videotape as you go along. Then go on to the activity on the following page.

Baxter was in trouble. He and Big John dug up the garden while they were playing. Baxter's owner, Mr. Man, was very angry with him. Baxter went to Grandpaw's doghouse to hide and told Grandpaw that getting into trouble was the one thing he seemed to be good at.

"You know that's not true," Grandpaw said. "Whatever your problem is, I doubt that hiding is the answer." When Baxter told Grandpaw what had happened, Grandpaw asked him, "Where was your snuzulator when all this was happening? Why didn't you use it to sniff out trouble ahead of time?"

Baxter was surprised. "Sniff out trouble?" he exclaimed.

"Yes, indeed," Grandpaw answered. "Like this. Stop what you're doing, close your eyes, and use your imagination. Think ahead about what you're about to do and see if it could turn into trouble. Then name the trouble and say, 'I'd rather do something else.'"

Baxter tried it when his friend Pickles invited him to play dress-up with her owner's clothes. He imagined the clothes might get torn or dirty, and Pickles's owner would be very angry. So he told Pickles he would rather play ball, and he left. He found out it worked!

He told Grandpaw, "I never realized how easy it is to get into trouble, but now I also know how easy it is to stay out of it. If you just stop and think for a minute, you can just say No and find something else to do instead. And don't forget to say, 'Good Job.' That way you'll feel a little more super every day."

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Discuss the story with your child. Talk with your child about how to use his or her own “snuzulator” to sniff out trouble before getting into it. Then help your child complete the activity below.

What is a snuzulator? Tell what you think it is. Describe what it does. Draw a picture of it, if you want to.

School Activities

- Suggest that children write a story about a snuzulator that they have invented. They should describe what the snuzulator does and how it works. They should also describe how they would use it. They should also describe how they would use it to help someone else.

What else could you find to do if your snuzulator warns you not to do something? Think of as many ideas as you can.
