

## **My Body Talks without Saying a Word**

By Barbara Gilmour

“Hi, everyone.” said Ms. Gilmour to her students Nicole, Tanner, Stephen, Rudy, Carmen and Truman the Dragon. “Hello, Ms. Gilmour.” “Today we are going to find out how our bodies can talk without saying a word,” she said.

All the kids had funny looks. Nicole raised her hand and asked, “How can our bodies talk without saying a word?” Rudy suggested, “Maybe we wave our hands around and jump up and down to talk.” Truman had a smile on his face and said, “I think I know how that can be.”

All the kids turned to Truman, who had a really mean look on his face, and his arms were at his sides, with fists clenched. Stephen jumped up and said, “I know; you’re mad.” Then Truman hung his head, shuffled his dragon feet and mumbled. Carmen said, “Now you look like you’re sad.” Next, Truman put his nose in the air and wouldn’t look at anyone. Tanner said, “Now you look like you’re better than us and don’t want to be our friends.”

“All the things Truman just showed us are called body language.

That’s how your body tells someone what you’re thinking or feeling, without using words. Who can give us another example of body language?” she asked. Nicole said, “My mom tells me to lean forward and look people in the eye to show that I am interested in them.” “Your mom is right,” said Ms. Gilmour. “What would your body language be like if you were not interested in someone?”



Tanner was first to say, “I might look all around, or at the ceiling; looking bored.” Carmen added, “Or, you lean back, or face away from the person. Some people look like they have fallen asleep. But that’s just plain rude.”

Rudy added, “A kid in my class likes to get in my face and glare at me. He’s a bully, but I just walk away when he does that.” “Did you know that when you roll your eyes at someone you are showing them disrespect?” Ms. Gilmour asked.

“Oh boy, I need to stop doing that to my older brother,” admitted Stephen.

“The great thing about learning social skills is that when you find out something you were doing wasn’t kind, caring or respectful, you can change it,” explained Ms. Gilmour. “Now, how can our body language show others that we are confident?”

Tanner jumped up saying, “Stand straight and tall, with shoulders back.” Rudy added, “Hold your head high.” “Look alert, like you are paying attention, and listening to others,” shared Nicole.

“Last time we talked about first impressions. How can your body language help you make a good impression?” asked Ms. Gilmour.

Truman stood up and said, “*The Cool Kind Kid Challenge* can help us remember that positive body language equals a good first impression.”

“How can your body language affect your friendships?” asked Ms. Gilmour. Tanner replied, “If we are showing others that we are mean, bored or disrespectful, no one will want to be our friends. Good body language equals many good friends.”

*Barbara Gilmour, Tanner’s grandma, is the creator and developer of the Tanner’s Manners: Be a “Cool Kind Kid” Social Skills, Character Values and Anti-Bullying educational materials and the award-winning “Cool Kind Kid” Audio CD. © Cool Kind Kid. 866-KID-KIND. www.CoolKindKid.com.*