

# SOCIAL STORY TO TEACH PERSONAL SPACE IN THE COMMUNITY

When children are in community spaces, they interact with people they may not know well.

Sometimes children:

- stand too close in lines
- touch people or belongings without asking
- struggle to notice when someone needs more space
- forget how personal space works in busy places

This social story helps children understand **what personal space is, why it matters, and how to respect it in community settings.**

**KEEP SCROLLING TO TAKE A CLOSER  
LOOK AT WHAT'S INSIDE THIS RESOURCE!**

oneGiggle at a time

## RESPECTING PERSONAL SPACE IN MY COMMUNITY

Community Edition Social Story  
+ Poster & Personal Space Tools

PreK-K Included

Respecting Personal Space  
in My Community  
(Community Edition Social Story)



THE  
PERSONAL  
SPACE  
SERIES

Building Safe & Respectful Boundaries in the Community

# HELPS CHILDREN LEARN PERSONAL SPACE SKILLS IN COMMUNITY SETTINGS

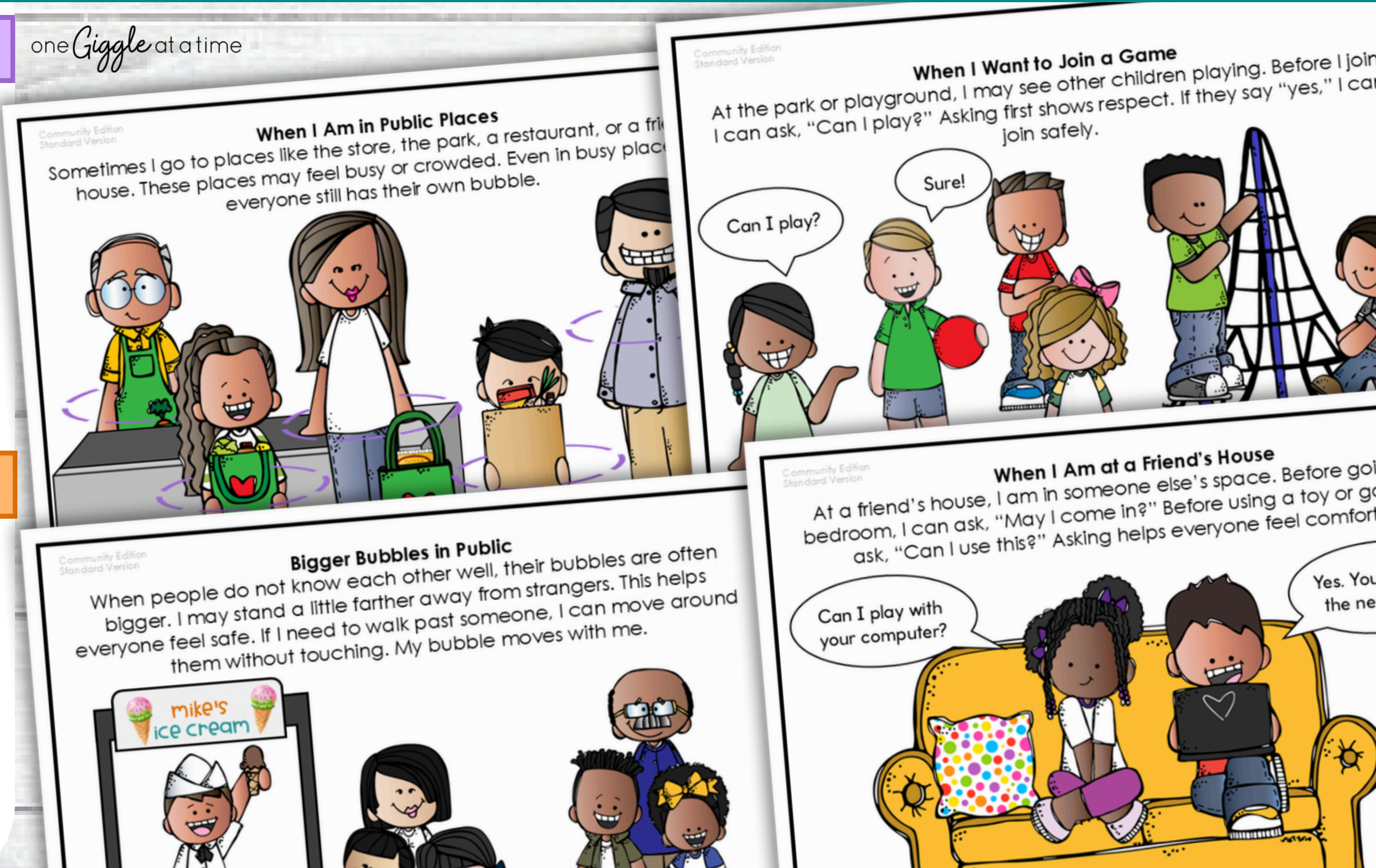
## Children may struggle with:

- standing too close in lines
- touching items or people without asking
- crowding others in busy places
- getting too close during play
- difficulty noticing body boundaries

## This story teaches students:

- what personal space means
- how to notice when space feels too close
- how to ask before entering someone's space
- how to respond respectfully

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# WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THIS RESOURCE



**Respecting Personal Space in My Community**  
(Community Edition Social Story)

**Child-friendly social story**




**When Community Spaces Feel Busy**  
Sometimes stores, events, or parks feel loud or crowded. When I feel overwhelmed, I can stay close to my safe adult and use a personal space tool. My tools help me feel calm.

**Simple, reassuring language**



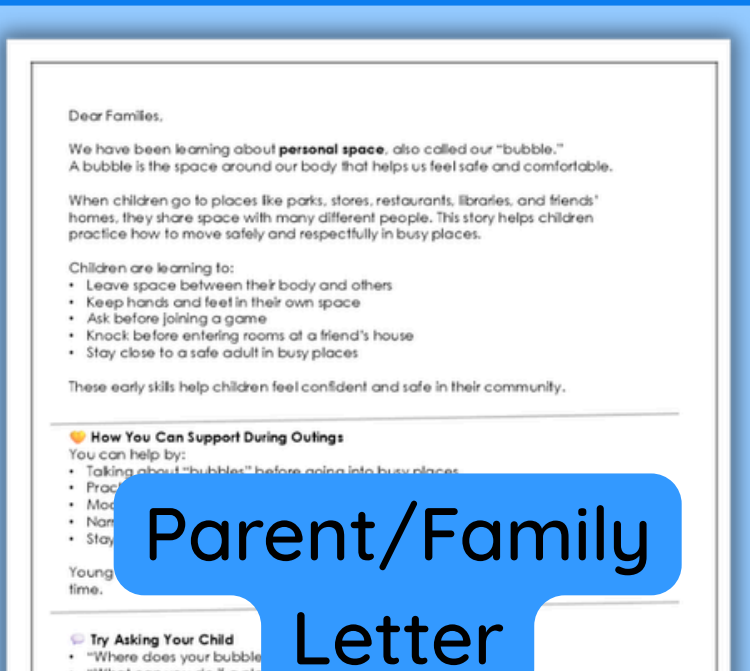
**When I Am in Public Places**  
Sometimes I go to places like the store, the park, a restaurant, or a friend's house. These places may feel busy or crowded. Even in busy places, everyone still has their own bubble.

**Real-life community scenarios**



**When Someone Comes Into My Space**  
Sometimes someone may stand too close or touch me without asking. If I feel uncomfortable, I can take two steps back or use my stop hand and say, "I need space." If I need help, I can tell a trusted adult. Trusted adults help keep me safe.

**Respectful boundary examples**



Dear Families,

We have been learning about **personal space**, also called our "bubble." A bubble is the space around our body that helps us feel safe and comfortable.

When children go to places like parks, stores, restaurants, libraries, and friends' homes, they share space with many different people. This story helps children practice how to move safely and respectfully in busy places.

Children are learning to:

- Leave space between their body and others
- Keep hands and feet in their own space
- Ask before joining a game
- Knock before entering rooms at a friend's house
- Stay close to a safe adult in busy places

These early skills help children feel confident and safe in their community.

**How You Can Support During Outings**

You can help by:

- Talking about "bubbles" before going into busy places
- Practicing skills
- Modeling respectful distance
- Naming positive behavior ("You walked around them carefully!")
- Practicing asking to join games
- Reinforcing safe choices

Preparation reduces overwhelm.

**Section 4: Connection to Skill Building**

Connection to Social-Emotional Learning

- Community personal space connects to:
- Public safety awareness

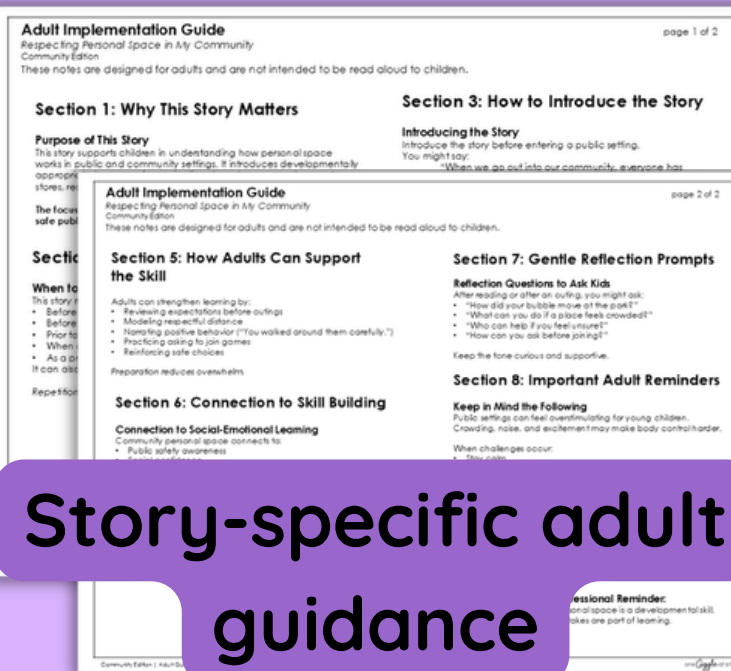
When challenges occur:

- When safety awareness

**Try Asking Your Child**

- "Where does your bubble go?"
- "What can you do if a place feels crowded?"

**Parent/Family Letter**



**Adult Implementation Guide**  
Respecting Personal Space in My Community  
Community Edition  
These notes are designed for adults and are not intended to be read aloud to children.

**Section 1: Why This Story Matters**

**Purpose of This Story**  
This story supports children in understanding how personal space works in public and community settings. It introduces developmentally appropriate skills for children.

**Section 2: The Focus of the Story**  
The focus is on personal space.

**Section 3: How to Introduce the Story**

**Introducing the Story**  
Introduce the story before entering a public setting. You might say: "When we go out into our community, everyone has their own bubble."

**Section 4: Connection to Skill Building**

Connection to Social-Emotional Learning

- Community personal space connects to:
- Public safety awareness

When challenges occur:

- When safety awareness

**Section 5: How Adults Can Support the Skill**

Adults can strengthen learning by:

- Reviewing expectations before outings
- Modeling respectful distance
- Naming positive behavior ("You walked around them carefully!")
- Practicing asking to join games
- Reinforcing safe choices

Preparation reduces overwhelm.

**Section 6: Connection to Skill Building**

Connection to Social-Emotional Learning

- Community personal space connects to:
- Public safety awareness

When challenges occur:

- When safety awareness

**Section 7: Gentle Reflection Prompts**

**Reflection Questions to Ask Kids**  
After reading or after an outing, you might ask:

- "How did your bubble move at the park?"
- "What did you do if a place felt crowded?"
- "Who can help if you feel unsure?"
- "How can you ask before joining?"

Keep the tone curious and supportive.

**Section 8: Important Adult Reminders**

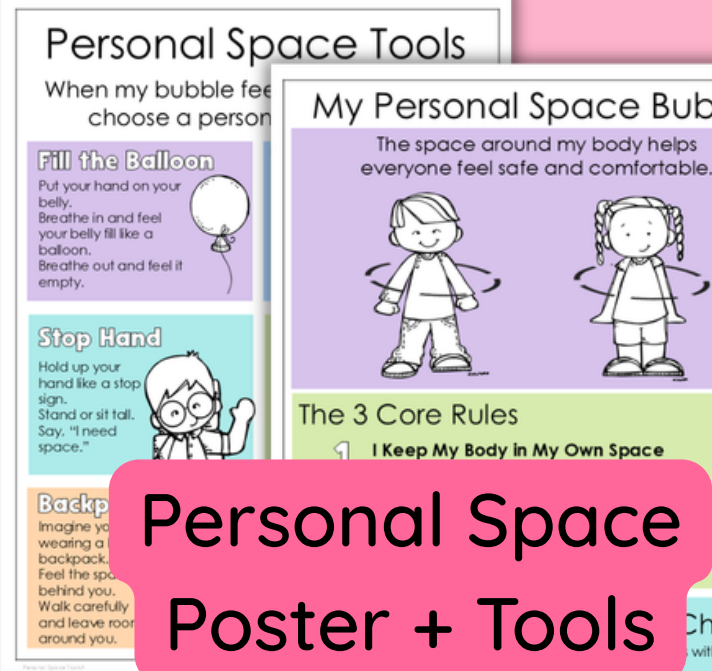
**Keep in Mind the Following**  
Public settings can feel overwhelming for young children. Crying, noise, and excitement may make body control harder.

When challenges occur:

- When safety awareness

**Sectional Reminder:**  
Personal space is a developmental skill. It takes time to learn.

**Story-specific adult guidance**



**Personal Space Tools**

When my bubble feels crowded, I can choose a personal space tool.

**My Personal Space Bubble**  
The space around my body helps everyone feel safe and comfortable.

**Fill the Balloon**  
Put your hand on your belly. Breathe in and feel your belly fill like a balloon. Breathe out and feel it empty.

**Stop Hand**  
Hold up your hand like a stop sign. Stand or sit tall. Say, "I need space."

**Backpack**  
Imagine you are wearing a backpack. Feel the space behind you. Walk carefully and leave room around you.

**The 3 Core Rules**

- 1 I Keep My Body in My Own Space

**Check without**

**Personal Space Poster + Tools**



I have a body. Around my body is my **personal space**. **Personal space** is like an invisible bubble. My bubble moves with wherever I go. Other people have bubbles too. In my community, there are many people I may not know very well. Keeping bubbles safe helps everyone feel safe.

I have a body. Around my body is my **personal space**. **Personal space** is like an invisible bubble. My bubble goes everywhere with me. Everyone has a bubble. Bubbles help us feel safe.

**Simplified PreK-K version included**

No prep • Print or digital • Easy to use anywhere

# WAYS TO USE THIS SOCIAL STORY

Read before outings or errands

Review before visiting playgrounds

Practice before community events

Use after social misunderstandings

Share with families and caregivers  
to reinforce skills at home



**USE REGULARLY**

to help children build **body awareness and respectful boundaries in shared spaces.**

# SKILLS THIS STORY SUPPORTS



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- Body awareness
- Perspective-taking
- Flexible thinking
- Respecting boundaries
- Social problem solving
- Emotional regulation
- Asking before touching

Community Edition  
Standard Version

### Bigger Bubbles in Public

When people do not know each other well, their bubbles are often bigger. I may stand a little farther away from strangers. This way everyone feels safe. If I need to walk past someone, I can move them without touching. My bubble moves with me.

mike's ice cream  
chocolate  
vanilla  
strawberry  
mint  
orange  
peach  
apple  
raspberry  
peanut butter  
coconut

### Personal Space Tools

When my bubble feels too close, I can choose a personal space tool.

**Fill the Balloon**  
Put your hand on your belly. Breathe in and feel your belly fill like a balloon. Breathe out and feel it empty.

**Two Steps Back**  
Stop your feet. Take two small steps back. Feel your bubble get bigger.

**Stop Hand**  
Hold up your hand like a stop sign. Stand or sit tall. Say, "I need space."

**Backpack Sp**  
Imagine you are wearing a big backpack. Feel the space behind you. Walk carefully and leave room around you.

### My Personal Space Bubble

The space around my body helps everyone feel safe and comfortable.

### The 3 Core Rules

- 1 I Keep My Body in My Own Space  
Hands, feet, and body stay in my bubble.
- 2 I Ask Before Entering Someone Else's Space  
I can say: "Can I come closer?"
- 3 I Use My Words if I Need Space  
I can say: "Please give me some space."

Community Edition  
Standard Version

### When I Am in Public Places

Sometimes I go to places like the store, the park, a restaurant, or a friend's house. These places may feel busy or crowded. Even in busy places, everyone still has their own bubble.

Community Edition  
Standard Version

### When I Want to Join a Game

At the park or playground, I may see other children playing. Before I can ask, "Can I play?" Asking first shows respect. If they say "yes," I can join safely.

Can I play? Sure!

# DESIGNED TO SUPPORT TEACHERS, FAMILIES & COUNSELORS

## What to Say & When to Say It

This resource includes **adult guidance pages** to help families support children while learning about personal space.

Notes explain:

- when to introduce the story
- how to support respectful interactions
- how to reinforce skills during daily routines
- how to respond when space conflicts happen

**These notes are written to be supportive—not prescriptive.**

### Adult Implementation Guide

Respecting Personal Space in My Community  
Community Edition  
These notes are designed for adults and are not intended to be read aloud to children.

#### Section 1: Why This Story Matters

##### Purpose of This Story

This story supports children in understanding how personal space works in public and community settings. It introduces developmentally appropriate language for navigating shared spaces such as parks, stores, restaurants, libraries, and friends' homes.

The focus is on building body awareness, respectful behavior, and safe public interactions.

#### Section 2: When to Use This Story

##### When to Introduce

#### Section 3: How to

##### Introducing the Story

Introduce the story before entering a new space.  
You might say:  
"When we go out into public spaces, we need to be respectful of other people's personal space. This story helps us do that safely around others."

Keep the tone calm and matter-of-fact.

Avoid presenting it as a warning.  
Frame it as preparation.

#### Section 4: What to

Developmental goals supported by this story:  
• Body awareness  
• Personal space awareness  
• Respectful behavior expectations  
• Conflict resolution skills  
• Communication skills

Space Series

### Personal Space Tools Adult Overview

#### Purpose of This Toolkit

Personal Space Tools help children develop body awareness and support children in understanding when space feels too close. They help children practice their own space boundaries before entering someone else's space. The toolkit provides simple, repeatable strategies for teaching safe strategies before problems grow. The focus is prevention, safety, and mutual respect.

#### This Toolkit Fits With the Story

Personal Space stories teach what personal space is. This toolkit provides simple, repeatable strategies for teaching safe strategies before problems grow. The focus is prevention, safety, and mutual respect.

#### How to Introduce the Tools

Introduce the tools proactively during calm moments. Introduce one tool at a time. Model tools throughout the day. Practice before transitions. Ask, "Which tool could help right now?" The goal is familiarity through repetition.

#### How Children Use the Tools

Children are encouraged to:  
• Choose a tool when they feel uncomfortable.  
• Use a tool before reacting.  
• Ask for help if needed.  
• Practice across settings.  
Independence develops gradually.

#### Important Guidance

Some children may have challenges that relate to this toolkit. Narrating safe choices ("You are needed here, so please stay here carefully.")

Community Edition  
PreK-K Version  
My bubble goes with me everywhere. At home. At school. In my community. When I take care of my bubble, I help everyone feel safe and happy. I am learning every day.

PreK-K Version

Community Edition  
Standard Version  
My bubble goes with me everywhere — at home, at school, and in my community. When I respect other people's bubbles and protect my own, I help everyone feel safe. I am learning how to move safely in the world. That is something to feel proud of.

Standard Version

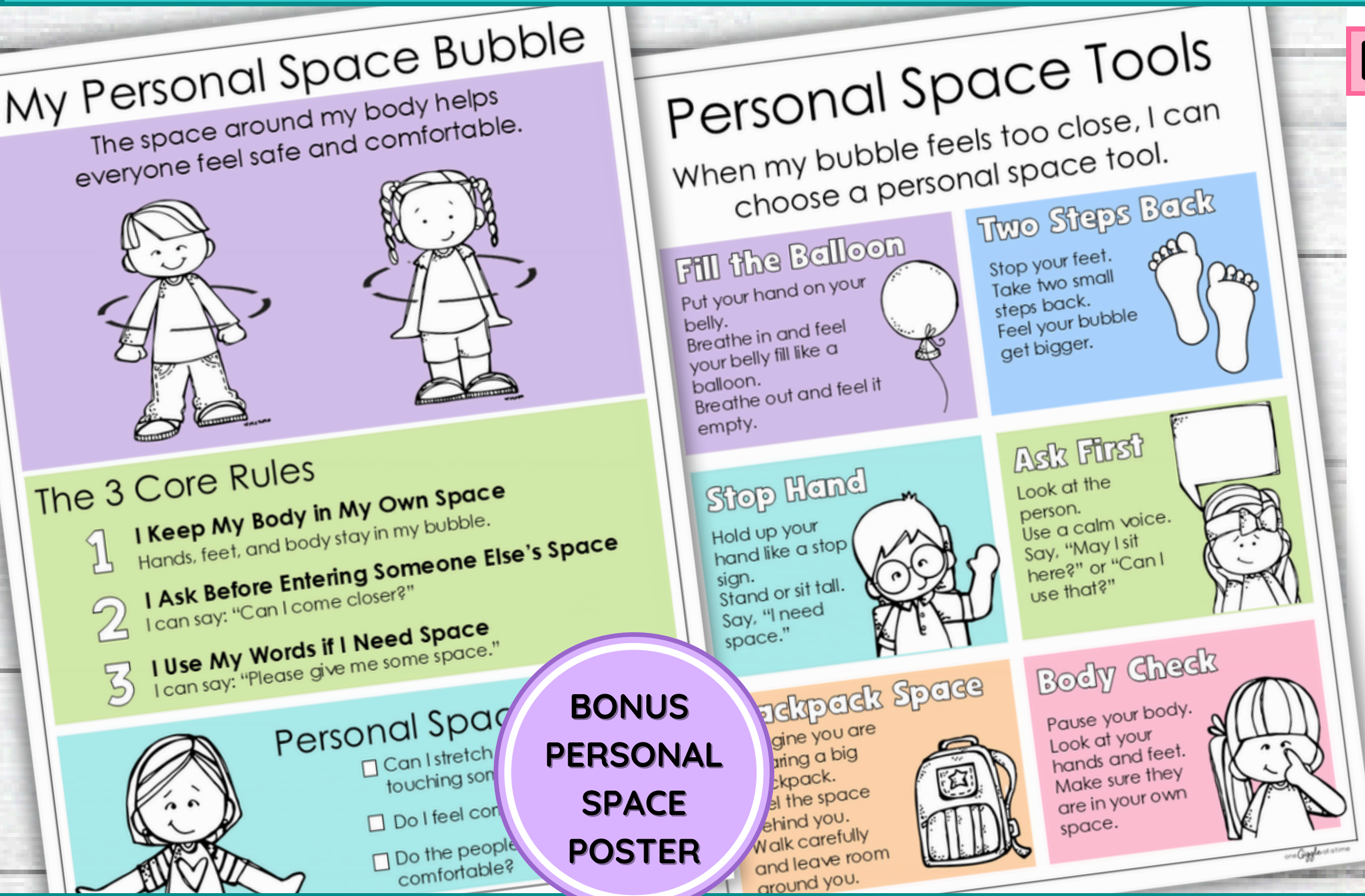
# BONUS

A standard version for elementary-age children & a simplified PreK-K version are both included.

Parent/Family Letter  
for Home Connection

# PERSONAL SPACE POSTER + STUDENT TOOLS

Visual supports that help children practice respectful boundaries.



## Personal Space Tools Included:

- **Fill the Balloon** – calming breathing
- **Two Steps Back** – create more space
- **Stop Hand** – signal when space is needed
- **Ask First** – respectful communication
- **Backpack Space** – visualize body boundaries
- **Body Check** – notice hands, feet, and body position

one *Giggle* at a time

Great for classrooms, homes, counseling spaces, or community programs

# BUILD PERSONAL SPACE SKILLS EVERYWHERE WITH THIS MONEY-SAVING BUNDLE!

## Part of a Complete Personal Space Social Story Series

Personal space is a skill children **learn across environments.**

This social story series helps children practice respectful boundaries at:

- school
- home
- community settings

Use one story – or combine them for deeper learning.



# ABOUT ONE GIGGLE AT A TIME



Diane Romo, creator of One Giggle At A Time, is a veteran first-grade teacher, children's book author, and professional development presenter. Since 2014, her resources have helped teachers and students worldwide create fun, positive classroom communities.



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*one giggle at a time is a passionate supporter of:*

- ♥ Helping teachers create classroom communities that foster positive relationships.
- ♥ Helping students unlock their potential for greatness.
- ♥ Helping parents provide support for young learners to set them up for success.
- ♥ Making learning FUN!

*one Giggle at a time*



social emotional learning



classroom community



parent/family connection



classroom management



teaching ideas



seasonal activities