

# Activity 1

## GUS and GUSSIE Come to Class

### Curriculum Area

- Family Life
- Language Development
- Relationships

### Behavior Strategies

- Coping Skills
- Other Life Skills



### When To Use

- Group Time



### What We Learn

- To introduce children to the GUS and GUSSIE dolls/puppets and to their place in the classroom
- To provide information to the children on how to use the dolls/puppets
- To allow children to express their feelings about the dolls/puppets or the class



### What You Need

- GUS and GUSSIE dolls/puppets
- The “How To Use GUS and GUSSIE dolls and puppets” (Page 16 in the Teacher’s Guide)

Note: If you do not have the GUS and GUSSIE dolls yet, introduce the puppets first and let each child put a puppet on their hand.

### Procedure

1. Have the children sit in a circle on the floor. You sit in the circle, too, with the GUS and GUSSIE dolls in your lap.
2. Tell the children about the dolls. You may want to read them the “Note from GUS and GUSSIE” on page 16. In telling the children about the dolls/puppets, be sure to include the following points:
  - They are special new friends in our classroom.
  - They will always be ready to listen to us.
  - They can help us feel better when we have a hard day. (Later, you may need to remind a child that she or he can use GUS and GUSSIE if you notice the child is having a difficult time in class that day. However, avoid making a child use the dolls or puppets.)
  - There is a special place in our room where GUS and GUSSIE will live. (Show the children this place if you have already chosen it. Or, you can have the children select a place where GUS and GUSSIE will live.)
3. Have the children tell GUS and GUSSIE individually something about the class, about themselves, or about the classroom. Explain to them that, after all, GUS and GUSSIE are the “new kids on the block.”  
For example: “GUS and GUSSIE have never been here before, and it is probably very exciting for them to see all these new faces and to be in a new place. Let’s tell them what our class is like and what they can expect in our class.”
4. When the dolls have been thoroughly initiated, you will be the first one to give the dolls a welcoming hug. Then, pass the dolls around the circle so each child can also give them a welcoming hug. If the child does not want to talk to the dolls or hug them, don’t press him or her to do so.
5. When this session is over, make a point of taking GUS and GUSSIE to the place in the classroom that will be their “home.”