

## Body Language 45

### Children

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The study of body language would not be complete without drawing specific attention to the amazing movements of children.

As we mature, human beings pick up all kinds of norms and inhibitions. We no longer exhibit the reckless freedom expressed by young children. Most of that restraint is brought about by adults who teach us to “fit in” and not be wild.

The cultural differences are one sign that a good portion of body language is learned from elders. Young children do not have caution baked into their movements; they are free to express how they feel at any moment, and really don’t care about being “normal.”

If you ask an adult to mimic the movements of a child, you will see it is nearly impossible to do it. Here are some specific ways children’s body language is unique:

#### **Facial delight and wonder**

Kids find it impossible to suppress their glee in their facial expressions. They also have no inhibition for expressing hurt or sorrow.

Adults have learned to partially hide their true feelings most of the time. Still, when conditions are extreme, like in grief, or when winning the lottery, we revert back to wearing our emotions on our faces.

#### **Wiggling**

Kids do not stay still. They need to be moving every part of their body in reaction to what is going on around them.

You can witness the erratic and joyful movements of kids when [hearing a jig](#) played on the violin for the first time. The upbeat music translates into their movements by instinct, and their facial expressions display sheer delight with no inhibitions.

## **Arms**

Children fling their arms out to the extended position at the drop of a hat. It is just part of expressing their feelings with everything they have. Most adults are more restrained with their arm movements, but there are some exceptions, like Elizabeth Warren.

## **Legs and feet**

Particularly in reaction to upbeat music, kids shuffle their feet wildly and get a lot of movement in their rear end. It is as if the music is emanating directly out of the child. They only stop when the music does or when a parent tells them to knock it off.

## **Tumbling**

Since kids are low to the ground, they have no compunction about rolling around on it or the floor. It doesn't matter if it is a type of somersault or a primitive form of break dancing, since kids don't worry about dirt or grass stains, they are free to show emotions by interfacing directly with terra firma whenever they feel like it.

## **Swimming**

Most children love the freedom of swimming or frolicking in the water. The joy comes from the buoyancy of a lower gravitational pull. They act as if they are gliding in space where there is no gravity and they love to discover all kinds of weird positions, much to the alarm of worried parents watching from the side of the pool.

So what is the point of this article? First of all, you can gain a lot by noticing the difference in body language between children and adults. Ask yourself if it would be fun to be as uninhibited as a child, at least in some circumstances.

Don't mock an adult who occasionally reverts to a childlike movement. Celebrate the person for having the courage and flexibility to enjoy life the way a child does. Also, try to allow your children the freedom to move like kids from time to time without imposing adult rules at every moment.

The significant benefit to you is that you have the ability to regain some of the pure joy of living if you allow yourself become unshackled and practice some childlike body language on occasion.

*This is a part in a series of articles on "Body Language." The entire series can be viewed on <https://www.leadergrow.com/articles/categories/35-body-language> or on this blog.*