



# Take a look at more “private speech”

## Talking Away a Worry



Preschool teacher Ms. Patricia notices 4-year-old Maya playing by herself in the classroom’s kitchen area. She has a doll and a stuffed animal and is talking with great animation. Ms. Patricia goes closer and overhears Maya talking in a “grown up” voice for the doll, saying “and I will come right back home.” Ms. Patricia remembers that Maya’s mother mentioned she is going out of town on a business trip. She approaches and picks up the stuffed animal. “I think this little bear’s worried because his mom is going away for a few days.” Maya nods and says, “But she says she’ll be back soon.” “What does the bear think about that?” Ms. Patricia asks. Maya shrugs. “Why don’t you help him talk about it with his mom?” She pretends to make the bear talk aloud to the “mom” doll, then she lets Maya take over and finish the conversation. Soon she sees Maya smiling as she joins the other kids in play.

## Best Buddies

Four-year-old James is best buddies with Reggie at preschool. One day Reggie is absent and James keeps to himself during free time, seeming lost as to what to do. To encourage James to get involved in a fun activity of his choice, his teacher reminds him of fun things that he and Reggie do when they are together. “You can build a zoo for the animals,” she suggests to him. “Remember when you and Reggie did that and the animals all moved in?” The teacher gets a toy lion and makes it “talk” about needing a safe new zoo so it will not be tempted to gobble up people. James laughs, and a little while later his teacher overhears James “talking” for each animal as he uses blocks to build their new homes. When another child in the class finishes a game, she helps the child ask James if he can join in, and James tells him about all the zoo buildings he is making.



## Transition Talk



Four-and-a-half-year-old Maria has difficulty transitioning from one activity to another when she’s at preschool and gets anxious and angry at these times. Her teacher has encouraged her to talk to herself out loud when it is time to switch activities, to help her remember what is coming next. They have a special day planned with a trip to the zoo, so during morning circle time, her preschool teacher asks the class: “Remember what we’re going to do today? First we’ll get on the van and then...” She calls on Maria and waits patiently for her to complete the sentence “Then we are going to drive to the zoo!” Maria says, remembering. “Then what will we do?” the teacher asks her. “Then we will get out and see the animals.” “That’s right!” the teacher tells her. “And class, if anyone feels mad or worried, what should they do?” “Count to ten,” one of the other children says. “Not hit or yell” adds Maria, “just use our words or do our counts.” “You’re right,” her teacher replies, “We’re going to have a really fun day.” The teacher knows this line of discussion helps Maria, because she hears Maria counting or talking quietly to herself when she gets frustrated, instead of hitting the way she did in the past.