

THE SECRET CODE OF
senses

INSTRUCTOR GUIDEBOOK

CODY ROUNDS AND JORDAN P. NOVAK

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INTRODUCTION

The Secret Code of Senses introduces children to the act of developing self-awareness through use of the body. It teaches the importance of our body and senses, how to decipher the sensory signals we receive, and how the body connects to emotions. Children also learn that the body is an effective tool for increasing concentration and intentionally calming an active mind. The goal of the book is to empower children by helping them recognize their ability to regulate their own well-being.

There are many benefits to deepening our awareness and understanding of the body, such as refining motor skills and promoting self-care habits. The body is also an excellent tool for self-regulation, which is the ability to calm ourselves down, stay on task, or cheer ourselves up when needed. *The Secret Code of Senses* introduces a technique called *intentional sensing*. Intentional sensing is the act of purposefully concentrating on a sense or senses in order to redirect our minds away from distractions or overwhelming situations.

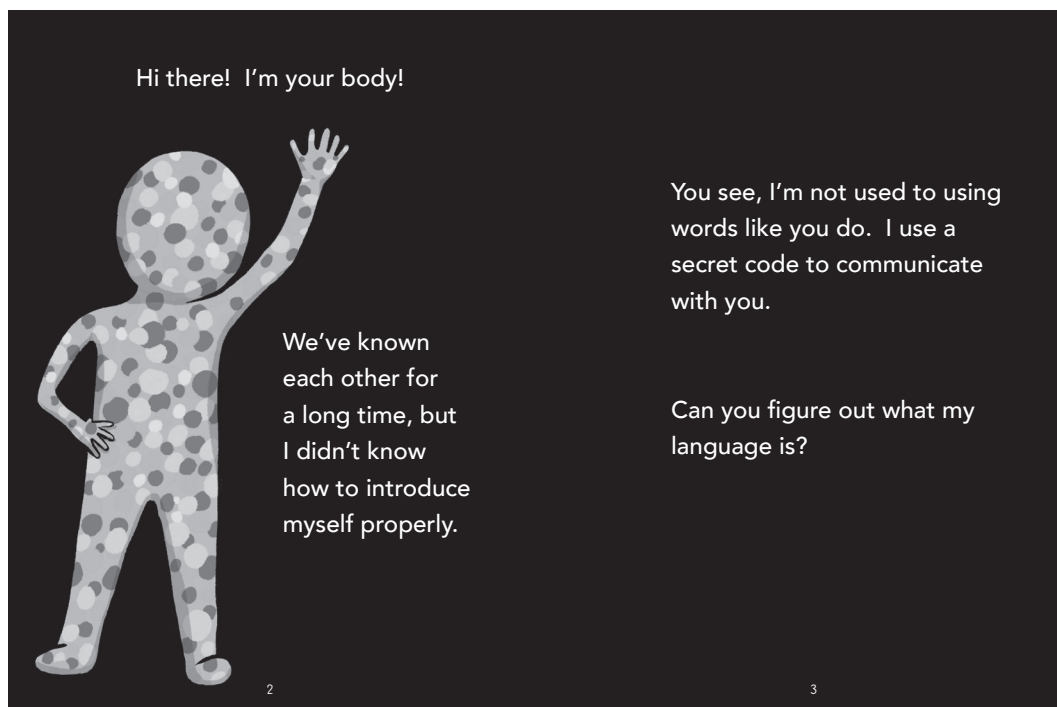
When we get stressed or upset, we experience a fight, flight, or freeze response, which is a physiological reaction that causes nervousness within our minds and bodies. It speeds up our heart rate, makes our breathing shallow, and creates racing thoughts. This makes it difficult to think clearly or act rationally and causes us to feel overwhelmed. Intentional sensing can be used to interrupt this physiological reaction by relaxing the mind and creating mental space to get back on task or settle our emotions.

Intentional sensing should be practiced frequently to become a lifelong tool and an automatic response to stress. While reading the student book, children will learn the information and techniques in a calm environment, but they should be reminded of them in times of stress, distraction, or heightened anxiety. Application opportunities are suggested in this guidebook to encourage practice on a regular basis and to integrate these techniques into the daily routine.

This guidebook provides examples, prompts, and engaging activities as guides, but it is equally important for children to be allowed to use their creativity to come up with their own methods of using the body as a self-regulation tool. Everyone experiences his or her body differently, so allowing children to explore what works for them can be quite effective. Some of the discussion questions included here are designed to allow children room to do so if they wish.

PAGES 2-3

The opening pages of the book introduce the narrator of the book: the body. It is important that children understand this character as their own body as opposed to a generalized body. Seeing their own body as a figure that can communicate with them makes it easier to see it as something other than themselves. This draws a distinction between the body and the mind, allowing children to listen better to their bodily signals, build a relationship to their physical needs, and respond to them with care. Give children the opportunity to guess how their bodies communicate with them.



PAGES 4-8

These pages give hints about how the body communicates through the senses. Here children get to see the functions of our senses and how they help us in the world. Allow children to share their experiences with their senses through the discussion questions below.

Discussion Questions:

1. What senses do we have?
2. What other ways do our bodies communicate with us?
3. What is your favorite sense?
4. What have your senses told you in the past?
5. What are your senses telling you right now?

