

*The* **Activity Catalogue** *for*  
**Child Friendly Spaces**  
*in* **Humanitarian**  
**Settings**



**Psychosocial Centre**



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

**World Vision** 

## Activity Catalogue for Child Friendly Spaces in Humanitarian Settings

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The Toolkit for Child Friendly Spaces in Humanitarian Settings comprises:

- Activity Catalogue for Child Friendly Spaces in Humanitarian Settings
  - Operational Guidance for Child Friendly Spaces in Humanitarian Settings
  - Training for Implementers of Child Friendly Spaces in Humanitarian Settings
- 

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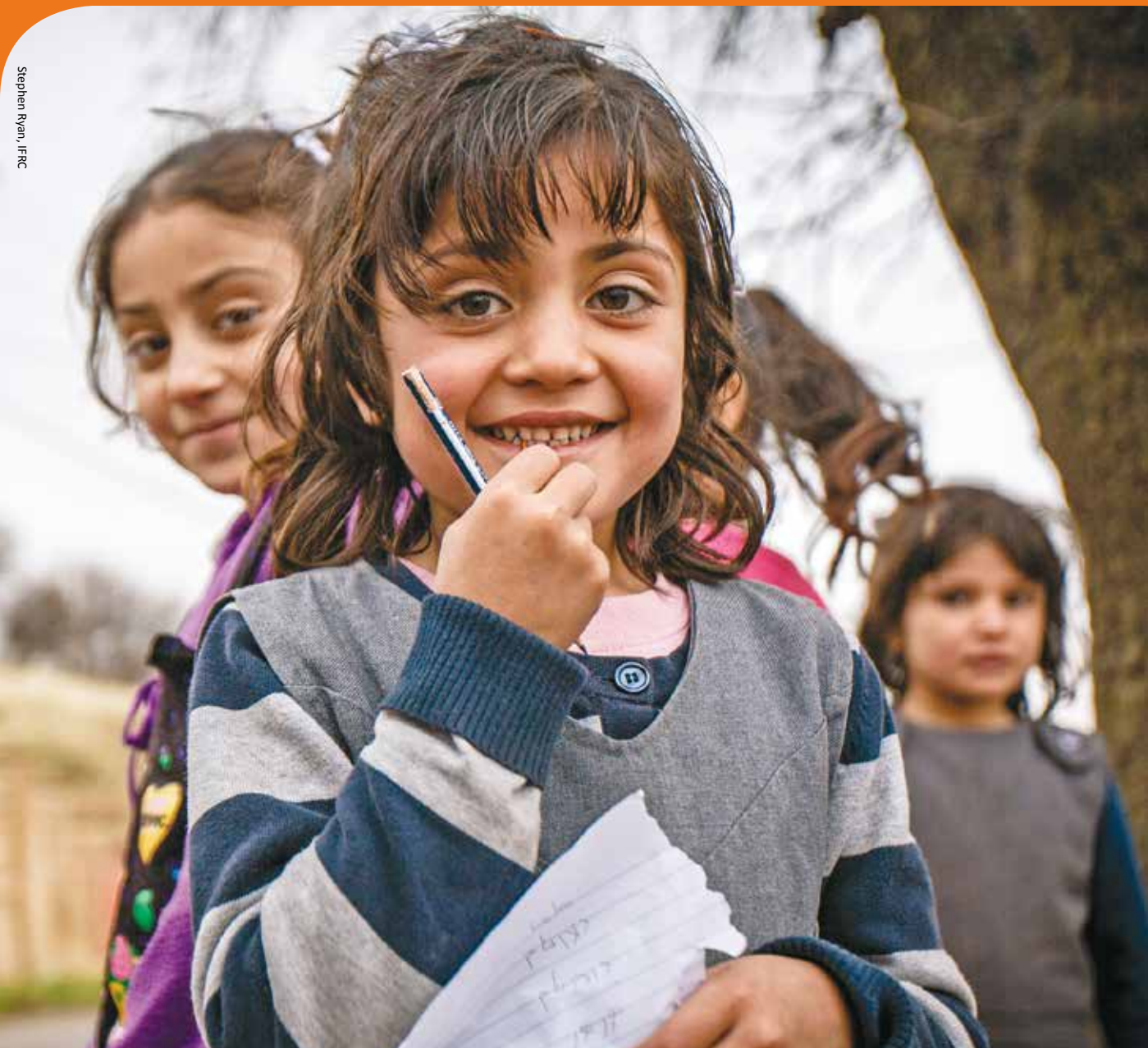
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# A Toolkit for Child Friendly Spaces in Humanitarian Settings



## A Toolkit for Child Friendly Spaces in Humanitarian Settings

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### ‘UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)

Article 19: “Children have the right to be protected from being mistreated, physically and mentally.”

Article 31: “Every child has the right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.”

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**The Toolkit for Child Friendly Spaces in Humanitarian Settings** was developed by the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support and World Vision International. The toolkit provides a set of materials to assist managers and facilitators/animators in setting up and implementing quality Child Friendly Spaces (CFS). These resources have at their core the protection of children from harm; the promotion of psychosocial well-being; and the engagement of community and caregiver capacities. The CFS Toolkit includes:

- Activity Catalogue for Child Friendly Spaces in Humanitarian Settings
- Operational Guidance for Child Friendly Spaces in Humanitarian Settings
- Training for Implementers of Child Friendly Spaces in Humanitarian Settings.

The **Activity Catalogue for Child Friendly Spaces in Humanitarian Settings** provides materials mainly for facilitators/animators responsible for implementing activities in a CFS:

- It features a wide range of easy-to-use resources, including sessions to open, close and review a programme of activities.
- It has a set of seven themed workshops which relate to key aspects of children’s psychosocial well-being. These resources provide structured activities that can be used in a sequence over a set period of time, but are flexible too so that they can be used as standalone sessions, if attendance is fluctuates at a CFS.
- Activities are generally intended for children aged 6-18 years, with some additional resources provided in the annexes for activities targeted to younger children and older children such as adolescents.

The **Operational Guidance for Child Friendly Spaces in Humanitarian Settings** summarises key approaches in the protection of children and in the promotion of their psychosocial well-being. It is directed to CFS managers and facilitators/animators. It has four chapters, addressing the following aspects of setting up and implementing a quality CFS:

- Introduction to CFS
- Setting up a CFS
- Information for CFS facilitators/animators
- Working with caregivers and community members.

The **Training for Implementers of Child Friendly Spaces in Humanitarian Settings** outlines a three-day training for CFS managers and coordinators, addressing the challenges of setting up and implementing quality CFS in diverse circumstances. Using various case scenarios, participants in the training are exposed to realistic demands and equipped to find practical solutions to challenges faced in the field. The training draws on resources from the Operational Guidance for Child Friendly Spaces in Humanitarian Settings and the Activity Catalogue for Child Friendly Spaces in Humanitarian Settings.









We recommend that facilitators and programme managers read the Operational Guidance for Child Friendly Spaces in Humanitarian Settings which accompanies this Activity Catalogue before getting started.

## Introducing the Catalogue

### Using the Catalogue

The catalogue has an introduction which guides facilitators in implementing the activities that are presented here. This includes an orientation to seven psychosocial themes and to supporting activities for CFS (including opening and closing activities, etc.). There is a section on using an activity planning worksheet to help facilitators set out their plans for activities.

There are seven chapters which present each of the psychosocial themes. All the chapters include an introduction to the theme and its psychosocial benefits for children. The activities are then outlined as follows:

Symbol	Description
	Aim of activity
	Time needed
	Ideal age and number of participants Number of facilitators needed for group work
	Setting and materials needed
	Step-by-step instructions
	Reflection points
	Other important issues
	Variations



## Psychosocial Themes

CFS implement activities to promote children's psychosocial well-being and safety. Activities have various aims. They support children in their recovery and management of stressful events. They also develop children's life skills, such as building relationships. They build their resilience and help children cope with their emotions. Very importantly, they also aim to keep children safe from harm.

The seven psychosocial themes in this catalogue are:

- Theme 1. Building Community: "Our Space Together"
- Theme 2. Emotional Learning: "My Feelings"
- Theme 3. Well-being and Coping: "Feeling Good"
- Theme 4. Social Support: "My Friends and Family"
- Theme 5. Relating to Others: "Being a Good Friend"
- Theme 6. Protection and Boundaries: "My Safety"
- Theme 7. Building on Strengths: "All My Supports"

Each theme has a variety of activities. Facilitators can select activities appropriate to the situation of the children in their groups and the humanitarian context. For example, some activities are more energizing and others are more relaxing. Some involve physical exercise and others involve creativity or self-expression. This variety is important for children to learn different types of skills and address the various feelings and challenges they may have.

The themes are presented in a sequence suitable for a group of children coming to a CFS over a period of time. For example, the first theme, 'building community,' features activities for the first few sessions of a programme. They are aimed at helping a new group of children get to know each other and what to expect of the programme. The second theme, 'emotional learning,' takes the children into activities addressing their own feelings. The themed activities are like building blocks that give children a foundation, promoting their psychosocial well-being.

There are, however, situations where the group of children attending a CFS programme is never the same. In this case, facilitators can choose that day's activities based on the specific needs of the children attending, the time available, etc. For example, choosing some relaxation exercises would be helpful for children who need some space to calm themselves. Alternatively, it may be appropriate to use activities from theme 5, 'relating to others,' if some children seem lonely, or if children have come from many different places and they need to make friends. In other words, for children who participate in the CFS for a limited time, it is best to plan activities that are standalone and that meet the needs of the children attending that day.

Some CFS are integrated with other initiatives that have broader aims. For example, CFS are sometimes used as temporary learning spaces. In this case, the activities in this catalogue can be incorporated into the educational curricula being used.

**Activities in a sequence:** Some activities follow a sequence, so that one activity builds upon another. For example, in theme 2, 'Emotional Learning,' there are four activities that follow on from one another: 2.1 'Building the Emotion Wheel' opens the session, 2.2 'Emotions and Behaviours,' follows, then children consider 2.3 'Different Ways to Respond', and finally, the sequence closes with 2.4 'Things To Do When Big Feelings Are In Our Hearts.'

**Activities that can standalone:** Most activities can be implemented anytime. For example, 3.7 'Muscle Relaxation,' or 4.2 'My Garden with Friends,' or 5.10 'Lean on Me', can all be done singly.

It is important to note that these activities are not a form of therapy or counselling. They promote the social support and inclusion of children – factors which build children's recovery from distressing events. They enable CFS facilitators to engage with children about psychosocially supportive topics (or themes), without going into too much depth and potentially causing harm to children.

The activities come from a range of sources, based on therapeutic approaches, art therapy activities, child development and education resources. But they are not intended to have therapeutic outcomes for children with specific mental health needs. This would require specially trained facilitators and helpers and proper supervision.

## Play

Play is crucial to children's well-being. It is therefore important to balance structured activities with free play. Free play can be included as part of a session, or the whole session can be dedicated to free play.

Free playtime does not mean that facilitators stand back and let the children interact without any intervention. Facilitators should engage and interact with children during free playtime. They should encourage children as they play and provide positive feedback about ways that children may be learning. They should be ready to give children ideas for games when needed and enable children of different ages, genders and abilities to have opportunities to participate. (See next section for ideas about adapting activities). It is vital to support children when they face challenges in their games, and in relation to any conflicts that occur.

Facilitators should always supervise children during free play to make sure they are kept safe. It is important too to check that equipment and toys, etc. are clean and safe and that there are enough for the number of children attending.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAY

Play provides lots of ways for children to develop. How children are developing can also be seen in terms of how well they are acquiring language skills, motor skills, thinking and reasoning. Children are active learners, so play is a wonderful context for teaching and learning.

Facilitators and caregivers can learn a lot about children by watching them play. They can then find opportunities to support their development.

Play provides a context for children to try new social skills and challenging new tasks, and to solve complex problems. Children also express their ideas, thoughts and feelings when engaged in symbolic play (such as playing house or market, or building a farm with blocks). They can learn how to control their emotions, interact with others, resolve conflicts, and gain a sense of competence. It fulfills a need for imagination, curiosity and creativity. It can also be a natural way of integrating academic learning, such as maths, science and literacy.

Play enables children to find their place in a culture, and it can provide temporary relief from the hardships they face in day-to-day life. Children who are skilled at play have more power, influence and capacity to create meaningful lives. It helps them to cope with new experiences because a playful attitude enables the mind to explore and remain open to a wide range of possibilities.

Free play that is child-centred and supported by caregivers and facilitators is an essential component of a CFS. A CFS as a play setting can also help children develop an understanding of how communities of people can and should work together.

Skills children learn through play	Examples of children's learning
1. Show initiative to make a plan and follow it through	"First, I'm going to play the new shapes game with my friend, and then I am going to play in the sand box because it's a sunny day."
2. Apply concepts of quantity, science and movement to real life	"If I want to build a really tall building from blocks, first I will have to make a large base." "When I play house, I will need to get three dishes so that my mummy, daddy and baby sister can eat their food."
3. Reason in a logical, analytical manner by acting	"I am going to make a book about my family. The book will need five pages because there are five people in my family. I will colour one page each day, and then I can finish the book this week."
4. Communicate with peers and negotiate differences in points of view	One child goes quickly to the blocks and takes all of them. Two other children arrive and say that they want to also use the blocks. The three children decide to divide the blocks equally among the three of them.
5. Take satisfaction from achievements (a sense of pride)	"Today I found out that I could do things I've never done before, like making shapes with my body, acting my feelings, and using my imagination!" "I can see my artwork on the wall of the CFS. I'm really happy to be part of making our space beautiful."

## Inclusion

It is very important to take account of the gender, age and abilities of the children who attend CFS. For example, facilitators should consider if boys and girls (especially adolescent boys and girls) may interact in activities and within the CFS itself. It may be best to have separate time slots for girls and boys to attend the CFS. This may be more appropriate in certain contexts and will ensure that girls feel comfortable to join and fully participate in the activities. Having different time slots for different age groups may also be useful for tailoring activities to be developmentally appropriate for each subgroup. For example, there could be subgroups for children aged 6-12 years and for teenagers aged 13-18 years.

Most of the main activities described in this catalogue are designed for children of a minimum of 6 years and up to 18 years. Where an activity may be more relevant for younger or older children within this age range, this is indicated in the description. (See Annex 2 for information on other resources for activities for youth and adolescents.)

It is crucial to include children's perspectives of the kind of activities they would like to do. For example, younger children may have a preference for certain games or sports, while older children such as adolescents may prefer discussion groups, theatre or traditional handicrafts. Children should also be able to choose the activities they like best during CFS sessions. For example, once they are familiar with different types of activities, children may enjoy choosing how they would like to open and close the CFS session (e.g., a song, sharing group) or what kind of activity they might like to do for relaxation or energising.

Children can participate in the following ways to develop a sense of leadership and responsibility:

- Children welcome each other
- Children design their own attendance sheets and complete them every time they arrive
- Children are responsible for getting out and putting away equipment
- Completing inventories and checklists
- Proposing and designing activities
- Children checking the condition of the tent and equipment, and record any problems (by colouring in a drawing if they can't write)
- Children preparing snacks and drinks for each other
- Children monitoring the amount of drinking water available and request fill-ups
- Children cleaning and tidying the facility
- Children choosing which toys and equipment to order

*From: WVI (2008) Children in Emergencies Manual*

Activities may need to be adjusted to make sure children of different ages and abilities are able to enjoy their experience in the CFS and participate meaningfully. The variations section in each activity has suggestions for alternative ways of running the activity which might help in making the session suitable for the group of children you have in mind.

Facilitators can use the ideas in STEP to promote inclusion (see the box below). STEP stands for 'Space, Task, Equipment, and People.' It guides facilitators in making changes to the space, or in the task, or in the equipment used, or in how groups are formed so that all children (for example, whether they have special needs or not) can really enjoy and be safe in CFS activities.

## USING 'STEP' TO PROMOTE INCLUSION

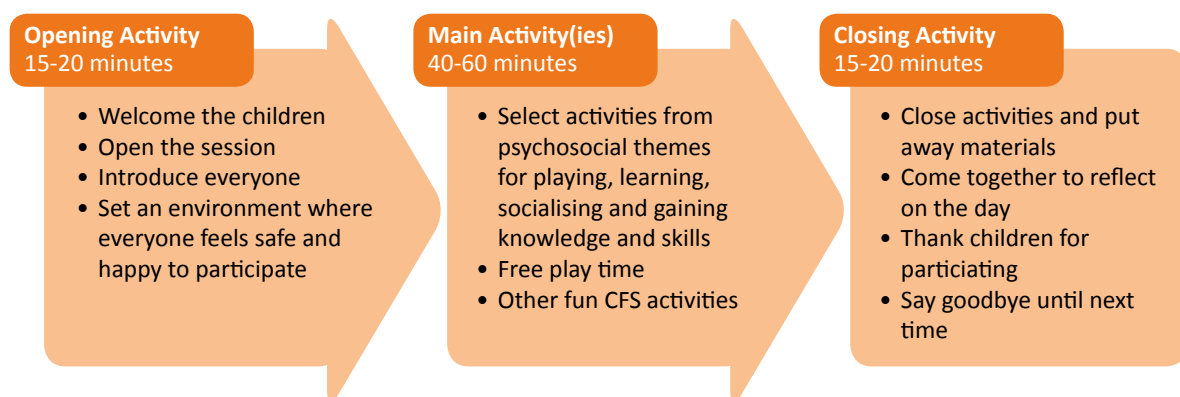
Aspect	Examples of inclusive activities
Space	<p>The CFS space may be a field, gym, tent, an indoor room or outside place. To modify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase or decrease the size of the play area. Less space often makes the activity easier, but sometimes also more intense. A large space often makes the game more challenging.</li> <li>• Vary the distance to be covered in activities to suit different abilities. For example, in an activity involving a race, double the distance that more physically fit children must run in order to level out the difference from those who cannot run as fast.</li> <li>• Use 'zoning' – that is, match participants so that they are playing against others of similar ability. This increases the chance of all children to participate equally.</li> </ul>
Task	<p>Task refers to the rules of a game or the way activities are carried out. To modify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure everyone has equal opportunity to participate. For example, rather than have children run a race to see where only the fast children can "win", give all children a piece of newspaper that they must keep on their chest without using their hands for the whole race. In this way, everybody is running and feels challenged, but the pace doesn't matter to anyone.</li> <li>• Break down complex skills into smaller component parts if this helps children to develop skills more easily.</li> <li>• Ensure adequate opportunity for children to practise skills or components individually or with a partner before moving on to a team game.</li> </ul>
Equipment	<p>Equipment refers to balls, nets, play parachutes, etc. that are needed to do an activity. To modify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In ball games, increase or decrease the size and hardness of the ball to suit the children participating. For example, small and soft balls may be easier to catch for children with smaller hands. A soft ball or balloon can be used instead of a hard ball for children of different physical fitness or who can only use one arm because of injuries or impairments.</li> <li>• Provide options for children to send or receive a ball in different ways; e.g., use a chute or gutter, or roll the ball on the floor.</li> <li>• Use bells or rattle balls to assist children with visual impairments. Or use a piece of tape to wrap an ordinary ball in a plastic bag so that it makes a crackling sound when it is used.</li> </ul>
People	<p>This aspect refers to the characteristics of the children participating in an activity, such as their age, gender, impairments or skills. To modify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Match children of similar characteristics and let them play together or against each other in teams.</li> <li>• Mix people from different groups (such as ethnicities, social groups or gender) in the same team as much as is culturally and socially acceptable. Take care that activities do not enforce unwanted divisions between groups.</li> <li>• Create teams with different numbers of players to even out differences in ability. For example, a team of 5 experienced players against a team of 7 less experienced players.</li> </ul>

*From IFRC Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support (2014) Moving Together: Promoting psychosocial well-being through sport and physical activity.*

## The Activity Planning Worksheet

The activity planning worksheet is a planning tool for facilitators. It is set out to guide decisions about which activities will be implemented. This includes thinking about the materials needed, the number of facilitators required, and any adaptations needed to enable all the children attending to fully participate. See the box below ‘Activity Planning Worksheet’ for details.

A CFS session generally runs for 1 ½ to 2 hours and has the following pattern:



### ACTIVITY PLANNING WORKSHEET

This worksheet is for planning three CFS sessions (generally over one week). Use the questions to think through which psychosocial theme to select, how to plan activities, and to reflect on the session afterwards.

#### **Psychosocial theme(s):**

*Which psychosocial theme(s) is best for the children currently using the CFS? (You may choose one theme or more.)*

*How does this theme(s) fit with what has been done before, and with the mood and the current situation of the children?*

*Do parents and community leaders have any specific preferences or have children articulated any preferences?*

#### **Activities and free play:**

*What activities from this theme will work best for this session (e.g., opening, main, closing, other fun activities)?*

*Would it be useful to add in free play time, or a day of free play?*

#### **For each session:**

*What adaptations may be needed for children in terms of age, genders or ability (e.g., children with physical, mental or developmental disabilities)?*

*What is the ideal number of children for each activity? What will you do if additional children come?*

*What is needed in terms of: materials, set up of the space, number of facilitators and time for each activity?*



**Reflections:**

*How did the session go? Did any surprising or challenging situations arise, and how did you handle them?*

*Did any children need extra support during the session, or referral for more specialised help?*

*Were there ways that children and parents could have been better involved?*

*How did the work go together with co-facilitators and volunteers?*

*Do you need any support or guidance from a supervisor?*

SESSION 1 Psychosocial Theme:	Time	Materials / Space	Adap-tations	# Facilitators
Opening activity:				
Main activity and/or free play:				
Closing activity:				

Reflections:

SESSION 2 Psychosocial Theme:	Time	Materials / Space	Adap-tations	# Facilitators
Opening activity:				
Main activity and/or free play:				
Closing activity:				

Reflections:

SESSION 3 Psychosocial Theme:	Time	Materials / Space	Adap- tations	# Facilita- tors
Opening activity:				
Main activity and/or free play:				
Closing activity:				
Reflections:				
<p><b>Planning notes for the next session:</b></p> <p><i>What theme would work best next time? (This can be a continuation of the same theme):</i></p> <p><i>Are there activities that should be continued or repeated? (For example, an opening song, a game):</i></p> <p><i>What do we need to remember or take into account for next time? (For example, the mood of the children, circumstances, new children arriving, children with disabilities):</i></p> <p><i>Are there ways that community leaders and parents can be supported to become involved?</i></p>				

The Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (CPMS) recommends the following adult-child ratios for CFS:

Two adult facilitators per

- 20 children aged 5 to 9 years
- 25 children aged 10 to 12 year
- 30 children aged 13 to 18 years

At least two facilitators are recommended for each CFS session. Sometimes it will be important to have more facilitators, especially when working with young children. This is also important for activities where children are in smaller groups for discussion or working on something creative (e.g., the emotion wheel). When more facilitators are likely to be needed for a particular activity, this is indicated in the description of the activity.

When children with specific needs are attending sessions, it is vital that there are enough facilitators to enable the children to participate. It may also be helpful to invite caregivers or others who know the child well to support the child in the CFS.

Young children may also attend CFS. Very young children, aged 0-2 years, should always be accompanied by their caregiver. Children aged 3-6 years require additional numbers of facilitators (e.g., 2 facilitators are recommended for 15 children aged 2-4 years).

## Supporting Activities

This section presents different types of supporting activities. These notes are for facilitators with direct contact with children. These include:

- activities for opening a CFS session
- activities for closing a CFS session
- activities for reviewing a CFS session and
- other fun CFS activities.

### Opening the Session

Activities in opening a session are about welcoming the children to the CFS. It is important to set a positive tone even before the session starts by being friendly and warm, as children arrive. Try to learn each child's name and greet them personally, welcoming them to the space. Be sure to introduce yourselves as facilitators as you greet children.

If this is the first time that children are coming to the CFS, give them some direction as to where to sit, when activities will begin, etc. Younger children may need more encouragement and direction and children with disabilities may need extra assistance to come into the space. Make use of co-facilitators to ensure no one is left out and everyone feels welcomed.

If a new child is joining an existing group, orient them to the CFS, and introduce them to the other children. In particular, explain the need for consent from their caregivers to attend the CFS. As the facilitator, you can also invite caregivers to an informational meeting about the CFS. If a child is unaccompanied, refer them to child protection services but invite them to attend the session at the CFS.

Use theme 1 "Building Community" to find activities that enable children to get to know more about each other. It can be helpful to repeat name games over a few sessions with a new group, so that everyone can learn each other's names over time. Name games can be repeated when new children join an existing group, or when different children attend the CFS each time.

Theme 1 also contains activities and information about setting expectations and ground rules for everyone joining the CFS. At the opening of each session, in addition to reviewing names, be sure to review the ground rules and make sure all participants – both new and old participants – understand and agree to the ground rules.

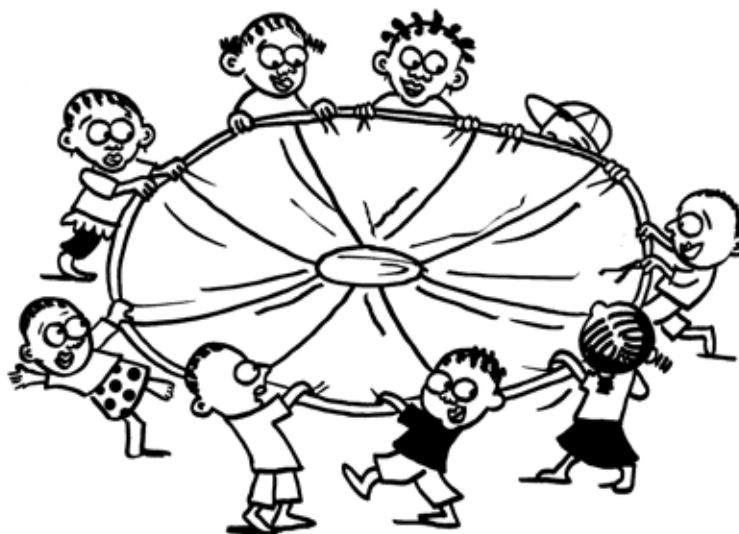
You can also start by asking the children a few simple questions:






- Has anyone ever been to a CFS before?
- What kinds of things do you hope we will do here? (e.g., arts and crafts, games, play and sports)
- (If they are returning to the CFS), who can say what we did in the last session?

Here are some popular games used in many CFS as opening activities:

## OPENING ACTIVITY I

### Opening the Parachute



	<p>The AIM is to open the session, introduce some play and help the children feel comfortable together.</p>	 10 minutes
	<p>Ages: For six years old and above Participants: Any number of participants</p>	
	<p>Materials: Parachute (this can be a play parachute, a parachute made from local materials or an imaginary one) Setting: A space (indoors or outdoors) large enough for all children to stand around the open parachute.</p>	
	<p>Ask the children to stand in a circle. Ask them if they know what a parachute is.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you have a play parachute, spread it on the floor in the centre of the circle and ask the children what they notice about it – its shape, how it is divided into different coloured triangles, etc.</li> <li>• If you are using an imaginary parachute, explain that it is a large, round piece of fabric and walk about the circle showing children how large it is. Describe the colours and how the fabric floats up when we lift it into the air.</li> </ul> <p>Ask the children to gather around the edges of the parachute. For the first session, the children can start introducing themselves by saying their name, age and something they like to do for fun. Have the children hold firmly onto the edge of the parachute or pretend to hold the edge of the pretend parachute. Then tell the children we’re going to shake the parachute together. Encourage the children to repeat what you say (and to do as you do, if using the pretend parachute). The group begins shaking the parachute together, first slowly then quickly while chanting “Shake shake, shake shake, shake shake, stop” four times. Everyone stops shaking each time on the word, “Stop”. Then encourage the children to march round the circle, holding onto the parachute, chanting “Round and round and round and round, stop.” Reverse the direction after they stop.</p>	

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Chant “Into the middle and back away” (4 times, then “Stop”) as you all move close together and then back away.

Chant “Down-up, down-up, down-up, down-up” (4 times, then “Stop”) as you pull the parachute down and then lift it up into the air with arms stretched high.

Then have the children help roll up the parachute while chanting: “We’re rolling up the parachute, the parachute, the parachute, we’re rolling up the parachute and putting it away.”



To reflect on the opening activity, you can ask children:

- How are you today?
- Are you ready for our activities today?
- What do you hope we’ll do today? Answers could be to have fun and to make friends, for example.



For children with mobility issues, you can do the exercises staying in one place and just moving the parachute up and down with their hands.

For children with visual impairments, the parachute exercise can still be done easily with the play parachute. If using an imaginary parachute, it may be helpful to have a long piece of rope that all of the children in the circle can hold.

Children with hearing impairments can follow the gestures of the facilitator.



**Beach Ball Fun:**

- Materials: Beach ball (or other medium sized lightweight ball or balloon), play parachute.
- Place the parachute on the ground.
- Have the children stand around the parachute, then hold firmly onto its edges (or handles if it has them), and lift it up.
- Toss the beach ball in the middle of the parachute.
- Tell the children that their goal is to keep the beach ball in the air without having it fall outside the parachute.
- Finish by having the children set down the parachute, roll it up and put it away.

Note: if you don’t have a parachute, you can draw a circle in the ground or an imaginary circle on the floor and have the children keep a beach ball or balloon in the air within the borders of the circle.

**Parachute Tag:**









- Materials: Play parachute (real or imaginary)
- Have the children lift up the parachute high into the air.
- Call out two children’s names.
- Those children then need to switch places by running underneath the parachute before it comes down on them.

**Mushroom:**

- Materials: Play parachute (real)
- On the count of three children raise their arms and lift the parachute over their heads.
- Then they pull the parachute behind them as they sit down with their bottoms on the edge of the parachute.

## OPENING ACTIVITY 2

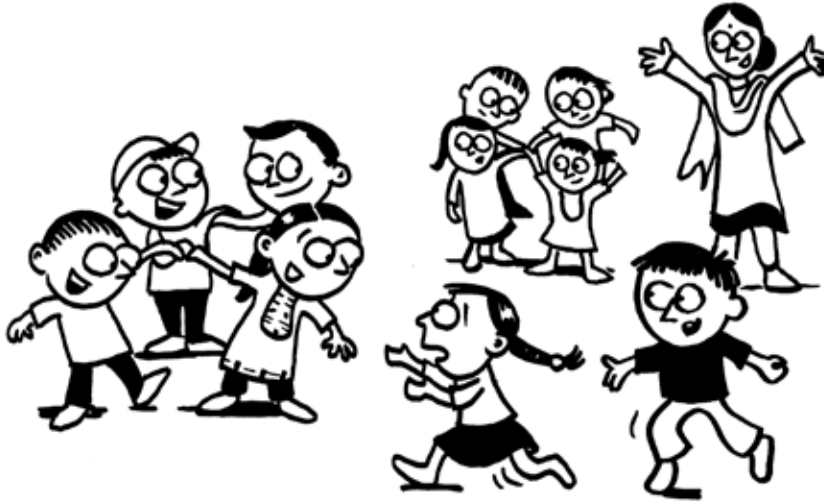
### Line Up Games

	The AIM is to open the session, introduce some play and help the children feel comfortable together.		10-15 minutes
	Ages: For six years old and above Participants: Any number of participants		
	Setting: Any Materials: None		
	<p>In this game, participants will have to form a line according to some characteristics, such as their height, colour of clothing, birthday, age.</p> <p>Tell the children that we're going to play a game to get to know a bit more about each other.</p> <p>Tell them that you will ask them to get into a line according to the instructions you will give. Give each instruction below one at a time, giving children time to get into each new line. When they are in each line-up, check to see that the order is correct (e.g., the tallest to the shortest). Say;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Line up from the tallest person on one end to the shortest person on the other</li> <li>• Line up by the colour you are wearing today (clothing colour, for example, light to dark clothing)</li> <li>• Line up by age, with the oldest on one end and the youngest at the other</li> <li>• Line up in alphabetical order using your first name</li> <li>• You can make up other instructions depending upon the age, interests and abilities of the children and the context</li> </ul>		
	<p>To reflect on this activity, ask the children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What did you like about this activity?</li> <li>• What did you learn about each other?</li> <li>• What do you notice about new people when you meet them for the first time?</li> </ul>		
	<p>You can give instructions about things that are visible (such as height) or not visible (such as age, children's names in alphabetical order). However, avoid any instructions about issues that might be sensitive to children, such as their weight, ethnicity, skin colour, etc.</p>		
	<p>For older children and adolescents, you can make a rule stating that participants may not talk to each other during the activity to make it more challenging.</p> <p>You can also divide into two teams who then compete to be the fastest in lining up.</p>		



## OPENING ACTIVITY 3

## Mingle Mingle



The AIM is to open the session, introduce some play and help the children feel comfortable together.



10 minutes



Ages: For six years old and above  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: Any  
Materials: None



In this game, participants have to form groups of different sizes and must think quickly. Explain to the children that this game is about “mingling” with as many different children as possible in the CFS. If they don’t know what mingling is, explain that it is when we come together with each other to get to know one another.

Explain that there are two main instructions for the game:

The first instruction is “Mingle, mingle.” Now let the children practise walking around the space randomly, repeating the words, “Mingle, mingle.”

Now say, “Who wants to mingle?” Ask the children to answer, “I want to mingle.” Practise a few times.

The second instruction is “Mingle plus a number.” Explain the children need to get into groups of that number. So “Mingle 4” means children must get into groups of four. Practise this with the children.




They may find that there are children who can’t join a group of 4. Explain that these children can form their own group of any number.

Now put the two instructions together: Call out “Mingle, mingle” and the children again begin walking around the space randomly until you call a new “Mingle” with a different number. Call out a different number each time.

When children have formed groups, have them find out something they have in common (e.g., favourite colour) before they mingle again.

If you like, you can start again and instruct the children to find groups with people that they were not in a group with the first time.

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	<p>To reflect on this activity, you can ask the children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did you like this activity?</li> <li>• How many different children did you get into groups with?</li> </ul>
	<p>Make sure that participants don't choose the same groups each time. Remind them that the point of the game is to mingle with as many different children as possible. If just one child is left over, the child can join any group. If you notice that the child is shy or keeping back in some way, you can see if they want to mingle with one of the groups, or you can form a little group with them yourself, so that they don't feel left out.</p>
	<p>A child with mobility impairments may be able to stay in one place, while others mingle around him or her. Be sure to encourage the group to find ways such as this, in order to be inclusive of all children.</p>

### Closing the Session

The closing of the session is the time when children come back together again, if they were doing small group work or some creative activity by themselves. Coming back together as a group to end the session helps the group to feel connected. It gives everyone a chance to reflect together on what they have learned and experienced in the CFS that day.

The signal for closing the session is to first have the children tidy up the space. This includes putting away any materials or toys they have been using. Be encouraging and praise children as they tidy up, and emphasise to them that this is our space together, so it is nice to keep it neat and clean.

Then bring the children together in a circle. You can ask the children to explain what they did together today, what they learned and if they had any new experiences they would like to share. You can ask for feedback on the session, such as:

- What did you like or didn't like?
- What did you find easy to do? What did you find difficult?
- What felt enjoyable? Did anything make you feel uncomfortable?









Praise the children for things they did that day, such as lovely artwork, working together cooperatively, making sure everyone was included, etc. You can also do a short closing activity (see below for ideas). Over time, you and the children may develop a ritual for closing such as singing a closing song.

Tell them when you will meet again for the next session, and say goodbye to the children as they leave the space.

If any children were distressed during the session, or if you have concerns about any child's safety or well-being, be sure to follow up with the child, caregivers or referral resources, as appropriate.






## CLOSING ACTIVITY I

## Sensitive Hand Squeeze

	The AIM is to close the session, bringing children together to remind them they have a community of friends in the CFS.		10 minutes
	Ages: For six years old and above Participants: Any number of participants		
	Setting: Any Materials: None		
	Ask the children to stand in a circle holding hands. A hand squeeze is sent around the circle from one child to the next. If the child squeezes the hand once it means continue the direction; if a child squeezes the hand twice, it means reverse the direction, so that the hand squeeze goes around the circle in the opposite way. Continue until the hand squeeze has come around the circle in both directions a couple of times.		
	To reflect on the closing activity, you can ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How is it to communicate through our hands?</li> <li>• How does it feel to know we are all connected in this group?</li> </ul> If appropriate to the culture and context, you can refer to the hand squeeze as the “pulse” of the group where we are all connected through our hearts, minds and spirits. You can emphasise how important it is to have a support group and be connected within the life of community.		
	In some cultures, it is inappropriate for girls and boys to hold hands. (See below for variations on this game.)		
	In cultures where boys and girls do not hold hands, it is advisable to have two separate groups, one for boys and one for girls. Another variation, particularly with large numbers of children, is to have two or more circles.		

## CLOSING ACTIVITY 2

## Cleaning and closing the parachute

	The AIM is to close the session in a safe way, and help children to shake off tension.		10 minutes
	Ages: For six years old and above Participants: Any number of participants		
	Materials: Play parachute (real or imaginary) Setting: A space (indoors or outdoors) large enough for all children to stand around the open parachute.		
	<p>Have the children stand around the real or imaginary parachute.</p> <p>Say to the children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Imagine and visualize that any uncomfortable or unpleasant feelings or thoughts you have – like any worries or stress – are covering you like a green slime.</li> <li>• Now we want you to pretend to remove the slime and throw it on the parachute.</li> <li>• Have the children pretend they are washing themselves clean and wiping off their slime into the parachute.</li> </ul> <p>Now say:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before we close our parachute, we need to clean up all the uncomfortable or unpleasant feelings that we just put in it. It's now really heavy and dirty with all the emotions we dumped inside, so we are going to make it light and clean again.</li> <li>• We're going to lift it up and down until the parachute isn't heavy anymore.</li> </ul> <p>Ask the children to lift the parachute with their two hands and act as if you are lifting something very heavy.</p> <p>Lift it up and down, ten times, counting all together loudly, acting as if the things in the parachute are getting lighter and lighter, and then put it back on the floor.</p> <p>Now ask the children to stand in two lines, facing each other on two sides of the parachute, then together roll it, fold it and place it somewhere safe. (Children can pretend to roll up the parachute if it is imaginary.)</p>		

### Reviewing Activities

Here is a range of activities that can be used to review what children have learned and accomplished together in the CFS. A review activity helps to remind children of all they have accomplished, talked about and done together in a session. It can also reinforce new things they have learned, for example, about cooperation, teamwork, self-confidence.

Review activities can be used at the beginning as part of opening a session, in the middle of the session or after breaks, or at the conclusion of each day as part of closing activities. Sometimes this kind of activity can be a positive energizer for when the group needs a break.

You can choose to have children review the session they have just done or wait until they have completed several sessions. The timing of reviews depends on whether you have a group of children attending the CFS over a period of time or not.

There are many ways of reviewing what children have learned and experienced. There are two sets of activities listed here.

- The first set of activities (A) are suitable for younger children or children who cannot read or write.
- The second set of activities (B) are aimed at children who have some basic literacy skills. (If children draw responses rather than write about them, it may also be possible to use these activities for children who are unable to read or write).

Use the following ideas as inspiration and try coming up with your own!

## A. Reviewing without reading and writing

### Statues

In an open space, ask the children to follow you in different body movements (e.g., hopping on one leg, walking on tippy-toes, crab-walking, stretching movements) then call out “STOP!” Choose a child and ask them a question about what they remember from the previous session (something they learned or did).

### Circle

In a circle, ask the children to say one thing that they remember from the previous session. They must say something not yet said by anyone else. If they cannot think of anything to say, they can say “Pass.”

Alternatively, you can ask children at the end of an activity or session to say one word about what they will take away from the activity/session (e.g., “togetherness”, “cooperation”).

### Learning in Images

Around the room, stick an image from a newspaper or magazine on large pieces of flip-chart paper. Be sure that the image you select is one that is not distressing to children (e.g., no images of violence, no pictures of a recent disaster). Ask the children to go to each image and describe what that image reminds them of as it relates to their learnings so far. Try to find images that relate to the games they have played, such as footprints (1.7 Our Footprints and Handprints), trees (3.3 Tree in the Wind) or eggs (6.1 Make an Egg).

### True/False

Have all the children stand up. Make statements about things they have learned in the CFS and ask them to place their hands on their head if they believe it to be true, and their hands on their hips if they believe it to be false. If a child gets a statement incorrect, they sit down. Gradually make the statements harder, until only one child is standing who can help the others to remember the many things they have learned together.

### Imagery

Divide into groups of three or four and give each group a topic of something they have learned so far. Ask the groups to draw a poster about that topic, using only images and/or symbols – no words allowed. Review each group’s poster in the plenary (or use a ‘café style’ walk around).

### Learning Dance

Divide the children into three or four groups. Ask the children to act or create a dance, movement or gesture that relates to something positive they learned in the session. Have each group demonstrate to the others. If you have time, you can ask the other groups to learn the movement or dance created by each group.

## B. Reviewing with reading and writing

### **Brainstorming Against the Clock**

This is often best for later in a programme where there have been lots of activities over an extended period of time. Have the children come together in groups of three or four with a piece of large paper and markers. Give them five minutes to list as many things they have learned as possible from their time in the CFS. Then look at all the lists and see which group has come up with the most unique things they have learned. This group gets the chance to, for example, lead the next energizer activity or to be first in line for morning tea.

### **Paper Ball Fight**

Each child writes down a question about something they have learned (either in the session they have just done or in previous ones so far). Ask them to gently scrunch up the paper to form a ball (but make sure it can still be opened and read!) Form a standing circle. Call out “Paper ball fight” and let the children throw their paper balls at one another in the circle (playfully rather than aggressively). Ask each child to keep one ‘paper ball’. Go around the circle and ask each child to open their paper ball and read out their question and then to give an answer.

### **“Read all about it” Newspaper Article**

Pre-prepare five or six topics that reflect the activities the children have done and what they might have learned. Ask the children to form small groups of four and to make a newspaper article about their topic. Give them a large piece of paper and ask them to write the headline for the article, draw a picture to go with it, and then write a short article. You can then display the news articles in the room for others to read during breaks.

### **Alphabet**

Sitting in a circle, go around the group, starting with “A” and ask each child to say something they have learned or achieved that begins with that letter of the alphabet. Keep going around the whole group until the whole alphabet has been said, allowing children to help one another if they cannot think of something.

### **Laundry Line**

Give each child two clothes pegs (or whatever is to hand that will attach cards to a line) and two coloured cards. Explain that whenever they learn something new, they can write (or draw) what they learned on their cards. Encourage children to pin their card to the “laundry line” (a piece of string or rope mounted in the space, e.g., two ends taped to a wall, or tied between tree branches) whenever they feel comfortable to do so during the session. Towards the end of the session, encourage the children to share with the group what is on the cards they pinned to the laundry line.

### **Other Fun CFS Activities**

Using other fun activities alongside the main psychosocial activities helps to balance the session with movement and/or relaxation and keep a fun and playful atmosphere. Fun activities are the same as any other type of activity in CFS – they should provide a safe, fun, inclusive and participatory experience for all the children involved. Remember to take account of children’s age, gender, culture and abilities so that everyone can participate comfortably.



Wherever possible, look for local caregivers and community members who would be willing to share special skills or tell stories and sing songs in the CFS, etc. See what is locally available and appropriate for children to bring to the CFS from within their own communities. For example, local craftspeople may be willing to teach their craft to the children, or a local firefighter may be willing to talk about what they do. If this is arranged, it is important to appropriately screen anyone who comes to the CFS.

There is an enormous range of fun activities that can be used in CFS. Some of them depend on materials or equipment being available. They include:

- Icebreakers – activities that help children to get to know one another and feel comfortable together)
- Energizers – physical activities to release tension and encourage movement
- Group sports and games
- Arts and crafts – such as drawing, colouring, knitting, making local toys
- Cultural activities – such as traditional song and dance, celebrating local holiday rituals
- Gardening
- Group education – activities that help children learn about, e.g., child rights, hygiene
- Basic literacy and numeracy
- Storytime – such as storytelling, reading to children, or time for children to read if books are available
- Science experiments
- Supervised free play time

Here is a list of other fun CFS activities that you can use alongside the main psychosocial activities in a CFS session.

### **Clapping Name Game**

The leaders starts clapping in a rhythm. To this rhythm the leader calls out their own name, and then calls out someone else's name. For example, the line could be in alphabetical order of their given name. This continues until everyone's name has been called.

### **Names in Order**

Tell the children that this is a silent game. Ask them to stand up and try to form a line in the order of their names, without talking. For example, the line could be in alphabetical order of their given name. When they are all lined up (still no talking!), they can say their names one by one along the line and see if they are in the right place.

### **Coconut**

The facilitator shows the group how to spell out C-O-C-O-N-U-T by using full movements of the arms and the body. Then all participants try this together.

### **Body Writing**

Ask the children to write their name in the air with a part of their body. They may choose to use an elbow, for example, or a leg. Continue in this way, until everyone has written his or her name with several body parts.

### **The Sun Shines On**

The children sit or stand in a tight circle with one person in the middle. The person in the middle calls out, "The sun shines on..." and names a colour or articles of clothing that

some in the group possess. For example, if the person says, “The sun shines on all those wearing blue,” everyone wearing blue has to try to change places with one another. The person in the middle tries to take one of their places as they move, so that there is another person left in the middle without a place. The person in the middle shouts out “The sun shines on...” and continues the game.

### **Animal Reunion**

Divide the children into two groups in a large space, and ask the children to “put up their bumpers.” This means putting their hands up, palms away from their body to protect themselves from bumping into something. Then the children all close their eyes or are blindfolded (if they are comfortable to do so). Explain to the children you will whisper the name of an animal in each child’s ear. As the facilitator, you will give the same animal to a child in each of the two groups – so there are two dogs, two goats, two cows, two chickens, etc. – one in each group. Ask the children to slowly walk around, making the sounds that represent their animal. They need to find their animal partner without using words. Once they find their partner, they stand quietly together and can open their eyes and watch the rest of the group unite. At the end, you can ask each pair to say what their animal is.

### **Supermarket**

Tell the children we’re going shopping in the supermarket. Explain we’re going to buy something from each letter in the alphabet, starting with the letter “A” and so on. The first child says, “I went to the supermarket to buy “an Apple” (or any other object you can buy there that begins with “A”). The next child repeats the sentence including the “A” word and adds a “B” word. Each player recites the sentence with all the alphabet items, adding one of his or her own. For example, “I went to the supermarket to buy an Apple, Banana, Cookies, Dates, Eggs, Fish, and so on.” Children can ask for help from the group with difficult letters such as “Q” and “X”. Keep going around the circle (even if some children respond more than once) until you reach the letter “Z”.

### **Rainstorm**

Tell the children we are going to make a rainstorm. Everyone sits quietly in a circle, waiting for the facilitator’s first movement. The facilitator rubs their palms together to create the sounds of rain. The person to their right makes this sound, and then the next person until everyone in the group is making the same sound. Once everyone is rubbing palms, the facilitator makes the rain sound louder by snapping their fingers, and that sound in turn is passed around the circle. Then the facilitator claps both hands together, and that sound is passed around the circle to create a rainstorm. Then the facilitator slaps their thighs, and the group follows. When the facilitator and the group stomp their feet, the rain becomes a hurricane. Then it is time to calm the storm. Now the facilitator goes through the actions again, starting with thigh slapping, then hand clapping, finger snapping, palm rubbing, and ending in silence.

### **Stand, Sit and Sing**

Participants sit in a circle and sing a song they all know. Choose two words that occur frequently in the song, and ask the girls to stand up when they sing one of the words, and the boys to stand up when they sing the other word.

### **Fact or Fiction**

Ask everyone to write down three things about themselves, two of which are true. Ask them to read them out in turn and then invite the group to vote which are true or false. This usually works best in a small group.

### **Add Words**

The first person says a word (e.g. “The”). The 2nd person says the first word and adds a second word of their choice, and so on. At the end, you might have a complete sentence.

### **Country/Village Names**

Take names of countries/villages that children are familiar with and write them down on pieces of card or paper. Then cut the names in half or thirds. Give the halves or thirds to different children. They then have to find their partner to form their country/village.

### **Backward Clumps**

Divide the children into pairs. Each pair sits on the floor with their partner, backs together, feet out in front and arms linked. Their task is to stand up together. Once everyone has done this, ask two pairs to sit on the floor back to back and link arms. Now ask the groups of four to try to repeat the task. Once they succeed, add another two and try again. Keep adding people until the whole group is trying to stand together!

### **Group Statues**

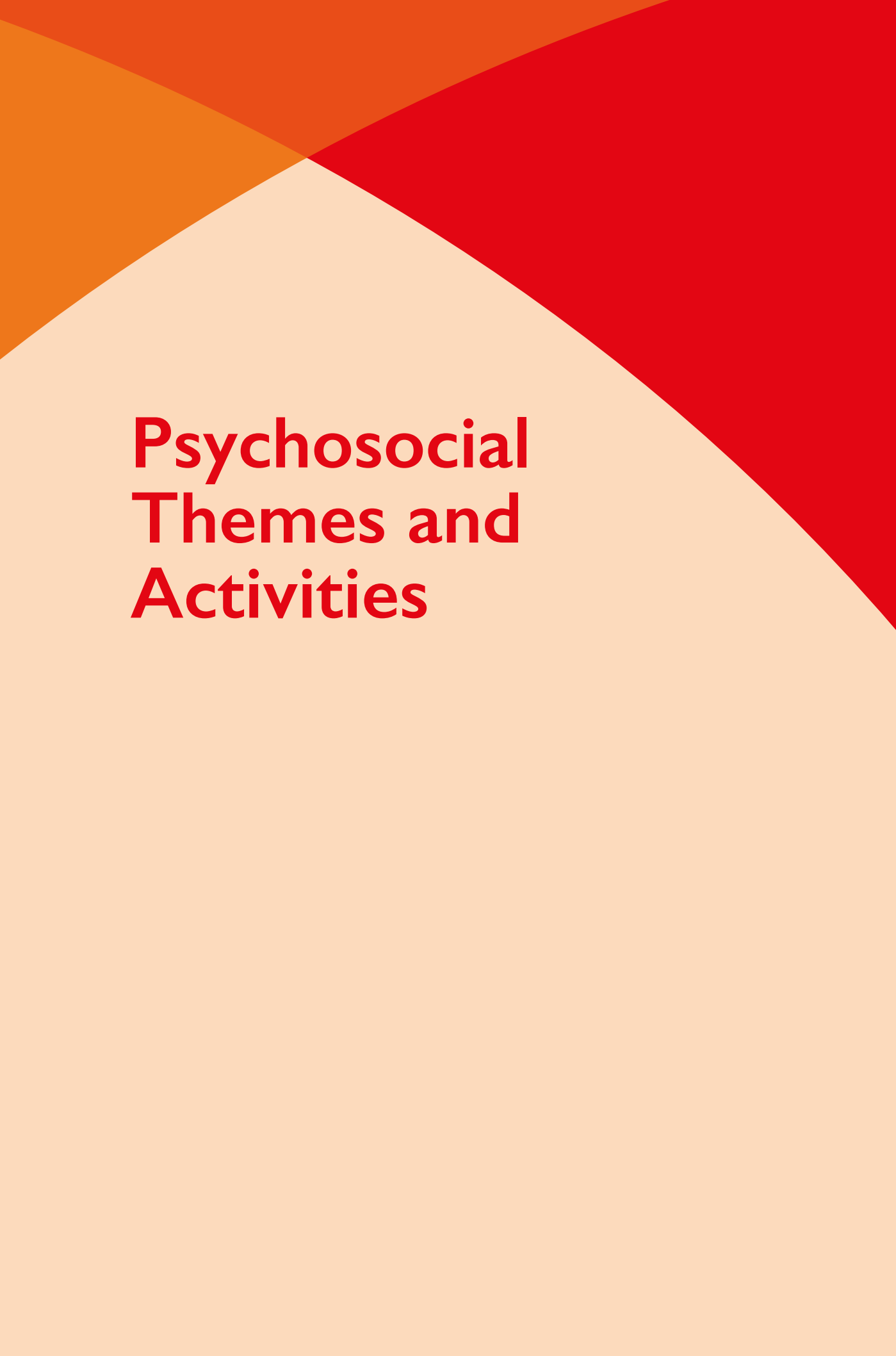
Have the children move around the room, gently swinging their arms and gently relaxing their heads and necks. After a short while, shout out a word. The children stop moving and form themselves silently into statues that describe the word. For example, you can call out “Peace” and all the children make a pose that show what peace means to them. Repeat the exercise several times using different words.

### **The Human Chair**

Ask everyone to stand in a circle with their shoulders touching. Each person then turns to the right to face the back of the person in front of them. Ask them to place their hands on the shoulder of the person in front. On the count of three they slowly begin to sit down on the lap of the person behind. As long as everyone is helping the person in front of him or her to sit, then everyone should be supporting the weight of everyone else. If someone falls, the game becomes ‘human dominoes.’ It might take a couple of attempts to complete the challenge.

### **‘Prrrr and Pukutu’**

Ask everyone to imagine two birds. One calls “prrr” and the other calls “pukutu”. If you call out “prrr”, all the children need to stand on their toes and move their elbows out sideways, as if they were a bird ruffling its wings. If you call out “pukutu”, everyone has to stay still and not move a feather.

The background features a large, abstract shape in the upper half, resembling a stylized mountain or a large letter 'A'. This shape is divided into three distinct color sections: a bright orange section on the left, a vibrant red section on the right, and a cream-colored section at the bottom. The lower half of the page is a solid, light cream color.

# **Psychosocial Themes and Activities**

# Building Community: “Our Space Together”



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1

## 1. Building Community: “Our Space Together”

Type	Activity	Time Needed
Name games and group rules	1.1 “Pass the Ball” Name Game	10-20 minutes
	1.2 What We Expect from Each Other	20 minutes
	1.3 Our Names are Unique	15 minutes
Group identity games	1.4 Our Favourite Things	10 minutes
	1.5 Making the Space Ours	20-40 minutes
	1.6 Group Song	25 minutes
Personal identity games	1.7 Our Footprints and Handprints	20 minutes
Fun exercise to get to know each other	1.8 Things We Have in Common	15 minutes

This theme, “Building community,” is a good starting point for working with a new group of children in a CFS, or for helping to include new children into an existing group. The activities are designed to help children feel welcome, safe and included, and to get to know each other and the facilitator(s) in a relaxed way. It enables children to understand the rules for the CFS and expectations for appropriate behaviour so that everyone feels safe.

“Building community” has the following psychosocial benefits for children:

- The activities strengthen basic social and communication skills.
- The activities promote children’s self-esteem in being recognised and included in the group.
- The activities encourage children to behave in a pro-social manner (e.g. behaviour that is socially appropriate, cooperative, non-violent and helps to build relationships with others).
- The activities enable children to relax in social situations, especially in a new situation and/or with new people.
- The activities reinforce the importance of rules and boundaries.

You don’t have to use all the activities in one session. Choose from the list to find the ones that seem most relevant to the sessions you are planning. For example, you may be planning to build community in a new group or you may have some new children coming to the CFS. For the very first session, you could choose:

- 1.1 ‘Pass the ball’ (a name game) and 1.2 ‘What we expect from each other’ (the group rules activity)
- Plus 1.5 ‘Making the space ours’ (a group identity game) and 1.8 ‘Things we have in common’ (a fun exercise.)

For the second session, you could try a different name game, point out the group rules developed in the first session, and then choose another group or personal identity game and fun exercise.



## 1.1 Pass the Ball Name Game



The AIM of this activity is for children to learn each other's names in a fun way.



10-20 minutes (depending upon the number of children attending)



Ages: For six years old and above (modifications suggested below)  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: Any  
Materials: A ball or other soft object to throw



1. Ask the children to sit or stand in a circle and explain that they are going to play a game to learn each other's names.
2. Give one of the children a ball and ask them to say their name and then pass the ball to another person.
3. The next person says his or her name and passes the ball again.
4. The exercise continues until everyone has had a chance to receive the ball and say their name.
5. Now ask the children to begin throwing the ball to one another. Explain that this time when a child throws the ball, the whole group should call out the name of the child catching the ball. If the group cannot remember that child's name, they can call it out to remind the rest of the group. Instruct the children to throw the ball randomly around the circle.
6. Continue with the game until everyone who wishes to has taken part.



Make sure all the children who would like to participate get a chance to say their names. Some children may be shy or withdrawn, depending upon their experiences. If a child does not want to participate, do not force them. They can still be in the circle with the others if they like.



This game can be made more challenging, particularly for older children. For example, in the second round (once everyone has said their name in the first round), you can:

- Ask the person catching the ball to call out the name of the person who threw it.
- Ask the person throwing the ball to call out their own name and the name of the person to whom they are tossing the ball.
- Ask the person catching the ball to call out 1) the name of the person who threw the ball, 2) their own name, and 3) the name of the person to whom they are tossing the ball.

Be sensitive to children who are living with disabilities and may not be as mobile as other children. For example, an alternative to throwing the ball is to have children roll the ball across the floor to each other.



## 1.2 What We Expect from Each Other



The AIM of this activity is to agree group rules for the sessions.



20 minutes



Ages: For six years old and above  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: Quiet enough for everyone to talk together and hear each other  
Materials: Markers (or felt-tip pens/paints), flip charts or paper or canvas, tape or tacks



1. Ask the children to sit in a circle.
2. Share with the children how you are happy that they are here and excited to be doing these sessions with them. During these sessions, say that we will play and have fun, and will also sometimes talk and share feelings about what we have experienced, about our lives and our dreams for the future.
3. At this point, you can give children general information about the CFS, such as when it is open, how long each session is, when they are expected to come, and so on. Consider posting this information in the CFS for the children and their caregivers to refer to (e.g., create a poster).
4. Explain that in order to make the sessions safe and fun for everyone, it is important that everybody, as a group, agrees on how to treat each other. So together we will agree on 'ground rules' during the sessions.
5. On a piece of flip chart paper, write 'ground rules' across the top.
6. Ask the children to brainstorm with you what they think are good ground rules. Remember to let the children set the ground rules and expected behaviour themselves. In this way, they feel involved in the process and more responsible to respect the rules they create for their group.
7. It is important that you as facilitators agree with the rules children suggest, and to help them constructively to ensure the rules are appropriate.
8. Once the children have finished, review the list of rules. If any of the ground rules below are not included, ask the children if you can add whichever ones are relevant. As you add them, explain what they mean and why you are adding them:
  - Use only kind words
  - Everyone can speak and share ideas, but no one has to speak or share ideas if they don't want to
  - Everyone is safe and respected, inside (emotionally) and outside (physically)
  - Boys and girls are equal
  - Everyone can play (no one is left out)
  - Play fair (follow the rules)
  - Help others when they need help
  - Treat others the way you would like to be treated
  - Everyone is responsible to keep the CFS neat and tidy
  - Respect everyone's privacy (including not taking photos of each other with cell phones or other cameras, if children have them).
9. Once the ground rules and behaviours have been agreed, ask the children what consequences there should be if someone breaks the rules. It is important that children understand that there are consequences for breaking the rules. However, also explain that the facilitator(s) will be the ones to give out any consequences, and the children should not do this themselves. Reassure the children that consequences will never involve hitting, hurting or humiliating a child, and that you will always explain why there is a consequence. (The consequences should be appropriate and acceptable, such as asking a child who breaks the rules to take a time out.) Emphasise that the ground rules and behaviours are to help all the children participate and enjoy the space together.
10. Say: Now that we have agreed on these rules, let's all sign the flip chart to say we commit to these rules.
11. Hang the flip chart where the children can see it whenever they come to the CFS. Since this will be an important poster for the whole programme, it might be helpful to protect it from getting dirty or torn.



Once the rules are posted on the wall of the CFS, be sure to mention them at the start of each session, and ask children to explain the rules to newcomers.

You may also need to refer to the rules at different times during activities with children in the CFS to remind them of our agreement with each other for a safe and fun space for everyone.

Consider what consequences may be appropriate for children who break the rules. This will depend upon the situation, the severity of the behaviour (e.g., violence), and the child themselves in terms of any personal difficulties that might require extra assistance to help them follow instructions and keep to the rules. For example, some children may have difficulty following rules because of developmental problems or other reasons, and they may need more attention from facilitators to help them in their behaviour. It is important not to shame any children in the CFS, including those who may have broken a ground rule. In this way, the CFS remains a safe space for everyone and the value of the commitments to each other are reinforced. Hitting or hurting a child is NEVER an appropriate consequence.



There are several variations on this activity for children of different ages. Most of the activities listed need facilitators to prepare materials ahead of time:

For young children, you may need to make extra suggestions to help them think of rules.

Create a symbol or picture for each rule to make it more fun for children, and to help those who may not read and write well to remember the rules.

Older children and adolescents may be able to work on the ground rules in more detail by coming up with behaviours that relate to each ground rule. Extra instructions for this option are explained here:

1. After welcoming the children and introducing the session (as above), explain that it is important that everybody, as a group, agrees on how to treat each other. Say: So together we will agree on 'ground rules' and 'acceptable behaviour' during the sessions.
2. Draw a line down the centre of a piece of flip chart paper. On the left-hand side write 'ground rules' and on the right, write 'our behaviour'.
3. Ask the children to brainstorm with you what they think are good ground rules. For each ground rule, ask them to discuss and agree on what behaviour is expected for this rule. For example, if a ground rule is 'to respect one another', they need to agree on what behaviour is needed for this, such as 'we will listen to one another' or 'we will not use bad language.' Note that there may be more than one behaviour for each ground rule.
4. The activity continues as above, with the older children and adolescents committing to the ground rules and behaviours they developed together.

The following instructions provide an alternative to the above exercise with older children and adolescents:

1. Explain to older children and adolescents that the CFS is a space for them to be together respectfully. To be together in a good way, we have to have group rules and acceptable behaviours.
2. Cut out a large canvas or card into puzzle shapes. Divide up the children into the same number of pieces of the puzzle.
3. Ask each group to choose a rule and an acceptable behaviour and design their puzzle piece according to the rule and acceptable behaviour. They can choose to use a combination of words or pictures (e.g., creating a collage).
4. Bring the final pieces together into one large puzzle and discuss the completed piece as a whole.
  - A variation for closing this activity is to create 'a circle of trust.' Give each child a piece of fabric or coloured rope. Ask them to create a circle of trust by tying the loose ends of their fabric with those of the children next to them on either side. The circle of trust represents the commitment among group members to keep the ground rules (and behaviours) that they have agreed to.

## 1.3 Our Names are Unique



The AIM of this activity is to promote a feeling of being unique and to help children get to know each other.



15 minutes



Ages: For six years old and above

Participants: A smaller group of about 15-20 participants (see variations below for large groups)



Setting: Any

Materials: Paper or card to make name cards. String. Markers (or felt-tip pens, paints or crayons)



1. Ask children to sit in a circle comfortably.
2. Start the activity with the following introduction:
  - Names make us feel special. They show the world that we are each an individual person, unique and extraordinary. Names are one way we use to define ourselves.
  - Even though we may have names that are the same as others, we are all different people. We may do similar things and behave in a similar way, but we are never exactly the same as another person. For example, when twins are born on the same day, they may look the same but they are two different people. When two people have the same name, they are still two different people, with different personalities and different families.
  - Maybe every parent has chosen a child's name for a reason. Maybe your parents told you something about your name and why they chose it? For example, some children are named after someone special. Or maybe there is something that you particularly like about your name? Let's go one by one and say something about your name – maybe something you like about your name, someone you were named after, or a special meaning your name might have.
3. Go around the circle giving each child time to say something briefly about their name. Be sure to also say something about your own names as facilitators.
4. Then, give everybody a piece of paper or card and tell them we are going to make name cards.
5. On one side of the name card, ask everyone to draw a picture of happiness. They may like to simply colour the card, or they may wish to draw something that represents joy.
6. When they have all finished this task, ask them to show their card to the group and tell them what they have drawn.
7. Now ask them to write their name on the other side of the card and ask them to put the name-cards on. (Help younger children or children who may not be literate, to write their names on the cards.)



Ask the following questions to encourage reflection:

1. How did you like learning each other's names?
2. How did you like sharing something about your own name?
3. What kinds of new things did you learn about our group of friends here in the CFS from each other's names?
4. What was it like to have others recognise your unique name?

Note that some children may not like their name, or their name may have a painful association (e.g., being named after a loved one who has passed away and is missed). If this happens in the activity, acknowledge that everyone can have different feelings about their name. If someone does not like their name, you could suggest that they can use a nickname in the CFS instead.

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If the children do not know each other well, these name cards can be worn each time they meet, if this seems appropriate. Collect the cards and keep them in a safe place between the sessions. Or you can let children take their name cards home as a reminder of the sessions they have attended.



- For larger groups, you can divide into two or three groups of about 10-12 participants each in order to facilitate sharing. There should be a facilitator for each group. Children can also be divided into groups of participants whose names all start with the same letter of the alphabet.
- For younger children, it may be best to attach the string to the cards before the session begins.
- For youth, creating a symbol for their name might be fun. Give each person a circular piece of paper or cardboard. They can write their name on one side and decorate the other side with arts and crafts or natural materials of their choice (e.g., markers, paints, felt, foil paper, corrugated card, pebbles, beach glass, glue, feathers). The personal symbol and choice of material can also reflect positive characteristics about themselves that they would like to share with everyone. For example, a child might choose flexible metal wires in their name symbol because it is flexible and strong at the same time.

## 1.4 Our Favourite Things



The AIM of this activity is to help participants to get to know each other, and share how they are each unique.



10 minutes



Ages: For six years old and above (modifications suggested below)  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: Any  
Materials: None



1. Divide the group into pairs, or have children choose a partner. Encourage them to choose a partner that they don't know very well.
2. Ask participants to tell each other their favourite food, colour and/or animal (you can choose other topics as well) and why these are their favourites.
3. Gather the group together and let each participant introduce their partner by telling about their favourite thing(s).



It may be important to reinforce that it is important to respect everyone. No child should be made fun of because of what they share as their favourite things (e.g., like a funny animal or food that others are not familiar with).



One variation is to ask each child to tell their partner to name an animal that best describes them and why (e.g., I think I'm like a lion because I am brave).

For adolescents, you can alternatively ask each pair to interview each other more generally for a few minutes about each other's lives and interests. Then, gather the group together and let each participant introduce their partner by name and share at least two unique characteristics about them.

As an icebreaker to introduce this exercise, ask participants to stand in two lines so that they are facing their partner. Ask one line to make body movements while their partners mirror their movements, and then switch. By mirroring each other, they can learn more about their partner through body movement. You can add music to the exercise if you like.

## 1.5 Making the Space Ours



The AIM of this activity is to help children feel a sense of belonging, identity and ownership within the CFS.



Time needed: 20-40 minutes

This activity can also be done in two 20-minute sessions. The group name could be done in one session and decorating the space in another session.



Ages: For six years old and above (modifications suggested below)

Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: Quiet enough for conversation and space for small groups to meet

Materials: Markers (or felt-tip pens/paints), flip charts or paper or canvas, tape or tacks, other arts and crafts or natural materials that are available (e.g., string, fabric, stones), scissors (use child-safe scissors for younger children or have the facilitator assist them)



### Part 1. Group name

1. Divide the children into smaller groups of about 6-10 children per group.
2. Explain to the children that since they know each other a bit better now, it is time to give a name to their whole CFS group. It can be a funny name or a meaningful name that gives a sense of identity and purpose to the group.
3. Give the children time to brainstorm on their small groups until they agree a name they'd like to suggest to the larger group. Usually the first ideas are common ones, so encourage them to carry on suggesting names and being creative. Ensure the names are appropriate to the place where the CFS is, and the culture of children attending. Once they find a name that all agree upon, have them write this name on a piece of paper and place it on the floor by their group.
4. Once all the groups come up with different names, have each small group in turn tell the larger group what the name they'd like to propose is, and why they like it. After the groups have presented their names, the facilitators say:
  - We have some nice options for names that we can choose from. You might like the name your group decided, or perhaps you heard a name from your friends in other groups that you like. Now, we will vote by going to stand next to the piece of paper that has the name you like the best. The name that has the most number of children standing next to it is the name we will choose for our CFS!
5. Use the group name during opening and closing activities, or when as a group they have accomplished a task or reached an achievement.

### Part 2. Decorating our space

1. Now that the group has a name, explain to the children:
  - Now, we will make a decoration that shows how we feel about the space, and that makes us happy to be here. Everyone who sees our decorations will know this is OUR special space and will also feel happy. So, what kind of decoration shall we make? We can do anything – like pictures, words or symbols, or a logo. We can also make a sign or decoration for the entrance to our space – maybe we can make a sign with the name of our group? What kind of ideas do you have for our decoration?
2. This exercise stimulates children's creativity. However, you may need to help them think about how the space is used and make some suggestions to accommodate different types of spaces. For example:
  - Is this an indoor space that is used for other purposes besides the CFS – and therefore the decoration will need to be taken down and put back up each time? For this, consider a "wish line" where children each write a wish for the CFS or a symbol (like a flower) on a small piece of fabric. Each fabric piece is then tied to a long string that can be strung up temporarily on the wall of the CFS, or between branches of a tree outside or along a fence. This wish line can be easily taken out and displayed or stored when needed. Another idea is a poster that can be stored in between CFS sessions.

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- Can it be a kind of decoration that children new to the space can add to? (e.g., a drawing of a tree, and each child's name is written on a paper leaf that is taped to the tree. This might be especially helpful for CFS spaces for children on the move who may join at different intervals and stay for fewer sessions.
  - Is this an outdoor space? In this case, consider using natural materials, like drawing a picture in the ground, or using rocks, twigs and grasses to decorate the picture or to make an outdoor sculpture.
3. Ask the children for suggestions on the decoration and work together on the final design. This can be done in different ways:
    - You can ask the children to discuss ideas in a large group. Invite children to draw their ideas on a piece of flip chart paper.
    - You can break into smaller groups, and each group comes up with an idea for the decoration that they share in the larger group.
    - You can use voting (variations described below) to select among a few ideas, or try to merge different ideas into one overall decoration. One option for a large group is to work together on a big mural, with plenty of space for everyone to contribute their ideas and creativity.
  4. Encourage cooperation in working together to make the decoration. When it is finished, be sure to take time to display and admire it.



This exercise requires children to cooperate and to negotiate their opinions and ideas to come to a common name and decoration. Depending upon the spirit of cooperation in the group, you may want to reflect on how it is to come together and cooperate in this exercise. For example, you can ask:

- We had so many good ideas for names and decorations. Sometimes it can be hard to choose! How was it to cooperate with each other on coming up with just one name and with a decoration together?
- Did you find that some ideas built upon each other, so that in the end everyone contributed something?
- How did you feel when an idea for a name and decoration was chosen – or not chosen?
- What did you like about working together? What was hard about cooperating?
- What helps us cooperate better and be respectful of everyone's feelings?
- How did it feel for each of you to contribute to building our space together?

Reflect with children that when we come together with different ideas, sometimes one idea builds on another, and on another – so in this way everyone contributes and is included in the end. You can say: This is why cooperation is so good! The end result is more creative with everyone's ideas coming together.



Acknowledge all of the suggestions that children gave for group names and decorations, even if a particular idea was not selected. Thank all of the children for their creativity.

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Younger children may need more direction and encouragement in selecting names and decorations. For example, you can suggest to younger children that they could choose between three to five different animals to represent the space. This animal would become their logo. Older children and adolescents, on the other hand, may want to come up their own decoration ideas, rather than being presented with options from the facilitator.

For a small number of participants (e.g., less than 10), you can do the ‘group name’ and ‘decorating our space’ activities in one big group.

Options for voting include:

- A secret ballot where children indicate the name they like best on a small piece of paper. The papers are placed in a box anonymously and then the papers are sorted and counted to see which name has the most votes.
- For younger children who may choose an animal for a logo, they can vote by making the noise of the animal they like best. The loudest animal wins!
- It may be possible to put some names together that different groups come up with, particularly if there is a “tie vote” or a very close vote between two options. You can then ask the children if they would like to try to merge the names in a creative way.

You can build on this activity to develop group identity. For example, consider the following questions that can help children to develop stronger connections within the group:

- What are your hopes and dreams? What would the group like to be in the future?
- If the group was living under the sea, what kind of fishes or sea creatures would it have and why? What are some of the strengths that the group has that allows it to live under the sea?
- If we were to build a tree house for our group, what would that tree house look like and how can it protect us? (Children can do a group drawing of the tree house, or construct a small version of it using arts and crafts or recycled materials.)

## 1.6 Group Song



The AIM of this activity is to help children feel a sense of belonging, identity and ownership within the CFS.



25 minutes



Ages: For six years old and above (modifications suggested below)  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: Any  
Materials: None



1. Ask the children to write a group song or chant. Tell them that you will help them to do this.
2. Explain that this will be their song to encourage the group and so they will want to think of words related to a positive theme. Help them do this as follows:
  - Ask children first to say words that relate to the various things/people they love and that make them happy. You can write the words on a flip chart, if helpful.
  - Then ask the children to create sentences from these positive words.
  - Next have them work together to develop the words into a short song. First of all, work on a chorus that everyone repeats in the song (for example, "This is our group of friends", or "Our group makes us happy.")
  - Then ask the children to work together in the large group or in smaller groups to develop verses (3-4 lines of words) that can be sung in between the chorus. Depending on the time available and the ages and development stages of the group, the song can be very simple or more complex (e.g., with extra verses).
  - If they like, they can use music from another song and sing the words to that tune.
3. Be sure to let children know that the activity is not about how well each person sings, but that we bring our voices together.
4. Encourage children to clap their hands, stamp their feet or snap their fingers to create a rhythm to go with their song.
5. Once the song is finished, let the group sing it through several times, until everyone knows the words and melody and can sing it together.



You can reflect with the group on how they felt about creating a song together. What do the tune and words mean to them? Some tunes and words may have particular meaning for the group.

Ask them to think about singing and enjoying music too. This may be important for children who have recently suffered very stressful events.



Be sure that the words and tune do not represent any political or religious group that could exclude some children from participating.

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There are several variations possible to suit various age groups. If you feel your group is able to create an entire song, then give them extra time to do so. If you feel this may be too difficult, you can suggest that they choose a familiar children's song and replace the words with their own. Another easy option is to help them think of a simple chant or a familiar, positive song that everyone likes to sing.

Children might also like to add in musical instruments, or sounds made from materials around them. Drumming sounds can be made with a variety of materials (for example, empty plastic containers) or on the body (stamping feet, clapping hands, snapping fingers, slapping thighs or chest). Encourage creativity!

Another activity that can be used as a variation or an icebreaker to the group song is to work with musical instruments:

1. Start with an assortment of instruments such as whistles, triangles, gongs, shakers, drums; locally crafted instruments; or natural materials such as gourds that can be hit to make a drumming sound. Body percussion and vocal sounds can also be used.
2. Place all items in the middle of the room and have children each choose one instrument from the pile – or, if there are no instruments, demonstrate some body percussion and voice sounds (e.g., simple vocals like “be-bop”).
3. Have children sit on the floor and start to make a sound paying close attention to other sounds being made by fellow group members. After a few moments, ask everyone to stop and wait for your lead.
4. Then, help the group to start a rhythm by starting with a simple beat with the instruments or body percussion, keeping your beat as facilitator constant and clear. Invite others to slowly add their beat to the group. You might call out one instrument at a time to have children who have that instrument join in until everyone is playing together. Then you could add another sound like a vocal sound, building the rhythm into a song.
5. You can use these questions to close the activity and reflect with the children:
  - Which instrument (or body percussion or vocal sound) did you choose and why?
  - How did it feel to connect to others in the group through music?
  - What were some of the sensations you experienced in your body while playing music with other people in the group?
  - How important is it to listen to others in the group?

## 1.7 Our Footprints and Handprints



The AIM of this activity is for children to enjoy working cooperatively with a peer and to make a picture of a footprint or handprint.



20 minutes



Ages: For six years old and above (modifications suggested below)  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: Any

Materials: Markers, paintbrushes, textile colours, flipchart paper, finger/face paint, water cups, canvas or large piece of paper to paint on, water and cloths or paper towels to clean up



1. Set up the room with finger/face paint, paper, water cups and brushes.
2. Explain to the children that they are going to work in pairs and make a coloured print of their hands or feet.
3. Ask the children to find a partner and explain the task is for one child to paint the hand or foot of their partner. The child with the painted hand or foot then makes a print on the paper, by pressing their hand or foot onto the paper.
4. Give them about five minutes for each child to have a turn at making the print.
5. Once all children have finished, ask them how they felt. Use the reflections questions below to do this.
6. After reflecting on the activity, ask the children what they would like to do with their handprints/footprints. They could put their names on them, and display them on the CFS wall together. Or children may want to take them home.
7. Finally, ask the children to wash their hands or feet. Ask them to help clean up the space and put away the materials.



This activity may create discussion about physical sensations (the way things feel on the body). This type of discussion can be helpful, especially if a child is discovering these sensations for the first time. It could be a new or strange experience for them. Ask the children:

- Was the paint warm or cold?
- Could you feel your whole foot and hand? Could you feel the sole of your foot or the palm of your hand, or your toes or fingers when they were being painted?
- How did you feel while your friend was painting your hands/feet?
- Did you trust your partner not to paint another part of your body?
- Look at your handprints/footprints carefully. Can you describe them? Is there anything you notice that you did not expect? Any other thing you want to add?
- For older children and adolescents, you can also reflect on the idea that our footprints can remind us of where we have been – the different places we have walked and travelled. Our handprints can be like a mark that we want to leave in the future – where we want to go next.



Be patient with the children and give them positive feedback. Also remember to encourage the children to be safe and responsible with the paints – and try not to get paint on their clothing.



Adolescents may prefer to draw and decorate their handprint or footprint, rather than making a print with the paints. Here are some options:

- They could make an outline of their hands/feet with markers and decorate the drawing in a way that reflects who they are.
- They could make outlines of both their hands, and draw something about their past on one hand and their hopes for the future on the other hand. They could then share their drawings with the group.
- They could cut out outlines of their hands and glue them onto a piece of paper and write around the drawing the words that best describe them as individuals.
- They could make a group picture with all the hand drawings. They could stick the hands onto a large piece of paper and write around the edge things that describe them as individuals and as a group.

## 1.8 Things We Have in Common



The AIM of this activity is for children to be active and to learn that although they are unique, they share things in common too.



15 minutes



Ages: For six years old and above  
Participants: At least 10 participants



Setting: Any

Materials: Markers, paintbrushes, textile colours, flipchart paper, finger/face paint, water cups, canvas or large piece of paper to paint on, water and cloths or paper towels to clean up



1. Bring the children together in a circle, either sitting on the floor or sitting on chairs set in a circle. If using chairs, there should be one less chair than the number of children so that one child is standing.
2. Say to the children: There are things that are unique to each of us. [If you have done previous activities in this theme about children's names, favourite things, handprints and footprints, you can mention these here.] Now we will find out what we have in common with each other.
3. Explain the rules of the game: One child starts by saying something that is true for them, such as "I like the colour red." Children who also like the colour red stand up and join the child by walking around the circle on the outside. The children continue to walk around the outside of the circle until the facilitator calls, "Stop!" (While the children are walking around the outside of the circle, the facilitator can play music or all the children can clap their hands.) When the children hear "Stop!" they must find a space to sit in the circle. This must be an empty chair or taking an empty spot in the circle on the floor. There will always be one child left standing and that person is the next one to say something about themselves.
4. Carry on playing until most of the children have had a chance to say something that is true for them.



Children should say true things that are not hurtful or disrespectful of anyone. As the facilitator, you may want to start by demonstrating with a statement like: "I like to ride a bicycle," or "I know how to bake a cake."

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Variations for children with disabilities include:

- Children who are less mobile can sit or stand in a circle. The children each take a turn taking one step in the circle and saying something that is true for them (e.g., "I like the colour red"). Any child for whom the statement is true also takes one step inside the circle. Then they re-join the circle and the next child says a statement, and so on. For children who are not able to step into the circle, they can place their hands in the circle or above their heads and wave them around.
- Children who are blind can play by making a sound if the statement is true for them – such as clapping their hands, or drumming on the floor.

A variation for large groups is to have the child who is making the statement about themselves at the centre of the circle. Then all the children who agree with that statement have to run to find another seat in the circle, but it cannot be the seat next to where they were just sitting. Whoever is left standing in the centre makes the next statement.

A variation for older children and adolescents is to have them say something that is NOT true in a funny way, rather than something that is true. For example, "I always eat my vegetables," or "I'm never late for school," or "I'm a fabulous singer."



Ask the group to reflect on the activity:

- How was it to find out that there were many things each of you had in common with others in the group?

# Emotional Learning: “My Feelings”

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# 2



## 2. Emotional Learning: “My Feelings”

Type	Activity	Time Needed
Emotion wheel activities: This sequence of activities uses an emotion wheel that helps children name their feelings and discover healthy ways to respond to those feelings.	2.1 Building the emotion wheel 2.2 Emotions and behaviours 2.3 Different ways to respond 2.4 Things to do when big feelings are in your heart	45-60 minutes 20 minutes 30 minutes 30 minutes
Being aware of emotions in others	2.5 Mirror game	15 minutes

Emotional learning is a fundamental psychosocial skill for all children. Learning how to manage difficult emotions is very important for children who have been through stressful events in their lives.

This theme, “Emotional learning,” has the following psychosocial benefits for children:

- The activities enable children to acknowledge and name their feelings.
- The activities enable children to understand that everyone has different kinds of feelings, and that emotions are not either good or bad.
- The activities enable children to recognise the emotions of other people.
- The activities strengthen children’s capacity to help themselves to feel better when they are upset, sad or angry.
- The activities enable children to realise that everyone can choose to respond in healthy and respectful ways to their feelings.

Use the instructions in 2.1 to make an emotion wheel before the session so that you can show the children what it looks like. Make a larger version of the wheel than the one the children will make, so that you can use it for demonstration purposes. Make sure it is strong enough to be used multiple times in the CFS.

Apart from using the emotion wheel in this session, it is useful more generally for helping children to name and manage their emotions. For example, if a child is demonstrating difficult behaviours or seems to be distressed, the facilitator can ask the child to use the emotion wheel to express how they feel. This can help a child who is struggling to talk about what is upsetting them. Once they know the emotion wheel activities, they can refer back to what was discussed to help them to name emotions and respond differently.

## 2.1 Building the Emotion Wheel



The AIM of this activity is help children name their emotions.



45 to 60 minutes



Ages: For six years old and above (modifications suggested below)

Participants: Any number of participants (for large groups, divide into smaller groups of 6-8 children per each group)

Facilitators: One facilitator for each small group



Setting: Any

Materials: Sheets of cardboard 100cm x 100 cm (2 for each group). Wax crayons, markers, scissors, flip chart, arts and crafts material, circle templates (e.g., a circle cut from cardboard or construction paper the size of the emotion wheel), metal paper fasteners, A4 paper, plus a larger version of the emotion wheel made in advance.



1. Have the children sit in a group or in several small groups (depending on the number of children present). Explain that each child (with the help of a facilitator in their group) will be making an emotion wheel which features six emotions.
2. Ask the children if they can name some emotions. Ask them to describe the emotion – what does it feel like?
3. Write six emotions on a flip chart: anger, sadness, disgust, fear, happiness, surprise. (Note that these are generally common emotions that can be recognised across cultures. But see the notes in 'remember' below.) Children may have named some of these emotions already and described them. If not, ask the children if they can describe them. Briefly discuss what each emotion is so the children understand.
4. Give each group a sheet of cardboard, the arts and crafts material, paper and circle template.
5. Next, have each child use the circle template to draw a circle on the sheet of cardboard and cut it out. Now ask them to divide their circle into six equal slices.
6. For each slice, have them write one emotion from the flipchart and draw a simple image that illustrates that emotion. Alternatively, if you have some magazines or other resources with photos or pictures of people with different emotions, the children can cut out pictures to represent the emotions and paste them on the appropriate slice. Another alternative is to have them colour each slice of the emotion wheel to represent its emotion (e.g., happiness might be pink, sadness might be blue).
7. After they are done, ask them to use the circle template to draw and cut out a circle from the paper. Ask them to divide the paper into six slices, just as they did on the cardboard, and then cut out one slice. They can also decorate the sheet of paper if they like.
8. Next, tell them to take a metal paper fastener and attach the paper circle on top of their cardboard circle. Do this by placing the paper circle on top of the cardboard circle and pushing the metal fastener in the middle of the two circles. They can then turn the paper circle so that one emotion from the cardboard circle shows through the missing pie slice.
9. They can continue to decorate their wheel as long as time allows.
10. Once done, ask the children to show their emotion wheels to each other. This can be done in the small groups, or can be done all together if the group is not too large.
11. Explain to the children that they can take their emotion wheels home, and use them any time to name emotions they are having.

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It's important for children to understand that there are no right or wrong emotions. It's completely normal for children and adults to feel all kinds of different things. Help to normalise their emotions by explaining that everyone has feelings, and that it is ok to have them. We can 'make friends with' all of our emotions, and can learn to respond in safe and kind ways to each other.

It might also be helpful to explain to the children that we all feel many emotions and sometimes we have different names for them. For example, sadness might be felt as grief or missing someone or feeling lonely. The six emotions used to construct the wheel are some common emotions, but other feelings and feeling words may come to mind.



The instructions for building the emotion wheel are based on six emotions that are generally recognizable across cultures. However, it is very important to adapt the number and type of emotions appropriate to the language, culture and children in your CFS.

Be sure to give children enough time to make their emotion wheels during this session. Remember this is a relatively long activity – about 45 to 60 minutes – so it may take up most of one session in the CFS. It can be helpful to pair this activity with a physical activity, such as a warm-up or energizer. You can also do this activity over two separate sessions in the CFS – making the emotion wheels in one session, and decorating them in the next session.

Give the children encouragement, help and positive feedback throughout the session as they construct their emotion wheels.

Be sure to save the facilitators' big emotion wheel for use in the next activities in this sequence. Children can either keep their individual emotion wheels at the CFS or take them home.

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There are various ways of making the emotion wheels. Find the way that works best for the age, gender and abilities of the children, as well as the material you have available. Here are some ideas:

- Younger children may need more help and support to make their wheels. For example, before the session cut out the cardboard circles for them. Try to get child-safety scissors, or if not, make sure they are well-supervised when they are cutting paper. If there is a mixed-age group of children, older children may be able to help younger ones with some of the tasks.
- It is possible to make a very simple emotion wheel by drawing a picture of the wheel on a piece of paper. This is helpful if you don't have the materials as described above, or if it is too complicated for the children to make. They can use the emotion wheel by simply pointing to whatever emotion they want to talk about. Or they can make a pointer with paper or some other object that can be attached to the wheel with string.
- A large emotion wheel can be drawn on a piece of flip chart paper, or a sheet, or even on the ground in the dirt. This is an alternative to making a large version of the wheel in cardboard.

There are also variations in relation to the emotions used:

- Use five main emotions and leave one slice of pie blank for children to fill in an emotion they choose;
- Have children (especially older children and adolescents) name as many emotions as they want for their emotion wheel. They just have to draw lots of slices on their emotion wheels to represent their set of emotions.
- Give children lots of different ideas to help them describe their emotions. They can draw shapes, or use colours, or lots of different textures (for example, stick stones or seeds on paper). Sometimes it is difficult to name an emotion. Use these questions to help them:
  1. Can you name some emotions? Sometimes it is difficult to name our feelings.
  2. Our feelings can be linked to situations in our lives. For example, I feel happy when I am with a good friend. When do you feel happy? When do you feel sad?
  3. If the feeling were an animal, which animal would it be? If it were a colour, what colour would that feeling be? If it were a fruit or a vegetable, which one would it be and why?
  4. Can you think of a song, a rhythm and/or a movement to represent one of the emotions on your wheel?

## 2.2 Emotions and Behaviours



The AIM of this activity is to help children become familiar with different kinds of emotions and how they are expressed in behaviours.



20 minutes



Ages: For six years old and above  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: Any  
Materials: The big emotion wheel made by facilitators, white papers, markers, pieces of paper with various emotions written on them  
Optional: music.



1. Have the children sit on the floor in a circle. Use the big emotion wheel as facilitator and ask the children to use their own emotion wheels, if the children have the wheel in the CFS.
2. First, point to each emotion on your emotion wheel in turn and ask the children to point to the same emotion on their own emotion wheel. If the children do not have their own emotional wheel, this step can be skipped.
3. Now ask the children to make faces that correspond to each emotion in turn. For example, for happiness, they can smile.
4. Now ask the children to do actions to match the emotions. They can make a sound to go with the action. They can stand up to act out the emotion, if they want.
5. Put the pieces of paper (with the emotions written on them) all around the space on the ground.
6. Explain the game: When I tell you, walk around the room. While you are walking, I will start clapping (or singing, or playing some music.) But when I stop clapping (or singing, or stop the music), find a piece of paper near you and act out the emotion on the paper. You can ask the children near you to guess the emotions you are acting out, and take turns guessing the emotion.



You can reflect with the children about this activity by asking the following questions:

- Sometimes it can be hard to know how we really feel – or how another person is really feeling. Could somebody's behaviour give you a clue as to how they're feeling?
- What kinds of behaviours did you see for sadness, for anger, etc.?
- Did some of our behaviours fit with more than one feeling?

Also, point out to the children that sometimes we don't know how a person is feeling inside just by looking at them from the outside. Some feelings are hidden. A person may be smiling, but inside they might be feeling sad. It is important to know how to name our feelings, and sometimes to ask each other, "How are you feeling?"

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Write lots of different emotions on the pieces of paper, not just the six emotions that you started with. Make sure the words you choose for emotions are those the children can understand, according to their age and developmental stage. For younger children or children with basic literacy skills, for example, emotions could include being sad, feeling very tired, being happy, feeling mad (very angry).

Make sure you have the same number of papers to the children in your group. You can repeat the emotions to make sure you have enough.

Keep in mind that some behaviours might link to different emotions, and the same emotions might be linked with different behaviours.



Children with limited mobility can pull the pieces of paper out of a hat rather than move around the room. Everyone can clap or sing until the facilitator calls out "Stop" and tells everyone to act out their emotions.

Some children may not be able to act out behaviours corresponding to the emotions. Here are a couple of ideas to help the children express themselves:

- Invite the children to draw their responses, or do movement and music.
- Young children might enjoy thinking an animal to represent their feelings. For example, they might think of a lion to represent anger, and they could do a big lion's roar.

## 2.3 Different Ways to Respond



The AIM of this activity is to help children understand the different ways people respond to their emotions.



30 minutes



Ages: For six years old and above (modifications suggested below)  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: Any  
Materials: The children's emotion wheel (or the big emotion wheel)



1. Explain that in this exercise, the children will work in pairs. Each pair chooses an emotion from their emotion wheels. There are then two things to do:
  - Work out how to express that emotion in their bodies
  - Work out how they would act or behave when they feel that emotion.
2. Give the following example. Say: "Let's take the emotion of sadness. First, we feel that we are sad. Next, we might express it in our bodies with a big sigh or by crying. Next, we might act to make ourselves feel better, like talking to a trusted friend and telling them how we are feeling."
3. Now show the children by acting out an emotion yourself. Ask the children to choose an emotion for you. Whatever emotion they choose, first show the emotion on your face and in your body language.
4. Then demonstrate an action or behaviour you might do if you were feeling that emotion. You can also ask the children for suggestions of how you might behave. For example, for fear, the children might have a few different suggestions. They might suggest that you run, so run for a few steps. If they suggest that you hide, go and hide somewhere for a minute. They might suggest that you phone a parent, so pretend to phone a parent.
5. Now give the children five minutes to work together in pairs on an emotion of their choice.
6. Once each pair has had a chance to prepare, invite the first pair to demonstrate their emotion.
7. Alternatively, the children can act out how they express the emotion and the behaviour without telling the other children what emotion they picked – then the children have to guess which emotion they are showing.
8. Give time for each pair to act out their emotion. Some pairs may choose the same emotion as others. Ask the children to look for the different ways the children do this.



Help the children reflect upon this exercise, and in particular to how to connect their own feelings with their behaviours. For example, you can ask them:

- How do you feel when you think about your friends?
- And when you feel like this, how do you act? What do you do?
- Do you see how our feelings are linked with our behaviours?
- Why do you think it's important to be able to name our feelings?
- Why is it important to know how our feelings affect our behaviours?

You can explain that knowing how to identify our feelings and understand our behaviours helps us to cope better when we have difficult feelings. This helps so that we don't do something that might hurt ourselves or someone else.





Some children may have experienced very difficult emotions. It is best to start by selecting happier or softer emotions that are not too scary for children to act out.



A variation for younger children is to have children stand in a circle. The facilitator can call out different feelings and children are invited to act out that feeling or pose to express their personal feelings. Encourage children to look at the other children so that they can see we are all different and express emotions differently.

Another variation for all children is to ask children to give each emotion a colour. Then they can do a painting that reflects their mood or feelings at that moment. Explain to children that sometimes emotions can be mixed – sometimes we can have two emotions at once. This is called having 'mixed feelings.' Ask children if they have ever had this experience. They can make paintings of their feelings – including mixed feelings – using finger paints. Older children and adolescents can also write a letter about their mood or emotions.

A variation for older children or adolescents can be to have them act out a scenario that describes all the emotions on the wheel.

## 2.4 Things To Do When Big Feelings Are In Your Heart



The AIM of this activity is for children to learn helpful ways of responding to difficult emotions.



30 minutes



Ages: For six years old and above (modifications suggested below)

Participants: Any number of participants, divided into small groups of 4-6 children each

Facilitators: One facilitator for each small group



Setting: Any

Materials: The big emotion wheel and children's emotion wheels, flip chart paper, drawing and colouring materials (pens, markers, crayons)



1. Ask the children to sit in a circle.
2. Using the emotion wheel, remind the children of the various actions and behaviours that they demonstrated for each of the emotions on the wheel.
3. Explain to the children that these are the outward ways we show our emotions. It is also important for us to understand how we feel our emotions inside – in our bodies. You can give examples, such as some emotions might cause us to feel tension in our muscles, or other emotions might feel like butterflies in our stomach.
4. Select an emotion from the wheel and have children close their eyes. Say: Think of a time you felt [the emotion – e.g., sad, angry]. Where do you feel this emotion in your body? Do you feel it in different parts of your body? How does it feel?
5. Have the children open their eyes and give time for sharing where they felt that emotion. Then say: When we have big emotions, we may feel them very strongly in our body. For example, big sadness might feel like a hurting in our heart, or big fear might make us feel sweaty and shaky.
6. Now, divide into smaller groups of four to six children per group. Each group gets a piece of flip chart paper. Have them draw a person on the paper. Then have them choose another emotion from their emotion wheels (or assign each group a different emotion). Have them talk together in their small group about where they feel that emotion in their bodies and how it feels. Then ask them to draw these feelings on the picture of the body using colours or symbols. Children may have different ideas about how to draw the feelings and can illustrate them differently in each of their drawings.
7. Children might find it difficult to draw feelings. Give them some materials to help them, if needed. For example, some string can be stuck onto the head to represent mixed feelings or thoughts. Twigs, small and big rocks, cotton, and other materials can also be used. Colours and symbols can also be used to represent feelings.
8. Bring all the children back together to share their drawings.
9. Explain to children: Learning where we feel different emotions in our bodies helps us to recognise what we are feeling. It is like a clue or a signal that our body sends us. When we notice a certain feeling in our bodies it can be easier to name our emotions. It also helps us to take time to consider how we want to respond.
10. Discuss the example of crying: Crying is one way we all have of expressing a strong emotion. When do people cry? Is it only when they are sad? Sometimes crying makes us realise we are feeling something strongly.
11. Say: There are lots of ways to respond to our feelings – especially big feelings we have in our hearts. We can respond in ways that help us to feel better, or sometimes in ways that don't help us. We might also respond in ways that hurt other people.
12. Have the children go back to their small groups to discuss the following:
  - What actions and behaviours are respectful and kind to others?
  - What actions and behaviours can be hurtful to others?
  - What behaviours and actions are helpful to ourselves?
  - What behaviours and actions may be hurtful to ourselves?
13. Bring everyone together again and as a big group, have the children share their thoughts from their small groups.

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You can help children to understand that they have a choice in how to respond to their emotions by saying: Just as we saw in this exercise, there may be many different ways to respond and behave when we have different emotions. Some behaviours can hurt ourselves or others, and some can help ourselves and others.

You can ask the children:

- Can you name some ways of responding to anger that might be hurtful to someone? (Examples could be hitting or yelling).
- How else can you respond so that no one gets hurt?
- Can you name some ways to respond to sadness that can help you feel better? (Examples include crying with a friend, talking to a trusted adult, drawing a picture or writing in a journal).



It is important to help children to understand that they can learn to respond to their emotions positively, and to choose how they respond.



One variation, especially for older children and adolescents, is to have the children perform a play on different ways to manage big feelings. For example, taking a particular emotion, you can divide the children into three groups. One group can play helpful ways to manage the feeling, the second group can play ways that are unhelpful (or harmful) to oneself and the third group can play ways that might be hurtful to others.

Another variation for older children is to have them work in pairs and discuss happy feelings. This may help adolescents who don't want to engage otherwise.

A variation for all children is to divide up the body outline into two halves. On the left side of the body, children can represent the big feelings and on the right side they can represent positive and helpful behaviours to deal with emotions in positive ways.

With younger children, it may be helpful to suggest options and to act with them the kinds of helpful behaviours they can choose. You can write their suggestions in simple words or pictures on the flip chart.

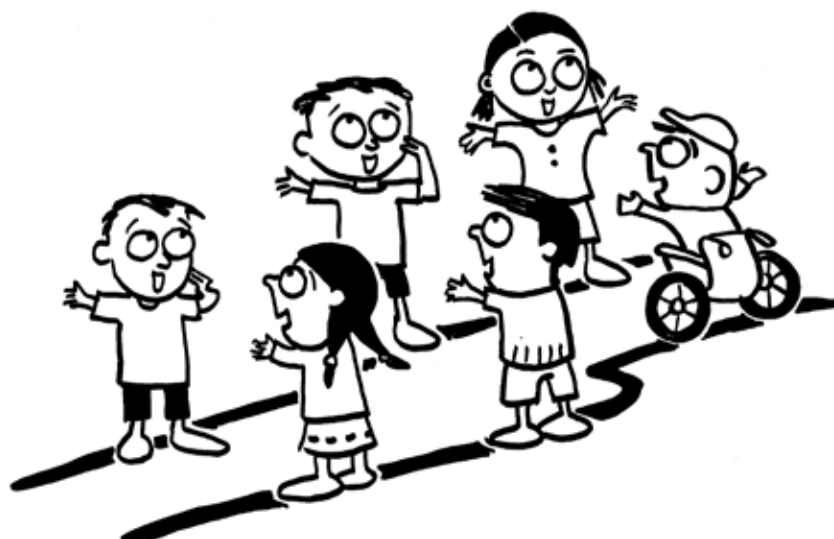
Younger children may also benefit from being able to release big feelings. One way to do this is with 'an anger horn.' When children are feeling big emotions that are uncomfortable, they can point to them on the emotion wheel and then 'blow them away' through the anger horn. You can make an anger horn from simple materials, such as the cardboard tube from a toilet roll that the children decorate.









Other ways to release big feelings are to put their feelings on crepe paper and make kites to fly in the air. The children can imagine that big feelings are becoming lighter and lighter and floating up.

Children can also make dream catchers to 'catch' difficult dreams. Dream catchers can be made simply with string or yarn, wound across a frame made of popsicle sticks, twigs or other materials. Some children may like to hang the dream catchers above where they sleep at night. This catches the bad dreams but lets the good dreams through.

Other variations include working with clay to help children release their emotions. Clay can be thrown on the floor, slapped or shaped, helping children to express big feelings. If clay is not available, then mud or dough will also work.

## 2.5 Mirror Game



	The AIM of this activity is to have fun and to strengthen awareness of emotions.		15 minutes
	Ages: For six years old and above Participants: Any number of participants		
	Setting: Any Materials: None		
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask participants to stand in two lines.</li> <li>2. Explain that one line will be mirrors and the other line will be actors.</li> <li>3. The facilitators then demonstrate the game. The facilitators call out a positive emotion, such as strength, courage, bravery, happiness, or peacefulness. The facilitator and co-facilitator then act out this emotion – one as the actor and the other as the mirror.</li> <li>4. Each line takes it in turns to be the actor and the mirror for each emotion.</li> <li>5. The mirrors try to copy the actors in every detail.</li> <li>6. The facilitator tells the group which emotion to act out, and when the actors and mirrors should swap.</li> </ol>		
	<p>Reflect with the children how our emotions affect others, how other people's emotions can affect us. For example, you can say:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sometimes our feelings can affect others, and how others feel can affect how we feel. For example, if someone feels sad, we might feel sad too.</li> <li>• Try to remember a time when you were very aware of someone else's feelings. For example, maybe a time when you knew your caregiver(s) was sad or angry. How did this make you feel?</li> </ul> <p>This is how we can understand other people and their feelings. When we recognise their feelings, we can help them and talk to them about how they are feeling.</p>		
	As the facilitator, try to begin by calling out positive emotions (e.g., courage, bravery, happiness) rather than negative ones (e.g., anger, disgust). When the children are more comfortable with the game, you can call out a bigger range of emotions. Try to use positive and negative emotions to keep a good balance for the children and to keep the game fun and engaging.		
	<p>The mirror game can also be done sitting down for children who are unable to stand.</p> <p>Another variation is that once a pair has done one emotion, the children in one of the lines all take one step to the right so that they are paired up with a different partner.</p>		



# Well-being and Coping: “Feeling Good”



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# 3

### 3. Well-being and Coping: “Feeling Good”

Type	Activity	Time Needed
Games that increase energy	3.1 Multi-Tasking	15 minutes
	3.2 The Energy Within	10 minutes
Gentle relaxation games	3.3 Tree in the Wind	15 minutes
	3.4 Bakers and Hairdressers	20 minutes
Breathing and relaxation exercises	3.5 Relaxed Breathing	5 minutes
	3.6 Muscle Relaxation	20 minutes
	3.7 Belly Breathing Together	10 minutes
Mindfulness exercise	3.8 Mindful Art Walk	20 minutes

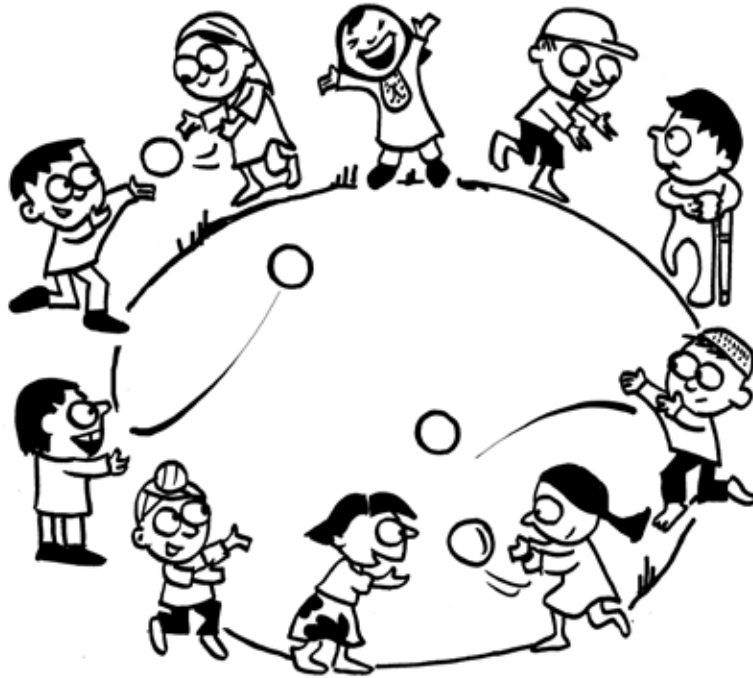
It is very important to strengthen the well-being and coping (or feeling good) of children who have been through difficult or stressful events. Many children who come to a CFS may feel stressed by events that they have experienced or witnessed, as well as by the stresses in their daily lives. The activities in this theme are about helping children to understand how stress and relaxation feel in the body, and to give them some tools they can use to calm themselves and support their own wellbeing.

The theme, “Well-being and coping,” has many psychosocial benefits for children:

- The activities promote an awareness of breath and the skills to breathe deeply.
- The activities promote an awareness of stress in the mind and body and an understanding of its effects.
- The activities build children’s skills to use their breath and the movements of their body to bring a state of calm and relaxation.
- The activities bring a sense of empowerment to the children in being able to calm themselves.

The breathing and relaxation exercises (3.5, 3.6, and 3.7) work well in a sequence. They build on each other so that the children then have a range of skills for relaxation.

## 3.1 Multi-Tasking



The AIM of this activity is to reflect on how multi-tasking affects concentration and how they handle stress.



15 minutes



Ages: For older children, aged 10 and above  
Participants: Any number of participants, in groups of 6-10



Setting: Any  
Materials: Different types of small balls



1. Ask the group to stand in circles of 6-10 children.
2. Tell them that the aim of the activity is to throw balls to each other in a specific pattern. The patterns can be different but there are two rules for this game:
  - Each child can catch each type of ball only once.
  - Children cannot throw balls to those standing next to them in the circle.
3. Tell the group to practise the pattern a number of times.
4. Begin by introducing one ball. After some time, add a second, third, fourth, etc. until the participants start dropping the balls.
5. Now collect all the balls and ask the participants to describe what they experienced during this activity.



You can use this activity as a starting point for a discussion about the physical and emotional reactions to stress. For example, you can ask:

- What was it like to try to remember the pattern?
- How did you feel when another ball was added?



Depending on the age of the children, it might take children a few practices to establish the ball-throwing pattern before introducing too many balls at once. For younger children, a pattern with just one ball may be challenging enough without introducing a second or third ball.

To help children remember the pattern, you could have them say the name of the person as they are throwing the ball to them. But remember that as more balls are added, the children will be calling out lots of names at the same time!

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A variation for younger children is as follows (use three different coloured balls for this variation):

1. Have the children stand in a circle. Using only their right hands, the children must pass a ball clockwise around the circle (passing to their neighbour standing to their left). Let them practise this until all of the children are able to pass the ball using only their right hands around the circle clockwise.
2. Next, to make the task more difficult, take another ball (preferably of a different colour), and have the children pass this ball using their left hands only, counter-clockwise around the circle. So, they will pass this ball to their neighbour on their right, from their left hand and into the left hand of their neighbour.
3. If the children seem to be able to pass the two balls around the circle in different directions correctly, you could add a third ball (preferably of a different colour) and toss it to their neighbour on the right, while the other two balls are going around the circle in two directions!

## 3.2 The Energy Within



	<p>The AIM of this activity is to be aware of the feelings of being energised and being relaxed, and to learn to calm themselves when they need to.</p>		<p>10 minutes</p>
	<p>Ages: For six years old and above, and suitable for younger children          Participants: Any number of participants          Facilitators: Two or more</p>		
	<p>Setting: Any safe, flat terrain/space (indoors or outdoors)          Materials: None</p>		
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask the children to stand in a circle with a lot of space between each other.</li> <li>2. Have the children shake their body – starting with their hands, then their arms, legs, torso, head. Shake all parts of the body.</li> <li>3. Then ask the children to start walking on the spot, running on the spot, and then running as fast as they can on the spot. Keep the group moving fast for at least one minute, getting the children's heart rate up.</li> <li>4. Next, ask the children to stand very still.</li> <li>5. Say: Feel what's happening to your body. Feel your heart beating. Feel the tingles in your belly and legs and arms. Feel the heat in your body. This is your energy. Your energy within. This feeling can be similar to how you feel when you are very excited, or maybe when you find it hard to calm down.</li> <li>6. Say: Sometimes when we're excited, we might find it hard to calm down. In these situations, it can help to remember that your energy can also be still and calm. Now close your eyes. Think of the floor beneath you. The floor is steady. It doesn't move and it keeps us safe. Think of the people in our lives who help us feel safe and steady. Use your energy within to feel the love and support they offer you.</li> <li>7. Then instruct the children to open their eyes slowly. Ask them to slowly move their fingers, their shoulders, their heads from side to side and return to 'normal'.</li> </ol>		
	<p>This activity helps children become aware of the positive energy that flows through their bodies. They feel the difference between how being energised and being relaxed feels, and understand that they can calm down their inner excitement when they need to. You can ask the children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you usually do if you are getting excited and need to calm down?</li> <li>• Have you seen people do other things to calm down? What are they?</li> </ul> <p>This activity also allows children to mentally link up with important people in their lives. It also helps them to understand that no matter what changes around them, the ground will always keep them steady.</p>		
	<p>Some children may have difficulty quieting down their energy. It may be important to have a co-facilitator help those children by saying, try to be very quiet now and listen inside. Or have the children bend over to touch the ground with their hands, and feel their whole body relaxing, or to crouch down with their arms around their knees and their heads down like a turtle until they feel more relaxed.</p>		
	<p>A variation for children could be to have them sit or lie on the floor, once they stop shaking and running in place, rather than remain standing.</p>		

### 3.3 Tree in the Wind



The AIM of this activity is to enable the children to relax, to feel grounded and secure, and to use their imagination.



20 minutes



Ages: For six years old and above  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: Any safe, flat terrain/space  
Materials: None



1. Ask the children to stand with some space between them – at least an arm's length apart. You can have them put their arms out to the side to be sure they are not touching their neighbour. Then, give the following instructions to the group:
  - Please stand nice and straight with your feet placed apart (about as far apart as the width of your shoulders) and bend your knees a little bit. Relax your arms at your sides, letting them hang down naturally.
  - Close your eyes, if you feel comfortable to do so. Otherwise, you can just keep your eyes lowered and look softly toward the floor.
  - Be sure to stay standing on the same spot, and to feel your feet planted onto the ground, just like the roots of a tree. Imagine you have roots growing down into the ground, standing firm.
  - Now find the centre of your body (centre of gravity) – you might feel this just below your belly button. Breathe into the centre of your body, using nice slow, deep breaths.
  - Feel your feet and your roots connecting you to the earth.
  - Breathe into your belly, gathering your energy, and as you breathe out, let your roots dig deeper and deeper into the soil. Let your roots tunnel down through soil and stones and become strong. Feel the stability your roots give to you, keeping you balanced and steady. Your legs are like the trunk of a tree supported by your roots.
  - With each in-breath, imagine the energy coming up through your roots and trunk and into your arms. Slowly lift up your arms like branches and with each out-breath send the energy into your arms and fingertips to grow branches and leaves. Breathe in the energy from your roots, and breathe out to send the energy to feed your branches and leaves. Let the branches grow and spread – some may be thick and strong, others may be more delicate. Wiggle your fingers and feel your leaves moving in the wind.
  - Let the leaves and branches reach up to the sun and feel the energy coming in from above, and feel the energy coming up from the soil below. Feel nourished and refreshed. Let the energy flow into your tree.
  - On your firm roots deep in the ground, begin to sway like a tree in the wind. Gently wave your arms from side to side, and forwards and backwards, while you keep taking deep breaths.
  - Now, let the wind be still and come back to your centre, to your solid standing tree.
  - Slowly draw your roots and your branches back into your body, bring your arms slowly back in toward your sides. Stand still in your centre for a few moments, breathing and feeling calm.
  - Now, open your eyes and 'shake loose'. Begin to lift up each foot, bounce a few times gently on your feet and shake your hands and arms.
  - Your tree is always there. Whenever you want to feel rooted and strong and calm, you can just plant your feet and grow your roots and branches again!



You can bring up in discussion how it felt to use their imagination in this activity:

- Could you imagine having roots deep in the ground, and branches that swayed in the wind?
- How did it feel to have roots deep in the ground – was it reassuring?
- If the tree could speak, what would it say?

It is also useful to talk about how this activity felt in their bodies:

- Could you feel your 'centre' as you swayed in the wind?
- Were you more aware of your feet on the ground?
- Do you feel differently after the exercise compared to before? Did you get a feeling of relaxation?



Everyone has to focus on their own body, sensations and feelings.



- You can tell a short story about trees to introduce the game.
- Participants can stay still and when the facilitator says, "the wind is blowing", they move softly as if the wind is blowing through their tree branches (their arms). When the wind stops, they stand still again.
- There can also be imaginary sunshine, rain, or stormy or very windy weather.
- For participants who are unable to stand, this exercise can be done sitting down and they can imagine the roots coming from the base of their body with their sitting bones connected to the earth.

## 3.4 Bakers and Hairdressers



The AIM of this activity is to learn a gentle type of touch that can help with relaxation.



20 minutes



Ages: For six years old and above  
Participants: Any number of participants  
Facilitators: Two or more



Setting: A comfortable space to sit on the floor  
Materials: None



1. As an introduction, ask the children to stand or sit in a circle and explain that this activity is about using touch for relaxation.
2. Demonstrate two types of touch. The first one is stroking. Stroke your own arms and legs, as if you were stroking the back of a cat.
3. The second type of touch is a gentle slap, using the flat of your hand (with palms and loose fingers). Demonstrate this by gently slapping your arms and legs. It is very important that the children know that this shouldn't hurt.
4. Now ask the children to try both types of touch.
5. When all of the children can do the techniques, and ask them:
  - Notice how your hands feel now. Are they warm or cold?
  - How do your arms and thighs feel?
  - Anything else you notice in your hands or body?
6. Now ask the children to get into pairs. Explain that first we will be bakers kneading dough into bread, and next we will be hairdressers giving each other a nice hair wash.

### Bakers' Massage

1. Have the pairs raise an arm into the air – the one who raises their arm first will go first being the baker. Their partner sits (or stands, if they prefer) in front of the baker as comfortably as they can. Say: Please make sure you are sitting as comfortably as you can. Sit up tall with your head up and shoulders relaxed. Let your hands rest in your lap.
2. Now instruct the bakers:
  - Have you all seen a baker or maybe your mother kneading the bread? With palms and fingers, knead and squeeze the entire ridge of the shoulder and upper arm. Knead all the way back up to the lower part of the neck.
  - Feel the shape of the shoulders of your partner, and do the massage again. Knead your way to the sides of the shoulders and down the upper arms. Also work your way back up to the neck and press the low sides of the neck gently. Let your hands rest here. Now repeat one more time.
  - Place your hands on the shoulders and ask the bread to rise. And let go of the rising. Repeat two more times. Repeat the kneading and rising so that the bread is really well done.
  - Imagine the bread has come out of the oven and you are sweeping it, to make sure it is clean. From the neck, swipe with a flat hand and easy strokes out toward the shoulders. Swipe to the rounding of the shoulders and down the arms. Stroke or sweep the shoulders of your partner from the sides of the neck, over the shoulders and down the upper arms. Sweep a couple of times, till the bread is really clean and ready to eat.
  - End by slapping like we did when we were in the circle. Your slapping is like a lazy drum beat – the beat is firm, it can be heard, but mustn't hurt.
  - Begin by slapping the sides of the neck, work towards the shoulders, the rounding of the shoulders, down the arms – and back up to the neck. Slap from the neck to the upper back, the middle part of the back, the lower back down to the waist, and then back up to the neck.
  - Let your hands rest for some time at the base of the neck. Notice how you feel – maybe you feel heat from your hands, or other feelings. Don't say anything yet, just sense and think quietly about how it feels.

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- Let's all do some stretches before we swap places. Stand up and raise your hands to the ceiling or to the sky. Make yourself as tall and long as possible. Reach as far to the sides as you can without moving your pelvis and legs.
- Talk to each other about how it was to receive and to give a shoulder massage.
- Now change places, and repeat the massage.

### Hairdressers' Massage

1. Ask the children to get into pairs – it can be the same or new pairs. Tell them that they will pretend to be hairdressers, giving each other a hair wash using shampoo. This will help them to practise massaging their partner's head.
2. Ask one of the pairs to sit down in a chair or on the floor. They are the customers and their partner is the hairdresser. They stand behind the child sitting down.
3. Now instruct the hairdressers:
  - Start by massaging shampoo into the scalp on the top of your customer's head.
  - Now rub the shampoo in the hair behind the ears. Be careful not to press too hard. Is the pressure too hard or too soft? Ask your customer!
  - Now move to the back of the head. Put one hand on top of the customer's head for support while using the other hand to wash the hair at the back of the head and the base of the neck. Massage the shampoo well into the head, the base and along the entire edge of the back and sides of the head. Give an extra massage on top of the head.
  - Now you will rinse the shampoo out of the hair with water. Use your hands like water. Let your hands rinse their hair starting at the top of the head and down over their shoulders, and then from the top of the head again and down the back.
  - Let your hands rest for some time at the base of the neck.
  - Can you feel the heat from the hands?
  - What do you notice after the head massage?
  - Don't say anything yet, just sense and think quietly about how it feels.
  - Before the children swap places, let them do some stretches.
  - Stand up and raise your hands to the ceiling or to the sky. Make yourself as tall and long as possible.
  - Reach as far to the sides as you can without moving your pelvis and legs.
  - Talk to each other quietly about how it was to receive and to give a hair wash/head massage.
  - Change now. Repeat the instructions for the other children.



Reflect with children how they experienced this activity. You can ask:

- What was it like to receive a gentle touch from your partner?
- Do you feel more relaxed?
- What was it like to give your partner a gentle touch?



It is very important that children are gender-matched, in cultures where it is not permitted for girls and boys to touch.






This activity should only be done with children who are comfortable with each other and know each other well. Any child who is uncomfortable with being touched can opt out of this exercise. They can be given something else to do, such as self-massage of their arms and shoulders, legs and feet. Or they can do a different activity, such as drawing or painting.

Be sure to time each round, so that each child gets the same amount of time for a nice massage.

Walk around the pairs during the massages and help any children having difficulties with any of the techniques. Make sure they are applying the right pressure in massaging their partner.

## 3.5 Relaxed Breathing



	<p>The AIM of this activity is to learn how to use the breath to relax the body and mind. It is useful as an introduction to other breathing exercises.</p>		<p>5 minutes</p>
	<p>Ages: For six years old and above          Participants: Any number of participants          Facilitators: Two or more</p>		
	<p>Setting: A quiet space where children can lie down comfortably          Materials: None</p>		
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explain the benefit of deep breathing saying: It is very beneficial to be able to breathe deeply, especially if you feel under stress or if you find it difficult to breathe. Explain the following:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This short deep breathing exercise is very good for your body and mind.</li> <li>• It is useful when you have no time for a longer relaxation.</li> <li>• Even a very brief pause where you focus on the breath can have a deep, relaxing effect on body and mind.</li> <li>• A few deep breaths can help the whole body to release stress.</li> <li>• It can give the feeling of peace and can even relieve pain.</li> <li>• Whenever you need to, allow yourself to take a few minutes of relaxed breathing before you continue on with whatever you have to do.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Ask participants to sit or lie in a comfortable position. If they are sitting, have them sit upright with the head resting gently on the top of the spine. Have them close their eyes gently, or keep them open but soft and unfocused.</li> <li>3. Use the following script in a slow, steady voice ( and feel free to change it as needed):             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Imagine that you are sitting in front of a candle that burns with a steady flame. Your out-breath will only make the flame flicker a bit... Do not bite your teeth together, and let the lower jaw hang slightly so your mouth is a little open or closed softly... Let your eyes, jaw, teeth and tongue relax.</li> <li>• Put your hands on your chest and breathe in, so the hands move smoothly and evenly a bit up and outwards as the chest rises...and your hands move smoothly down and inward when you breathe out.</li> <li>• Notice the movement and let it be smooth and even.</li> <li>• Place both hands on the stomach. Breathe in while you let your stomach move outward, as if there is a balloon in your stomach that becomes inflated. (For some children, it can help to have them place their two middle fingers on their belly button so the tips of the fingers touch. When they breathe in through the belly, the two fingers separate slightly; then when they breathe out, the fingers touch again.)</li> <li>• As you breathe out, lower your shoulders, while the air seeps out of the stomach balloon.</li> <li>• Place the back of your hands on your lower back. Breathe in while you let your back expand with the belly balloon. Notice how your back and sides – this entire part of your body – expands when you breathe in... and collapses back when you breathe out.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>		

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- Bring your hands down to your lap, and let's just breathe quietly for a couple of minutes.
  - Sit quietly for a moment and notice how your breath feels, how your body feels... Notice what is going on in your mind now...and notice the feeling of the breath in the body.
4. To end, ask participants to open their eyes and bring their attention back to the room and to each other.



Reflect with children how they experienced the breathing exercise, and how they can use it in the future by asking:

- How do you feel now?
- Could you breathe deeply?
- Which situations can make you feel short of breath?
- Can you use this exercise to come back to deep breathing the next time this happens?
- When or where could you do this activity at home?

Encourage the children to practise this exercise at home so they will be able to do this relaxed breathing easily anytime they need it. You can also encourage children, particularly older children and adolescents, to teach another person this breathing exercise – such as a friend, sibling or even their caregiver.



Speak slowly and calmly in your normal voice.

Remember that some children may have difficulty staying still. It can help to have those children sit next to you or a co-facilitator. You can also ask the child to demonstrate, as giving them a task can help them to focus.



A variation is the following simple breathing exercise. Here are the instructions:

- Lie on your back or side so you feel supported by the mattress or floor.
- Focus on your breathing, let the mouth be slightly open, and let go of tension in your eyes, tongue and jaw. Spend a moment to let go of excess tension... Let go as much as possible.
- Count down on every out breath. Breathe in deeply, and on the first out-breath count five-four-three-two-one-zero. On the next out-breath, count six-five-four and so on to zero. As the breath deepens and slows with the exercise, you can increase the countdown up to a starting point of ten, as long as this feels comfortable.

## 3.6 Muscle Relaxation



The AIM of this activity is to learn to feel the difference between tension and relaxation in the body, and to be able to release tension.



20 minutes



Ages: For six years old and above  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: A quiet space where children can lie down comfortably if they like  
Materials: None



1. Explain that it is important to learn how to relax when we are stressed, angry, scared or overexcited. Give the following instructions:
  - This is just a practice. Watch me and copy what I do. We're going to focus on different muscles in our body, first making them tense and hard, and then releasing them and relaxing them. I'll explain to you the different muscles, one by one. Make sure you're comfortable. Just breathe nice and steady.
  - First, your hands and arms. Make a fist with both hands, and clench them really hard – as hard as you can. Feel how tense it is. Feel the tension in your hands and forearms. Hold it [hold the tension for each muscle group for roughly a slow count of five]. Now relax. Let it go. Good. Now your upper arms. Bend your arms at the elbow, as if you are lifting a heavy weight. Make them really tense. Feel the tension in your upper arm muscles. Feel how hard it is. Now relax, let it go. Good.
  - Now straighten your arms and your hands down at your sides. Keep your arms straight and push them back behind you. Feel the tension in the back of your arms (your triceps). Now, let it go.
  - Continue in this way for other major muscle groups as follows: neck and shoulders; face; stomach; legs; feet.
2. Ask the children how it went and if they understand how to tense their muscles.
3. Tell them that now we are going to do the exercise properly and try to relax. Have the children first stand up, move around and shake themselves.
4. Then, have them sit or lie around the room with space between them, so they don't touch their neighbour.
5. Go through the muscle relaxation again in a regular pattern. Speak slowly, in a calm and steady tone of voice. Emphasise the relaxation in contrast to the tension. Make suggestions that help them feel relaxed. For example, you can suggest that their bodies feel heavy and warm. You can use or adapt the script below, or develop your own script to guide the children through, one that you are comfortable with:
  - Say: "Make sure you're comfortable. Just breathe calmly, deeply and steadily. When you're ready, let your eyes close. Notice your breathing, steady and slow. With each breath out, you begin to feel a little more relaxed. Steady breathing, feeling calm and relaxed.
  - Now we'll go through your muscle groups tensing and relaxing. First, your hands and arms. Make a tight fist with both hands. Clench your fists really hard. As hard as you can. Feel how tense it is. Feel the tension in your hands and forearms. Hold it [you may want to count to three slowly] ... and relax. Let it go. Notice how the tension leaves your arms.
  - Now your upper arms. Hold your arms bent at the elbow as before. Make them really tense. Feel the tension in your upper arm muscles. Feel how hard it is. Hold it. ... and relax. Let it go. Notice the difference between the tension and relaxation.
  - Next your back of your arms. Hold your arms and hands straight won by your sides – then push them back behind you. Make them really tense. Notice the tension in the muscles at the back of your arms. Hold it. Feel the tension. Hold... and relax.
  - Now your arms are relaxed. They begin to feel heavy by your sides. Notice how the tension has left your arms. Steady breathing. You're feeling calm and relaxed. With each breath out, a little more tension leaves your body.

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- Now your neck and shoulders. Shrug your shoulders up to your ears. Feel the tension around your shoulders and neck. Hold it, feel how tense it is. Hold it... and relax. Notice how the tension has left your neck and shoulders. You're feeling calm and relaxed.
- Now tense all your face muscles – your nose and forehead and cheeks – hold the tension... and now relax your face, and soften your forehead.
- Now your stomach. Make your stomach really hard and tense. Hold it. Really hard. See what the tension feels like. Hold it... and relax. Feel the tension leave your stomach.
- Your stomach... and shoulders... and arms feel relaxed. The tension is leaving your body. You're feeling calm, and relaxed, and warm. With each breath out, you feel a little more relaxed. Your body feels heavy against the floor. Steady breath, relaxed.
- Now your legs. Hold your legs out in front of you. Make them really tense. Feel the tension in your legs. Notice what it feels like. Feel it really hard. Hold it... and relax. All the tension is leaving your legs. Steady breathing, and you're feeling heavier, and calm... and relaxed, and secure.
- Now your feet. Point your feet away from your legs and tense your feet and toes. Feel the tension in your feet and calf muscles. Hold it. Feel the tension. Hold it... and relax. Let it go. Notice how the tension is leaving your legs and feet and toes, and you feel calm and relaxed and secure.
- Now your body is relaxed. Breathe steady. With each breath out, you feel more relaxed. The tension is leaving your body. You feel heavy, and relaxed, and calm, and warm. Just steady breathing. Good. Heavy, warm, relaxed. Think about your arms... and the tension leaves them. And your neck... feels relaxed. Notice your stomach, and the tension is just leaving your stomach. Legs... feel heavy and relaxed. And feet... relaxed.
- You feel calm and steady... and relaxed. Just stay like this for a minute. With each breath out, say the word relax to yourself. Feeling calm and relaxed. And when you're ready, let your eyes open slowly. Just sit. Notice how you feel. Relaxed. Good.
- Give the group time to come back in a circle to discuss the activity and how they feel.



Ask the children what it was like to tense the muscles and then relax them. Say that relaxation is like learning any skill – you need to practise to get better. The more they do it, the easier it will come.

Discuss with the children what types of situations might be useful for them to do this exercise (for example, when they cannot sleep, when they feel angry, when they feel they have too much energy).

You can ask them to practise this at home. Let the children know that this exercise can also be really helpful for them if they can't sleep at night. Even if they cannot sleep, it will help their body to be relaxed.



Speak slowly and calmly in your normal voice.

It may help to count to five slowly out loud when asking children to tense their muscles.

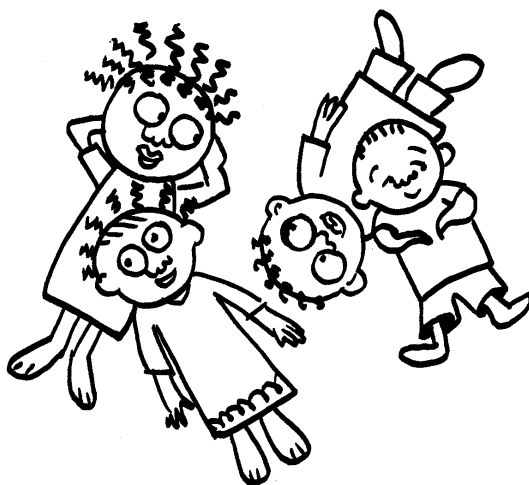
Some children may feel uncomfortable closing their eyes. Instead, they can just gaze down toward the floor and keep their eyes soft.



Adjust the language you use for the muscles according to the age and developmental stage of the children. The script above is written for younger children, but for older children you may want to name the muscles, such as 'biceps' (for upper arms) and 'triceps' (for muscles at the back of the arms).

For older children, you can do the exercise more slowly. However, for younger children who may have shorter attention spans, you may want to focus on just a few of the major muscle groups, or not have them hold the muscles quite as long. It is advisable to do a shorter demonstration and a briefer exercise.

## 3.7 Belly Breathing Together



	<p>The AIM of this activity is to relax with a group of peers who know each other well and feel comfortable together.</p>		<p>10 minutes</p>
	<p>Ages: For six years old and above Participants: Any number of participants</p>		
	<p>Setting: A quiet space where children can lie down comfortably Materials: None</p>		
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explain to participants that now they will have a nice rest.</li> <li>2. Help them to lie down on the floor in a large circle, in a way that each child has their head resting on the belly of another.</li> <li>3. Have them breathe deeply and regularly. Have them notice how their head rises and falls with the in-breath and out-breath of the person they are resting on. And how the same happens to the head of the person on their belly as they breathe in and out.</li> <li>4. When everyone is ready, the facilitator says:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin by noticing and observing your breath... Just quietly notice the breath for a moment...</li> <li>• Maybe you can feel the air in the nose or mouth, when you breathe in... Notice how the air fills the lungs and how the belly moves so the head on your belly is moving. And feel how the head is being moved by the breathing... up... and... down, up... and... down...</li> <li>• Take a deep breath so the belly becomes very big and the head rises upwards... and let the outbreath be long, so the head comes down really slowly...fine...</li> <li>• Repeat that one more time, and maybe breathe out as if through a drinking straw...</li> <li>• Now return to your normal breathing where you notice the movement of the belly... up... and... down, up... and... down, and a final time...</li> <li>• If your eyes are open, now close them and feel the movement from inside your body... thank you.</li> <li>• End the exercise and have everyone come sitting up.</li> <li>• Ask how the exercise was for them.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>		
	<p>You can reflect with the group using the questions below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How was this exercise for you?</li> <li>• How did it feel to be together as a group breathing and feeling your heads moving?</li> </ul>		
	<p>It is very important to have separate groups of boys and girls in cultures where they are not permitted to touch. In other contexts too, as this game involves lying down and touching, it may be best to separate the group into smaller, same-gender groups to make the exercise more comfortable for everyone.</p>		

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Use this variation when the children need a laugh:

- Participants stand or sit in a circle and before lying down they decide who will be first, who will be second, who will be third and so on.
- Participants then lie down in a circle with their head on the belly of another. The first person begins by saying one loud and clear ha! The next person the says two – ha! ha! The third person then says three – ha! ha! ha! and so on. The room will soon fill with the sounds of laughter.

If you can, have the children use actual straws when they exhale slowly out through the mouth in the breathing exercise.

Use this variation if children may be uncomfortable with being so physically close to one another (e.g., mixed gender groups). You will need a book or small stone for children to place on their bellies. Here are the instructions:

- Lie down on the floor face up and with your legs stretched out or bent with the soles of the feet on the ground, whichever is more comfortable.
- Put your hands or an object (a book or small stone) gently on your bellies – or as the facilitator, gently place the object on each child's belly.
- Now begin by noticing and observing your breath... Just quietly notice the breath for a moment. Don't force your breath... just allow the breath to happen.
- Maybe you can feel the air in the nose or mouth, when you breathe in... Notice how the air fills the lungs and how the belly moves so that your hands (or the object) on your belly is moving. Up... and... down, up... and... down, up... and... down...
- Take a deep breath so the belly becomes very big and the weight on your belly is rising upwards... Then let the outbreath be long, so the belly comes down really slowly.
- Fine... repeat that one more time... Follow the in-breath with your full attention, all the way to the end of the in-breath... Then follow the out-breath with your full attention, all the way to the end of the out-breath.
- Now return to your normal breathing where you notice the movement of the belly... Up and down... up and down... and a final time...
- Take away your hands (or the object), and notice how it feels now without this added weight on your belly. Can you still feel the movement of the deep breathing in the belly? If your eyes are open, close them and feel the movement from inside your body.
- Now we will end the breathing exercise. Open your eyes, and slowly, gently come up to a sitting position.

To reflect on this activity, you can ask:

- How do you feel after the exercise?
- How was it for you to do the deep breathing?
- Why do we need deep breathing?
- What other methods do you use to calm yourself?
- When do you need to calm yourself?
- Where and when could you practice this breathing exercise at home?

## 3.8 Mindful Art Walk



	The AIM of this activity is to for children to practice mindful attention of their surroundings.	20 minutes
	Ages: For six years old and above Participants: Any number of participants	
	Setting: Safe and pleasant environment to walk in (outside preferably) Materials: Paper and drawing or colouring materials	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Find a safe and pleasant environment where the children can walk. Preferably this is outside, such as around the CFS, in a nearby park or playground. If the weather or environment do not allow for walking outside, it is also fine to do this exercise inside the CFS or in another safe indoor environment.</li> <li>2. Explain that often we are rushing through our days from one activity to another, and sometimes we forget to take the time to look around and really SEE things around us. Explain that we will now practise bringing our careful attention to our environment. We will do this by walking silently around the area, slowly step by step, noticing things around them.</li> <li>3. Ask the children to simply notice everything around them – all the tiny details. This could be colours, textures, smells, sounds, feeling the sunshine or breeze. Explain that when they find something interesting and beautiful, they should stop and look very carefully at that object. Let the children know that after walking around for a while, you will let them know when it is time to stop and draw the beautiful thing they noticed during their walk.</li> <li>4. Now begin the walk. Ask them to do this in total silence, bringing their full attention to their surroundings.</li> <li>5. Continue walking for 5-10 minutes, depending on the age and developmental stage of the children and their ability to focus on this exercise. For example, if the children start laughing and talking, it may be time to end the walking part of this activity.</li> <li>6. When the time is up, have them stop walking, sit down wherever they will be drawing, and think of something beautiful that they saw during their walk. Ask them to draw whatever they noticed as they were walking. It can be anything, no matter how big or small (e.g., a plant, a stone, the sun shining on them). Ask them to draw as much detail of that object as they can remember (e.g., if it is a leaf, draw its shape, the veins, its colour and any other unique characteristics of that leaf).</li> <li>7. Afterwards, take some time for children to share what they have drawn.</li> </ol>	
	<p>You can reflect with the group using the questions below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did it make you feel to walk silently and notice your surroundings?</li> <li>• What kinds of things did you notice that you have not noticed before? (e.g., sights, smells, sounds, patterns)</li> </ul>	

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Mindfulness has positive effects on the mental health and well-being of children and adults. Practising mindfulness has been shown to improve attention and to reduce stress.

Remember to have the drawing materials ready so that children can silently go from their walk and directly to drawing.

Be sure the environment is safe and that children do not wander away from the group and the facilitators, if they are walking outside. Put clear boundaries around the area where the children can walk so that you as facilitator(s) can still see all the children as they move around.



If the environment outside is not safe enough (due to hazards, insecurity) or pleasant for walking, then it is possible to do the mindful art work in the CFS itself or in another suitable indoor environment.

Very young children might like to be given an object and asked to draw all of its fine details (rather than find the object on their walk). Older children may be able to draw an object of their choosing from memory, but this could be a difficult concentration task for very young children.

You can also use drawing techniques for relaxing through the following variations:

- Have the children draw or paint to relaxing music.
- Ask the children to look at an object that they have collected from their walk and draw that object using one continuous line without looking at the paper. Encourage the children to do this without looking and without lifting the pencil off the paper. Start the exercise by explaining to the children that they should trust their eyes to lead their hand while following the outline of the object. Children should not be concerned with what the drawing should look like, but to notice afterward if they feel more relaxed.
- Stick large sheets of paper on the wall and have each child stand in front of the paper. Have them create a drawing using both hands, focusing on rapid and slow movement as they breathe. Explain that they can just scribble – just move their hands about however they like, they don't have to draw anything particular. They can create various shapes and use different colours to colour in the shapes if they like.

Clay can also be used as an alternative to drawing. It has many qualities for children to explore their senses. You can start with asking children to release tension by squeezing, tapping and gently throwing a piece of clay onto a surface. This can be followed with moulding of the clay into shapes and forms. Ask the children to notice how the clay feels in their hands. Ask them to note how the texture and temperature changes in the clay as they work it in their hands.



# Social Support: “My Friends and Family”



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# 4

## 4. Social Support: “My Friends and Family”

Type	Activity	Time Needed
Welcome game about how we are inter-connected	4.1 Ball of String	10 minutes
An activity for children to feel safe and remember that they have supportive people in their lives	4.2 My Garden with Friends	20 minutes
Cooperation game	4.3 Working Together	10 minutes
	4.4 Who am I?	30 minutes
	4.5 Who Matters in my Life?	30 minutes
	4.6 The Memory of Someone who Matters	45 minutes

This theme focuses on activating children’s emotional and social resources. It points to the importance of their friends and family members. Social support is critical for people’s recovery from stressful events, and helps children to feel safer, more connected to others and valued. These activities are designed to help children identify supports in their lives, including family, friends, teachers and others in the community, and to know how to both give and receive support.

The theme, “Social support,” has a number of psychosocial benefits for children:

- The activities raise children’s awareness of the sources of support they have in their lives from people like family, friends, teachers and others.
- The activities strengthen children’s sense of being connected to others.
- The activities promote children’s feelings of being valued and loved in their families and communities.
- The activities enable children to understand the importance of their networks and communities to help everyone grow and be healthy and safe.

Take great care, as some children may not feel safe within their families. They may be being abused by a family member. It is vital that these children find support from other trustworthy adults, such as a nurse, teacher, social worker, community worker. Facilitators need to know how to refer children for help, if needed.

## 4.1 Ball of String



The AIM of this activity is to demonstrate how we all benefit from being connected.



10 minutes



Ages: For six years old and above

Participants: Any number of participants (modifications for large groups suggested below)



Setting: Any

Materials: A large ball of string or wool



1. Ask the children to sit in a circle on the floor.
2. Say: We are going to make a web using this ball of string. This is like a web that connects us all in the CFS. Whoever is holding the ball of string says something that they are able to give to others. When they're finished, they hold onto the end of the string and roll the ball of string to someone else in the circle. That child then says something about what they are able to give to other people. We will go on until we are all connected by the ball of string.
3. You start by telling the group something that you can give, such as a smile, or an ear to listen to children, etc. Now roll the ball of string to one of the participants, without letting go of the end of the string. Ask that person to say something they can give to others.
4. Continue with the activity until everyone has participated.
5. Now ask the participants to stand up. Ask them to hold onto the string. This forms a web. Explain how this web is a symbol of how we are all connected, how much we as a group can give to each other, and how we need to work together as a team to encourage one another.
6. Now ask a few children to loose their piece of string. Ask the group to say what has happened to the web. Reflect with the children on how the web is weaker when we are not all connected.



Explain to the group that when we don't include everyone, the web is much weaker and doesn't work together as well as it could. Emphasise that everyone has a role to play in supporting each other.



For very large groups, you may want to divide into two smaller groups, each with their own ball of string.

You can also ask children to say something they need from others to be well and happy in their lives, or to identify a strength that they can bring.

You could tighten and thicken the web by doing multiple rounds. For example, in round one the children can each say something they can give. In round two they can say something about a strength they have. In round three they can say what they need from other people.

## 4.2 My Garden with Friends



The AIM of this activity is to help children identify people in their lives they can turn to for support.



20 minutes



Ages: For six years old and above  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: Any  
Materials: White A4 or A3 paper or cardboard, colouring pencils or crayons



1. Ask the children to sit in a circle.
2. Give the children the paper or cardboard and ask them to draw a garden with a tree.
3. When the children have done their drawing, say: Now that you have all finished drawing, I want you to close your eyes, take a deep breath and think of who you would like to put in the garden. They could be your family, your friends or someone close to you. They could be someone you trust, someone who makes you feel safe or someone you love or look up to.
4. Give the children time to add the people to their drawings.
5. When they have finished their drawings, ask them to tell the group about the people in their gardens.



Reflect with the children about this activity using the following questions:

- What did this activity make you think of?
- Why is it important to think about who matters in our lives?
- What kind of nice things you can do with people in your garden? (e.g., play with the person, talk to them, feel safe with them)
- Who would you go to if you had a problem at home, at school or with an adult in your life?

Help the children realise that many of the people in their gardens are people that they can go to for help when needed. Ask the children to think about the different people they might go to when they have different types of problems, or when some people are more available to offer support than others.



Children may draw loved ones who have died. Be prepared to respond appropriately if children become distressed thinking about them.. Allow them to express sadness if they feel this way, and offer support. Tell them that it is good to remember loved ones who have died. This can help them to feel better.



Children can imagine other places like a walk in a forest, being in the mountains, or near a river or the sea or any other positive place for the children. You can also ask them to choose a place together.

If time and equipment allows, you can do this activity using more materials such as cloth, glue, coloured paper, etc. This activity can be as simple or as 'crafty' as you want, depending on the age of the children and the resources available. It is best to create the garden on a large piece of card if using other materials.

## 4.3 Working Together



The AIM of this activity is to encourage the children to be aware of, respect and work with others in the group.



10 minutes



Ages: For six years old and above (modifications suggested below)  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: Any

Materials: A stick about the length of a pencil or a pen with a flat end, one for each child



1. Divide the children into pairs. Give each pair of children two sticks, preferably of equal length. Ask the children to stand facing each other, not too far apart – close enough to hold the sticks between the tips of the fingers of each pair
2. The aim of the game is to keep the sticks from falling on the floor. To keep the two sticks stabilized, the children have to watch each other closely and react quickly. Both children have to learn to adjust to each other's movements. This is not easy!
3. Demonstrate with one of the children or a co-facilitator what the activity requires. Place the end of one stick against the tip of the index finger of the child's right hand and against the tip of your left index finger. Then, place the second stick against the index fingers of your and the child's free hands. Explain to the group that in order to keep the stick balanced, both of you have to apply a little pressure. Try moving a little bit to demonstrate how you both have to work together to keep the sticks between your index fingers.
4. Now have the children do the same in their pairs, giving them a chance to get both sticks balanced between their index fingers. Now ask them to try taking a step to the left or right whilst holding the sticks steadily!
5. End the game once everyone has managed to keep the sticks steady for a period of time or a reasonable period of time has passed.
6. You can use the reflection points below to discuss the activity with the children.



This activity can challenge children in working together. It encourages children to be patient and how to agree to do the task. Keep these things in mind as you reflect with the children using the questions below:

- Was it difficult to keep the sticks balanced?
- What did you have to learn to make this work?
- How did you communicate and were you patient with each other?

If some of the children have also tried doing the activity in bigger groups, ask them:

- Was it more difficult when there were more children?
- What did you learn about communication and patience?









It is important to have separate groups in cultures where girls (especially adolescent girls) and boys are not permitted to be together.

Be encouraging, especially with younger children. It may be easier for them to start by practising with just one stick. When they feel more confident, they can try two sticks at a time.



Depending on the number of children, the game can be played with children standing in two lines (in pairs), in a triangle (three children in each team) or in circles (more than three participants). The game is more difficult if lots of children participate. Keep the number of players small (2-3 children per group) with younger children to make the task a bit easier. Or make the group bigger for older children, making the task more demanding.



4.4	Who am I?	
	The AIM of this activity is to enable participants to reflect on how they define themselves and what roles they play in life.	 30 minutes
	Ages: For six years old and above Participants: Any number of participants	
	Setting: Any Materials: 10 strips of paper for each participant, pens or pencils for each participant	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Give each participant 10 strips of paper and something to write with.</li> <li>2. Ask the children to each write down the roles they play in life, one role per strip of paper. For example: 'I am a girl', 'I am a good friend', 'I am a student', etc.</li> <li>3. When they have all done this, ask them to find a partner. Ask the pairs to present their roles to one another and discuss them with each other, throwing away the ones that are least important, until they have the three most important roles left. These will be the three most important roles they have in their lives.</li> <li>4. Invite a few pairs to share the roles they identified for themselves.</li> <li>5. Use the reflection points below to discuss this activity.</li> </ol>	
	<p>Use these questions to reflect on this activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did it feel to throw away seven of the roles that you play in life?</li> <li>• Was it difficult to be left with only three roles?</li> <li>• Was it difficult to choose the three most important roles?</li> </ul>	

## 4.5 Who Matters in My Life?



The AIM of this activity is to explore and encourage respect of the various kinds of support systems the children may have.



30 minutes



Ages: For six years old and above  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: Space to sit in a circle.  
Materials: Copies of blank 'Who matters in my life?' worksheets (see Annex 3), pens or pencils.  
If it is not possible to provide printed copies of the worksheet, show the children how to draw the circles themselves. Use a flipchart or other board to demonstrate. You could also draw it with a stick in the sand. Help children who may have difficulties in identifying people to write in the circles. Take care to ensure that every child is able to do this activity.



1. Ask the participants to sit in a circle and begin the activity by talking about yourself and about the people who matter in your life. Use your own example of a completed 'Who matters' worksheet to show what you want the children to do.
2. Give each participant something to write with and a copy of the blank worksheet 'Who matters'. Ask them to think carefully about the people who are important in their lives and give them about 10 minutes to fill out the worksheet. Ask them to begin by drawing themselves in the middle. Then in the next ring, write the name of the closest person or people to them, and so on. Explain that they can write more than one person in each circle. Also explain that the important people they choose do not have to be people they have a close relationship with, but they can be people they look up to, or whom they were close with before.
3. When all the participants have completed this exercise, ask them to find a partner. They should take turns in telling their partner about the people they have written on the worksheet. Ask them to explain who they people are, and why they are important.
4. When they have finished sharing with their partners, ask them to find another partner and to repeat the activity of sharing. Repeat this a few times.
5. When the sharing activity is complete, ask all the participants to join the circle again and discuss the reflection questions below with them.



To reflect on this activity, ask:

- What did you like about doing this activity?
- Did everyone have the same people in their circles of who matters?
- What did you notice when you heard about other participants' circles of who matters?
- Why is it important to talk about who matters in our lives?



## 4.6 A Memory of Someone who Matters



The AIM of this activity is to encourage the children to reflect on the value of someone special and to respect one another in listening to their stories.



45 minutes



Ages: For six years old and above  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: Any  
Materials: Coloured pens, paper.



1. Ask the children to find a partner and to find a space to draw, either on a table or on the floor.
2. Explain that each child should choose one of the people they referred to in their 'Who matters' drawing. Ask them to think of a positive memory they have of this person, and draw something to do with this memory on the paper.
3. Explain that when they are finished, they will share the story or meaning of the memory to their partner.
4. Let the children draw for 15 minutes.
5. When both children in the pair have finished, they should take turns telling each other about the drawings, 5 minutes each.



To reflect on this activity, ask:

- How did it feel to draw this memory?
- What did it feel like telling your partner about it?
- What was it like to hear your partner's story about their memory picture?



Be prepared to support any children who may become distressed during this activity.

# Relating to others: “Being a Good Friend”



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## 5. Relating to others: “Being a Good Friend”

Type	Activity	Time Needed
Non-verbal communication	5.1 Guess an Animal	15 minutes
Communication 1: body language	5.2 Body Language 5.3 Silent Movie	20 minutes 10 minutes
Communication 2: active listening	5.4 Listen to Me! 5.5 Just Listen 5.6 Listen, Reflect, Question and Summarise 5.7 I am a Good Listener When...	15 minutes 40 minutes 30-40 minutes 15 minutes
Communication 3: speaking	5.8 Using “I” Statements	15 minutes
Activities about being a trustworthy friend	5.9 Lean on Me 5.10 Taxis and Radio Cars	15 minutes 20-30 minutes
Activities for cooperation and problem-solving	5.11 The Human Knot 5.12 Creative Fun	15 minutes 30 minutes

Relating to others is about how we communicate in both verbal and non-verbal ways, and how we can be good citizens in our communities. There are many psychosocial benefits for children:

- The activities raise awareness about body language and non-verbal communication.
- The activities promote the gift of listening and learning how to listen attentively.
- The activities enable children to share their story with others.
- The activities encourage cooperation and problem-solving.

The communication exercises (5.2 - 5.8) are best done in a sequence, but can also be done as standalone sessions. If you wish, you can select one or two activities from each section – from communication 1: body language, one or two from communication 2: active listening and then end with communication 3: speaking.

## 5.1 Guess an Animal



The AIM of this activity is to energize the participants and to raise awareness of non-verbal communication.



15 minutes



Ages: For six years old and above (modifications suggested below)

Participants: Any number of participants, split into smaller groups of 10 children



Setting: Any

Materials: Pieces of paper - each with a word or drawing of a different animal, a bowl or hat. (Please see annex 3 for pictures of animals that can be printed out or photocopied for this activity.)

Facilitators: Before the session, write the names of animals on small pieces of paper, one animal per piece of paper. The animals can be anything from an ant to an elephant. It is important that it is easy for children to differentiate the size of the animals. You may also want to make a list of the animals you have used in order of size.



1. Put the pieces of paper into a bowl or hat.
2. Explain to the children that they are not allowed to talk to each other during the game.
3. Invite each child to take a piece of paper from the bowl or hat.
4. Without making any sounds, the children have to stand in a row ordered by the size of their animal, with the smallest animal to the left and the biggest to the right. They are allowed to mime (act like) their animal.
5. When everyone is standing in a row, ask the participants to say their animal out loud.
6. Follow-up by asking how the children found communicating with each other without using words or sounds.



Reflect with the children about how our body language gives messages to others.

For example, you can say:

- How did children behave when they were a small animal?
- And how did they behave when they were a big animal?
- Were the behaviours different for children playing small and large animals?



Make sure you include animals in the game that are familiar to the children.



Use pictures of animals instead of written words for younger children or with children from communities with low literacy levels.

For older children and adolescents, you can use this variation:

1. Prepare small pieces of paper or cardboard numbered according to the number of people in the group. (For example, if there are 15 participants, prepare 15 pieces of paper or cardboard numbered 1 to 15.)
2. Explain to the children that you will give them a piece of paper or cardboard, but they must not look at what is written on it.

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3. Mix the papers up and give one to each child. Make sure that each child holds the paper so that she or he cannot see the number, but the other children can. For example, by holding the paper against their forehead.
4. Now, ask the children to get in line in order (for example, the lowest to highest number), without looking at the paper they received and without saying a word. They can form the line along a wall of the room, in a circle or in a straight line in the centre of the space – depending upon the number of children and the setting.

Reflect with the children about this activity using the following questions:

- How did you feel while playing this game?
- What was the hardest part? The easiest part?
- What tricks did you use to get into order?
- How did you communicate without words? Was it easy to understand each other?
- What are some of the barriers to communicating that we have in our group?
- How can we communicate better with our bodies?

## 5.2 Body Language



The AIM of this activity is for children to learn about how we communicate using body language.



10 minutes



Ages: For six years old and above  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: Any  
Materials: None



Ask the children to sit in a circle.

1. Say: Sometimes we communicate with words, but we also communicate with our bodies. This is called 'body language'.
2. Explain to the children that sometimes our actions or body language speaks louder than our words! Give the following examples (you can demonstrate the expressions if you like):
  - If a person says, 'I'm not angry,' but they are frowning and their eyes look dark and fierce, would you believe them?
  - If a person says, 'I like your new haircut' but then they roll their eyes, would you believe her words or her actions?
3. Tell the children that if our words and our body language don't match, people are more likely to listen to our actions rather than our words. This is because so much of the way we communicate with each other is through our body language. For this reason, body language is very powerful, especially when it comes to situations of conflict. We have the power to make things better or make things worse by what we do with our bodies. So, body language is like sending messages without words.
4. Ask the children the following questions:
  - If I cross my arms over my chest and look up at the ceiling, what does that communicate?
  - If I look out the window when someone is talking to me, what does that communicate?
5. Now ask the children: How do we show with our bodies that we are listening and paying attention to what the other person is saying? Get ideas from the children.
6. Next, have them form two lines, each child facing a partner. Give the following instructions:
  - Line one – show with your body language that you are listening to your partner.
  - Now, line two – show with your, body language that they are NOT listening to their partners.
7. Reflect with the children:
  - What did you notice your partner did to show they were listening?
  - How did the other partner show they were NOT listening?
8. Explain to the children that some ways to show that we are listening include:
  - Face the other person.
  - Make sure you are not too near or too far away.
  - Keep your body relaxed.
  - Don't make distracting movements like tapping your feet or fingers.
  - Don't stare, but look at the other person in a natural way (but see the 'Remember' box below).

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It is very important to remember to think about what our bodies are telling people. We communicate so much through our bodies., If we understand more about body language, we can hopefully understand more about what people are thinking and feeling.



Remember that body language, including eye contact and how close or far apart people stand while talking, will vary by culture, age and gender of the people communicating. Adapt what you say in this activity according to the culture(s) of the participants.



For older children, you can also use the terms "non-verbal communication" and "verbal communication" when talking about body language and spoken language, respectively.



## 5.3 Silent Movie



The AIM of this activity is to learn about body language as part of how we communicate.



20 minutes



Ages: For six years old and above (modifications suggested below)  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: Any  
Materials: None



1. Remind the children about the discussion on body language (if you did activity 5.2).
2. You can ask: Why is it important to be aware of your body language when communicating with others?
3. Explain to the children that body language can be either open or closed. Ask them for examples of open and closed body language.
4. Divide the participants into groups of four. Explain that each group will create two "still" images – one showing open body language and another showing closed body language.
5. They will then show these to the wider group who will guess which one is open and which one is closed.
6. To get them to think about open and closed body language, there are some examples below:

### Open:

Smiling  
Eye contact  
Active listening (nodding)  
Turning toward the person  
Being close to the person

### Closed:

Showing no emotion or negative emotion  
No eye contact – looking down or away  
Rolling the eyes or being distracted  
Positioning the body away from the person  
Being far away from the person

7. Reflect together:
  - What have you learnt in terms of communicating through body language?
  - How might this affect your daily life?
  - How can you change your body language to make people understand you better?
  - How can our body language show others that we are listening or care about what they are telling us?
8. Emphasise to the children that when we listen with our bodies, the other person feels respected. It is easier for them to focus on what they are trying to say if there are no distractions from the listener, and when they feel the listener cares about what they are saying and is paying attention. Our body language is important to help someone feel heard, and is the first step in listening with our words too.



Encourage children to notice their own body language and the body language of others. They can do this when they are with friends and family outside of the CFS, and when everyone is together in the CFS. In other sessions, you might want to ask the children again about the body language they are using with other children, and how everyone feels communication is going within the group.



Remember to emphasize to children that it is important to be respectful to each other – both with our words and our body language. Sometimes someone's body language might be saying 'I'd rather be left alone right now' or 'I'm open and I'd like to be closer right now.' We can learn how to notice others' body language and use our own body language to respond respectfully and kindly.



As a follow-on activity, older children and adolescents could make up a short play about experiences in their everyday lives regarding communication and body language. This could be about how they respond to their parents when they are asked to do chores. Let them choose the topic that they can best relate to. In the play, ask them to demonstrate how they can change their body language to be respectful and promote good relationships.

## 5.4 Listen to Me!



The AIM of this activity is for children to learn to speak and listen carefully in order to understand each other.



15 minutes



Ages: For six years old and above  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: Any  
Materials: Lots of paper shapes (triangle, circle, square, rectangle). Cut the shapes from paper before the session begins, if possible.



1. Ask the children to work together in pairs. Ask them to sit with their backs to each other. Give each child in the pair the same set of shapes.
2. Explain that one child in the pair will make a picture using their shapes. This child is the speaker. They will explain to their partner what the picture looks like. Their partner is the listener and must then try to make the same picture based on what their partner tells them. They are not allowed to turn around to see their partner's picture and they are not supposed to ask any questions.
3. When the listener finishes their picture, they can compare how much their picture looks like the one the speaker first made.
4. Then they switch roles and repeat the exercise.



Reflect with the children about this activity using the following questions:

- How did you feel while playing this game?
- What was the hardest part as a speaker? What was the easiest part as a speaker?
- What was the hardest part as a listener? What was the easiest part as a listener?
- What would have helped to make the activity easier?

Explain to the children that listening can be hard work. Sometimes we think we hear and understand another person, only to find out that we weren't listening well. Remind the children how we learned about body language and 'listening' with our bodies (for example, having an open body language, or eye contact). We can also show someone that we are 'listening' with our words.

Sometimes we have a miscommunication between the speaker and the listener because the speaker can't say clearly what he or she thinks. As listeners, we can help the speaker to get their feelings and thoughts across by asking them questions or by reflecting back to the speaker what we heard them say.

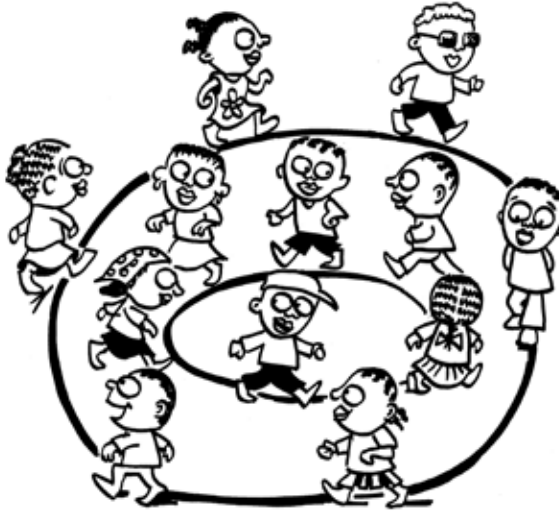


A variation is to have children describe their houses to each other or a particular place that they like, and draw it in pairs. If they like, they can take their artwork home or it can be displayed in the CFS.

Another variation is to use lego bricks, if available. Each child gets 5-8 lego bricks, with each pair getting bricks that match exactly in their shapes and colours. In this game, the child who is speaking makes a lego sculpture out of the blocks and explains to the child who is listening how they have made it. The listener should try to make the same lego sculpture!

For older children, you can ask them to make their own shapes for their pictures.

## 5.5 Just Listen



The AIM of this activity is to help children develop listening skills for good communication.



40 minutes - 20 minutes for each of 2 parts



Ages: For six years old and above (modifications suggested below)  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: Space for children to stand in two circles, one circle inside the other  
Materials: None



1. Divide the big group into two smaller groups, standing in two circles (one circle is inside the other circle). The outside is circle 'A' and the inside is circle 'B'.
2. Explain that this is an exercise in listening, so they must listen carefully to their partner.
3. Ask the two circles to walk in opposite directions until you say 'FREEZE'.
4. When they hear 'FREEZE', the inner and outer circles turn to face each other. Now ask everyone from circle 'A' to make a pair with the person standing opposite them in circle 'B'. The pairs can find a comfortable place in the room to sit together for the exercise.
5. Explain that each child in the pair takes a turn to tell the other something that interests them. Suggest simple topics to the children, such as talking about their favourite animal or their favourite superhero.
6. To start, have the children from circle A talk to their partner, and the children from circle B will listen. It is very important that while the listener does nothing but listen – they don't ask questions or make any comments, only listen.
7. Explain that after 2 minutes, you will call 'STOP' and then the listener will repeat back what they heard their partner say. So, it is important that they have listened carefully to their partner! They will have one minute to do this.
8. Then you will call SWITCH' and the pair will reverse roles so that children from circle B talk to their partner (about the same topic) and children from circle A listen and repeat back.
9. You can now go to the reflection points. Or, if you like, you can repeat the exercise but giving a longer time for each child in the pair to talk, such as 3-5 minutes to tell their story (longer time for older children, shorter time for younger children) and 2 minutes to repeat back. You can also suggest different topics, such as asking the children to talk about their interests, or what they want to be when they are grown up.
10. Remind them that they have to concentrate hard and listen to their partners just as they did in the first exercise. They should not ask questions or make comments while their partner is talking. They don't have to remember every single detail, but rather summarize as best they can what they heard.
11. When everyone has had a turn talking and listening and feeding back, ask all the children to sit in one big circle for reflection.

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Reflect with the group about their experience of this activity by asking:

- Did you enjoy it more when you were talking or when you were listening?
- Was it difficult to listen without commenting? If yes, why?
- Even though your friend did not speak while you were speaking, how did you know when your friend was listening to you?
- What did it feel like to be listened to in this way?
- Explain that what we say is important. However, sometimes our body language can be just as important for showing others that we are listening and that we care.



Remember that if there is an uneven number of children, a facilitator or volunteer will need to pair up with one of the children.



For younger children, it can help to give them a specific topic to talk about that they can relate to and easily answer. Also, remember to use shorter times for talking and reflecting back for younger children. That will help young children to listen better and remember the main points of what they heard their partner say.

For older children, you might like to ask them to speak about something relevant to their age and to be more sensitive/intimate in nature. Be sure that the pairs are gender-matched if you choose a more sensitive/intimate topic (see the list below). You can do this by having only boys in two circles and only girls in another two circles in the first exercise. If there are not many children present, just have them pair up with someone of the same gender for the second exercise. Possible topics for adolescents include:

- What I like and don't like about being a teenage girl/boy
- What or who has most inspired me in my life
- A time when I really felt I made a difference to someone else.

## 5.6 Listen, Reflect, Question and Summarise



The AIM of this activity is for children to learn active listening by reflecting, asking and summarising someone's story.



30-40 minutes



Ages: For children over age 10  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: Any  
Materials: None



1. Remind the children that listening can be hard work! Sometimes we think we hear and understand someone, only to find out that we didn't truly understand. Explain that sometimes it is difficult for someone to express what they want to say.
2. As listeners, we can help the person speaking by using active listening. There are three steps in active listening:
  - reflecting
  - asking clarifying questions
  - summarising.
3. Explain that we will look at these three steps in turn:

### A. Reflecting like a mirror:

1. Ask participants what they think reflecting is. After some responses, you can say: One way we can show someone we are listening is to reflect back what the other person is saying. Reflecting is a way of restating what the speaker said. When we reflect, it is as if we were a mirror for the person. When we reflect, we don't give our opinions of their situation or advice. We just say what they have said in other words.
2. You can give these examples or make up other examples on-the-spot with a co-facilitator or one of the children:
 

Example 1:

  - Speaker, "My friend couldn't come over to play on the weekend. I really didn't like it – I felt so bored!"
  - Listener, "You felt bored over the weekend because your friend couldn't come over to play."

Example 2:

  - Speaker, "My best friend was not very nice to me. He/she said something very mean and hurt me."
  - Listener, "You felt hurt because your best friend said something mean to you."
3. Explain that when we reflect back what we have heard to the speaker, it shows that we are listening and understanding. The speaker may feel that you didn't quite understand and correct you. That is OK. Just ask if they can tell you again or clarify what you didn't understand. Keep reflecting until the speaker feels understood.

### B. Clarifying questions:

1. Ask participants what they think clarifying questions are. After some responses, you can explain: We can also ask clarifying questions to make sure that we understand what the speaker is trying to say. If the speaker says something that you do not understand, you can ask them follow-up questions. This not only shows the speaker that you are interested in what they are saying, but it also helps to prevent miscommunication.
2. Using the same examples that you used for reflecting, ask the children what kinds of clarifying questions they might want to ask. Emphasise that the questions should not be judgmental (like asking, "Didn't you wonder if your friend was hurt or sick and that maybe you should have been more understanding?"). Instead, clarifying questions are only to understand the story better and the person's feelings and point of view. For example:
 

Example 1:

  - "Did I understand that your friend couldn't come over to play on the weekend? Does your friend usually come over to play on the weekend?"

Example 2:

  - "Can you tell me more about feeling hurt? Has your best friend ever said something mean to you before?"

### C. Summarising the story:

1. Explain that only after we listen, reflect and ask questions, can we get a full idea of what the person is trying to say. At that point, we can summarise the facts and feelings that we heard in the person's story, and share our summary with them. When we summarise, we try to capture both the facts of the story and the speaker's feelings. Again, using the same examples that you used for reflecting and clarifying questions, ask the children for examples of a summarising statement. For example:
  - "It sounds as though you are used to your best friend being with you on the weekends to play together, and when you were alone it felt very boring."
  - "What I understand is that your best friend really hurt your feelings by saying something mean, and you are feeling badly about it still."
2. Now, explain to the children that they will practice active listening.
3. Divide the children into groups of three – a speaker, a listener and an observer. Explain their roles as follows:
  - The speaker talks about what s/he did last weekend.
  - The listener shows they are listening in their body language and in the words that they are using. They should try to do all three steps of active listening: 1) reflect 2) ask clarifying questions, and 3) summarise.
4. The observer shares what s/he saw the listener do well and what the listener could improve on.
5. If there is enough time, rotate roles until all three children in the group have had the chance to try all three roles.



You can reflect on this exercise using the following questions:

- How well did the listener reflect back what the speaker had told them?
- What was the trickiest part about listening to the speaker?
- What did observers notice the listeners did best? What do they need more work on?

You can also discuss with the children that many conflicts are resolved simply by active listening because the parties realize the conflict is simply a misunderstanding. Even when a true disagreement exists, individuals who are given an opportunity to have their perspective heard are much more likely to work at a win-win solution.



For younger children, try doing this exercise with just reflecting and clarifying questions, practising each one separately as follows:

1. Have the children come into pairs. Explain that they will take turns practising a way to let others know that they are listening to them. That way is to be like a mirror reflecting back to the person what they say. Use the examples above or another example that would be appropriate to the age and developmental stage of the children and the circumstances.
2. Have the children practise in pairs, with one being the speaker and the other a listener. The speaker will tell about what they did last weekend, for example. The listener first listens well, and then reflects. Then they switch roles and repeat the exercise. Remind them that their partner might not reflect perfectly the first time. Encourage them to help each other by letting their partner know if they got something wrong. Then they can try to reflect again.
3. Ask them how the exercise was for them: How was it to be a mirror for your partner? What was it like when your partner "mirrored" what you said? Did you feel they listened well?
4. Now move onto clarifying questions. Use the examples above. Then, have the children practise clarifying questions with their partner.
5. Reflect on the exercise. You can say: Did the questions help you understand the person's story better? When your partner asked you questions, did you feel they were interested in what you had to say?
6. End by emphasising how nice it feels when we know that someone really hears what we say and is interested in our story.

## 5.7 I am a Good Listener When...



The AIM of this activity is to review how we know when we are good listeners.



15 minutes



Ages: For six years old and above (modifications suggested below)  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: Any  
Materials: Flip chart, paper, pens or markers



1. Divide the group into three or four smaller groups. Give each group paper and markers/pens. Ask each group to talk about the things they learned about listening and communication with body language in the last two exercises.
2. Ask the groups to write down their ideas that respond to the statement, "I am a good listener when..." Ask them to think of as many ideas as they can. For example, they could write, 'I am a good listener when I...
  - Do not interrupt
  - Listen carefully
  - Concentrate on what is being said
  - Look in the eyes of the person talking
  - Keep quiet.
3. After about 10 minutes, ask each group in turn to share what they have written.
4. If you want, you can give a prize to the group who came up with the most ideas, or the most original ideas!
5. Use the reflection points below to wrap up the discussion.



You can continue reflecting about listening with the following questions:

- How do you usually listen to other people?
- Can you interrupt sometimes? When is that ok?
- What did this activity make you think about your own listening skills?
- How do you feel when you share something with others who really listen to you?



This activity follows on from the Body Language, Silent Movie and Listening Carefully exercises above.



For younger children, you can do this discussion with the big group by asking similar questions and getting feedback from all of the children together. Help them to come up with various qualities of a good listener. Discuss together how nice it feels when someone truly listens to you and remind them that careful listening is a wonderful gift to give someone. The children can create posters in groups to reflect their ideas.



## 5.8 Using "I" Statements



The AIM of this activity is to learn to express ourselves in ways that others can hear us, especially when we are in conflict with someone else.



15 minutes



Ages: For ages 10 years and over  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: Any  
Materials: Flipchart and markers



1. If you have done the previous exercises on body language and active listening, remind the children of what they learned about listening with their bodies and their words.
2. Explain that today we're going to learn about how to speak to others in a way that allows them to hear us – especially when we have a conflict. And in ways that invites the other person to share what they are thinking and feeling.
3. Start by sharing the following story with the group:
  - Amma and Asha are sisters who share a bedroom. Amma likes to have the room clean at all times. Asha, on the other hand, feels there are more important things in life than making sure their room is clean. When Amma comes home to find their bedroom messy, she gets very frustrated. She goes to find Asha to talk with her about the mess. She is considering what to say to her sister.
4. Ask the children how they think Asha will respond if Amma says the following statements. Allow some time for children to respond after you say each statement:
  - "You are so lazy! Why can't you ever keep our room clean!"
  - "I feel embarrassed when our room is messy. It makes me frustrated when I come home and find it dirty, because I spent a long time cleaning it up."
5. Reflect with the children that when we are in the middle of an argument or disagreement, we want to talk all about how WE see things. Sometimes we are so eager to speak that we forget to listen to the other person!
6. So, when you say how you are feeling and what is upsetting you, it is best to do so in a way that will help the other person hear you. If you start accusing the other person of what they did wrong, it is going to be difficult for them to listen to you because they will want to defend themselves.
7. The secret to helping the other person hear you is to say what and how you feel something; rather than telling the other person what you think they did or didn't do.
8. Point out to the children that in the first example Amma said Asha was lazy and talked about the fact that she didn't keep the room clean. But in the second example, Amma used "I" statements. She talked about how she felt about the room being messy without blaming or attacking Asha. She talked about what she would like to be different.
9. Using the flip chart, explain to the children that an "I statement" has four parts:
  - I feel.... (state what you feel)
  - When... (state the event that is making you feel that way)
  - Because... (state why you feel this way and the effect the event has had on you)
  - What I want is... (state how you want things to be different – see Remember below)
10. Ask the children: What is a possible "I" statement that Amma could say? Give them time to reply and help the children to use the four parts of the "I" statement. You can give the following example if they are having difficulties coming up with "I" statements:
  - "I feel frustrated when our room is a mess because a clean room is important to me. What I would like is for us to find a way to keep the room clean."
  - Then ask: What is a possible "I" statement that Asha could say? Give them time to reply and then give the following example:
    - "I feel annoyed when you keep nagging me about our room because I like it the way it is. What I want is to be allowed to have the room the way I like it."

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11. Now break the children into smaller groups (of 4-6 participants) and ask each group to come up with "I" statements for the following situations. Alternatively, you can make up or have them make up some other situations that are relevant to their lives:
- The child playing behind you bumps into you and doesn't say "Excuse me."
  - A child you're playing with breaks your toy by mistake because they were rushing and being careless.
  - Someone you know doesn't invite you to a party that s/he is having, but invites all of the other children in your neighbourhood.
  - Another child says something mean to you in front of the other children, and you feel embarrassed.



Reflect with the children that there are a few good reasons to use "I" statements. "I" statements make it easy for the other person to listen and reflect back. This is because you are very clear on your feelings and the facts. It helps to share your perspective, which allows the other person to see your side and then to voice his/her own perspective. It allows you to focus on the problem without attacking the other person. These kinds of statements can help you remember to work on a win/win solution. They help you say what you want, and can get at the underlying need.

Emphasise that good communication is about listening and speaking in a way that allows everyone to feel heard and understood. "I" statements may not feel real at first. But by practising them, they become more natural. You will find that they can help others understand your point of view and they can help you find a solution to the conflict at hand.



It is important that children think about what their underlying need might be when they are in conflict with someone else. This helps more than thinking of the solution they want.

## 5.9 Lean on Me



The AIM of this activity is to explore what friendship and trust means.



15 minutes



Ages: For six years old and above  
Participants: Any number of participants  
Facilitators: Two or more



Setting: Any  
Materials: None



### Part 1. What is a friend?

1. Ask the children to sit in a circle. Explain that you are going to discuss friendship and what it means to be a good friend. Encourage everyone to participate by reminding them that there are no right or wrong answers.
2. Use relevant questions from the list below and have the children share ideas.
  - What is a friend?
  - Why do we have friends?
  - How is someone a good friend to others?
  - How can a friend help?
  - How does a friendship start?
  - Is it difficult to make new friends?
  - What happens if you do something that upsets a friend?
  - Why do some friendships end?
  - Why do some friendships last?
  - Can you still be friends with someone even though you do not agree on everything or like exactly the same things?
  - What do you like to do with friends?

### Part 2. Leaning game

1. Have the children come into pairs. Try to ensure children are matched with a partner of about the same height and weight, if possible, and consider matching children by gender.
2. Children face each other with their feet planted on the floor, holding hands at shoulder height.
3. One child in the pair will give the other child 10% of their body weight by leaning forward towards their partner, then after a few seconds they will take their weight back. Their partner steadies them by holding their weight while they are leaning, and gently pushing to help them back to standing in a neutral position. Facilitators may want to demonstrate this, particularly leaning only 10% of body weight, and not more.
4. Then they switch, and they can explore leaning and supporting each other for a couple of minutes.
5. Once the children have had the chance to explore leaning into and supporting their partner, have the children come back sitting in a circle and follow up with the questions below:
  - How did you feel to let yourself lean into your partner's hands? Was it difficult or easy? If difficult, did it get easier with time?
  - How did it feel supporting your partner? How did you let them know they could trust you?
6. End the activity by saying: This activity has shown us how important trust is among friends. If we have people in our lives that we can trust, then there will always be someone to lean on whenever we need a friend. It is also important to be a friend that others can trust.

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Reflect with the children about the importance of trust in friendships using the following questions:

- This activity required us to trust each other – to trust that you could lean into your partner’s hands. How important is it for us to be able to trust our friends?
- Why is it important for others to be able to trust us?
- What makes a friend “trustworthy”?



It is important to ensure that no child is touched inappropriately. For certain age groups (particularly adolescent girls) and cultures, children should work in pairs with someone of their same gender.

This activity is meant to be a gentle exercise in trusting. Be sure that children know they have control over how much they choose to lean into their partner’s hands. It is all right to develop trust more slowly.

Remind the children not to lean too much of their weight on their partner, only 10%, so that the exercise feels gentle for both children in the pair.

For younger children who have less upper body strength, be sure the children in the pairs stand close together so that the weight of the child who is leaning will not be very heavy.

Be prepared that some children might find it difficult to let themselves lean. Let them know that it is ok to develop trust more slowly and they can lean as little as they like.



If there are a large number of children, you can do the discussion about what is a friend in smaller group of 6-8 children.

Older children and adolescents may like to try this activity with their eyes closed. In this way, they must rely more on the touch and pressure on each other’s hands in leaning and providing support.

A very gentle variation of this exercise is ‘the blanket swing.’ This may be useful for children who are afraid, very shy, or in groups who may not trust very easily (e.g., children who do not know each other well or come from different backgrounds). This variation is also especially useful for children who have been exposed to stressors that make them anxious and afraid to fall. Here are the instructions:

1. Have one child lie in the centre of a blanket on the floor.
2. Six to ten children stand around the blanket, holding its edges firmly. They lift the blanket off the ground about six inches and sway the child gently from side to side inside the blanket.
3. After a little while, give the signal to slowly lower the child back to the ground.
4. Repeat for any child who would like to try the blanket swing.

## 5.10 Taxi and Radio Cars



The AIM of these activities is to experience trust within the group and explore the role that trust plays in friendships



20-30 minutes, depending upon the number of activities chosen



Ages: For six years old and above  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: A large space, free of obstacles  
Materials: None



1. Ask the children to sit in a circle and explain that you are now going to work more on the issue of trust. Ask the children the following questions and allow briefly for some responses and discussion:
  - How do you know when you can trust someone?
  - How do you know when you cannot trust someone?
  - How can you show others that you are trustworthy?
2. After about five minutes, tell the children that we are going to play some trust games. Choose whether to do one or both games, depending on the age and capacities of the children in the group and the situation.

### Taxi Game

1. Explain the taxi game is played with children in pairs. One child is the driver and the other is the taxi. Make sure that children know that no one must get hurt in this game by bumping into things or others.
2. Explain that the child who is the taxi closes their eyes. The child who is the driver then has to move the taxi around the space very carefully. If the taxi is to trust the driver, the driver will have to do slow movements in a way that doesn't surprise the taxi. This game is done without any speaking at all.
3. In pairs, have the children clap. The first one to clap in the pair will be the taxi. The taxi stands in front of their driver and closes their eyes. The drivers hold onto the shoulders or the hips of their taxi and steers their taxi around the space without crashing into anything or any other taxis and drivers!
4. After a few minutes, the facilitator shouts "Stop!" and the taxis can open their eyes. Ask the children:
  - How was it to be the taxi and have to trust someone to drive you around the space?
  - How was it to be the driver and have to guide someone around the space safely?
5. Next, have the pairs switch roles and repeat the exercise, including the reflecting questions.

### Radio Car Game

1. For this activity, a defined space is needed for the children who will be radio cars. The drivers stand outside this defined space. Make sure the children know that no-one must get hurt by bumping into things or other children.
2. Give these instructions: If you are a radio car, stand in this area. If you are a driver, stand outside the area. Drivers direct their radio car using the following words only: "Stop," "Forwards," "To the right," "To the left," and "Backwards." The radio car cannot speak during the exercise – and they can only move at a slow to moderate walking pace.
3. Have children get into pairs, each touching the nose of the other. The one who touches first will be the radio car, and the other is the driver. Have all the radio cars get into the space and close their eyes. Have the drivers direct their cars around the space. After a few minutes, say "Stop!" and have the radio cars open their eyes. Ask the children:
  - How was it to be the radio car and have to trust someone to direct you around the space?
  - How was it to be the driver and have to guide someone around the space safely?
4. Next, have the pairs switch roles and repeat the exercise including the questions afterwards.

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Reflect with the children about the activities above, and about trust in their friendships by asking the following questions:

- What did you like or not like about the activities? What was challenging?
- How did you feel trusting your friends in the activities?
- What makes trust grow in our friendships?
- If trust gets broken, how can we repair it? How can we be trusting friends again?



In cultures where it is not permitted for boys and girls to touch, it is important to do this activity in pairs which are girls or boys only.



For older children, consider doing role plays on the theme of trust. Use the following instructions:

1. Explain that they will now create a role-play that is about trust. The role-play should be about building trust between friends, or something that shows trust being broken between friends.
2. Give the children about ten minutes to prepare and practise the role-plays and then ask them to show their role-plays to the big group.
3. After each role-play ask the children who were watching these questions:
  - What did you see in the role-play that helped to build trust?
  - Or that broke trust between friends?
  - Close the exercise with the reflection points above.

## 5.11 The Human Knot



The AIM of this activity is to encourage cooperation and collective problem-solving



15 minutes



Ages: Age 12 and above

Participants: Any number, divided into groups of 6-8 participants



Setting: An open space free of obstacles

Materials: None



1. Divide the children into teams of 6-8.
2. Each team forms a small circle standing close together, side by side.
3. Ask everyone to take their right hand and extend it across the circle and hold the hand of the team member opposite them. Then extend their left hands across the circle and hold the hand of another group member.
4. Their task is to unravel the spider's web of interlocking arms without letting go of anyone's hands. They have 3 minutes to complete the task!



Reflect on this activity using the following questions:

- What did you think of this exercise?
- What was required of the group to work together to unravel the knot?
- How did you communicate and take decisions?



This exercise is best done in gender-separated groups.



- Younger adolescents may need more time to complete the task. Older adolescents may enjoy the challenge of a shorter time to complete the task!



## 5.12 Creative Fun



The AIM of this activity is to encourage cooperation and collective problem-solving



30 minutes



Ages: Age 6 - 12 (but suitable for older children too)  
Participants: Any number, divided into groups of four



Setting: An open space

Materials: Lots of different materials, if possible. For example, string, paper, sticks, pencils and markers, clothes pegs, empty boxes, glue, bottle tops, empty plastic bottles, stones, plastic bags, etc.

Make a list of challenges on a piece of flipchart paper before the session begins. (The challenges are listed in the instructions below).



1. Divide the children into groups of four children.
2. Ask the children to try to do two of the challenges listed on the flipchart. Explain that they will have to work together using whatever materials they want.
3. Here is the list of challenges:
  - Build the highest tower possible that can stand on its own, using four different types of materials
  - Make a very small house for a toy figure
  - Make a toy that a child would love
  - Make your own game, including the rules for the game
  - Make an object that can carry a stone from one side of the room to the other
  - Make a ramp and a ball – so that the ball can roll down the ramp
  - Make something that can roll on the ground for three feet, using at least three different types of materials.



Reflect on this activity using the following questions:

- What did you think of this exercise?
- How did you decide what to do?
- How did you work together to make things?



Please use whatever materials you have available. Try to find lots of different types of materials so that the children have lots to choose from.

This activity is suitable for older children too with slight changes to the list of challenges. For example, use other objects instead of toys. The activity could be changed so that groups work together giving one another challenges that they have made up in turn.

# Protection and Boundaries: “My Safety”



Photo: Masaki Kamei

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## 6. Protection and Boundaries: “My Safety”

Type	Activity	Time Needed
Exploring the world from a safe space	6.1 Make an Egg	20 minutes
Awareness of the body and boundaries of personal space	6.2 Personal Space	20 minutes
	6.3 Protecting myself	20 minutes
Knowing I’m important	6.4 Mirror in a Box	10 minutes
Recognising the dangers and the positive resources in our community	6.5 Our Community	60-90 minutes
	6.6 Helping our Community	40-60 minutes

This theme, “Protection and boundaries,” has a number of psychosocial benefits for children:

- The activities enable children to find a safe place within themselves.
- The activities raise children’s awareness in relation to their own body and personal space.
- The activities enable children to identify dangers and resources in their environment.

## 6.1 Make an Egg



The AIM of this activity is to help children create a place in their imagination where they can experience a sense of safety



20 minutes



Ages: For six years old and above (modifications suggested below)  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: A quiet space where children can sit or lie comfortably on the floor/ground  
Materials: None



1. Ask the children to sit in a circle. Then ask them to bring their knees to the chest, hug their legs, and rest their head on their knees.
2. Start by telling the children to close their eyes and take a deep breath.
3. Ask the children to imagine that they are very small, so small that they can fit inside an egg with a very strong shell.
4. Ask them to roll on the ground if they want to feel how strong their shell is. Remind the children that they are safe and protected in their shell. Then ask them to go back to the sitting position. Say the following:
  - Now get into your egg again and close your eyes. You are very small inside the egg. You are protected in there. It is very nice to be there. It is warm and you can breathe easily. You are inside the shell and there is the world outside. You can hear some sounds, but the shell softens them.
  - You are fine inside your egg, but the sounds outside make you curious to go out and explore the world. You can hear the wind and music coming from far away. What is the world like outside? What is happening there?
  - So, you start breathing more strongly, and then opening your arms, and gently pushing your feet outwards. The shell starts breaking and you can slowly stretch your arms and your legs and emerge outside
  - Keep your eyes closed as you imagine yourself exploring the outside world. Notice what is around you – imagine a peaceful place.
  - What do you hear? Are their birds chirping, or maybe you hear a stream flowing nearby?
  - What do you feel? Maybe you feel the warm sun shining on you, or you can feel a soft wind or breeze cooling your skin.
  - What do you see? Maybe there is soft grass that smells nice, or trees or an ocean?
  - Breathe in the nice sounds and sensations all around you in your peaceful place.
  - Now, notice again your eggshell there on the soft grass. Climb back slowly into your eggshell. It covers you gently and you feel fine back there, safe and protected.
  - Take a few more breaths and then start moving your fingers, then your toes, then your legs and your arms. Turn slowly on your side; then... 1... 2... 3... you can open your eyes.
5. Once the children have their eyes open again, invite them to slowly come up to a sitting position.
6. Wait a few more seconds and then ask them how they feel and about their experience.

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In reflection, you can ask the children:

- How did you feel inside your eggshell?
- What was it like to become curious about the world outside and to come out of the shell?
- How did it feel to go back inside your eggshell?

This exercise helps children to create their own safe space within themselves, and to imagine a peaceful place that they can go to whenever they need to.



If a child shows some resistance, agitation or opens their eyes during the exercise, don't force them to continue. It may be difficult for some children to imagine themselves in a small space like an eggshell, or to be able to go to a peaceful scene in their imagination. You can ask children who seem agitated or upset to sit quietly while you finish the activity. Invite them to watch the others in the space, or give them crayons and paper to colour or draw an eggshell or a peaceful place. This may help the child to focus and feel grounded. Be sure that you or a co-facilitator checks in one-to-one with any child who is agitated or upset and offer support.

Some children may like to stay in their eggshells for a longer time than other children, before exploring the outside world. Let them do so, if they want.



Instead of using the idea of being inside an egg, you can guide younger and older children through an imaginary peaceful landscape that they can explore. For example, you can suggest there are friendly animals, trees and rivers there as their friends.

## 6.2 Personal Space



The AIM of this activity is to explore the concept of personal space, and how to respect our own and others' personal space.



20 minutes



Ages: For six years old and above (modifications suggested below)  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: Space for the children to spread arms out to the side without hitting each other  
Materials: None



1. Have the children sit in a circle. Ask them to notice how closely they are sitting next to each other. Let the children reflect on why it is comfortable enough to sit closely together. If the children do not say it themselves, explain that when we know and trust someone, we can allow them within our "personal space". You can say: When you are good friends with someone, it can be nice to be close and even to hug each other. If you are sad, it can be comforting to get a hug or for your friend to hold your hand.
2. Next ask the children to stand in a circle with enough space that they can spread their arms out to the side, without touching their neighbour. Now say:
  - Reach your arms out to the sides. This is the personal space of most people around the world.
  - Now, reach both arms in front of you. This is also part of your body's boundary and your personal space.
  - Now, plant your feet firmly on the ground, keep your arms out to the side, and swing your upper body by twisting to the left and right. You are making a circle around you. This circle marks your personal space all around you.
  - Within our personal space, we are happy to let in people who are close to us, like good friends and family who we love.
  - Now, put your arms down.
3. You may want to repeat this exercise one more time so to be sure the children understand the boundaries of their personal space. Then, ask the children: What happens to our personal space when we're in a crowded place? How does it make you feel about your personal space? Let's see if we can keep our personal space in a crowd in this next game!
  - Ask the children what kinds of crowded places they know of in their community. Have them pretend that they are in a crowded place they know.
  - Instruct the children put their arms up at their sides (bending at the elbows this time). They move around the room randomly, and can spin around slowly as they move (turning around the circle of their personal space) – but tell them to try not to invade anyone's personal space! If two people bump into each other, they have to sit down on the floor.
  - When several children are sitting on the floor, you can stop the exercise.

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4. Then discuss with the children about other times when someone might invade your personal space, besides just being in a crowded place:
  - If someone wants to bully you or manipulate you, they will often invade your personal space. Most people feel that only known and trusted people can comfortably enter their personal space. If you feel uncomfortable about someone, make sure to maintain your distance so they do not invade your personal space. Ask the children how we can keep our distance if someone is too close to our personal space? Answers could include: We can look away, step away, cross our arms, stiffen our bodies and turn sideways away from the person, or ask the person to move further away. Sometimes it can help to rub the sides of our bodies so we can feel its boundaries.
  - Tell them they can also “put up their bumpers” (put their hands up in front of them, palms facing away) and say, “Stop! Please move away a bit!” Or if someone has invaded their space and they are treated badly they can name more specifically what they don’t like, “Stop! I don’t like it when you [hit me, call me names, etc.]” You can have the children practise this together.
5. Now, ask the children to sit in a circle again.
6. Emphasise that it is important for children to listen to their feelings about their personal space, and what makes them uncomfortable and comfortable.
7. Reflect on this activity with the children using the reflection points below.



The children learn about their own and other peoples’ personal space by talking about this together. This knowledge is useful in daily life when children need to be able to identify when other people overstep their boundaries, or when they themselves overstep the boundaries of others. Reflect on the exercise using the following questions:

- In daily life are there situations where people are close to each other’s personal space?
- Do you ever find yourself in a crowded place? Where is that? How does it make you feel about your personal space?
- How do we know if we are invading someone else’s personal space? What can we do to make things better if that happens?



The exercise should be adapted to the cultural context. In some cultures, personal space may be wider than an arm’s length.

Some children may be living in crowded spaces, such as camps for refugees or displaced people, or may attend crowded schools. Adjust the activity for these situations and have the children brainstorm how they can be respectful of people’s personal space when conditions are crowded.



Older children and adolescents could do the following as a variation of this activity:

1. Have the children get into pairs and form two lines, so that the pairs are facing each other. Make sure the two lines are far enough apart – about three large steps for the children to reach each other.
2. Have the children in one line begin to tell their partner a story or just have casual conversation. The children telling the story stand still, while their partners in the other line walk toward them slowly.
3. Ask the children who are standing still to let their partner know when they are close enough to enter their personal space – just when they start feeling uncomfortable that their partner is too close. Their partner then has to stop walking.
4. Have them get back into their original position, switch roles and repeat.
5. Have a discussion about the activity using the following questions:
  - How did you feel when your space was invaded?
  - How was it to find out you had invaded your partner’s personal space? Would you have stopped earlier if you knew you were getting too close?
  - How close would you go to your partner until you would stop?
  - What might be different if you turned your body a little sideways as you approach your partner, then could you come closer to that person? Why or why not?



## 6.3 Protecting Myself



The AIM of this activity is to understand and practise safety rules to reduce the risk of violence to children.



20 minutes



Ages: This is for younger children, (see variations for older children)  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: Any  
Materials: Flipchart paper and pens or markers



1. Ask the children to stand in a circle.
2. Tell the children they are important and they need to stay safe. Ask them the questions in points 3-5 below, giving them time to think what they might do. Then, make your suggestions about what they could do (which are also included in points 3-5) and give them time to practise these responses.
3. Ask the children: What can you do if someone is trying to hurt you or make you do something you don't want to?
  - Answer: "You can say NO!" Have children practise their "NO!" with their hands out, palms away from them, and faces serious. If you want, you can have children stand in two lines on opposite sides of the room. Each line of children takes turns in shouting "NO!" – loud enough so that the children on the other side of the room can hear!
4. Ask the children: What else can you do if someone is trying to hurt you?
  - Answer: "You can leave and run away". Have children practise running away. (They can do this safely by all running in a circle, in the same direction. Or they can all run on the spot.)
5. Ask children: What else can you do if someone is trying to hurt you?
  - Answer: "You can talk to someone you trust". Have children practise asking a trusted person for help by saying, "I need help, can you help me?" The facilitators walk round the inside of the circle and pause to face each child in turn who then says, "I need help. Can you help me?" The facilitators then say, "Yes, I'll help you stay safe." Or you can have children practise with each other in pairs.
6. Explain that sometimes people can hurt us by what they say to us. Bullies may try to do this using bad, rude or hurtful words. Ask the children what they can do if someone is hurting them with words. Suggest the following to the children:
  - If someone bullies you, look him or her straight in the eyes, and say in a loud and clear voice so that other people can hear, "Stop what you're doing, I don't like it."
  - Have the children practise saying the phrase in a loud and clear voice altogether.
7. You can repeat the activity a few times as needed.



End the activity by stressing to the children that they should always tell an adult who they trust if someone tries to hurt them. Remind them that it is a sign of strength to protect themselves. They should never feel embarrassed or be ashamed of telling someone. Ask the children:

- Even though we do all these things to keep children safe, sometimes children still get hurt. Do you think it's their fault? (As the facilitator emphasise that it's not the child's fault if someone hurts them.)
- Who is responsible to keep children safe? (e.g., adults)
- Who can you think of in your life that you could ask for help?
- And if that person doesn't help you, who would you ask next? Who in this community provides support for people who are being hurt? (Help children think of, for example, health workers, teachers, social workers, psychologists, others.)

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**Child protection:** Some children may have experienced abuse, bullying or other types of violence in their lives, including abuse from caregivers. They may have been powerless to stop the abuse. If you are aware of any child in the group who has experienced abuse, be sure to monitor them carefully and provide any needed support if the child becomes upset. If you are aware of a child currently being abused, report this to the relevant local authority (e.g., local child protection committee, relevant NGO working group or equivalent). (See the Operational Guidance for Child Friendly Spaces in Humanitarian Settings for more information on child protection and reporting incidents of violence against children.) Sometimes children may experience bullying from their peers or friends, or from another child in the CFS. You can open a discussion on this in the reflections by asking:

- What can you do if it is a friend or some other children in your community hurting you in some way?
- How would you get help in this situation?



Saying “NO!” or “STOP!” may not always work. If a child needs more help, they can shout for “HELP!” You can have the children practise shouting for help. Some child protection specialists recommend that children shout “FIRE!” which may be more likely to get the attention of adults and other children nearby to intervene.

This variation is for older children and adolescents. It allows for more dialogue about situations where someone invades your personal space:

1. Ask the children to sit in a circle. Have them think of situations where people intrude on their personal space. Ask them to first discuss this in pairs for about five minutes, and then ask them to share with the big group.
2. If they do not mention it themselves, explain to the children that words can also invade our personal space. Bullies may try to do this using bad, rude or hurtful words.
3. Ask the children to think of ways they can protect themselves and their personal space. Note the responses on a piece of flipchart paper. If the following are not mentioned, suggest adding these to the list:
  - If someone bullies you, look him or her straight in the eyes, and say in a loud and clear voice so that other people can hear, “Stop what you are doing, it is unpleasant and I do not like it.”
  - If someone tries to hurt you, move out of harm’s way. Run away if you have to.
  - Tell an adult you trust that someone is trying to hurt you, physically or verbally.

## 6.4 Mirror in a Box



The AIM of this activity is to enhance self-confidence and self-respect.



10 minutes



Ages: For six years old and above  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: Any  
Materials: A cardboard box with a lid. A mirror is glued inside the box at the bottom.



1. Ask the children to sit in a circle. Place the box in the middle of the circle, making sure the lid is down.
2. Explain to the children that they will now take turns at having a look inside the box. Tell them they should look inside the box one by one and then close the lid again. Ask them not to tell their friends what is in the box, but they should keep it as a surprise for everyone.
3. Now say to the children: This box contains the picture of someone really precious and important that you should respect and take very good care of.
4. Now ask the children to look in the box, one at a time. They will see their own reflection in the mirror. When they have had a look in the box, ask them to return to the circle.
5. Follow-up with the questions below in reflection points.



You can reflect on this exercise by asking the children the following questions:

- How did you like this exercise?
- Were you surprised?
- What is the message of this exercise?

## 6.5 Our Community



The AIM of this activity is to map the community the children live in and identify problems and sources of safety and support.



60-90 minutes (20-30 minutes for each part)



Ages: For six years old and above (modifications suggested below)  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: Table or floor space to make a large group drawing.  
Materials: Drawing materials (pencils, coloured pens or markers). A very large piece of paper to draw on (you can tape several flipcharts together).



Explain the three parts of the activity they will be doing together:

- Part 1: Drawing a map of the community they live in now.
- Part 2: Talking about the places in the community which are safe and those that are not safe and showing them on the map.
- Part 3: Talking about how to make things better in their community and who can help.

### Part 1: Our community (people and places)

1. Gather the participants around a large table or a large space on the ground, where it will be possible for them to do a group drawing.
2. Explain that the first task is for them to draw a picture of their community. It should have things on it that are easy to recognize, such as people's houses, public buildings like schools and hospitals, roads, rivers, woods etc. The drawing does not need a lot of detail at this stage.
3. Explain that as a group they have to work out how to complete this task. For example, they can ask certain people to do the drawing, while others help direct them on what to draw. Or they can each take turns to draw, or they can each choose to draw certain areas.
4. Ask them to show on the map the places that are important to children and children's families. These questions might help the children with this task:
  - Where do people in the community go to meet each other? Where are the gathering places like markets, places of worship, schools or sports fields, etc.?
  - What kinds of people are in the community and where can we find them?
  - Who and where are the people who are helpful to the community – and helpful to children?
5. Do a short, fun activity here (e.g., an energizer) so that children can relax before part 2.

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**Part 2. Our community (safe and dangerous places)**

1. Ask the children to gather around the map again. Ask them to think about the places in the community that are safe for children. Ask them about safe places where they can play and walk and be together in. They can choose a symbol to mark the safe places (such as a green "go" light). Give them time to discuss this and mark the safe places for children on their maps.
2. Now, ask them to think about places on the map where they do not feel safe. These can be physical dangers in the environment (like damaged buildings or dangerous roads) or places where they fear being attacked or hurt by people. Have them come up with a symbol for the dangerous places. Give them time to discuss this together and mark the dangerous places on their maps.
3. Have a discussion about the safe and dangerous places. You can use the following questions:
  - How do you know about the safe and dangerous places for children?
  - Does everyone in the community know where is safe and dangerous?
  - What do you do to avoid the dangerous places?
4. Do another short, fun activity here (e.g., an energizer) so that children can relax before part 3.

**Part 3: Our community (resources for change)**

1. Bring the children together again around their maps. Remind them that we've looked at the various places and people that are important for children and families, as well as the safe and dangerous places for children to be.
2. Now ask:
  - How can we make things better in our community for children?
  - What changes would you like to see? For example, these could include safe play areas, or an adult to help children crossing a busy road to get to school.
3. Let them brainstorm different ideas and indicate on their maps where they could make changes.
4. Now ask:
  - Who can help us to make these changes that are better for children?
  - Who are the people who can support children and families? Have them indicate people who are resources for making the community better – that can also be children themselves!
5. Finish the activity by sitting in a circle and discussing the reflection points below. The community maps can be placed on the wall as decorations for the CFS.



You can use the following questions to reflect with children about the activity:

- What has it been like to do this activity? What did you like? What did you not like?
- What has this activity made you think about the good things in your community?
- What has it made you think about the problems there are in your community?

Ideas for the future: This activity is a good way of encouraging and enabling children's participation in community life. If the children have some good ideas for what they can do to help make good changes in the community, make every effort to follow up on this. For example, you could discuss the children's ideas with a parents' group, or with the programme managers of assisting organizations. It is important that the children feel they are taken seriously when they contribute ideas, so remember to give them feedback as you take their ideas further. Activity 6.6 Helping our Community also outlines steps in planning a community intervention of some kind.

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Try to let the group do their tasks with as little input from you as possible. This will give them a sense of ownership over the map, and also provide you with a lot of information on group dynamics and the roles the different children play in the group.

**Child protection:** Pay attention to any areas or events in the community that the children mention where they may feel unsafe or threatened. These concerns should then be raised with the children's caregivers and other adults in the community or case manager if children are being supported through a case management system, as well as being discussed with the children themselves. Themes or patterns of threats to children's safety that are emerging should be shared with local child protection committees, NGO working groups or equivalent. Ensure trained child protection staff are available to support and guide the facilitators.



This activity involves the whole group. For large groups, form several smaller groups of no more than 10 children per group. If the group is very large, help the children to share tasks within the group to help to keep discussions focused. If the children are very young and do not yet write confidently, help them with writing or drawing, if appropriate.

This activity can also be divided into a series of CFS sessions.

Consider doing this activity with caregivers in caregiver meetings. You might also want to arrange for the children to share their community maps with caregivers and other adults in the community, to encourage discussion about improving community support and protection for children.

## 6.6 Helping our Community



The AIM of this activity is to build confidence by giving adolescents the opportunity to help their community with their own initiatives.



40-60 minutes for preparation



Ages: For children over age 12 years  
Participants: Any number of participants (If the group is very large, they can divide into smaller groups of 12-15 participants)



Setting: Any  
Materials: Flipcharts, paper and markers plus other materials depending on what participants decide to do



1. Ask the group(s) to think about some of the issues in their community that are important to them, or that they would like to address or change. If you have previously done Activity 6.5 Our Community, you can refer back to the points that were discussed then in terms of how to make the community better.
2. Give the group(s) time to develop the activity and support the planning process. It could be a drama performance, a song, an informational campaign, or even a volunteer day to help in the community. Encourage them to be as creative as they want!
3. Support them in choosing an appropriate theme, such as keeping the community clean, ensuring children can travel safely to school and have safe play areas, hygiene awareness, raising awareness of the needs of people with disabilities, and so on.
4. Agree on a time and place for implementing the activity and support the group(s) to make safe, appropriate links in the community to be able to carry out their activity. It is possible to use time in another CFS session for carrying out the activity, and to hold the activity at the CFS rather than elsewhere in the community, if appropriate.
5. After the activity has been implemented, reflect with the children about what went well and if there were any difficulties.



You can reflect on this activity in terms of:

- Preparation: How did the group take decisions? How was everyone's voice included?
- Developing and implementing the activity: How did you decide on roles? How did you ensure everyone could participate using their unique talents?
- Lessons learned: How did the activity go? What went well? What did you most enjoy about this activity? What was the response of the community? What would you do differently next time?



Consider the particular context and culture of the community in advising the group(s) on appropriate topics for this activity.

Remember, where appropriate, to get the permission of caregivers for children to participate in the activity. Be sure to invite caregivers to the activity. Caregivers could be asked to attend a practice session, depending on what it is, and to give feedback on the activity.



In some cases, it may be appropriate to involve children younger than age 12, depending on the type of activity chosen, the age and developmental stage of the children, and the safety of the activity and situation. For example, adolescents may want to hold a sports day or a football game for younger children.



# Building on Strengths: “All My Supports”



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## 7. Building on Strengths: “All My Supports”

Type	Activity	Time Needed
Strengthening self-esteem	7.1 Nobody knows what I can do	25 minutes
Reflecting on life achievements and goals	7.2 River of life	60 minutes
Setting and achieving goals for the future	7.3 If I were	20 minutes
Recognizing the hero within ourselves	7.4 Heroes	40 minutes

This theme, “Building on strengths,” gives children an opportunity to identify positive aspects of themselves and their lives. This includes developing their own strengths and talents, as well as considering the people who support them. By building on their strengths, children can look forward to realising their hopes and dreams for the future, and become the person they would like to be.

This theme has the following psychosocial benefits for children:

- The activities promote children’s self-esteem and self-confidence.
- The activities emphasise the importance of role models and how to build the characteristics we admire in them.
- The activities build children’s capacity to look positively toward the future.
- The activities strengthen children’s capacity to think and plan for how to achieve one’s goals.

These activities can be done at any time during a CFS. However, they do provide a strong, positive ending for a programme so they are useful for children who have been coming to the CFS for a period of time.

## 7.2 Nobody Knows What I Can Do



The AIM of this activity is to build self-esteem and confidence by sharing personal qualities and skills with others.



25 minutes



Ages: For six years old and above  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: Space for two circles  
Materials: None



1. Ask the children to form two circles – an inner circle and an outer circle with the same number of children in each. (If there is an uneven number, the facilitator can join a circle.) Ask them to face each other.
2. Ask the children to take turns in telling the other person something they think that person did not know about them. It should be a positive quality or skill or characteristic. Give an example: "Nobody knows that I can... sew my own clothes."
3. Once the first pair have shared with each other, clap or make another sound to indicate it is time to move: The inner circle stands still, whilst the outer circle moves one person to the right. Keep doing this until everyone in the inner circle has talked with everyone in the outer circle.
4. Now ask the children to sit down in one big circle. Ask the children to share one thing they learnt about someone else. No repetitions are allowed, and every child should be mentioned.
5. When everyone has been mentioned, follow up with the questions below:
  - How did you feel about talking about a quality or skill that you have?
  - Were there some new qualities or skills that you heard about that you would like to learn?
  - Were there some qualities or skills you heard from someone else that you realise you also have?



You can further reflect with the children that everyone has strengths and positive qualities. Nobody is good at EVERYTHING. We each have different types of skills and qualities. When we put all of our positive qualities together, then we can help each other and support each other well. (If the children in the CFS have previously done activity 4.1 the Ball of String, you can remind them of this and how all our positive qualities create a strong web of support.) Sometimes we may feel shy to talk about our positive qualities, but it is important to recognise the things about us that are good, and to recognise the positive qualities of others.



Some children may be shy to talk about their positive qualities, or may not be able to come up with positive qualities easily. As the facilitator, you may need to encourage and help children to identify and share a positive quality, appropriate to their age and the context. Give some examples, such as "Nobody knows that I can do a somersault." Or "Nobody knows that I can sing my baby brother to sleep." Or "Nobody knows that I can tell a joke".

## 7.2 River of Life



The AIM of this activity is to enable children to reflect on their lives – past, present and future



60 minutes (15 minutes for each section, and 15 minutes for reflection overall)



Ages: For six years old and above (modifications suggested below)  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: Any  
Materials: Pen (or crayons and markers) and A4 paper (3 sheets of paper for each child)



1. Take three pieces of A4 paper (landscape) and sticky tape them together – so children can use one page each for past, present and future.
2. Ask the children to sit in a circle and give out the papers and pens (or crayons/markers) to the children.
3. Have the children mark the first page as their past, the second paper as their present and the third paper as their future.
4. Ask each child to draw a river along the paper, going across all three sheets of paper from the past to the present to the future. The river represents each child's life.
5. Now, ask each child to show on the line things they feel important in their lives, writing down or drawing pictures in each section (past, present, future), one at a time. (See variations below for further instructions.)
6. Begin with the past first. Things that are important in their lives could be events or people or places, as well as achievements the child feels they have made in life. Encourage children to think about the positive things in their life and what they are most proud of. Have the children share some of their drawings or writing about the past, before moving on to the next section.
7. Next, move on to the present. Have children draw or write about important things in their lives now – people, places or things that they value; things they like to do; ways they feel supported in the present. Have the children share some of their drawings or writing about the present, before moving on to the next section.
8. Next, move onto the future. Have children draw or write about what is important to their future, including hopes and dreams. When they are finished, have children share some of their drawings and writings about the future.
9. Once the pictures are finished, reflect with the children about their drawings. (See reflection points below.)
10. Once the reflection time is over, allow children another 10 minutes or so to finalise their images. They may wish to add things to their timeline after the group discussion.



To reflect about the river of life, you can ask the children questions about the following:

- Achievements: Until now, what have been the most positive things in your life? What have you been most proud of?
- Learning from past experiences: What are the most important things you have learnt so far in life? What would you like to do differently in the future?
- Goals for the future: What steps could you take to achieve your goals for the next year? What steps could you take to achieve your goals for the next five years?

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Keep questions simple and encourage children to focus on real things in their lives to draw on their rivers. For the future panel, have them focus on their short-term future.

Also remember that this activity may bring up painful memories for children who have had to flee their homes or who have lost loved ones in the past. It may also be difficult for children who are living in a difficult situation, such as those in camp settings. Be sensitive and encouraging, and provide support to any child who may need it.

When working with "past", "present" and "future", keep in mind that cultures differ in terms of whether they place "past" to the left or the right. In this version of this exercise, children draw or write on separate pieces of paper, but they may display the drawings in a line that might go left to right, or right to left depending upon the culture.



Small objects like stones, flowers, sticks, feathers, string, buttons, etc., can also be glued on the rivers. The objects can represent different things to the child as part of the story of their life.

Young children may have difficulty with complicated instructions and reflection on their rivers. However, older children and adolescents may want to go deeper with this activity. Use instructions and reflection questions appropriate to the age group you are working with – simpler and more concrete for young children, and more in-depth for adolescents. Older children may also like to be more creative and artistic in their drawings and writings.

This activity can be done over several sessions, so that the past, present and future are done in separate sessions. This may work well with young children so that you can also do some active exercises for movement and other activities as well in each session. Older children and adolescents may like to spend more time on each section, so spacing the activity over several sessions can give them more time to do each one in depth.

## 7.3 If I Were



The AIM of this activity is to encourage children to articulate their hopes and dreams and begin to identify practical ways to move toward their goals.



20 minutes



Ages: Children who can read and write, generally over age 6 (See variations below)  
Participants: Any number of participants



Setting: Any

Materials: Flipchart paper, paper, pens or pencils

Write the list of "if I were a..." on the flipchart paper before the activity begins, if possible.



1. Introduce the activity by saying: Everyone likes to dream and imagine about things they would like to do or have. For example, some people like to imagine themselves as their favourite superhero. Others like to imagine themselves as their favourite animal. I like to imagine myself as a (insert thing or person of your choice).
2. Ask the children about some of the things and people they dream they could be.
3. Now read through the list on the flipchart paper:
  - If I were a bird, I would... ..
  - If I were strong, I would... ..
  - If I were rich, I would buy... ..
  - If I were an adult, I would... ..
  - If I were superman, I would... ..
  - If I were an invisible person, I would... ..
  - If I could be any person in the world, I would be... ..
  - If I could have one dream come true, it would be... ..
4. Divide the children into pairs and give them a piece of paper and a pen or pencil.
5. Ask them to take turns to answer the questions on the flipchart.
6. Once everyone is finished, regroup the children for a group discussion.
7. For each of the questions, ask the children to share their own answers or the answers of their partner. You can reflect with the children using the reflection questions below.



To reflect on the activity, you can ask the children:

- What were some of your dreams or hopes?
- What could you do to help make some of your dreams come true?
- Who can help you to make your hopes come true?



For older children, you could create a different "if I were" chart that reflects different well-known celebrities, professions or family roles.

For children who cannot read and write, including young children, you can modify this activity by using pictures or symbols instead of words. Take each suggestion one at a time and ask the children in pairs to tell each other their answers. If they want, they can draw the answers. You can ask children to share their answers with the larger group before going on to the next suggestion.

Older children can create a collage of their dreams into a poster.

## 7.4 Heroes



The AIM of this activity is for children to identify how they are courageous and talented heroes.



60 minutes



Ages: For children age 10 and over  
Participants: Any number of participants  
Facilitators: 20 children per facilitator



Setting: Any  
Materials: Paper and pens, crayons, markers or paints. Prepared hero books – one for each child.

To prepare the hero book, take 5 sheets of A4 paper and fold them in half. Then staple them near to the fold so that the book has 20 pages (back and front).

Leave the very first page (the front page) blank. Children will design the front cover of the book as the last exercise.



### Steps in the process:

1. Introduce the activity by explaining that the children will be making hero books. Give out blank copies, one for each child. Explain that they will be doing one page at a time, beginning at page 1. There will be time to draw the cover at the end. Now begin by reading out the prompts below, starting with page 1.
2. The children will then respond to prompts in words on the pages of their hero book.
3. The children then illustrate or decorate their responses with artwork in their hero book.
4. Children share with another person in the group after each page is completed.
5. Children reflect on the process to the rest of the group as they go along.

### Prompts to read to children:

Page 1: Ask the children, What is a hero? Have the group brainstorm some responses. Then, introduce the children to the following definitions of a hero:

- "A hero is someone who has tricks and tactics to overcome problems in the life."
- "A hero is someone who is resilient – the most impressive heroes are not people who are and always have been successful. Resilient means one can bounce back from and absorb problems, like a shock absorber on a car or motorbike. A hero is someone who has had many difficulties and has bounced back."

Have the children write the hero definitions as well as any others they like onto the first page of their hero book. They can decorate the page with some artwork.

Page 2: My name is... ..., I live in... ... I am... ... years old, I spend most of my time... ...  
(write and draw)

Page 3: I am good at... ... and... ... (write and draw, don't forget things like being good at making friends, singing, dancing, understanding the feelings of others, etc.)

Page 4: I wish... ..., I hope for... ..., my vision of me in the future is... ... (write and draw)

Page 5: I am worried about... ... (write and draw, no need to share)

Page 6: Some of the problems I have for which I have had even a little success in beating or controlling are... ... (write and draw, no need to share)

Page 7: People in my life who support me are... ... I also support them in the following ways  
(write and draw)

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE ►



Page 8: To make my worries smaller I... .., ... .., ... ..  
(my tricks and tactics) (write and draw)

Page 9: A shining moment is a moment when I overcame my problem, even if it was just a little bit. This is my shining moment for which I give the approximate date (year and month) and time. (write and draw)

Page 10: I am a hero (a person who bounces back) because... .. (write and draw) (Life can be hard. Anyone who has some happy moments in this life is a hero)

Cover: Make a title and cover for your hero book – using your name and the word hero in the title. (write and draw)

What I learned about myself making my hero book... (share verbally in larger group).

Remember to save the hero books (or have children save their hero books) in a safe place.



Reflection points:

- How did it feel to make a hero book and to share your story?
- What was the most interesting part for you?
- Did you learn anything about each other that you didn't know?



Remember that there are some pages of the hero book that do not involve children sharing in the group, unless they want to. These are indicated in the instructions above by the words, "No need to share." Do not force any child to share about their hero books if they do not want to.



One variation is to have the other children write something on each child's hero book, if they like, that says something positive that they admire or like about them. This could be on the back cover or wherever the child may like to have them do so.

# Annexes



## Annex 1. Sources

Every effort has been made to list the sources of activities included in this catalogue. In some cases, however, no source is given. This may be because some have been especially written for inclusion here. There are also others that are commonly used in psychosocial programmes, CFS or children's playgrounds which have no clear, attributable source.

### Opening activities

#### 1. Opening the parachute

UNICEF MENA (2002) Psychosocial Play and Activity Book for Children and Youth Exposed to Difficult Circumstances (Version 1.01).

#### 2. Line up games

Jordan National Red Crescent Society and Danish Red Cross: Energizers and Activities for Children and Youth: Volunteer Handbook for South Sudan Red Cross – adapted from “Sports Activities for Children and Youth – A Volunteer Handbook”

#### 3. Mingle, mingle

Jordan National Red Crescent Society and Danish Red Cross: Energizers and Activities for Children and Youth: Volunteer Handbook for South Sudan Red Cross – adapted from “Sports Activities for Children and Youth – A Volunteer Handbook”

### Closing activities

#### 1.1. Sensitive hand squeeze

Jordan National Red Crescent Society and Danish Red Cross: Energizers and Activities for Children and Youth: Volunteer Handbook for South Sudan Red Cross – adapted from “Sports Activities for Children and Youth – A Volunteer Handbook”

#### 1.3. Cleaning and closing the parachute

UNICEF MENA (2002) Psychosocial Play and Activity Book for Children and Youth Exposed to Difficult Circumstances (Version 1.01).

### Other fun activities

The activities in section 4 were adapted from the following resources:

1. World Vision (2017) World Vision International PM+ Helpers' Training Guide: An Internal World Vision publication (unpublished).
2. Grahame Knox. 40 Icebreakers for Small Groups, licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 3.0. [www.insight.typepad.co.uk](http://www.insight.typepad.co.uk)
3. International HIV/AIDS Alliance (2002) 100 Ways to Energise Groups

### Building community: “Our space together”

#### 1. Pass the ball name game

Danish Red Cross (2008) Children Affected by Armed Conflict Workshop Manual

#### 2. Our names are unique

UNICEF Republica Dominicana (2010) Return to Happiness

### Emotional learning: My feelings

#### 2.4. Things to do when big feelings are in your heart

WHO (2014) Psychological first aid during Ebola virus disease outbreaks (provisional version)

## Well-being and coping: “Feeling good”

### 3.3 Tree in the wind

Contributions by Lidia Kasianchuk, IMC Ukraine, [www.worksofliterata.org](http://www.worksofliterata.org)  
Grounding and Centering: The Tree of Life, and [www.pharos.nl](http://www.pharos.nl) Works for Care Modules

## Social support: “My friends and family”

### 4.3 Working together

Catholic Aids Action, Namibia (2003)  
Building Resilience in Children Affected by HIV/AIDS

### 4.4. Who am I?

National Association of Child Care Workers (South Africa) Making a Difference

### 4.5. Who matters in my life?

Inspired by Terres des Hommes (2008) Child Protection Psychosocial Training Manual

### 4.6. A memory of someone who matters

Save the Children Denmark (2008) Free of Bullying

## Relating to others: “Being a good friend”

### 5.4. Listen to me!

Equitas International Centre for Human Rights Education (2008) Play it Fair! Human Rights Education Toolkit for Children

### 5.5. Just listen

Danish Red Cross (2008) Children Affected by Armed Conflict Workshop Manual

### 5.6. Listen, reflect, question and summarise

Equitas International Centre for Human Rights Education (2008) Play it Fair! Human Rights Education Toolkit for Children

### 5.7 I am a good listener when...

Danish Red Cross (2008) Children Affected by Armed Conflict Workshop Manual

### 5.8. Using “I” statements

Equitas International Centre for Human Rights Education (2008) Play it Fair! Human Rights Education Toolkit for Children

### 5.9. Lean on me

Catholic Aids Action, Namibia (2003) Building Resilience in Children Affected by HIV/AIDS

### 5.12. Creative fun

[www.encourageplay.com/blog/creative-problem-solving-activities-for-kids](http://www.encourageplay.com/blog/creative-problem-solving-activities-for-kids)

## Building on strengths: “All my supports”

### 7.1. Nobody knows what I can do

Adapted from Save the Children activities (Kyrgyzstan) Refinement of Dignity

### 7.4. Heroes

REPSSI (2017) Making a Hero Book (short version)

## Annex 2. Other resources for youth and adolescents

Annex 2 includes resources designed specifically for youth and adolescents.

### Danish Red Cross and IFRC Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support (2015) The Resilience Programme for Young Men – A psychosocial handbook

**The Resilience Programme for Young Men** is a resource for programme managers and trainers in providing psychosocial support for young men living in vulnerable or unstable situations. It has two components:

- The psychosocial handbook provides guidance in managing psychosocial support programmes and sets out a two-day training workshop with psychosocial activities specifically designed for young men living in difficult conditions
- The activity catalogue suggests relevant activities which can be organised for young men.

The catalogue is complementary to the handbook but can also be used separately by those who have some experience with psychosocial support looking for new activities. The activity catalogue is available online in English and Arabic.

Weblink: [www.pscentre.org](http://www.pscentre.org)

### IFRC (2012-2013) The YABC Toolkit: Promoting a culture of non-violence and peace through youth as agents of behavioural change

**The Youth as Agents of Behavioural Change (YABC) Toolkit** provides resources to empower youth to take up an ethical leadership role in their community.

YABC is grounded in the fundamental principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and their underpinning humanitarian values. The toolkit presents six thematic issues, beginning with concept papers followed by activities for youth. They include:

- non-discrimination and respect for diversity
- intercultural dialogue
- social inclusion
- gender
- violence prevention, mitigation and response
- international humanitarian law.

The toolkit also features activities in relation to intra and interpersonal skills, including empathy, active listening, critical thinking, dropping bias, non-judgement, non-violent communication, collaborative negotiation, mediation, enhancing personal resilience, and operating from a state of inner peace.

There is also a peer educator manual, guidelines for peer educators working in community engagement and psychosocial support guidelines for toolkit users.

Weblink: [www.ifrc.org/yabc](http://www.ifrc.org/yabc)

## Save the Children (2015) The Youth Resilience Programme: Psychosocial support in and out of school

**The Youth Resilience Programme: Psychosocial support in and out of school** is a resource kit with guidance for designing and implementing the Youth Resilience Programme, as well as broader youth programming that aims at promoting positive coping and resilience of young persons. It includes:

- “A Theory and Programmatic Guide” which provides an overview of key concepts and the theoretical background of the Youth Resilience Programme.
- “Facilitator’s handbook: Life Skills Workshops for Youth” which presents the various types of workshops included in the programme.
- “Facilitator’s handbook 2: Parents and Caregivers Meetings” which features seven meetings for parents and caregivers of the young people attending the workshops.

The heart of the programme is a series of 8-16 structured workshops implemented by the same facilitators once or twice a week, for the same group of young individuals aged 14 years and above. The workshops aim to help young people to:

- Resume normal, routine activities during or in the aftermath of crisis events.
- Have strong personal and social skills to adapt to and cope with adversities.
- Feel good about themselves and confident in their own abilities.
- Make good and safe life choices.
- Be more social and act as role models to other children and young people.
- Trust others and feel comfortable about sharing feelings and thoughts.
- Seek help from others (i.e. peers and adults) when needed and have stronger awareness about who can help.

The youth workshops are complemented by sessions for parents and caregivers. These sessions aim to promote their understanding of the challenges their children are facing. They provide them with skills to support youth, as they transition from childhood to adulthood.

Weblink: [www.resourcecentre.savethechildren.net](http://www.resourcecentre.savethechildren.net)

## UNICEF (2015) The Adolescent Kit for Expression and Innovation

**The Adolescent Kit for Expression and Innovation** is a package of guidance, tools, activities and supplies for supporting adolescents ages 10-17 years affected by crises and poverty. It is designed to strengthen existing programmes with adolescents in child protection, education, youth, HIV/AIDS, reproductive health and other areas. It can be integrated into child friendly spaces, education schemes, youth centre activities and community-based protection networks, or established as a separate initiative. Programmes can either use the Adolescent Kit as a comprehensive approach to engaging adolescents, or select tools, guidance and activities to target specific programme areas that need strength-ening for adolescents.

The Adolescent Kit draws from UNICEF and inter-agency guidance for psychosocial support, life skills education, child protection, child participation, equity, inclusion and peacebuilding. It includes:

- Facilitator Guides: Guidance, tools and activities for facilitators
- Supplies: Equipment and materials to support activities with adolescents.
- Digital and training resources.

The Facilitator Guides outline how to run structured sessions of activities for adolescents in humanitarian situations, and to work with them through different stages that address their interests and needs. The approaches used emphasise arts and innovation. They encourage adolescents to express themselves creatively, have fun, experiment, solve problems, learn new skills and connect with others. Facilitators can use the materials and supplies in the kit to support these activities, as well as improvise new ones.

Weblink: <http://adolescentkit.org>

### UN Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (2016) Guiding Principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding

**Guiding Principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding** presents nice guiding principles to promote participative, inclusive and inter-generational peacebuilding strategies and programmes in challenging conflict contexts. They include: Promote young people's participation as an essential condition for successful peacebuilding; value and build on young people's diversity and experiences; be sensitive to gender dynamics; enable young people's ownership, leadership and account-ability in peacebuilding; do no harm; involve young people in all stages of peacebuilding and postconflict programming; enhance the knowledge, attitudes, skills and competencies of young people for peacebuilding; invest in inter-generational partnerships in young people's communities; introduce and support policies that address the full needs of young people.

Weblink: <https://www.youth4peace.info>

### UN Inter-Agency Working Group on Youth Participation in Peacebuilding (2016) Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding: A Practice Note

**Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding: A Practice Note** presents key strategic and programming considerations for young people's participation in peacebuilding. It includes evidence-based promising practices for youth peacebuilding in the field, and makes recommendations to policy makers, donors and planners regarding policy, programming and funding. The promising practices are drawn from a wide range of countries and agencies and include examples in relation to policy, planning and programming.

Weblink: [https://www.youth4peace.info/PracticeNote\\_YPS](https://www.youth4peace.info/PracticeNote_YPS)

### World Vision (2010) Empowering Children as Peacebuilders

**Empowering Children as Peacebuilders** organises, trains, and empowers children and youth to develop their skills and character as peacebuilders within their communities. It is best for programmes that are established or that are being re-designed. Elements of the project model can be incorporated into on-going programmes that already have children's and youth club structures and activities.



The project model is based on promising practices identified from across World Vision, including child participation; capacity building, education, and skill training; club structure; clustering and collaboration; and creativity and ownership.

There is an extensive set of tools, including:

#### Curricula

- Peace education curriculum
- Children and youth 'Do No Harm' (DNH) training and Training of Trainers
- Culture of Peace training and Training of Trainers – dealing with self, handling difficult emotions, biases, myths, stereotypes, etc.
- Life skills
- Child rights education and community-based advocacy
- Leadership, facilitation, and skill development for organising events

#### Summer camps

- Focus on peace and tolerance curricula and planning modules
- Include culture, arts and sports
- Promote peace through music, dance, drama, storytelling and art
- Use sport activities and games for peacebuilding
- Promote cultural exchange programmes and collaborative community service projects for peace.

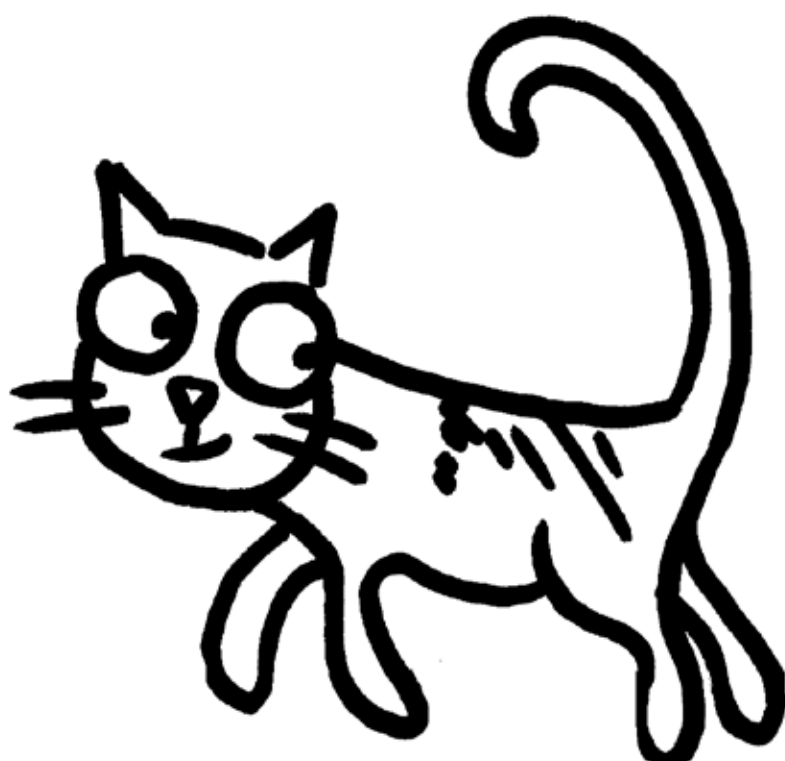
#### Staff and adult leaders' training

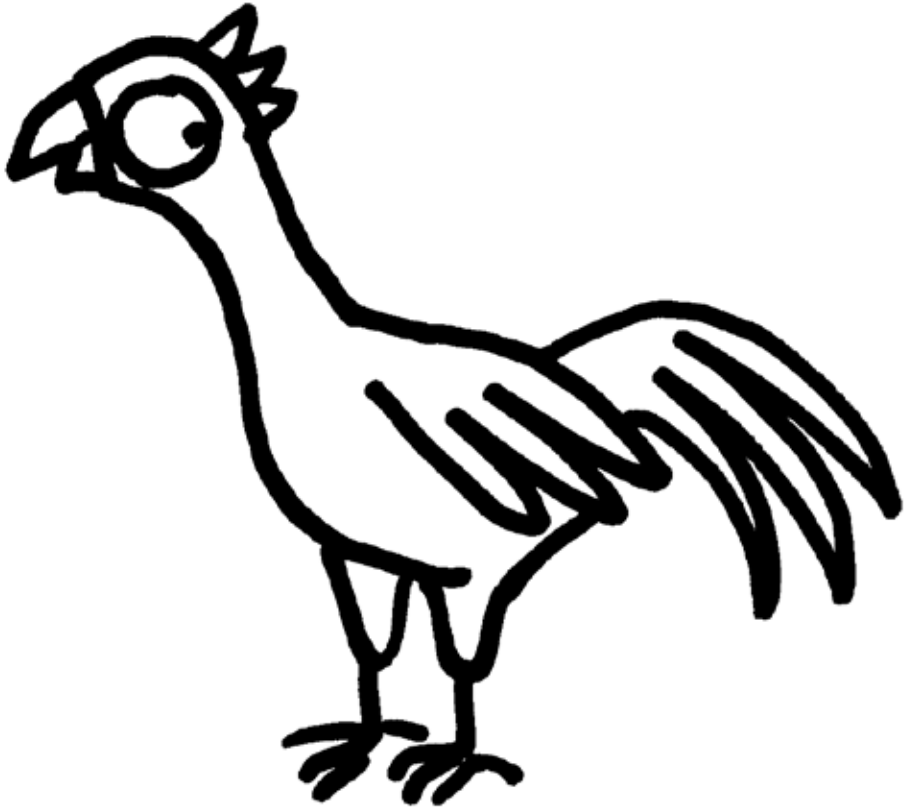
Peace Skills for Transformational Development (PS4TD) includes 13 modules for staff and adult training which focus on topics including listening skills, negotiation, mediation and conflict transformation.

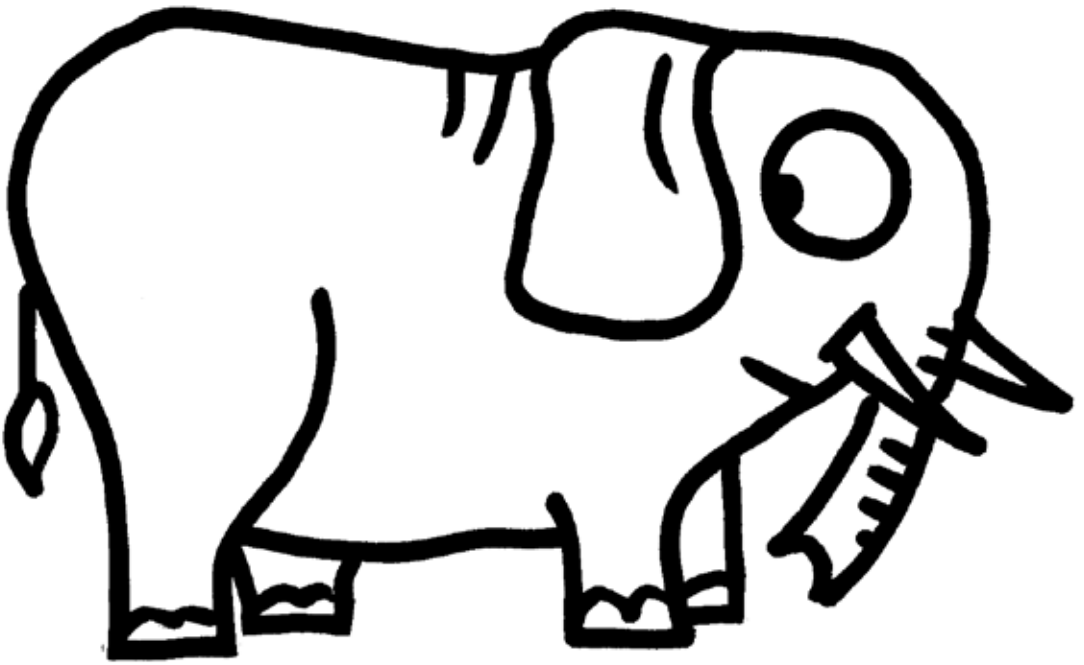
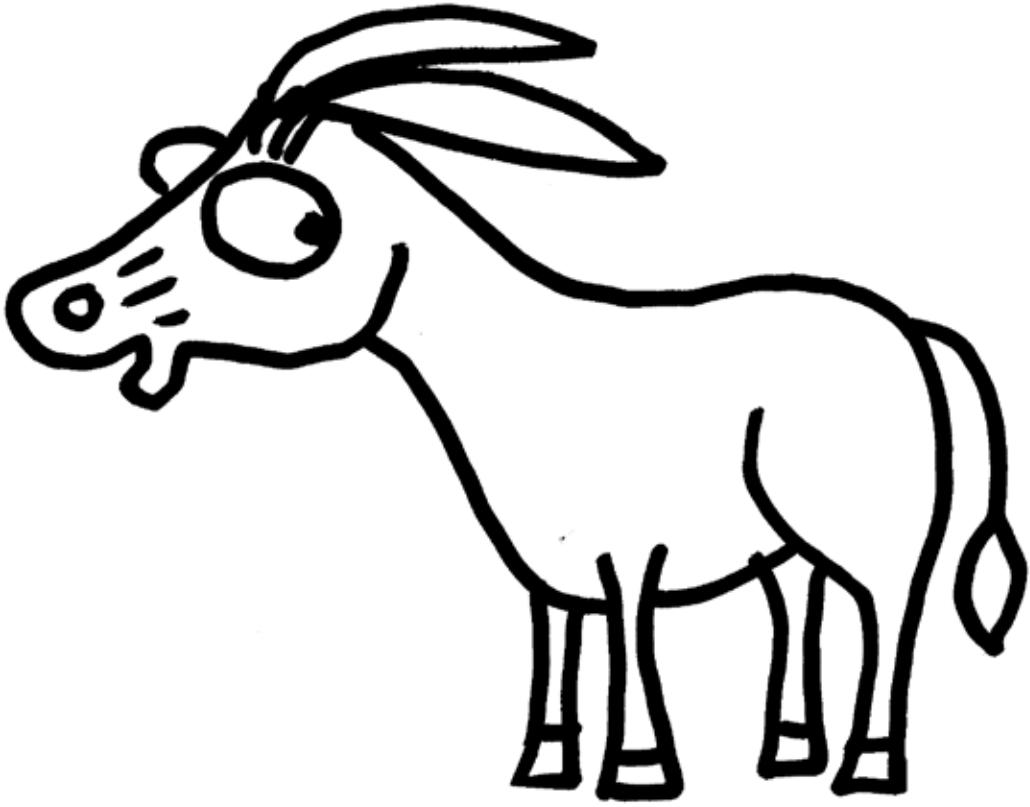
Weblink: [www.wvi.org](http://www.wvi.org)

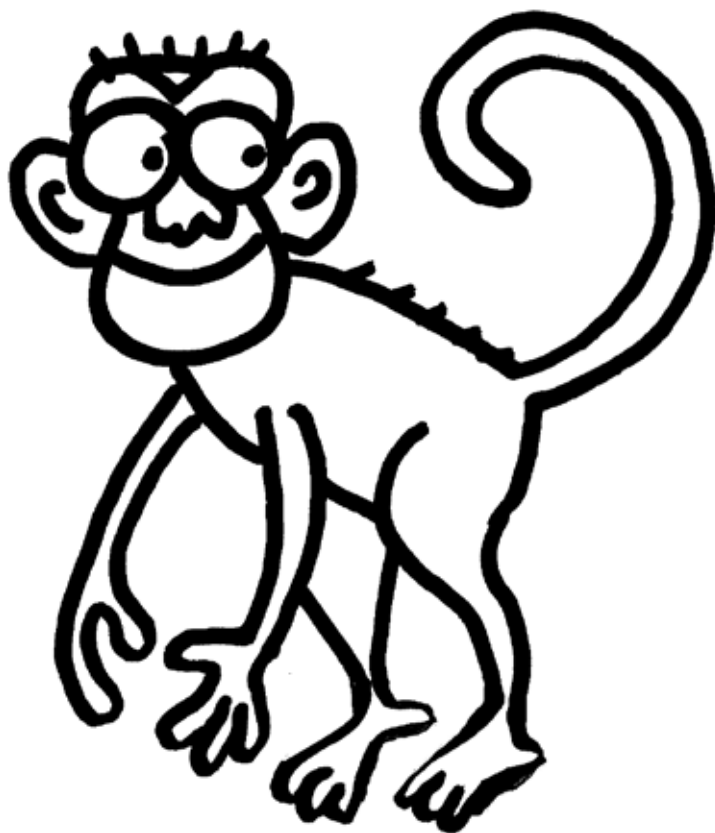
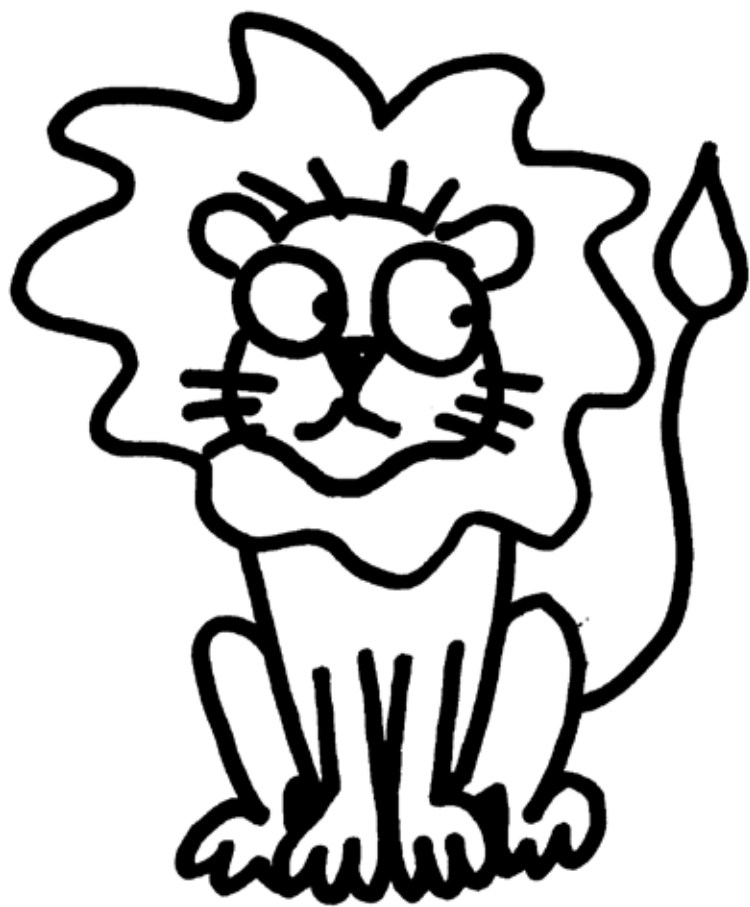
## Annex 3. Materials for activities in the catalogue

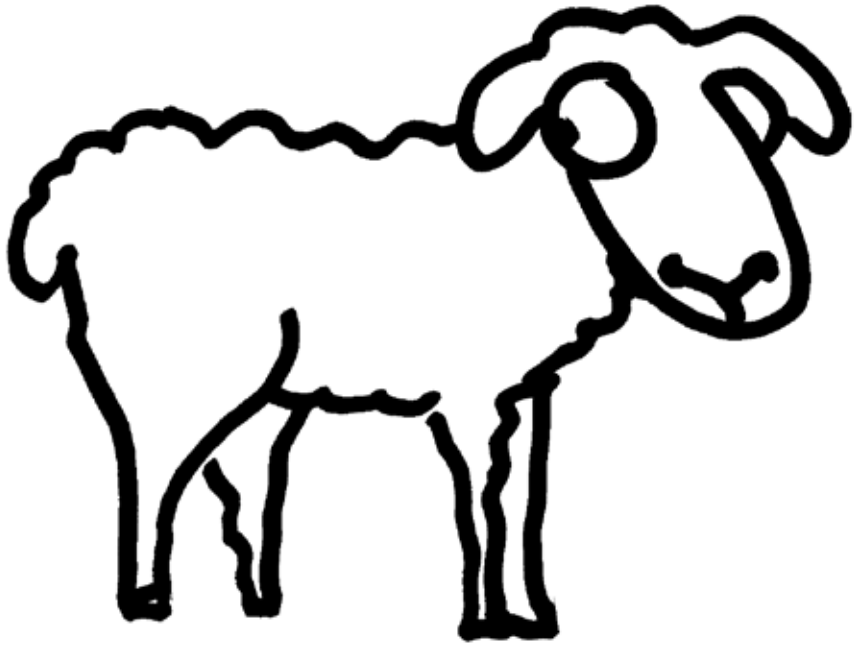
### 5.1 'Guess an animal' pictures











## 4.5 'Who matters in my life?' worksheet

