

PRINCIPLE FOUR

ENVIRONMENTS SURROUNDING CHILDREN ARE CHILD-FRIENDLY AND PROVIDE THEM WITH OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP AND GROW



MAKE
it
FUN!



MAKE IT FUN!

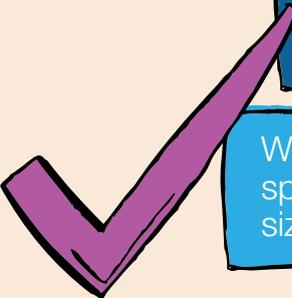
IN THIS SECTION YOU WILL FIND

- What children say they need most
- Helping children gain ownership over space
- Creating child friendly spaces
- Taking child friendly environments with you
- Why play is so important for children
- Tools, boredom busters and games



ENVIRONMENTS SURROUNDING CHILDREN ARE CHILD-FRIENDLY AND PROVIDE THEM WITH OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP AND GROW

Children thrive in environments which are not only safe and secure but also give them opportunities to learn, to grow and develop. Engaging and stimulating physical environments provide children with opportunities for play and to have fun. Children have some control over their environments and are encouraged to personalise their spaces.



Children are provided with safe physical environments which allow them to play and have fun.

While accommodated, children are provided with safe spaces which are child-friendly, which are adequate in size and over which they have some ownership

Children's connections to their usual social environments and formal and informal support networks are maintained and fostered



4.1

CREATING HOME: THE ULTIMATE CHILD- FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT

Children tell us that the most important place in their life is their home: it is the place they feel most safe, where they are most able to learn and to play and to deal with the world around them. In *Finding their way home* children told us that not having a home was often a big issue for them. They shared, though, that homelessness did not necessarily end when they were provided with shelter. Instead, they argued that they needed to feel 'at home' and to feel what others have described as 'homefulness' they needed to:

- Be with, connected to and supported by family
- Be safe and to feel safe (see principle 1 "Keep me safe" for more)
- Have space and things of their own
- Have a sense of ownership and control over their environment and their lives
- Feel stable and secure
- Have a sense of permanence and know that things were predictable
- Feel 'normal'
- Feel connected to peers

THINGS YOU CAN DO TO PROMOTE 'HOMEFULNESS':

Replacing lost toys and special possessions

Children tell us that after periods of homeless they have limited possessions of their own. They tell us that when escaping domestic violence or otherwise having to leave their homes quickly they leave their pets and some of their favourite toys and games behind.

Parents tell us that replacing these important materials is often their first priority when finding a home and that this places some considerable financial strain on them in the weeks afterwards. Supporting families to collect a few things for their children while accommodated can be helpful, as can helping families to find cheap sources to replace toys.

I had to leave my teddy at home. And my skates and all of my dress ups. When we got our new place we didn't have anything and that made me feel sad.

Most of my toys and my stuff that I like and my whole life was packed in this storage unit..it was all in the storage unit... this is the first house that I have had all these things back - they were in storage because for a very long [time], quite a few moves..lots of toys I liked were in there, stuff that bring back my memories...

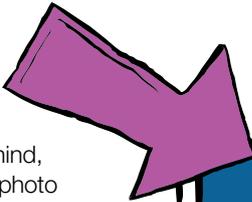
Boy, aged 6



MAKE IT FUN!

CREATING NEW MEMORIES

Not only do they leave favourite toys and clothes behind, but children also often leave important memorabilia: photo albums, school reports, birthday cards from family. Although most of these special things are not replaceable, spending time with kids creating new reminders can help them feel more comfortable in their new surrounds and to develop a sense of homefulness.



“ We left everything behind: photos, the kids drawings, their awards. It was soul destroying –[when we escaped the family violence] he robbed us of everything that was special. So we need to replace all those things, start again. Just to help the kids remember who they are and how special they are.”

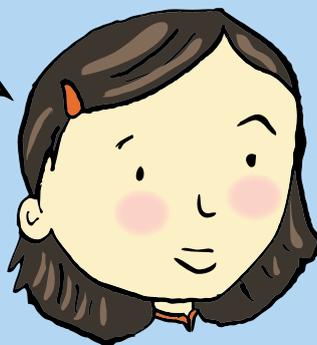
Mother



Tool 4A 'Memory Boxes' and Tool 4B 'Gratitude Diaries' can be used with children to create new memories

Mainly you've sort of like settled down, you've got everything in place and you're like comfortable. Like here is home because we have all our artwork up, we've got our stereo and everything set up and everything is put away

(Young woman, aged 15)



INSTILLING A SENSE OF CONTROL AND OWNERSHIP OVER SPACE

In *Finding their way home*, kids asserted that 'having a home' was about having a sense of permanency, of stability and security. Putting artwork on the walls, setting up furniture and being able to unpack personal belongings were all considered necessary if children and young people were to feel at home. One young woman likened moving home to returning from a holiday. While away, people lived out of suitcases and were not able to personalise their surroundings but, on returning home, were surrounded by their belongings and felt more secure as a result.

MAKE IT FUN!

4.2

SOME (CHEAP) CRAFTY IDEAS THAT CAN FOSTER A SENSE OF OWNERSHIP OVER SPACE

DOORHANGERS:

- Wooden door hangers are often available from craft stores or are easily made using Template # which can be laminated after decoration
- Get kids to paint their names on the hanger and decorate

PHOTO FRAMES:

- You can pick up fairly cheap photo frames from discount shops or craft stores (or make them out of matt board or thick cardboard (from art suppliers).
- Take a photo or get the kids to take photos of their family or of themselves and have them developed
- Have children decorate the photo frame with words, pictures and colour that describe them / their family

SWEET DREAMS:

- Have children decorate their own pillow cases by:
 - Sewing patches of different coloured material (this might include their name)
 - Using bubble fabric paint to create stories / memories

PERSONALISED STICKERS:

- Grab a set of blank name tag stickers (these can be bought at any stationery shop)
- Either write the child's name on each sticker or get them to write them out themselves (they might like "this belongs to:" or "this is the property of")
- Have the child decorate each sticker with textas, crayons, novelty stickers etc
- Tell children that these stickers can be used to identify things in their space that is theirs – books, games, furniture.

PADDLE POP FRIDGE MAGNETS

- Buy some paddle pop sticks and get kids to paint with their favorite colours
- Either have them write their name on the sticks or use lettered beads / stickers
- Decorate with buttons, beads, or odds n ends found around the local environment
- Attach small magnets on the back with craft glue and stick on fridge

MAKE IT FUN!

HELPING KIDS 'FEEL NORMAL'

Though children, young people and parents all valued having an inviting home, many felt that places where they lived in the past were not welcoming to others. Kids told us that they did not tell their friends or teachers at school about things that were going on at home because they didn't want to be treated differently to their peers.

Children therefore appreciated the attempts that workers and others made to ensure that they didn't miss out on 'normal' family activities such as birthdays and other celebrations.



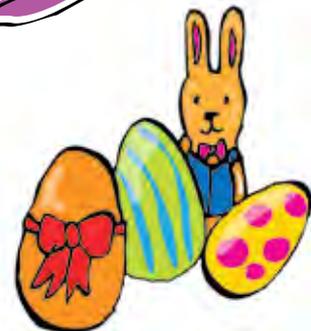
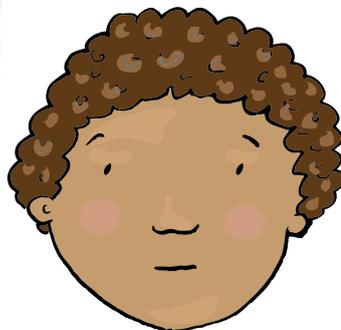
I remember I couldn't tell people where I lived, who I lived with... as a child, like you really want people to come over and play and I really couldn't have anyone come over and play... that was the start of my path downwards

(Young man, aged 18)



We got these Easter eggs because it was Easter and because my Mum was too scared to go outside she couldn't get us eggs but we got up and there were eggs on the table. We got it from this woman who had a white car like ours

(Boy, aged 11)



MAKE IT FUN!

4.3

CHILD FRIENDLY SPACES: THE BASICS

Kids tell us that often don't feel comfortable when they go to mainstream services because "they're not really for us". They tell us, though, that there are some quick and easy things that you can do to make your space more child-friendly while sending messages to kids that you value them and see them as being important enough to consider them when designing your space. Some ideas they've shared:

- "have lots of bean bags, yeah I like them"
- "Maybe have a "fun" room where kids can just go if they want some time out or if they are in the group and they get upset – someone could go into the fun room and talk to them about what they are upset about or play games with them or something"
- "have games you can play with two people like Guess Who or Connect4"
- "have lots of toys"
- "have posters like Bratz, Superman, Barbie, Horses, Skaters, Soccer..."

Alongside these guides there are a series of six posters which you can pin up around your service illustrating the key messages for kids as well as one explaining their rights. NAPCAN and other local community organisations have also developed some child-friendly resources which might be displayed also. Go to www.napcan.org.au and look under 'resources'.



OTHER IDEAS

In their book "Housing as if People Mattered", Cooper and Sarkissian observe that:

1. Children need safe, uninhibited outdoor play for their physiological and mental health.
2. Parents need to be able to allow their children outside without constant, close supervision.
3. The environment around children's homes needs to be safe from traffic, pollution, and unnecessary physical and social hazards.
4. Children should be able to experience the pleasures of finding bugs, picking leaves, smelling flowers, collecting things and so on without their parents or the management harassing them. Through such contact with nature they may develop, among other things, an understanding of basic ecological principles.
5. Children need easy, casual access to other children without a formal invitation to play.
6. Children need places in the communal environment that are undeniably their territories where they can expect to find other children.
7. Children need to create private spaces for themselves (for example, tree houses, forts, or clubhouses) on wild or unmaintained ground away from public view.
8. Children need to be able to move around their home neighbourhoods safely and to take little trips farther and farther from home to gain a sense of independence."

MAKE IT FUN!

4.4

CREATING EMOTIONALLY SAFE AND FRIENDLY PLACES

Emotionally safe places are those where children feel safe and where they feel able to express their emotions. This requires adults to:

- Set and communicate clear expectations about how people will treat each other and enforce these in respectful and appropriate way
- Consider and be empathetic towards children and their feelings
- Provide children with safe opportunities to talk about their feelings (this requires them to ensure that they have the time, energy, skills and resources to actively listen and respond to children)

Some questions that workers might consider when exploring whether their space is emotionally safe or not include:

- Are children exposed to any unsafe or unfriendly behaviors: are they bullied, threatened or intimidated in any way?
- What opportunities and invitations are given to children to talk about their feelings and thoughts?
- How can we best gauge how child safe and friendly the environment is?

CREATING PHYSICALLY ENGAGING AND FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENTS THAT PROMOTE PLAY

Child friendly spaces are those in which kids want to play, to interact, to explore and experience a sense of wonder. By having bright colours, kid friendly posters and artwork, books, games and activities that are prominent and inviting, as well as spaces that allow to play in non-formal and pre-determined ways (such as gardens or big back yards), services send powerful messages to children that they recognize that they are valuable and that they want them to feel at home.

A number of the kids in Finding their way home told us that they liked growing a garden because (a) they had control over the space, (b) it represented stability, (c) they liked watching things grow and (d) they liked feeling as though they were good at something and seeing the outcomes of their effort.

See *Tool 4C 'Friendly maps'* for ideas on how to help kids give you feedback on particular spaces that are child safe and child friendly.

See those pots – one of them is mine. I like to help with the garden – to see things grow. I used to play behind the bush. I dugged dirt and that

Boy, aged 6



MAKE IT FUN!

4.5

CREATING SPACES FILLED WITH JOY AND WONDER

Social geographer Paul Tranter argues that children are not given enough spaces where they can explore, experience and benefit from unstructured play. Here are some ideas for creating fun **outdoor** spaces for kids:

1. Create a vibrant natural environment by hanging a birdhouse and feeders in a quiet spot in the yard.
2. Find spots where low branches, shrubbery or groupings of trees have created secluded alcoves for children to play.
3. Gather some cheap, safe odds and ends (like old tyres with the centres painted white so little critters can be easily seen, swimming noodles, hacky sacks etc) and have them available in a corner of the back yard
4. Designate a flower or vegetable bed for the children to tend and in which they can hunt for worms and beetles (maybe build a worm farm that kids can tend)
5. Plant herbs and other scented plants in the ground or in pots and let children use them to make mud pies.



Some things to be mindful of when setting up an inside play area:

- **Don't overcrowd:** it's too hard to keep tidy and kids are often overwhelmed. Have a store of toys that you keep elsewhere and rotate toys and games so that the area is always vibrant and new
- **Fill the space with kid-friendly messages:** by using bright colours, putting kids artwork up on the wall and making sure that adult-centred things (like wordy documents, posters with more 'don'ts than do's etc) are kept to a minimum
- **Give kids some control:** over what games they play and what activities they participate in. Unstructured fun can be more engaging for kids and allowing them to invite you into their worlds can be powerful
- **Set some rituals:** have a plan for setting up and packing up which the kids participate in so that they can develop a routine and, hopefully, some closure at the end of play time – kids are less likely to get upset when its time to do something else if they know how long they've got to play and are involved in the finishing up.

MAKE IT FUN!

INCLUSIVE FOR ALL

An inclusive nation is one that celebrates and embraces diversity, and disability is core to diversity. An inclusive nation ensures that every citizen has the opportunity to fully participate in the social, cultural, civic and economic life of that country. And that includes people with a disability and their families.

When you are working with a child or parent with a disability, as with any other person, always look past the disability and see the person first. Assume children can participate in age appropriate activities, with their peers with and without disabilities – this is known as inclusion – and find ways of supporting them to do that by making adjustments and giving extra help.

When assessing the needs and wishes of a child or family member with a disability always involve the child. Make accommodations, rephrase questions, demonstrate them and use concrete aids and examples. Use simple words, gestures and body language to communicate. When there is not language, or limited language, see all behaviour as communication.

As with all other children, find out what a child's interests are, their likes and dislikes and their wishes. Focus on the assets and strengths of the child and use those to help the child learn, rather than just focusing on needs. Ask simple questions about where the child goes to school, what kind of support they are getting, who is involved and then work together with other informal and formal supports.



***Inclusion means** that a child is participating in all aspects of life with their typical peers, for example attending their local school, in the same class as children of the same age and participating in their local community events regardless of their support needs.*

CREATING INCLUSIVE SPACES

Children who have special needs may have special requirements that services should be aware of to ensure that they too can play and have fun. A few things to be mindful of:

- **Access:** can children who are in wheel chairs or who have sensory impairments easily make their way into the space? What are the entrances and exits like?
- **Space:** is it easy for children with different needs to get around comfortably?
- **Placement:** where are toys, games and other things that kids like stored? Are they easily accessed?
- **Inclusive:** can games and activities be played with all children or might they exclude particular kids (ie kids who aren't literate, or who have limited English language skills, who don't understand the cultural nuances, who aren't physically able to participate)?
- **Alternatives:** can kids with special needs take on different roles – team captain, helper or umpire? Can they be buddied up with other kids so as not to feel excluded?

MAKE IT FUN!

4.6

DESIGNING A WELCOME TO THE SERVICE KIT

A number of services working with families have shared how successful giving kids a welcome pack can be in engaging children and their parents. By providing a small kit filled with little treasures that children can own, services send a message that they value kids and that they want them to feel comfortable in the program.

SOME THINGS YOU MIGHT CONSIDER INCLUDING IN YOUR “WELCOME TO THE SERVICE KIT”:

- Some soap, shampoo, conditioner
- A toothbrush and toothpaste
- A comb or brush
- A towel and pillowcase (that could be decorated)
- A toy (ie a stuffed animal) or game
- A book
- Some colouring in stencils and pencils
- A telephone card
- A door hanger
- A photo frame
- A “what you can expect” guide (see Tool 4.4)
- A lolly or a piece of chocolate
- A balloon or some stickers



An example “what I can expect” page is included as **Tool 4D** A complaints process is included as **4E** ‘When I’m not happy’

These packs can be made en masse and include small gifts that can be bought cheaply from discount shops. Be creative and be as child-like as you can in putting them together (you might even enjoy it!). Some services who have used these kits suggest making them out of durable material (ie giving them a back pack which they can keep).

In addition, your welcome to the service kit might include some information:

- about what they can expect from your service
- about who is going to support them and how to be in contact
- about how they can get information
- about how they can make a complaint

Children tell us that its good to have some child-friendly information which they can keep which helps them understand more about how workers might interact with them, what things you might do for them and their families, what rights they have in regard to confidentiality and what they might do if they’re not happy.

MAKE IT FUN!

4.7

TAKING A CHILD-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT WITH YOU!

Workers often share that they enjoy working in child-friendly environments as children are more engaged, feel more relaxed and are more likely to share their thoughts and feelings. They report, however, that they often work in adult-focused spaces or ones that are cold and uninviting. Some have taken this on the chin while others have taken a range of child-friendly resources with them to create child-friendly pockets in otherwise unengaging environments. The basics might include:

- A range of PETs (see Guide #4 for some other ideas)
- Some coloured textas, pencils and blank paper
- St Luke's Bear Cards and Strengths Cards for Kids
- A bright coloured table cloth (CanTeen bandanas are great for this)
- Talking cards (see Guide #4 for these)
- A smiley face stamp (available from discount stores)
- A sample of cheap stickers
- A mouldable clay face (usually available at markets or make your own: see Guide 4)
- A packet of tissues
- Sample size packets of chips and lollies
- A packet of novelty bandaids (these are great for little kids!)
- A small ball, a doll and a toy car
- Some picture books (see resource lists at the end of each guide for relevant ideas)

You might keep these in a back pack or a tub which can easily be transported.



MAKE IT FUN!

4.8

PLAY: A SERIOUS BUSINESS!

Recent advances in brain research show that early experiences profoundly impact the development of the brain. Play is a vital part of these experiences. Not only fun, play is the way children learn about their world and practice to take their place in it. Through play in a safe environment, children can experience success, try on different roles, practice being in charge of their own activities and interact with others.

BENEFITS OF PLAY

- Gives children a sense of power and control
- Promotes imagination
- Allows for investigation and repetition
- Promotes longer attention spans
- Encourages deeper interests
- Decreases stress
- Is a voluntary activity
- Allows children to practice different roles
- Encourages language building
- Is fun!

We don't stop playing because we grow old; we grow old because we stop playing

George Bernard Shaw

TIPS FOR PLAY

- Enjoy "time together" - free from other distractions. Focus on the child
- Be attentive. Maintain good eye contact and get down to the child's level
- Model communication skills
- Listen first, reflect and then respond
- Communicate thoughts and feelings sincerely. Children can sense insincerity
- Encourage children to express opinions while they play. Be sure to listen and value what children say
- Let the child lead
- Don't make comparisons to other children.
- Focus more on what you are doing and less on how well it is being done
- Make memories. Record funny moments or big accomplishments

Play for young children is not recreation activity... It is not leisure-time activity nor escape activity... Play is thinking time for children. It is language time. Problem-solving time. It is memory time, planning time, investigating time. It is organisation-of-ideas time, when the young child uses his mind and body and his social skills and all his powers in response to the stimuli he has met

Hymes, child development specialist

MAKE IT FUN!

FAMILY FUN

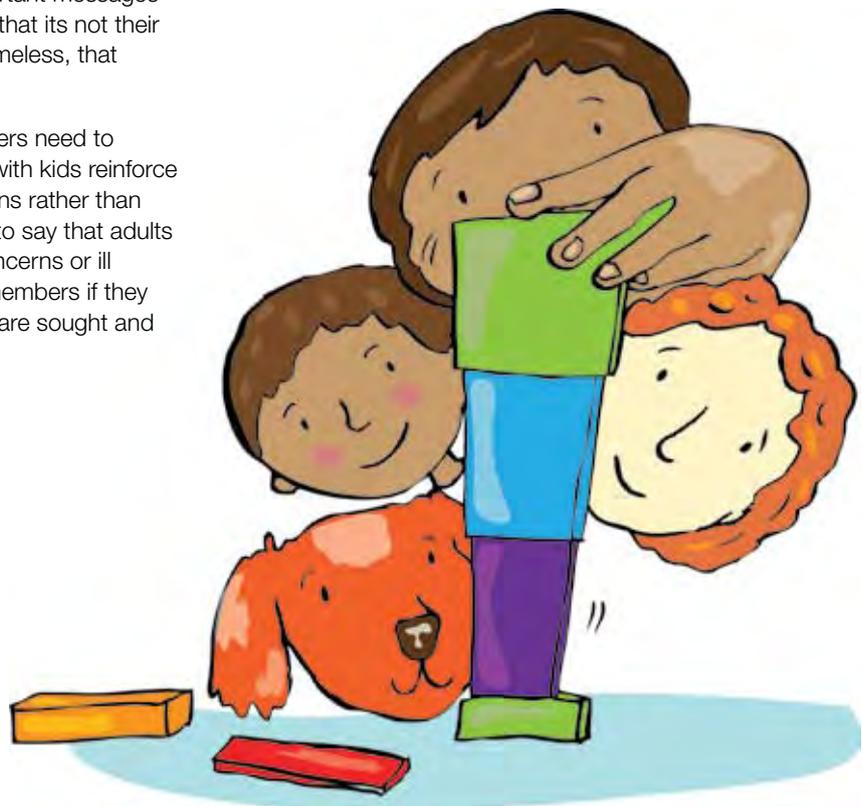
Although getting kids to participate in fun activities with individual workers helps them build trust and rapport, often it's better for games to engage the whole family. This allows family members to enjoy time together, to be reminded of their strengths (which workers need to constantly affirm and reaffirm) and to engage in some conversations that they might not have had the opportunity to begin.

It is also important to engage families, particularly parents, because this can reduce the level of suspicion and feelings of self doubt that parents might experience when other adults are engaging with their children. Providing time, support and opportunities for parent-child relationships to be strengthened is the most significant and central task you have.

In acknowledging this, there may be times when parents and children would prefer for kids to have one-on-one or child-only time. This could be because parents need some time out, because they want to give their kids space to talk about things that they might not raise while parents are around or because they would like another adult to reinforce important messages (such as their kids are special, that it's not their fault that they had become homeless, that things are going to get better).

In being family-focussed, workers need to ensure that their relationships with kids reinforce family strengths and connections rather than compromise them. This is not to say that adults need to minimise children's concerns or ill feelings towards other family members if they should arise but that solutions are sought and opportunities enabled.

We've included some quick and easy games that can be played with groups of children or in family groups at the end of the resource. Why not put together a folder for your team that includes other games and activities you come across that can be used!



MAKE IT FUN!



BUILDING KIDS UP

Children who have experienced hardship often feel down about themselves and their situations. The Peace Foundation in New Zealand argues that for every negative experience a child encounters and every negative message they receive about themselves they need 5 positive experiences and affirmations to build them up again.

Adults can build kids up by:

- *Acknowledging who they are*
- *Acknowledging what they do*

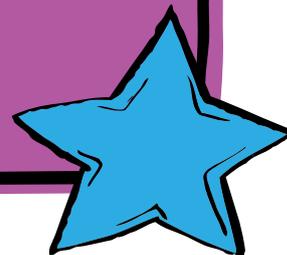
1. CHILDREN NEED TO BE ACKNOWLEDGED FOR WHO THEY ARE:

You can do this by what you say:

- *You're a cool kid*
- *I like you*
- *I'm glad you're my friend/son or daughter/*
- *I'm glad you're in my group*
- *I'm so happy to see you*
- *Come and tell me about ...*
- *Come and sit with me for a while*
- *How are you?*
- *We are lucky to have you here doing x (tidying up so well, with your big smile etc)*

And do:

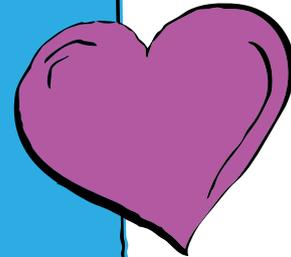
- *Make sure they get a turn*
- *Help them individually for a moment*
- *Pat their shoulder as they pass*
- *Smile*
- *Meet their eyes*
- *Remember their name*
- *Ask about something that they previously told you about*



MAKE IT FUN!

2. CHILDREN NEED TO BE ACKNOWLEDGED FOR WHAT THEY DO:

- *I like the way you did that*
- *Your colouring-in is awesome!*
- *You did so well in that game*
- *I really appreciate the way you helped your little sister do that*
- *That was very kind/patient/considerate/helpful of you to do....*



3. WE NEED LOTS OF PRAISE before we can take in criticism without damaging our self esteem. Use the 5:1 rule – one piece of criticism for five pieces of praise or acknowledgement.

4. DON'T USE GENERALISATIONS, they are rarely true: *You never help the other kids, You haven't done a good thing all day.*

5. NO NAME CALLING: Remember labels are sticky, even the seemingly good ones can be harmful. *"You're a good kid"* – a child can infer that this means *"I'm only OK when I behave like a little angel"*.

6. DON'T USE PUT-DOWNS.

7. DON'T PUT UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS ON CHILDREN. Get to know the capabilities of children at each stage of development: eg. adults often say to a child, *"How would you feel if...?"* Little children don't know, and – it's hard to catch a ball with one hand when you're only 6!

8. DON'T COMPARE ONE CHILD WITH ANOTHER

9. WHEN THINGS GO BADLY, CRITICISE THE BEHAVIOR NOT THE CHILD. *"I didn't like what you did"* instead of *"You're a naughty boy."* The latter puts down the whole child and doesn't leave room for hope. The first means – if I change my behavior things will be better for me.

10. GIVE CHILDREN A CHANCE TO LEARN. Behaviour doesn't change overnight. Children are in the process of becoming – as we all are.

11. PUT YOURSELF ON THE CHILD'S SIDE. *"We've got a problem here. What can we do?"* This gives the child a stake in what's going on.



MAKE IT FUN!



QUICK GAMES FOR GROUPS

BALL AND CHAIN

What you need:

- one balloon
- one piece of string approximately 40cms in length

What you do:

Have each family member / group participant blow up a balloon to medium size and tie to ankle – leaving a length of at least 10cms between their ankle and the balloon. The aim of the activity is to pop other family members' balloons while protecting your own.

SLEEPING LIONS

This is a good activity to quieten kids down.

What you need: nothing!

What you do:

Tell the children that they are sleeping lions, lying in the forest hiding from the villagers. Tell them that they have to lie as still as possible and that the lion who lies still the longest wins the game.

SOCK WRESTLING

What you need: nothing!

What you do:

Have the kids sit in a circle and take off their shoes so they are only wearing socks.

Number each child. Two numbers are then called out. The kids with those numbers come into the centre of the circle and, remaining on their knees, must, in any way possible, get the other person's sock. First to get a sock, wins!

THE LION'S CLUB

What you need:

- A stuffed animal (this can be replaced with a set of keys, a shoe, a ball: in fact anything that you can grab easily!)

What you do:

Select a child to be the Lion and have them sit with their back to the other players who should be at least ten feet away. Put a stuffed animal behind them and get them to pretend that it is their cub.

Get the other players to take turns sneaking up behind the Lion and trying to steal the cub.

If the Lion hears the person sneaking up it can roar and then turn around. If the Lion has caught a player the player takes the Lion's place and the Lion goes back to the other players. If there is no player when the Lion roars the Lion remains as the Lion and the game begins again.

MAKE IT FUN!

BOPPER

What you need:

- a large wad of rolled up newspaper or a pillow

What you do:

Participants sit in a circle with their eyes closed and with their hands behind their back. The facilitator walks around and puts the bopper in the hands of one of the players. The person with the bopper waits a few moments and 'bops' the person on their left gently with the bopper. Once they realise they've been bopped they call out "I've been bopped" and then run around the circle with the bopper following them, trying to bop them as many times as possible while the rest of the circle calls out "1-2-3-4" etc. The aim is for the bopper to bop as many times as possible and for the boppee to get away with the least bops possible.

FLIES AND SPIDERS

What you need: nothing!

What you do:

A player is chosen to be the spider and sits on the floor. The rest of the group are flies and skip around the spider buzzing as they go. The spider sits still and says nothing, but waits until when they believe they're most likely to catch the most flies. At that point they jump up and tag as many of the flies as they can as the group counts to 5 out loud. Those who are caught then become spiders and the game is repeated until there are no flies left.

BR-AVO

What you need: nothing!

What you do:

Players stand in a circle and hunch down. The first player whispers 'Brrrr' and then is followed by the next who repeats it a little bit louder. As a group, the players slowly starts to move out of their hunches as the 'Brrrs' get louder. When everyone is standing and the 'Brrr' has crescendoed players call out "Bravo".

SIT NEXT TO ME

What you need:

- a chair for each player + 1

What you do:

All players sit on a chair. The person to the left of the spare chair calls out "I want (name) to sit next to me!" That person then moves, leaving their own chair spare. The process continues. If you like, you can add an action "I want (name) to hop over and sit next to me" or "I want (name) to slither like a snake and sit next to me".

HUM TAG

What you need: nothing

What you do:

This is like a normal game of 'tips' but players can't be tagged if they are holding another player's hands humming. The only rule is that hummers can only have one breath before running off and finding another partner.

MAKE IT FUN!

MAGNETS

What you need: nothing

What you do:

Have participants secretly choose someone else in the group. Tell them that when you begin the game they will become magnetised towards this person. Get them to choose a second person and explain that they will be repelled by this person. Start the game and watch the mayhem erupt.

THE CHOCOLATE GAME

What you need:

- two coins
- dress up clothes
- a block of chocolate
- a chopping board
- a knife and fork

What you do:

Have players sit in a circle around the clothes, chocolate and knife and fork. Give one child the two coins and get them to flip them. If they get two heads they race into the middle of the circle, put on the dress ups and cut up the chocolate with the knife and fork, eating one single cube at a time. Meanwhile other players flip the coins until someone else flips two heads, at which time the player in the middle takes off the dress ups and passes them on. The game continues until there's no chocolate left.

Option:

Sometimes it's good to quit the game before all the chocolate is eaten if there are players who've missed out. Share the chocolate as a way to end the game.

WHAT'S THE TIME MR WOLF

What you need: nothing

What you do:

one player is chosen as the wolf. They sit with their back to the group who stands some way away. Players call out "What's the time Mr Wolf?" The wolf replies "one o'clock" or "two o'clock" etc as the players take a step(s) forward (ie one step for each hour; one step for one o'clock etc) trying to get as close to the wolf so that he can be tagged. Mr Wolf can choose, at any time, to answer "Dinner Time" and gets up and tries to tag as many players as possible.

ORBIT

What you need:

- an earth ball or a beach ball

What you do:

Groups of kids get into two concentric circles: the inside circle lies down with their heads pointing to the centre of the circle; the outer circle remains standing facing inwards. The earth/beach ball is dropped into the centre of the circle and the lying group tries to kick the ball over the heads of the outer circle. Those in the outer circle are only allowed to bop the ball (ie not catch/hold onto it).

MAKE IT FUN!

4.11

SOME BASIC RECIPES FOR CRAFT ACTIVITIES

FACE PAINTING

Recipe:

For each colour:

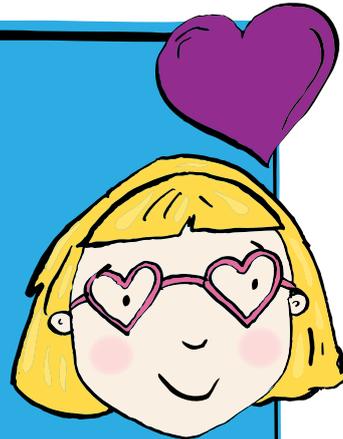
- 1 teaspoon of cornstarch
- ½ teaspoon of cold cream (ie Vitamin E)
- Food colouring
- ½ teaspoon of water
- Small jar

What you need to do:

- in a small container mix cornstarch and cold cream until well blended. Add water and stir. Blend in water and then the food colouring one drop at a time until you get the desired colour. The mixture should last some time if well covered, and can be washed off with soap and water.

Option:

Have family members paint symbols of the things that make their relative special.



MAKE IT FUN!

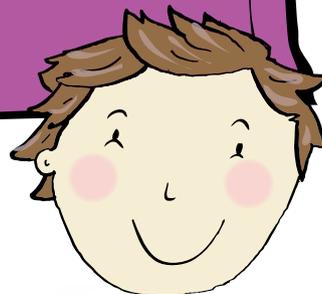
COLOURED PLAYDOUGH

Recipe:

- 1 cup of water
- 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil
- ½ cup of salt
- 1 tablespoon of cream of tartar
- Food colouring
- Saucepan
- 1 cup of flour

What you need to do:

- Combine water, oil, salt, cream of tartar and food colouring in a saucepan and heat until warm. Remove from the heat and add flour. Stir, and then knead until smooth. The cream of tartar makes this dough last 6 months or longer. Keep in an airtight container or ziplock bag.



MAKE IT FUN!

PAPIER-MÂCHÉ PASTE

Recipe:

- 1 cup of water
- ½ cup of flour
- 5 cups of lightly boiling water
- large saucepan

What you need to do:

- Mix flour into 1 cup of water until mixture is thin and runny. Stir this mixture into lightly boiling water. Gently boil and stir 2-3 minutes. Cool before using.



MAKE IT FUN!

COLOURED SALT

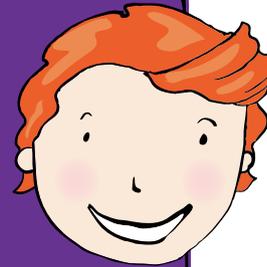
Recipe:

For each colour:

- ½ cup salt
- 5-6 drops of food colouring

What you need to do:

- Add food colouring to salt and stir well. Cook in microwave for 1-2 minutes or spread on wax paper and let dry. Store in an airtight container.



SLIME

Recipe:

- 2 cups water
- ½ cup cornflour
- food colouring

What you need to do:

- Bring water to the boil in a medium saucepan. Add cornflour, then food colouring while stirring constantly. Remove from heat and cool to room temperature. This makes a messy slime that goes from liquid to solid, and is great fun to play with.

Cover a small table with a plastic mat, put on some old clothes or an apron and let this slime run through your hands!



MAKE IT FUN!



PULSE CHECK “MAKE IT FUN”

PULSE CHECKS ARE HERE TO HELP ORGANISATIONS BY:

- promoting discussion;
- identifying strengths and any gaps that need action; and
- helping to set priorities

The pulse check can be used whether you have already developed child-safe policies and practices or are just starting out. It is not exhaustive - you will find that as you discuss it you may think of other areas that need attention in your organisation.

STEP 1: go through the indicators and list how your service acts on each one

STEP 2: each person rates how well the service does this

STEP 3: brainstorm things that could be done to improve how the service acts on each area



MAKE IT FUN!

	INDICATORS	HOW WE DO THIS list how this is currently done	1----2----3----4----5 NEVER SOMETIMES ALWAYS (rate the service by circling a number)	THINGS WE COULD DO (list or brainstorm ideas)
<p>CHILD Environments surrounding children are child-friendly and provide them with opportunities to develop and grow</p>	<p>Our service communicates to children that they are valued, welcome and that their needs and wishes are important.</p> <p>The service has a 'welcome to the service' kit specifically for children.</p> <p>The 'welcome to the service' kit includes a child-friendly explanation of children's rights and what children can expect from the service:</p> <p>a. Child-friendly activities. We use child-friendly activities to engage and work with children and families</p> <p>b. Child-friendly equipment child-friendly equipment is made available for children (small, colourful, attractive to children, invites play, safe)</p> <p>Play is recognised as a central part of children's growth and development. Our service creates opportunities and environments for children that promote spontaneous and free play as well as structured (organised) play</p>			

MAKE IT FUN!

	INDICATORS	HOW WE DO THIS list how this is currently done	1----2-----3----4----5 NEVER SOMETIMES ALWAYS (rate the service by circling a number)	THINGS WE COULD DO (list or brainstorm ideas)
<p>SERVICES PROVIDED</p> <p>While accommodated, children are provided with safe spaces, which are child-friendly, and which are adequate in size and over which they have some ownership</p>	<p>Child-friendly spaces. We create and value child-friendly spaces in our service</p> <p>a. The service provides or facilitates access to physically engaging environments for children that invite play, exploration and expression</p> <p>b. Children have ownership over spaces wherever they are accommodated, as evidenced by: spontaneous play and expression; decoration and arrangement of equipment, possessions and creations; ability to find comfort and joy in these spaces; attraction to and time spent in these spaces</p> <p>c. Children in our service have access to safe, child-friendly spaces in which they can explore and engage informally with other children (where possible)</p> <p>d. Children's spaces and services are inclusive and accessible to all children including children with disabilities and special needs, Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander children and children from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds</p> <p>e. Parents and children are encouraged, resourced and empowered to create the most homeful environment possible for children</p>			

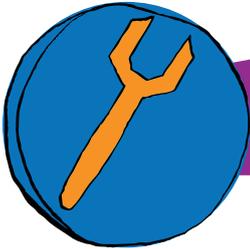
MAKE IT FUN!

	INDICATORS	HOW WE DO THIS list how this is currently done	1----2-----3-----4-----5 NEVER SOMETIMES ALWAYS (rate the service by circling a number)	THINGS WE COULD DO (list or brainstorm ideas)
SYSTEM Children's connections to their usual social environments and formal and informal support networks are maintained and fostered	a. Children are supported to maintain their usual social connections and networks as much as possible b. Parents are supported to assist their children to maintain networks and connections			



* See Guide 2 'I'm one of a kind' for more on assessing children's social, informal and formal networks.
 See Guide 6: 'Who Else Matters?' for some ideas on how to work together.

MAKE IT FUN!



TOOL 4A: MEMORY BOXES

LINKED TO:

- Section 4.1



WHY?

- To help kids collect memorabilia



WHO WITH?

- Kids of all ages



TIME?

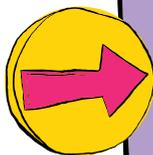
- One hour (in one sitting or over time)



YOU'LL NEED?

- A shoe box
- Wrapping paper, wallpaper, cloth
- Stickers, feathers, glitter, etc.
- Old magazines to cut up, photographs, old postcards
- A glue gun (optional, but helpful)

MAKE IT FUN!



WHAT TO DO:

- Get kids to stick bits of wrapping paper, wallpaper or cloth to the outside of the shoe box (including the lid) and decorate it with bits and pieces from around the house: feathers, buttons, lolly wrappers
- Get the kids to label the lid with their name and the date (or do it for younger kids).
- Explain to kids that this is their memory box and encourage them to collect and store reminders of special days and activities in their box: letters, photos, seashells, pressed flowers, post cards, awards, etc.
- When you catch up with them, get kids to take out their boxes and have them explain some of the cool things that they have kept.

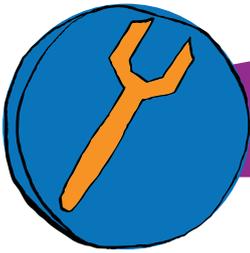


SOMETHING DIFFERENT?

- A similar box might be made and used to store things that will help the family prepare for a move into a new home: towels and sheets, photo frames, placemats made by the kids.



MAKE IT FUN!



TOOL 4B: GRATITUDE JOURNALS

LINKED TO:

- Section 4.1



WHY?

- To help kids to recognise that some of the good things in life are outside of themselves: in their relationships, in their environment.
- A gratitude journal is a bit like a diary but is different because it is all about affirming positive things in the life of the child. It might be celebrating something they did well, something they enjoyed, something special that they saw or something that made them feel good.



WHO WITH?

- Kids aged 5 to 14 years



TIME?

- Ongoing

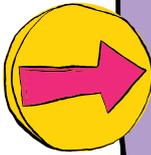


YOU'LL NEED?

- an exercise book
- things to decorate the cover
- laminate



MAKE IT FUN!



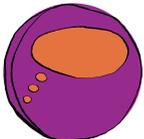
WHAT TO DO:

- Decorate the cover of the book with pictures, stickers, drawings and paintings
- Explain that the journal is all about celebrating the positive things and experiences that they have come across
- If helpful, stick a list of possible questions that kids might like to answer, such as:
 - What was the best thing that happened today?
 - What's something I'm grateful for?
 - What did I do today that made me feel proud?
 - What did I most appreciate in someone else today?
 - What am I glad about today?
- Although we try not to have rules in an exercise like this, it might be good to set some guidelines like:
 - 'This journal is about celebrating good things about you and things that happen to you, about creating happy memories and about remembering good times. If you want to, keep everything else in a diary or somewhere outside these pages.'



SOMETHING DIFFERENT?

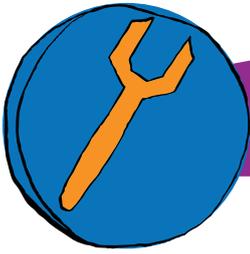
- The child may acknowledge doing something nice for another person. Or, the child may make a connection to their world around them (that they liked watching their puppy sleep or the smell of the cut grass in the backyard).



TO THINK ABOUT:

- A child, teen, or adult can spend a few minutes each night thinking about what has gone well during that day, and then list three of those things. This can become a relaxing bedtime routine. Young children can draw a picture, or say out loud for an adult to record, their three things. Children who can write on their own, can write their own list.

MAKE IT FUN!



TOOL 4C: FRIENDLY MAPS

LINKED TO:

- Sections 4.3, 4.4, 4.5 & 5.13



WHY?

- To gauge how child-friendly your space is
- To get feedback from kids about what spaces feel safe and those that don't
- To get ideas on how things might be improved for children



WHO WITH?

- Children aged 5 to 14 years



TIME?

- 10 mins to 40 mins depending on ages

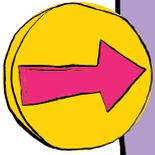


YOU'LL NEED?

- A3 sheet of paper,
- coloured textas or crayons



MAKE IT FUN!



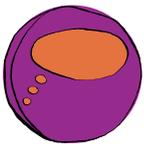
WHAT TO DO:

- Get the kids to map out the space that you're interested in understanding, be it your refuge, their home or the children's centre they go to after school.
- Then get them to make their way around the space drawing things on the map that (1) make them feel safe and (2) make them feel unsafe. They can choose how they represent this: workshop ideas like clouds and suns, different colours, hazard signs, smiley and sad faces
- Have a discussion as a group:
 - What are the spaces where kids **feel safe**?
 - What is it about these places that make them feel safe?
 - Do all kids feel safe there?
 - Are they always safe? If no, when aren't they?
 - What are the spaces where kids might **not feel safe**?
 - What is it about these places that make kids feel that way?
 - What could make these places feel safer for kids?



SOMETHING DIFFERENT?

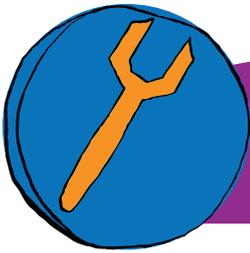
- Give the kids a video camera and ask them to make a documentary about the space. Invite them to be reporters or secret investigators on a mission to uncover unsafe spaces. They might want to interview their family members or other kids to get different opinions.



TO THINK ABOUT:

- Kids need to know that your service is keen for feedback and that it's safe for them to do so. It might be helpful to give them some ideas to start with: "I never like going out near the back fence because the dog next door barks and makes me feel scared" or "my favorite space is sitting under the window in the sun".

MAKE IT FUN!



TOOL 4D: WHAT I CAN EXPECT AND TOOL 4E: WHEN I'M NOT HAPPY

LINKED TO:

- Sections 4.1, 5.7 & 5.13



WHY?

- To help children understand the way that you have agreed to work with them and their families
- To help allay children's fears by letting them know that you are here to support them and their families
- To send the message that you take child-centredness seriously
- To allay children's fears and clearly articulating your role
- To provide kids with a mechanism to air their concerns or make a complaint



WHO WITH?

- Children 5 to 12 years



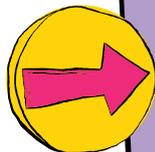
TIME?

- 5-15 minutes depending on how you want to link the expectations with your practice



YOU'LL NEED?

- A copy of the expectations sheet for each child



WHAT TO DO:

- Work your way through each of the expectations:
 - Ask kids what they think is meant by the different expectations
 - "Can you think of an example of how we should be working with kids to make sure this happens?"
- Talk through how your service considers these expectations and what kids might do if they feel as if they aren't being met
- Give kids copies of "When I'm not happy" and let them know where other copies are available.

What I can expect

At this service you can expect...

To be asked about what you want



To get told about what's happening



To have fun and to play



For you and your family to be treated kindly, fairly and with respect



To be and feel safe



To get what you need (food, a place to live, love and warmth, being able to go to school and to be protected)



To be listened to if you're not happy and for workers to try hard to make things better



For your story to be treated respectfully/ as precious and for it to be treated with care



To be given some choices about how things are done



If you're not happy or believe that you haven't got what was promised you can:

Me and the other workers will do what we can to make sure these things happen.

Signed _____

I've had these things explained and I understand.

Signed _____

When I'm not happy



What happened?



What I wish had happened



Why I think it happened



How did it make me feel?



What I'd like to happen now



Action Sheet

What has been done about the issue concerned?
(To be completed by the service)

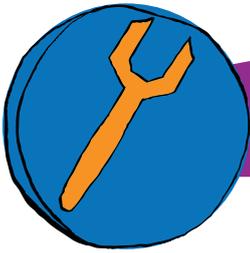
I think things are better now and I don't need anything more to happen

I don't think that things have been fixed up and would like something more to happen

What I'd like to happen now

I know that if I'm still not happy about something that has happened to me or my family I can:

MAKE IT FUN!



TOOL 4F FUNNY FACES

LINKED TO:

- This tool can be used in all situations where you might engage children directly
- Sections 4.5, 4.8, 5.3, 5.4 & 5.5



WHY?

- Just for fun!



WHO WITH?

- Kids aged 4 and up



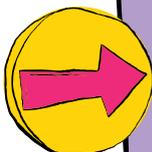
TIME?

- 15 mins +



YOU'LL NEED?

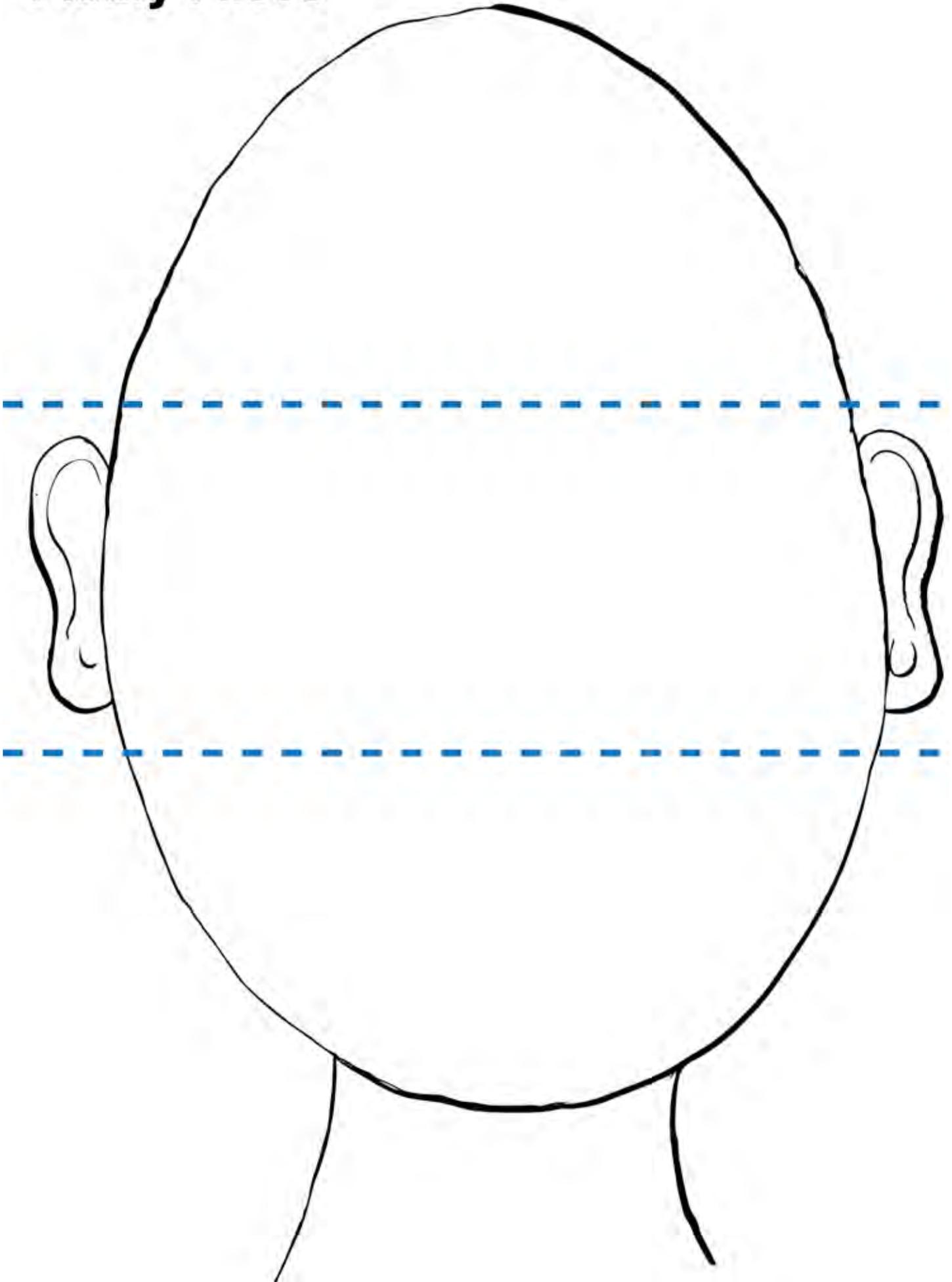
- between 6 and 20 copies of the stencil
- multiple copies of the head stencil (5-20)
- crayons and coloured textas
- scissors
- stapler



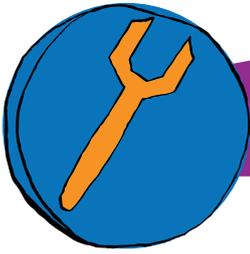
WHAT TO DO:

- For each head, draw funny facial features: eyes, nose, hair, hats, sunglasses etc. Make sure that they fit within the appropriate part of the grid (ie hair and hats in the top section; eyes and nose in the second; mouth, beard, neck in the third)
- When you have at least five completed, cut each of the faces along the dotted lines (making sure that you don't cut all the way across)
- Staple them together into a little book
- Have fun making new funny faces with different features from different pages.

Funny Faces



MAKE IT FUN!



OTHER TOOLS RELATED TO PRINCIPLE 4

LINKED TO:

Tool:	Relates to sections
1H	4.3, 4.4
2B	4.9
2C	4.9
2F	4.9
5B	4.6, 4.7
5F	4.6

MAKE IT FUN!

RESOURCES FOR WORKING WITH KIDS

Bedford W & Robinson, J (2001) **The Great New Book of 'Life. Be In it' Games** is a great resource and includes hundreds of games to get kids working together as a group.

Hill, S (1992) **Games that work: Co-operative games and activities for the primary school classroom** includes games that can help with co-operative learning, forming groups, communication and working together.

Lupton E & J (2007) **DIY Kids** includes a whole host of art activities children can do as individuals or in groups. Make toys, create party games, design new easy-made fashions.

Hodges (1998) **TV-free activities for children** includes activities for children of all ages. Sections include brain power, food fun, home made music, indoor play and much much more.

McElhme (2006) **Quick and Lively Classroom Activities** includes 250 quick activities that can be completed in 10-15minutes at a time.

Brielmaier (2009) **Activities on the Go** is a compact, portable guide is packed with simple, minimal-preparation, low-cost creative activities designed to strengthen bonds between adults and children.

Ragsdale, S & Saylor, A (2007) **Great Group Games** includes 175 boredom-busting, zero-preparation team building activities for all ages!

MAKE IT FUN!

LINKS AND BOOKS ON CHILD-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENTS

Cooper, CCM & Sarkissian W (1986) "Housing as if People Mattered", University of California Press: California

Bundy, A., Tranter, P., Naughton, G., Wyver, S., & Lockett, T. (2008) Playfulness: Reframing the value of play and play spaces for children, in *Children, Families and Communities: Contexts and Consequences* (3rd edn), J. Bowes & R. Grace (eds), Oxford University Press, Melbourne

The NZ Peace Foundation has a number of resources on creating child friendly spaces. These can be accessed at www.peace.net.nz

St Lukes Anglicare and Innovative Resources have a number of books, activity packs and other resources available at www.innovativeresources.org