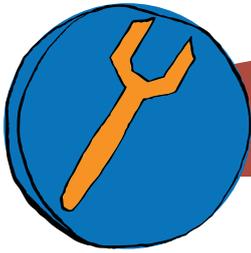


KEEP ME SAFE



TOOL 11: JUMPING JELLYFISH

LINKED TO:

- Sections 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.14, 5.13



WHY?

- To explore safety and trust in a fun way
- To allow children to experiment with trusting someone else in a safe environment
- To help workers and parents gain understanding of a child's sense of safety and ability to trust
- A great opportunity to talk about feelings, how we know when we feel safe, how we know if we feel unsafe, listening to our body's messages and our feelings



WHO WITH?

- Children aged 4+
- Individual kids, groups or families. This version is good for 5 to 15 year olds. Children can pair up with a worker or other children as part of a group, or this can be done with a family



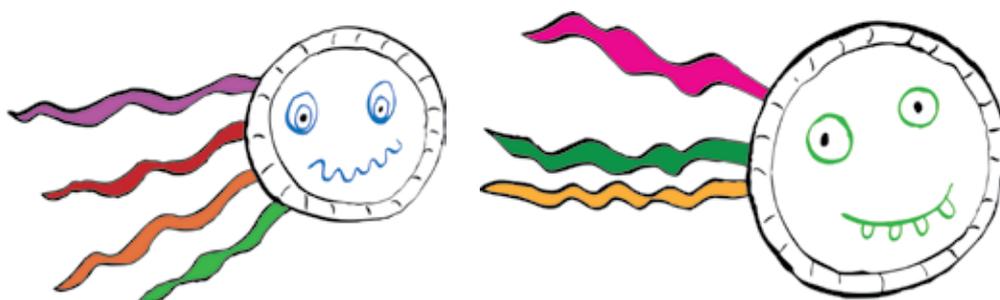
TIME?

- 20 - 40 mins (including discussion)

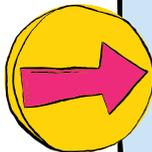


YOU'LL NEED?

- Paper plates, frisbees or other flat round or square objects
- Crepe paper (optional - jellyfish can be drawn onto the plates or cut crepe paper in strips and staple or sticky tape around the outside rim of the plate to make legs)
- A large space indoors or outdoors
- blindfolds



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WHAT TO DO:

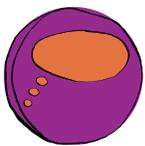
- Ask children what the word 'trust' means.
- Ask 'how do you know if you can trust somebody?' 'What happens in your body when you don't feel like you can trust someone?' (give examples).
- This is a game about safety and trust. Explain, as with all games, that the child can choose not to play or if they feel unsafe or unhappy at any point they can speak up and the game can be changed to help them feel safer.
- Worker first demonstrates to the child/ren by asking who thinks they can be trusted to lead the worker blindfolded across the 'beach' and help them not to step on any jellyfish. The jellyfish [paper plates or similar] have been spread out on the floor or grass. The child can either hold the blindfolded person's hand and guide them or stand near them and tell them how many steps, which direction etc. If there's more than one child, they can cooperate to direct the worker.
- Once the worker is safely at the other side, take the blindfold off. Ask the children: 'What was it like being trusted? Was it easy or hard to keep me safe? How did you feel when it looked like I might not be safe? How did you feel when we got through safely? Discuss anything that went wrong [difficulties explaining directions, children needing to push to keep you safe etc] and discuss guidelines or rules to make it work better next time.
- Share what it was like to be blindfolded and having to trust someone else. Point to 'feelings faces' to help – 'I felt a bit scared when you didn't say anything and I felt like I was on my own for a while' etc. 'I knew I was scared because my heart beat faster, and I got butterflies in my tummy'. Use this as a chance to introduce listening to our bodies and understanding our feelings, how do we know when something is scaring us?
- Swap roles if the children are comfortable doing this and try it again. Ask the same questions of the child: 'What was it like having to trust me? Was there any time when you felt unsafe? How do you know when you are feeling unsafe – what happened in your body?'

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SOMETHING DIFFERENT?

- Change the jellyfish into something else – black holes, monsters or, if you know a child well, you can draw or paint fears/things they worry about onto the plates. Use this exercise as a building block for talking about people they can trust in their lives and for helping the child learn to listen to their own internal warning signs about unsafe people and situations.
- When working with a group of children larger than say 8, children might pretend to be the jellyfish themselves. Start by getting kids to decide what noise they think a jelly fish makes and have them sit around the room. Have the blindfolded person try to make their way through the field of jellyfish unsupported – listening for the jellyfish as they walk. Then repeat with someone directing them from afar (or by their side if you like). Discuss the same questions as above.



TO THINK ABOUT:

- Games can provide kids with a space in which they can talk about topics they might not always feel comfortable engaging with otherwise. Make sure that you ensure that these activities are safe and fun and enable kids to opt out if need be.



HAZARD ZONES:

- Keep the game light and fun by demonstrating what it's like to be blindfolded, in a light-hearted way. Be aware that some kids who have been in extremely unsafe situations may not want to play this game or they may not want to use the blindfold, or maybe they will show you that they can't play it by mucking up instead. Do not force it in any way. That is OK, they can watch, they can take on the role of the guide, or the role of placing or moving the jellyfish, or they can do the bits they feel comfortable with – perhaps experimenting with closing their eyes some of the time or looking straight ahead instead of down. All of this gives you a lot of information about the child's needs and sense of safety and how they judge if something is safe or if a person can be trusted. You can say things like 'it is hard to trust people when you don't feel safe, and that's OK, it's normal.' And it shows that the child has some good skills to protect themselves, which you can revisit later.