

Peace-building Circles for Schools and Families

Key Principles

- Circles are a time to come together, be together, stay connected, feel safe and reassured, to share thoughts and feelings.
- Allow children to talk about the coronavirus situation as and when they want to – be led by them and give opportunities for support to come from everyone in the circle, not just the adults. Be as honest as you can without making any promises.
- As an adult, you will have your own thoughts and feelings. Children will be looking to you for reassurance and to know how to respond, so depending on the age of your children, think about how much is appropriate to share.
- Start by sitting in a circle. Everyone can be sitting on the floor or make a circle with chairs. If you are at home and your children are used to being in a circle, they will know what to do!

Circle 1:

Activity	Notes	Resources
Check In	<p>What are you spending more time doing now, than you were before?</p> <p>Go round the circle and let everyone speak. Only one person speaks at a time. If at home you can use a talking piece [teddy bear for example], if at school use an imaginary talking piece.</p>	Talking piece [real if at home, imaginary if at school to reduce the chance of passing on bugs and viruses].
Game	<p>The Sun Shines on You</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A chair is removed from the circle and someone stands in the middle. - Say 'the sun shines on you if you ... (the person in the middle selects something e.g. have a pet/like cheese/have been to Scotland/)' - People who the statement also applies to, stand up in the circle and swap seats with others who are standing - If no one moves, the person in the centre can be celebrated for being unique 	

<p>Activity</p>	<p>Discussion</p> <p>What does the word ‘connection’ mean? May say: a link, a bond, joining up,</p> <p>What does it mean to be connected? Might refer to internet, electrical circuits, joining piece of lego etc.</p> <p>To be connected, do we always have to have physical contact/touch?</p> <p>At the moment, we are being advised to stay connected to one another, but not to be in close physical contact to one another. Do you know why?</p> <p>Mirror Pairs: Place 2 chairs [or stand] a distance from one another. In pairs, players face each other. They choose one person to lead and one person to follow. The goal of the game is for the players to feel completely in sync with one another. Coach the leader to make their movements slow. Coach the followers to let their bodies do the following without thinking about it. After a time, have the players switch roles. Go back and forth a couple of times, and then coach the players to have no leader and no follower. (These activities can be done with friends over the internet too)</p> <p>In processing: How easy was this task? What made it easy/ difficult? How did it feel? What would it be like to try this with someone over skype who was in a different house or a different country?</p>	
<p>Game</p>	<p>1, 2, 3 Pairs sit or stand opposite each other [not too close remember!]. Start counting from one to three between each other over and over.</p> <p>Once they have done that a few times and have got the hang of it, ask them to replace 1 with a clap, but still say 2 and 3 aloud.</p> <p>The next stage is to continue but replace 3 with bent knees so: Clap, two, three [bend knees]. You could ask them to come up with their own ideas for two and three with an action, like smile or spin round.</p>	
<p>Check out</p>	<p>How did these activities help you to feel connected with your partner?</p> <p>Give everyone a chance to speak again. Only one person at a time. Why is it important to stay connected? Or What will you do this weekend/evening to stay connected to your friends and family?</p>	<p>Talking piece – real or imagined</p>

Circle 2:

Activity	Notes	Resources
Check In	<p>Who do you miss? Go round the circle and let everyone speak. Only one person speaks at a time. If at home you can use a talking piece [teddy bear for example], if at school use an imaginary talking piece.</p>	Talking piece [real if at home, imaginary if at school to reduce the chance of passing on bugs and viruses].
Game	<p>Chatterbox</p> <p>Download one of the chatterboxes from here. https://peacemakers.org.uk/resources#activities-to-help-build-connection</p>	Chatterbox folded and ready to go
Activity	<p>Feelings Through the Day Work in pairs Give each person one of the numbered statements from the list below. Ask them to finish the sentence. If you are doing this at home, you will need each pair to have more than one statement or do some yourself.</p> <p>When they are done, ask each pair to read their statement. Start with number 1 and work through them. And to lay their statement down in the middle of the circle.</p> <p>Say: These statements, when we put them together, show someone's day from breakfast right through to bedtime. Ask: What do you notice about their feelings? Is it normal to have different feelings through the day? Is it OK to have different feelings through the day?</p>	<p>Feeling statements (see below) and a pen per pair</p> <p>Encourage them to imagine themselves in that situation and to use as many different feelings words as they can. Explain that sometimes we can have more than one feeling at the same time [for example on a rollercoaster we can feel nervous and excited]. It's also OK for each person in the pair to have different ideas – write them all down.</p>

<p>Game</p>	<p>Choices Make a line across the circle (a skipping rope is ideal). The adult leading the session will read out two choices and the children decide which side of the line to stand. Say: stand on the left if your choice is Daytime and on the right if Night time.</p> <p>Other choices are: shark/dolphin breakfast/dinner cat/dog school/home Chocolate cake/chocolate ice-cream One friend/many friends TV/sport triangle/square inside/outside etc</p> <p>After each choice is made, ask everyone why they have made their choice. When reasons are given, others can change their minds. If a large group in school, ask what influenced their choices? Was it easy to make a different choice from your friends?</p>	<p>Skipping rope or masking tape</p>
<p>Check out</p>	<p>Explain that some feelings can seem 'bigger' to us than others. They can feel difficult to manage or control and some days we can manage them better than others.</p> <p>Share the managing big emotions poster [below] and go through each of them on your hand. Encourage them to say them with you. Ask if these would work for them or if they have other ideas.</p> <p>Show them a technique for calming down: Use the index finger of the right hand to trace around the hand and fingers of their left hand. Ask them to do it very slowly, to breathe in and out deeply while they are doing it. Slow down your voice and breathe with them. Ask them to notice how their skin feels as they trace their hand. Now try it with the other hand.</p> <p>Check Out Question: One way I like to calm down is to....</p>	<p>Talking piece – real or imagined</p>

Circle 3:

Activity	Notes	Resources
Check In	<p>What's your favourite sound?</p>	<p>Talking piece [real if at home, imaginary if at school to reduce the chance of passing on bugs and viruses].</p>
Game	<p>Give each person a colour. Red, Black, Green, Orange, Blue Yellow Call out the following. If the object could be one or more of the colours, change seats. Eg Ladybird [people with black and red move some may also say ladybirds can be yellow/orange – that's fine!] Ladybird Leaf [orange, red, green, yellow, black] Fire [red, orange, blue, yellow] Sky [blue, orange, red, black, yellow] Daffodil [yellow, orange, green] Tiger [orange, black] School uniform.... Fruit [all!] Tomatoes [red, green, orange, yellow, black] Cars [all] Paint [all]</p>	
Activity	<p>Memory Game Bring in a tray with 10 objects covered with a tea towel.</p> <p>Give the whole class 30 seconds to memorise what is on the tray.</p> <p>Next explain that if they correctly remember an object on the tray, the class will get one point. If they make a guess and it is wrong, you, the facilitator will get one point. If they repeat what someone else says, then you will also get a point. Keep a tally on the board. Use the imaginary koosh ball to popcorn around the circle.</p> <p>How easy/hard was it for them to remember the objects? What techniques did they use to remember the objects. Without showing them again, can they remember what colour the toy car [for example] was, or what was tied around the teddy bear's neck [for example].</p>	<p>10 objects on a tray and a cloth</p>

	<p>Taking Notice Sometimes we don't notice the things that are around us. We can be surrounded by the same things – and the same people – every day, but we get so used to them that we forget they are there. Let's try some activities to help us take notice of what's around us.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. [sound] 'We are going to sit in silence for 1 minute with our eyes closed and listen to the sounds we can hear. Every time you hear a different sound hold up one finger. For example if you hear someone talking in the corridor hold up 1 finger. If you hear them again, don't put up another finger, but if you hear something different, put up a finger'. After 1 minute ask 'how many different sounds did you hear?' What did you hear? What was it like to sit in silence? Did anything surprise you? Did it feel like a long time or a short time? 2. [sight] Give every person a picture frame. Ask them to stand somewhere in the room and hold up their frame. They need to keep it in position. Ask them to look at all the things they can see inside the frame. Are there things that they hadn't noticed before? Come back together. Share things that children hadn't noticed. What surprised them? What questions do they have? 3. [touch] Ask children to notice their bodies as they sit in their chair. Describe how the chair you are sitting on feels. Focus on your feet, how they feel on the ground, can you feel your little toe, can you feel your feet in your socks. Follow the outline of your hand with a finger. What happens inside your body when you notice what the outside of your body feels like? 4. [multisensory] Play some music [can be energetic or slow up to you]. What does the music make you want to do with your body? Move, dance – have a go! 	<p>Picture frames can be made from card or children can make a frame with their hands.</p> <p>Music</p>
<p>Processing</p>	<p>These activities helped us to take more notice of ourselves and our surroundings. When can it be useful to do this? Do these activities help you to feel calm and relaxed? Which ones do, which ones don't? Can you think of times when you might want to try one of these to help you feel calm and relaxed?</p>	
<p>Check out</p>	<p>What are you looking forward to?</p>	<p>Talking piece – real or imagined</p>

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1. I woke up in the morning and I was given my favourite breakfast.



I felt.....

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2. I wanted to go swimming  but we weren't allowed to go. I felt.....

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3. I was allowed to play on my tablet [or ipad]  . I felt

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4. My sister was trying to playfight  with me while I was on my tablet [or ipad]. I felt.....

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5. We had to stop playing because it was lunch  time. I felt.....

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6. For lunch we had something I hadn't eaten before  . I felt

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7. After lunch we went for a walk  . I felt.....

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8. We weren't allowed to go to the park  and play with our friends. I felt.....

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9. I found out that my uncle is not feeling very well  . I
felt.....
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10. At dinner time, my little brother was crying  and he
wouldn't stop. I felt.....
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11. After dinner we were allowed to stay up late and played our
favourite games  together. I
felt.....
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12. At bedtime, I snuggled down to sleep  I
felt.....
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5 Steps to Managing Big Emotions



<https://childhood101.com/helping-children-manage-big-emotions/>