

Circle time: Warm up activities and games

All ages

It can be helpful to include a warm up game or intersperse some of the mental health activities within the pack with a warm up activity. Some suggestions are shown below.

Fruit salad

Each child is given the name of a piece of fruit. The teacher explains that if and when their fruit is called out they must change places with someone else, The swapping continues until the class is thoroughly mixed up.

Birthdays

A month of the year is called out and if that month is the month in which one of the children was born they must run around the circle and back to their original place. The game can also be played in a similar way to fruit salad if it is helpful to mix up the class.

Clapping

Each child is asked to take turns clapping once or twice after the previous person in the circle. If they clap once the order remains the same but if they choose to clap twice the direction of clapping changes.

Words

A word is called out and the children must follow clapping twice and then saying a word that is related to the previous word. If helpful each round can start with a word related to mental health e.g. happy, worried etc.

Shopping

"I went to the shops and bought a" Each child takes turns repeating the item/s the previous child has listed and adding a further item.

Pass a smile

The children pass a smile around the circle.

Emotions

Call out different emotions and the children in the circle have to act out that emotion.

Listening

All children close their eyes and listen very carefully for 2 minutes. They are then asked to recall and describe what sounds they heard and anything else they notice.

Belonging game

Make enough cards for each child to have one. Make 3 or 4 sets of numbers from 1 to 6. Make one card for each number 7, 8 and 9. Give each child a card. In silence children are asked to find others who have the same number as them. When they do find others sharing their number they are asked to act as if very pleased to see them. If someone with a different number approaches they must act as if they are not welcome. When the group has sorted themselves out they are asked to talk about how it felt to be included, left out and on their own. They are also asked how it felt to exclude and include others.