

Share a hug — Compassion

EXPLANATION:

The simple act of giving and receiving hugs is a demonstration of kindness, compassion and empathy. 'Share a hug' is an activity for young children to show care for others and acknowledge their feelings allowing them to wrap their arms around someone or something.

YEAR LEVELS: Prior to school

STUDENT GROUPING: Group discussion and individual creations

ACTIVITY LENGTH: 20 mins plus time during the day or week for children to make their own 'hugs'

LINK TO CURRICULUM:

Early Years Learning Framework:

Learning Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity

- 1.2 Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency.
- 1.4 Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect.

Learning Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world

- 2.1 Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation.
- 2.2 Children respond to diversity with respect.
- 2.3 Children become aware of fairness.
- 2.4 Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment.

Learning Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

- 3.1 Children become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing.

Learning Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners

- 4.1 Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity.

SCOPE OF TASK:

Discussing concepts of kindness, empathy and compassion help children to become aware of the world around them and how events and emotions can impact on individuals. Providing children opportunities to feel, practice and enact compassion is most beneficial. This activity can be conducted at any time to assist children to recognise other's circumstances and express gratitude. Examples could include someone is unwell and in hospital, a pet is lost, or someone is injured. This activity could also be linked to events in the community that have impacted negatively on people such as bushfires, cyclones or community days such as ANZAC day or National Sorry day.

1. During group time discuss with children concepts associated with compassion. Question them:
 - What happens when people feel sad?
 - How do they feel when they see someone hurt or sad?
 - What can you do when people are sad, upset or hurt?
 - Why is it important to show others you care?
2. How can you show people or pets that you care when they are upset or hurt? Encourage children to share stories of when they have been kind or shown compassion.
3. Ask children if they have ever given a hug to people or pets to make them feel better? Encourage children to share stories of when they have given hugs.
 - How do people feel when they receive a hug?
4. Discuss with children that sometimes you want to show people care and compassion, but you cannot physically give them a hug.
5. Ask children:
 - Who do you think needs a hug?
 - Why do they need a hug?
 - Can you give them a hug — why or why not?
6. Tell children that we can make our own hugs:
 - Ask children to lie on poster paper with their arms and hands out as if they are ready to give a hug. Children can model this action prior to lying down.
 - Trace around the top half of the child's body.
 - Children can then paint and decorate their body shape.
 - Once they are finished decorating the body shape a teacher or adult can scribe a message to the person who the child wants to give a hug.



7. Once the 'hugs' have been made, children can take their 'hugs' home to be distributed to their recipients.

8. A few days after the hugs have been given, discuss the activity with the children:

- Have you given your 'hug'?
- Who did you give it to?
- How did they feel when you acknowledged them?
- How did you feel when you gave the 'hug'?

9. Remind the children how important it is to show care and compassion to other people and recognise their feelings.



Hint: To complete this activity, it will be important to share with parents/caregivers the learning outcomes and aims of the activity and also to ask their assistance in distributing the 'hug'.

RESOURCES:

- White poster paper
- Paints, crayons or collage materials
- Glue or tape
- Markers
- Scissors.