

Active Therapy for Kids

By Dr. Lakshmi Ravikanth, Bhoomika Trustee

Technique is to combine stories, play, breathing and meditation as multiple approaches with the aim of making children relax and focus on some of their concerns, in a trusting environment with the facilitator.

Skills of listening, empathy, probing-open ended questions only, and supportive responses to be used [see notes].

Select stories they can relate to, e.g. Panchatantra and the like, very acceptable by kids. Maintain a register of kids, their biographical details and pictures.

Duration of each session-one hour.20 min. facilitator introduces the activity...explains rules. Starts. Children work on task assigned individually or in groups as the need may be 10min. Facilitator elicits responses, using skills, and notes any bizarre expressions, withdrawal, blocks in communication.

[May choose to work with such kids later, if need be, or make referrals.]

Concludes the activity.

Makes them sit in a circle, close eyes and do a guided meditation-5-10min.

Ends session...gives balloons, twine. They blow the balloon gently [deep exhalation], tie it. If need be draw a picture, write their name and leave.

Week one-session 1. Establishing rapport.

Kids introduce themselves.

Facilitator introduces herself/himself.

Starts a story...and stops half-way. Asks children to complete the story their way. Look for thematic content, and feelings they bring out. Observe discrepancies, commonalities in thought.

Commend their effort.

Makes kids sit in circle close eyes...and take them through the "Secret tree" meditation.

Give balloons..., instruct them to blow gently into it, tie it. They write their name, or paint a smile on it. Conclude the activity.

Week two-session 2

Take various small objects in a closed bag: viz...pens, flowers, toys, ball, animal figurines, etc.

Ask them to pick one object...and describe how they like that object.

Use open ended questions and probe. e.g.how are you and this rose the same? etc.

Note any bizarre comments.

Go back to meditation, and conclude with breathing into balloon. Conclude activity.

Week three-session 3

Pair participants randomly.

Tell your partner...what you like-don't like; what you want to do and what you don't; whom you like don't like; what makes you laugh and cry; two good qualities you have.

Meditation-breathing into balloons.

Week four-session 4

Give them colored clay/plasticine, some match sticks, twine, card board squares 5 x 5"
Tell each child to create an object out of the plasticine, using match sticks, twine etc.
Optional--put their finished object on the card board. Give it a name. And tell the group
what their creation is all about.
Observe what they make, what its uses are, what feelings are brought out. etc. Make
notes where necessary.
End session with meditation and breathing.

This is merely a suggested outline...please make your own improvisation based on group
responses, interests etc.

lakshmi.