



# Children in Crossfire



## Therapeutic Arts & Play TOOLKIT

# GOALS for CHANGE

**Children in Crossfire is committed to the protection and promotion of rights of the most vulnerable children caught in the crossfire of poverty.**

We envisage the creation of a safe environment where every child can realise their rights, develop to the fullest and reach their potential.

By improving early childhood care for development, we will strive to empower young children and their communities to build a better future.

The 3 core components of our mission are integrated in our rights based, strategic approach to meet the needs of those in early childhood in developing countries, by identifying local partner organisations and building their capacity to:

- ▶ Tackle the issues affecting those in early childhood.
- ▶ Engage with conditions in which those in early childhood children live.
- ▶ Influence the policies relating to early childhood poverty.

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Compiled by Taraneh Erfan King (MA, Certified Expressive Arts Therapist)  
Edited & designed by Tanja Kisslinger (MoyaMaya Media)

## **Children in Crossfire**

2 St. Josephs Avenue, Derry / Londonderry  
BT48 6TH Northern Ireland  
+44 (0)28 7126 9898

P.O. Box 23204  
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania  
+255 (0)22 277 5965

**[infotz@childrenincrossfire.org](mailto:infotz@childrenincrossfire.org)**  
**[www.childrenincrossfire.org](http://www.childrenincrossfire.org)**

## Introduction

### What is this Toolkit?

Children in Crossfire (CiC) has developed this Toolkit as a practical resource for teachers in the education programme at Ocean Road Cancer Institute (ORCI). CiC's daily education programme at ORCI provides informal education as well as creative and therapeutically oriented activities to children who have cancer and are between treatment cycles. The Toolkit is designed for use as arts and play therapy with these children and provides teachers with games and activities that they can use when planning lessons.

Since children who attend the education programme vary each day, their ages, academic levels and cultural backgrounds vary each day as well. For this reason, the Toolkit provides a wide range of games and helps teachers to choose activities most appropriate to the energy levels of the children present.

Overall, CiC's Toolkit provides a practical reference that teachers can use to plan their day, while supporting the broader education programme objectives to provide daily structure without being prescriptive, to provide space for children to explore themselves, and to build the children's motivation and self esteem.

### Don't forget the Handbook...

The purpose of this handbook is twofold: to provide context and background to the Toolkit itself, and also to provide practical guidelines for implementing the games and activities contained therein. Specifically, this handbook provides an introduction to the significance of working with children afflicted by cancer (at ORCI), the role and importance of the expressive and creative arts and play, as well as some notes on facilitation.

Your feedback on the handbook, the Toolkit, and the usefulness of both resourc-

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## How to use this Toolkit...

The best way to go about using the Toolkit is to become familiar with the activities through experiential learning.

If working with co-facilitators, you might read and discuss the activity ahead of time or even try it on your own.

To structure a day, first assess these variables:

- Size of group
- Age of group members
- Energy level required (low, medium, high)

You may also need to consider:

- Physical abilities of the group members (For example, are there any children who can not stand, walk? Are there any children who cannot speak or see?)
- Emotional well-being of the group (For example, has any significant event occurred recently which may have emotionally affected the children? This may be an usual event, such as chemotherapy treatment or general lack of energy, or a more major event, such as the death of child on the ward).

Based on these variables, you can then choose the types of activities best suited for the day.

Try to incorporate a variety of types of activities. For example, in one day you may choose to do the following:

- (1) Warm up game to connect group members (medium energy, movement based).
- (2) Game with educational objective (such as teaching colors).
- (3) Storytelling session (followed by debrief about the themes, concepts, images and characters involved - which can be focused on therapeutic or educational means).
- (4) Visual arts activity as a follow up to the storytelling, using the story's images / concepts.
- (5) Group sharing.

The charts on the next page can help you select the best activities for each day ► ► ► ► ►



## Games-based activities

<u>ACTIVITY NAME</u>	<u>GROUP SIZE</u>	<u>AGE</u>	<u>ENERGY</u>
Name & Action	Small-Large	2+	Low-Medium
Pass the Pattern	Large	5+	Low-Medium
Mingle Mingle	Large	3+	Medium-High
Animal Scramble	Large	4+	Medium-High
Under the Rope	Small-large	5+	Medium-High
Pass the Balloon	Medium-large	4+	Medium-High
Check in Circle	Small-large	4+	Low
Sing Along Songs	Small-large	2+	Low-High
Partner Help Me Search	Pairs/partners	6+	Low-Medium
Funny Bones (Changanya)	Large	4+	Medium
I Spy with my Little Eye	Large	5+	Low
First Grip	Large	5+	Low-Medium
SPUD	Large	8+	High
I Really Want to Keep	Large	6+	Low
Through the Hoop	Medium-large	4+	Medium
Duck Duck Goose	Medium-large	2-6	Medium-high
Mirror Me/Follow Me	Partners/group	3+	Low-High
Imagine This	Small-large	5+	Low
Hello, Goodbye	Large	6+	Medium-High
Web of Support	Large	5+	Low

## Arts-based activities

<u>ACTIVITY NAME</u>	<u>GROUP SIZE</u>	<u>AGE</u>
What I Call Home	Individual & small	5+
Color My World	Individual & large	4+
Storytelling	Small-large	2+
Friendship Connection	Large	4+
Me and My Hand	Small-large	3+
Dream Drawing	Individual or group	5+
If I were an Animal	Individual or group	4+
A House or a Home	Large	6+
Welcome, Visitor!	Individual-large group	5+
Going on Safari	Medium-large	4+
Six Piece Story	Individual & large	7+
Family Tree	Individual	6+



### GAME #1: Name & Action

Small or large group / Ages 2+ / Low-medium energy levels

#### Objectives:

- ▶ To engage children in a collective and movement-based activity.
- ▶ To allow facilitators to learn names of children.

**Purpose:** Allowing children to choose their own movement without forcing a specific type of movement allows children to choose their own level of ability and use their energy as they see fit. It also decreases the chance for kids to feel that they 'can not' do something as the movements can be very simple.

**Materials:** None.

#### Step by step:

- ▶ Facilitators and children stand in circle facing in.
- ▶ Starting with the facilitator, one by one, have each person say their name and do an action. For example jumping up, raising their arms, shaking their body. The action can be as simple as stepping forward into the circle or as challenging as a cartwheel.
- ▶ Ask the group to repeat that person's name and action to the best of their ability
- ▶ Continue around the circle until everyone says their name and performs an action.

#### Facilitator notes:

- ▶ Always be the first to do the activity as to set an example. The sillier, fun and more creative your example, the more the children will feel free to express their own creativity.
- ▶ It is common that children repeat movements they have already seen others do (i.e. they do not come up with an original movement themselves). Try and encourage originality and clearly state that there is no wrong or right in this game.

#### Variations on activity:

- ▶ Repeat the same activity in the same manner but this time, give more specific instructions on the movement such as:
  - ▶ Favorite hobby or sport
  - ▶ Favorite animal
- ▶ How you are feeling today (only do this after a few weeks of children being familiar with the activity and the group as sharing feelings can create vulnerability in the group)
- ▶ Another variation to this activity is to add an object into the circle. Repeat the same activity in the same manner but this time, pass around an object (for example a scarf, a ball, a pillow, a piece of paper) that the group can use to interact with. NOTE: this variation is more suitable for an older age group.

### Reasons that children in your group will enjoy this activity...

- ▶ It is easily explained by the facilitators, with examples.
- ▶ It is understood and liked by children. Children are excited and there is lots of laughter.
- ▶ There is no standard of "good" action and there is little potential for error (this would only happen if an action was inappropriate or offensive for instance.)



## GAME #2: Pass the Pattern

Large group / Ages 5+ / Low-medium energy levels

**Objectives:** To engage children in a fun activity which stimulates their motor skills and memory.

**Purpose:** This group activity allows for team work and team building between the children. It is interesting to witness how the children support one another through the activity as they help each other to remember the pattern and then work together to quicken the pace of the game.

**Materials:** Small ball or a soft object to throw.

### Step by step:

- ▶ Facilitators and children stand in circle facing in.
- ▶ Starting with the facilitator, throw the ball to another individual in the circle who then throws the ball to a third individual. For example, Mary throws to Hassani and Hassani throws to Erene.
- ▶ Explain to the children that they must always remember who they throw to and who they receive from, and that they can only receive from and throw to those particular individuals.
- ▶ Continue throwing the ball around the group until everyone has thrown and caught the ball once. At this point the ball should have come back to the facilitator (the first person who started).
- ▶ Now ask the children to repeat the same pattern of catching and throwing, remembering whom they receive from and who they should throw to.
- ▶ Continue passing the ball around the circle, asking the children to try not to drop the ball and to pass the ball as quickly as they can.

### Facilitator notes:

- ▶ Encourage children to throw the ball across the circle and not merely pass it to the person next to them.
- ▶ You can challenge the children by timing how long it takes them to get the ball to all members of the circle and then asking them to beat their own time.
- ▶ Remember to encourage the children as they pass the ball, keeping in mind that for some children coordination is more challenging than for others.
- ▶ If all children are not able to stand, this activity can also be done seated.

### Variations on activity:

- ▶ This activity can also be used as a 'name game' to help the group learn member's names. To do this, simply ask each individual to say the name of the person they are throwing to.
- ▶ Additionally, using names may be a supportive way of keeping focus in the group.

## Reasons that children in your group will enjoy this activity...

- ▶ This is an easy activity which engages children both physically and mentally, keeping them stimulated.
- ▶ Kids have fun throwing and catching and the extra challenge of remembering the pattern creates a fun and exciting element to the game.



### GAME #3: Mingle Mingle (Tembea hukuna huku)

Large group / Ages 3+ / Medium-high energy levels

#### Objectives:

- ▶ To provide opportunity to review numbers, colors and animals while getting to know others.
- ▶ To allow children to engage in a fun and movement-based activity.

**Purpose:** This activity serves as a good opportunity to connect the children and bring the group together in a fun way. By using learning concepts such as that of numbers, colors and animals, the facilitators have the opportunity review with children in an interactive manner. Additionally, this is a good activity for times when children have energy and need to move around, or alternately, when facilitators see that the children are restless or bored and need a quick and easy way to engage the children again.

**Materials:** List of various categories to be spoken out by facilitators.

#### Step by step:

- ▶ Gather the children and begin with a quick review of concepts which may be covered in the game, for example: numbers, colors, animals, months, etc.
- ▶ Ask children to begin moving around the space at random while you sing out "mingle, mingle, mingle" or "tembea hukuna huku"
- ▶ As children are moving about, interject by asking them to form groups based on categories such as:
  - Groups of 2, 3, 5, etc.
  - Groups based on same number of sisters / brothers
  - Groups based on favorite color
  - Groups based on favorite animal
  - Groups based on same birthday month
  - Groups based on same age
  - Any other grouping you can think of that would be relevant
- ▶ After each grouping, you can do a quick check in with each group asking them what their group stands for. For example, ask each group what is their favorite animal, how many sisters they have, what is their age, etc.
- ▶ When activity is completed, there is the option to lead a short debrief:
  - Was it easy or difficult to find a group?
  - What did it feel like when you found a group?
  - What did it feel like when you could not find a group?
  - How does it feel when we are the same or different from others?
  - Discuss support systems the children have when they are discouraged by not "fitting in".

#### Facilitator notes...

- ▶ It is important to keep this activity fast paced and quick.
- ▶ You can ask the children to help you brain storm various group categories.
- ▶ During debrief discussion after activity, allow time for children to express how they felt during the activity. Discuss how sometimes we feel the same as, or different from, others. This similarity or difference can have an impact on how we feel.



## GAME #4: Animal Scramble

Large group / Ages 4+ / Medium-high levels

**Objectives:** To engage children in a fun and movement-based activity that teaches/reviews various animal names and sounds.

**Purpose:** This activity can act as a review or a teaching tool for various concepts including animals, colors, numbers (see list of variations for details).

**Materials:** Small ball or a soft object to throw.

### Step by step:

- ▶ Begin with a brainstorm of various animals (or alternate concept such as colors or numbers).
- ▶ Ask the children what sound each animal makes.
- ▶ Ask the children what color each animal is.
- ▶ When review is completed, ask the children to stand in a circle facing inward.
- ▶ Choose 3-4 animals (or alternately, numbers or colors) depending on size of the group.
- ▶ Go around the circle and appoint one animal (or number or color) to each child. For example, walk around and appoint: goat, lion, cat, dog, goat, lion, cat, dog, etc. until all children are assigned with one animal (or number or color)
- ▶ As children stand in the circle, call out one animal name
- ▶ Explain that when the children hear the name of their animal they must move from their spot and find a new spot in the circle. (i.e. when you call out lion, all the lions have to move and find a new spot)
- ▶ Continue calling out one animal name at a time, keeping the activity fast paced.
- ▶ Once children have a good handle on the game, you can call out two names at a time (for example, lions and goats) which would lead to more children moving about.



### Variations on activity:

- ▶ As stated, the same activity can be done by using colors. i.e. choosing 4 colors: red, blue, yellow, green. This can be an opportunity to also teach about primary and secondary colors.
- ▶ The same activity can also be done using numbers. For a more advanced group you can also use this as an opportunity to teach about addition or subtraction. For example calling out: "Move if you are 2+4".

### Facilitator notes...

- ▶ You can make the game more challenging by voicing animal sounds instead of the names of the animals. This will require that children stay sharp and pay attention, interpreting the sound and connecting it to their animal.
- ▶ To make the game even more challenging, you can go back and forth between switching from name and sound of animal.



### GAME #5: Under the Rope

Small-large group / Ages 5+ / Medium-high energy levels

#### Objectives:

- ▶ To engage children in a collective and movement based activity.
- ▶ To encourage cooperation, teamwork and communication.

**Purpose:** Although simple in its form, this activity is a great tool to encourage cooperation, teamwork and communication amongst the group. Make sure that aside from the "fun" element, the children understand that they must work together to achieve the goal of the activity. This is an opportunity to speak to the children about leadership, listening, problem solving and teamwork.

**Materials:** Jump rope(s).

#### Step by step:

- ▶ Ask the children to stand in a line facing the rope.
- ▶ Have two facilitators hold the jump rope (one on each end) and swing the rope as to create hoops.
- ▶ Make sure that the facilitators are standing close enough to one another that the hoops being made by the jump rope is large enough for children to go under.
- ▶ Begin by swinging the rope slowly asking the children to take turns going underneath the rope.
- ▶ Explain that the children must pay attention to the swing of the rope, watching its motion and timing their movement so that they do not get hit by the rope as it descends.
- ▶ Have the children take a few turns until they are comfortable with the activity.
- ▶ Now, ask the children to stand in pairs.
- ▶ This time, the children need to work together to create a plan of action for going under the rope together without being hit by the rope as it descends.
- ▶ Emphasize that the children are meant to create a strategy together (such as counting together out loud or having non-verbal cues such as holding and squeezing hands when they are ready to go under).



**This game teaches leadership, listening, problem solving and team work!!**

#### Facilitator notes...

- ▶ Take the time to explain the purpose of the activity to the children.
- ▶ Practice with co-facilitators ahead of time so that you can show by example what you would like the children to accomplish.
- ▶ Debrief the activity by asking the children what made the task challenging or easier. Include a discussion of leadership, listening skills, problem solving and teamwork in your debrief.



## GAME #6: Pass the Balloon

Medium-large group / Ages 4+ / Medium-high levels

### Objectives:

- ▶ To allow children to engage in a fun and movement-based activity.
- ▶ To encourage communication and teamwork.

**Purpose:** Non-verbal communication is an important aspect of communication which can be developed and highlighted as children grow up. This is an opportunity to encourage children to use both verbal and non-verbal communication skills to achieve a team-based task in an activity.

**Materials:** Balloon(s).

### Step by step:

- ▶ Ask the children to stand in a circle facing in.
- ▶ Holding a balloon, begin by explaining that you are going to pass the balloon to the person to your right who will then pass it to the next person and so on.
- ▶ Explain that the children should not throw the balloon, but rather hand it to the person next to them with care, making eye contact to ensure full receipt of the balloon.
- ▶ Pass the balloon a few times around the circle until the children have become comfortable with this and are able to keep a fast tempo while passing, without dropping the balloon.
- ▶ Explain the next step in the activity: children have the option of moving spots in the circle immediately after they have passed the balloon. They can move to any other part of the circle and the other team members must shift to create space and also to fill the newly made gap.
- ▶ Pass the balloon a few times around the circle until the children have become comfortable with passing the balloon, moving around the circle, and filling in the gaps.
- ▶ Explain the next step in the activity: children have the option to continue passing in the same direction as the balloon was received OR changing the direction of the pattern. This is when it is important for children to make eye contact with those they pass and receive from to ensure that there is no gap when the balloon is being passed.
- ▶ Continue to pass the balloon around the circle with the added elements of moving around the circle, filling in gaps and changing directions of the pass.
- ▶ Encourage the children to communicate with one another to fill in gaps, make eye contact when passing and receiving, and to keep the flow of the activity by keeping a good pace.

### Facilitator notes...

- ▶ Remember that moving around the circle only happens immediately after an individual has passed the balloon. Ask the children to go around/outside the circle when moving spots to avoid collisions and blocking of vision.
- ▶ Only introduce new steps to the activity once children are comfortable and succeeding at the previous step.



### GAME #7: Check-in Circle

Small-large group / Ages 4+ / Low energy levels

#### Objectives:

- ▶ To allow children the opportunity to check in about their feelings for the day.
- ▶ To start the day with a fun, gentle activity.



**Purpose:** It is important for facilitators to know the energy and feelings in their group before jumping into major activities for the day. This activity allows for this coming together to happen in a fast, easy and fun way.

**Materials:** None (i.e. optional object in circle).

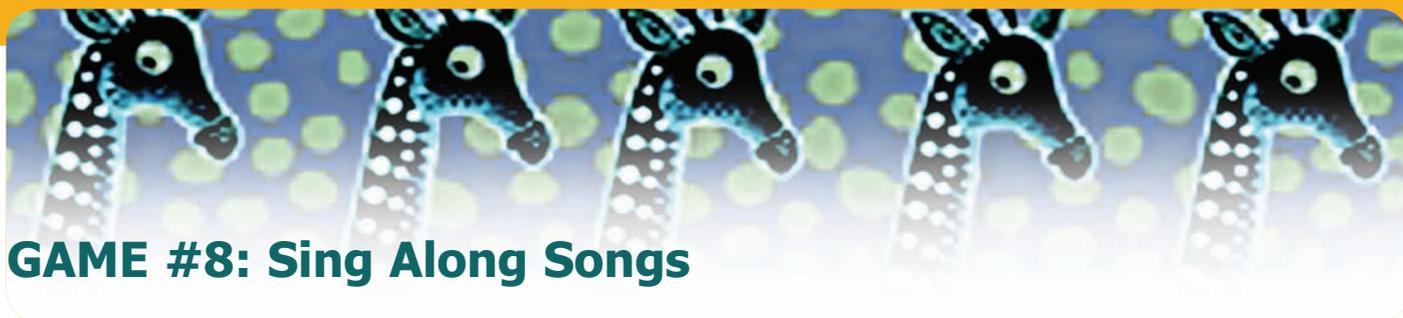
#### Step by step:

- ▶ Ask the children to sit or stand in a circle.
  - ▶ Starting with a facilitator to set an example, ask the children to use their hands, face and voice to show how they are feeling today.
  - ▶ You may wish to ask the children to share their name as well if new individuals have joined the group.
- ▶ Go around the circle 2-3 times allowing children the opportunity to physically, visually and vocally express their feelings.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Sharing emotions is not an easy task and should be taken seriously. Make sure you are creating a safe space for sharing by setting a positive and receptive example for the children.

#### Facilitator notes...

- ▶ Never force a child to share if they would prefer not to. Always give an alternative for children who do not wish to share; for example, they could simply say "pass", or they could clap their hands.
- ▶ Never judge or laugh at a child's sharing.
- ▶ Encourage children to use their voice and sounds (but not words) to express their feelings.



## GAME #8: Sing Along Songs

Small-large group / Ages 2+ / Low-high levels

### Objectives:

- ▶ To engage children in a fun activity which encourages them to use their voice and body.
- ▶ To have fun and engage children's imagination and adventurous spirit.

**Purpose:** Although simple in premise, singing songs is a great way to engage a group.

**Materials:** None.

### Step by step:

- ▶ Lead the children in singing a song.
- ▶ If it is a song that the children are not familiar with, begin by demonstrating the song once, then breaking the song up into smaller pieces to teach and have the children repeat until the song is complete.
- ▶ Continue to sing/teach the song until the children are comfortable with the song and can sing it by themselves.

### Variations of the activity:

- ▶ It may also be suitable and interesting to ask the children what songs they know and to ask them to teach the group.



**You can use this game to teach leadership! For example, you can ask children who know unique songs to teach a song to the rest of the group. Or, if there are older children in your group, simply ask them to lead by either leading the song or the motions which accompany the song!**

### Facilitator notes...

- ▶ Choose a song appropriate for the children's age and energy level.
- ▶ Whenever possible, try to add actions and movements to the song to engage the children further. If you have older children in the group, support their involvement by asking them to act as leaders in the group by leading the song or motions.



### GAME #9: Partner Help Me Search!

Pairs/partners (roughly same age) / Ages 6+ / Low-medium energy levels

#### Objectives:

- ▶ To encourage children to work in partners/teams.
- ▶ To support children in tuning into their senses.
- ▶ To encourage good listening skills.
- ▶ To encourage children to see things from another person's perspective.

**Purpose:** To support children's development and encourage cooperation, paired activities (i.e. having children work in partners) can be very beneficial. This activity is also supportive of teaching about the five senses and helping children to improve their communication skills (listening, speaking and body language).

#### Materials:

- ▶ Colorful and small objects (e.g. lego blocks, toys, clothes pins).
- ▶ Blindfolds (optional, and only appropriate in a group who are familiar with and trust each other).

#### Step by step:

- ▶ Before introducing the game, there is an opportunity to remind/teach the children about the five senses: sight, smell, sound, touch and taste. You may wish to lead into this discussion through telling a story (for example a story about an animal who has lost something they are looking for, or who is going in search of food, and who uses his senses to find what he is looking for).
- ▶ Once the children have been reminded/taught about the five senses you can display the topic visually by drawing a wheel split into five portions and writing out the senses in each pie piece, with an associated image (for example an ear for sound, a mouth for taste).
- ▶ Lead a brief discussion about how our senses support us on a daily basis.
- ▶ Discuss why and how communication is important and the different components of communication (listening, speaking and body language).
- ▶ Explain that the children will be grouped in pairs and each pair must work together to achieve the goal of the game.
- ▶ Demonstrate the game by providing an example for the children:
  - Ask your partner (a co-facilitator) to close their eyes while you place an object (a lego piece, a toy or a clothes pin) behind them at a random location on the ground.
  - Next ask your partner to open their eyes but NOT look back behind them (Alternately, blindfolds could be used, but only when a group feels completely safe with each other and children are excited about the challenge of not seeing with a blind fold on).
  - Slowly begin to lead your partner towards the location of the object by giving them verbal directions and clues. For example: Take 2 steps back, 3 steps to the right, stop. Now take 1 small step back. Now reach down, it is beside your left foot!
- ▶ Switch roles and play again.

#### Facilitator notes...

- ▶ Make sure there are no dangerous objects in the play area that children could step on while not looking.
- ▶ Emphasize the key concept and aim here: to listen carefully and to speak clearly.
- ▶ Remember that the use of blindfolds is optional and is only appropriate if the children know each other well and there is a great deal of trust already built into the group.



## GAME #10: Funny Bones (Changanya, changanya!)

Large group / Ages 4+ / Medium levels

### Objectives:

- ▶ To provide the children with the opportunity to move around and use their bodies to release some energy.
- ▶ To use an interactive approach to teach children about various body parts (eg. Shoulder, knee, elbow, etc) since some children are young and others may be new to Kiswahili.

**Purpose:** This game is a fun and interactive way to get the children moving around and interacting with one another. It tends to provide a good breakup for a shift in energy and usually ends up in lots of laughter for the group. It can be used either when the energy is low in the group and needs to be picked up, or when children are too antsy and need to get some energy out by moving about.

**Materials:** None.

### Step by step:

- ▶ Ask children to begin moving around the space at random.
- ▶ Lead a chant of "changanya, changanya, changanya" meaning 'mingle' as they move around the space.
- ▶ At random intervals, call out 'stop' at which point the children should find and stand with a partner. (Make sure that all children have partners and if you are working with an odd number in your group, ask a facilitator to step in to even out the group).
- ▶ As they stand in partners, ask them to 'touch' bones/body parts, calling out examples such as:
  - Elbow to elbow
  - Knee to knee
  - Hand to hand
  - Back to back
- ▶ Provide 3 or 4 categories maximum and then ask them to mingle again. Repeat stopping at intervals and calling out various 'funny bones'.
- ▶ As the children become more comfortable with the concept, you can make the game more challenging, fun or silly by calling out examples such as: Hand to head; Shoulder to knee; Hip to elbow; Ankle to hip; Head back; etcetera.



### Facilitator notes...

- ▶ Remain aware of the physical abilities of the children in your group to ensure that no child feels left out from the game.
- ▶ Set an example for the children by being playful and participating in the game (at first).
- ▶ After the game, you can teach about various body parts (especially for the younger children) by reviewing the various "bones" or body parts that were named during the game.



### GAME #11: I Spy with my Little Eye

Large group / Ages 5+ / Low energy levels

#### Objectives:

- ▶ To bring the children's attention to the space and time.
- ▶ To challenge the children to pay attention to their environment.
- ▶ To provide the opportunity for teamwork and collaboration.
- ▶ To teach colors or letters of the alphabet.

**Purpose:** This game gives the facilitator the opportunity to help bring 'focus' to the group and bring the children's attention all to one theme/concept or game. Also this game is a good opportunity for review of colors or letters of the alphabet.

**Materials:** None.

#### Step by step:

- ▶ Ask the children to sit together and begin looking around and noticing their environment.
- ▶ Look around the space yourself and choose one item from your surroundings.
- ▶ Give children a clue about the object you have chosen by stating, "I spy with my little eye something that is green" OR "I spy with my little eye something that starts with the letter B".
- ▶ Give the children the task of guessing what object you may have chosen.
- ▶ Depending on the ages of the children you are working with, you may wish to limit the children's guesses to 3 or 5.
- ▶ If children guess items that are not the correct color or start with the correct letter, take the time to teach them about the correct color or letter for that object.
- ▶ If you have an older group, and a large one, you can split the group into 2 teams and have the 2 teams compete with one another, asking each team to take turns choosing an object, giving the other team 3-5 chances to guess.
- ▶ When a team gets the answer correct they get a point, and if they are unable to guess, the choosing team gets a point. Add your points until one team has reached 10.



**This is a classic guessing game!  
You say: "I spy with my little eye something that is..."**

#### Facilitator notes...

- ▶ This game is a great game for reviewing colors and letters. Use every guessing opportunity to help the children learn.
- ▶ When the children choose an item that is the correct color or starts with the correct letter, but is NOT the item you had chosen, make sure that you acknowledge the child's correct identification of the color or letter. You can say something like, "Yes, that umbrella is blue. That is the correct color, but I had something else in mind. What else do you see that is blue?"



## GAME #12: First Grip

Large group / Ages 5+ / Low-medium levels

### Objectives:

- ▶ To use a physical game to engage the children and focus their attention on the group.
- ▶ To help build hand-eye coordination.
- ▶ To allow the opportunity for the group to learn more about one another.

**Purpose:** This is a great game to play when there are new children who have joined your group as it allows for introductions for the group and an opportunity for you, the facilitator, to learn more about each child including their interests, their physical abilities, their knowledge of Kiswahili, and their comfort level with the group.

### Materials:

- ▶ Ball or soft object for throwing and catching.
- ▶ Drawing materials for a follow through activity.

### Step by step:

- ▶ Ask the children to sit or stand in a circle facing in (based on children's ability).
- ▶ Begin by passing the ball around the circle at random (ie. Throwing it across in various patterns) and each person saying their name as they receive and then pass the ball on to another person in the circle.
- ▶ When everyone has had a turn and you have heard all group member's names, pass the ball around again in each cycle of the game asking the children to share about of the following subjects: Favorite color; Favorite animal OR what animal they would be if they were to be one; Favorite drink; Favorite food; Favorite place in the world (can be a city, town, a house, a place to visit, etc); Favorite pass time/ activity; Person who is important to me; Something that is really important to me
- ▶ After all children have shared about these categories, thank them for sharing with each other and express that you appreciate their sharing and enjoy getting to know them better.
- ▶ As a follow up to this activity, you may provide the children with drawing materials. Leave the concept of the drawing open, asking the children to draw any image that comes to mind during their sharing.
- ▶ What the children choose to draw will also provide the opportunity for the facilitator to gauge and sense where the children are at emotionally or mentally on that day. For example, one child may draw a member of their family that they miss, while another may draw their favorite food, etc.
- ▶ Take the time to debrief with each child about their drawing, asking them various open-ended questions to allow them to share with you what is on their mind at that time and how they feel about it.

### Facilitator notes...

- ▶ When working with younger children, you can do a quick review of colors and animals before starting the game.
- ▶ You may find that the children also want to share about things that they do not enjoy. This is perfectly fine. Remember to keep a safe space for sharing. Acknowledge a child's sharing and if appropriate, sit with them individually after the game and give them a chance to share with you their thoughts and feelings individually.



### GAME #13: SPUD

Large group / Ages 8+ / High energy levels

#### Objectives:

- ▶ To engage the children in a movement based and fun game.
- ▶ To review the numbers.

**Purpose:** This is a physical game that allows children to run around a little bit. It can be used when children have a lot of energy and need to move around. However, as it is a physical game, it is important to stay mindful of the physical ability of the children in the group.

**Materials:** Ball.

#### Step by step:

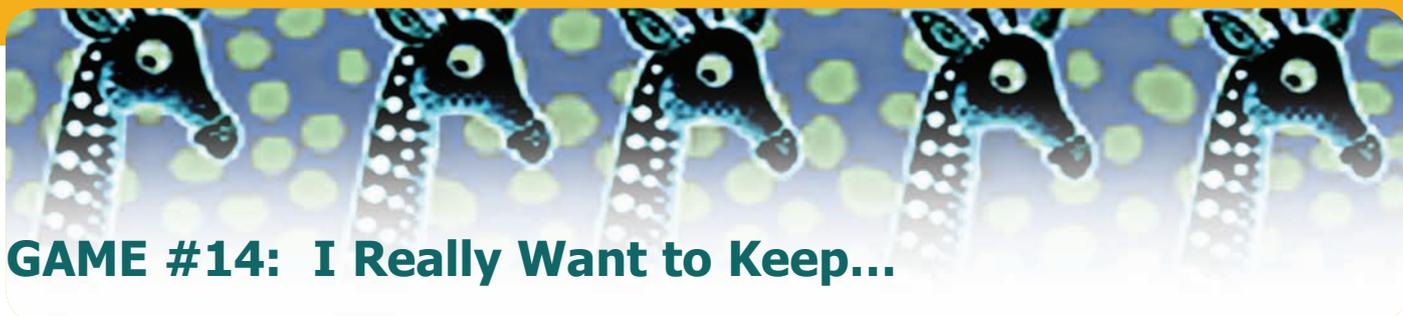
- ▶ Begin by asking the children to stand in a circle.
- ▶ Facilitator stands in the center of the circle and counts off the children asking them to remember the number they are give.
- ▶ Begin counting, giving each child around the circle a number to remember, and give yourself a number as well.
- ▶ Explain the game:
  - The person in the center, throws the ball up into the air and calls out a number,
  - The person whose number is called out must catch the ball, while all others run as far away from the ball/center as possible,
  - Once the person has caught the ball, they yell out 'stop' at which point all children have to stop moving,
  - The person in the center then throws the ball, aiming to hit someone else,
  - If the person is hit, they will come to the center of the circle and the game starts again,
  - If the person is NOT hit, the person who attempted the throw must retrieve the ball and stand in the center.
- ▶ Repeat the game, giving points to each person who completes a successful throw until someone reaches 5 or 10 points, or until the children are tired!



**This is a high-energy game that helps restless children burn off some energy! But remind the children to be gentle...**

#### Facilitator notes...

- ▶ Make sure that you explain and illustrate that when throwing the ball, the children should aim low and not throw the ball at any one's head.
- ▶ Carefully note if any children have wounds, swellings or syringes on their bodies.
- ▶ Use the numbers aspect of the game as a learning opportunity - help children to have fun while choosing and calling out numbers.



## GAME #14: I Really Want to Keep...

Large group / Ages 6+ / Low levels

### Objectives:

- ▶ To connect the group with a simple throwing and catching ball game.
- ▶ To engage the children in an imaginative game.

**Purpose:** This game allows children to think about something that is important to them at this time. This may be a real, imagined or symbolic object. Given that the children have had to leave behind many belongings at home when they come to ORCI and that many of the children must share a great deal of their belongings with others while living at the ward, this game provides the opportunity for children to voice what their wishes or desires are in terms of having something personal to keep. This game can give the facilitator a good indication of the children's emotional and/or mental head space.

**Materials:** Ball.

### Step by step:

- ▶ Ask the children to sit or stand in a circle facing in (based on children's ability).
- ▶ Begin by passing the ball around the circle at random (i.e. throwing it across in various patterns) and each person saying their name as they receive and then pass the ball on to another person in the circle.
- ▶ When everyone has had a turn and you have heard all group member's names, pass the ball around again this time passing the ball on as quick as possible.
- ▶ Next, ask the children to pass the ball around the circle again, this time giving them permission to hold on to the ball for longer. When they are holding the ball, ask them each to share one thing that they would like to keep. For example, "I really want to keep my school folder", "I would really like to keep this ball", "I would really like to keep my friends when I leave ORCI", "I would really like to keep all my snacks and not share!"
- ▶ Keep the tone of the game playful and lighthearted, allowing the children to imagine that they could have something they could keep and never let go of.
- ▶ When all children have had a turn, pass the ball around the circle again, going as quick as possible from one person to the next.
- ▶ Debrief with the group after the game, reflecting on the fact that often we have to give up things or do not get as much time as we would like with people or things we enjoy. Reflect on what it would feel like to get to keep something and that it is ok that sometimes we feel the desire to keep something for ourselves but that sharing is also very important.

### Facilitator notes...

- ▶ This should be a short activity used just to touch base with the children and get a sense of where they are at.
- ▶ This game originally developed during a "Passing the Ball" game when one child refused to let go of the ball.



### GAME #15: Through the Hoop

Medium-large group / Ages 4+ / Medium energy levels

#### Objectives:

- ▶ To engage the children in a fun, movement-based activity.
- ▶ To encourage teamwork amongst the children.



**Purpose:** This is a good game to help and bring the group together. This fast-paced game lifts the energy of the group and provides a fun opportunity to move about without needing to use too much energy.

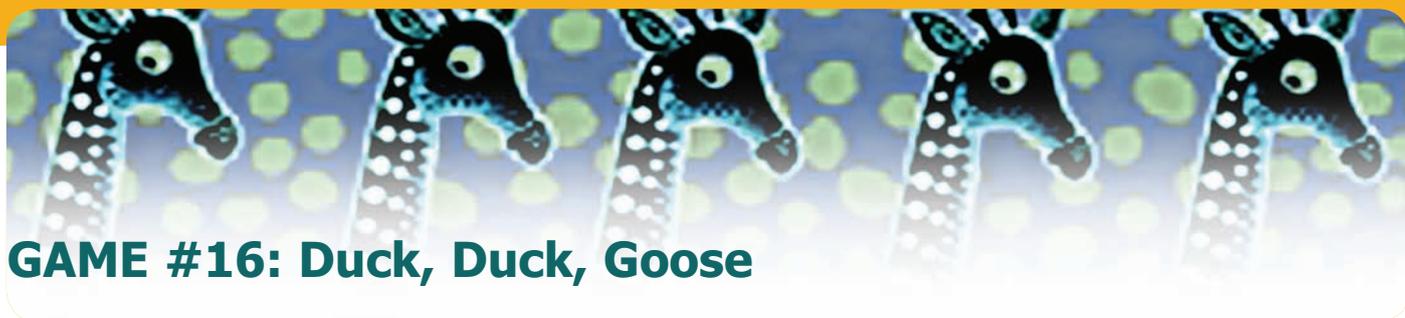
**Materials:** Hula hoop.

#### Step by step:

- ▶ Stand in a circle with the children facing in.
  - ▶ Ask the group to join hands.
  - ▶ Suspend the hula hoop on your arm (hanging on your arm, as you are holding hands with the person next to you).
  - ▶ Ask the children to move hula hoop around the circle by stepping through the hoop.
- ▶ Keep voicing reminders for the group to notice any peers with sensitive hands/arms (they will be holding them up and away from the hula hoop) and to be careful around these children.
  - ▶ Keep giving encouraging words to the children and supporting them in problem solving as they move through the hoop and the hoop makes it around the circle.
  - ▶ Keep the game fast paced. This game is all about raising the group's energy without the need for them to have a lot of energy to begin with!

#### Facilitator notes...

- ▶ Often children may have wounds or syringes on their hands, wrists or arms. Be aware of this and when needed, ask children to hold above the sensitive part on the arm/hand so that the hula hoop does not hit this sensitive area during the game.
- ▶ Although this game is simple in its premise, it is a wonderful opportunity for children to learn to be aware of their peers and to help those who have sore spots to play along.



## GAME #16: Duck, Duck, Goose

Medium-large group / Ages 2-6 / Medium-high levels

### Objectives:

- ▶ To engage children in a simple and movement based ice-breaker activity.
- ▶ To teach young children (ages 2-5) about various animals/animal sounds.

**Purpose:** When working with pre-school aged children, it is important to keep activities simple and interactive, even when teaching concepts and ideas, such as farm animals for example.

**Materials:** None.

### Step by step:

- ▶ Ask the children to sit in a circle facing in.
- ▶ Begin to walk around the outside of the circle, gentle tapping each child on the head or shoulder and naming them "duck, duck, duck..." for as many times as you wish, followed by naming one child "goose".
- ▶ The child named "goose" must stand up and chase you around the circle, trying to catch you before you get the chance to take their spot, sitting in the circle.
- ▶ If the child catches you, you must remain standing and repeat the above steps. If the child does not catch you and you sit in their spot, it is then that child's turn to walk around the circle and name each group member "duck" or "goose".
- ▶ Continue the game so that all children have a chance to take each role and a chance to walk/run around the circle.



**This traditional game can be played with children of any age to get them moving around, but it's really best suited to a group of younger children. For a fun variation of the game, try using animal sounds rather than the names "Duck" and "Goose"! There will be lots of laughter and giggles...**

### Facilitator notes...

- ▶ This game is only appropriate when you have a group of children whom are all able to sit, stand, walk or run with a reasonable amount of comfort. Do not do this game when you have children who are unable to walk/run.
- ▶ You can change the name of the animals used for the game to keep the children engaged and learning about various animals.



### GAME #17: Mirror Me/Follow Me

Partner or Group / Ages 3+ / Low-high energy levels

#### Objectives:

- ▶ To engage children in a fun, interactive activity that engages their imagination and provides an opportunity for expression of various feelings.
- ▶ To bring focus to the group.

**Purpose:** The need for and healing powers of laughter are critical for working with children in challenging circumstances. This game provides the opportunity to be silly and to enjoy laughing and being playful. Additionally, this activity also provides the opportunity to access a range of different emotions and can be followed up with a check-in session with the children about how they are feeling and what emotions they are experiencing that day.

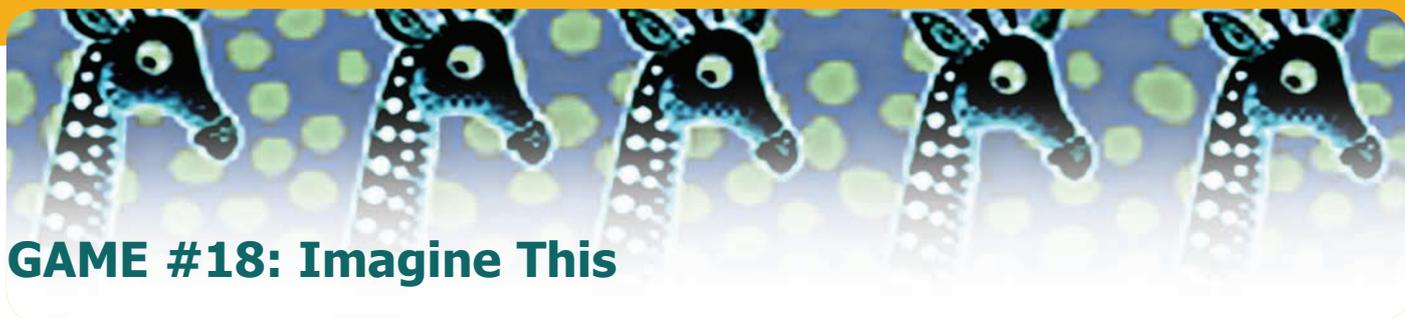
**Materials:** None for activity. Arts materials may be needed for follow up activity.

#### Step by step:

- ▶ Ask the children to stand in partners facing one another OR facing the facilitator or leader of the activity.
- ▶ Have one person (either one of the partners or the leader) to begin by making bodily movements and facial expressions.
- ▶ Demonstrate and explain that the other child (in the partnership) or other children in the group must 'mirror' the leader.
- ▶ Encourage the leader to use big, small, tall, short, round, sharp, fast or slow gestures.
- ▶ Encourage the leader to demonstrate various facial expressions associated with emotions. For example: happy, sad, angry, upset, excited, shocked, surprised, etc.
- ▶ Encourage the leader to use sounds while moving.
- ▶ Stay playful with the activity.
- ▶ Make sure that you participate in the activity yourself to support children in feeling comfortable about being playful and silly.
- ▶ If the activity is being done in partners, switch leaders after 5 or 10 minutes and repeat the activity with the other child taking the lead.
- ▶ If the activity is being done as a large group, switch leaders after 5 or 10 minutes by asking for a volunteer to step in as the leader while other mirror and follow.
- ▶ This game can easily and successfully be followed up with a check-in activity or an arts based activity, reflecting on various emotions and feelings.

#### Facilitator notes...

- ▶ You can follow up this activity with a debrief about feelings and how they are felt and experienced in one's body. For example, an arts-based drawing activity, or mask making can be done, asking children to illustrate their feelings or emotions for the day.
- ▶ Alternately, a role play can be facilitated (for older children) where they can create and present a short 'play' about various emotions.



## GAME #18: Imagine This

Small-large group / Ages 5+ / Low levels

### Objectives:

- ▶ To check-in with the children and assess the level of energy and engagement.
- ▶ To encourage the children to engage their imagination and verbalize their creative ideas.
- ▶ To create a trusting environment where any imaginative ideas are welcomed and supported.

**Purpose:** This is a simple game which can help engage children's imagination and also give insight to facilitators about where the children are at emotionally and mentally on a given day.

**Materials:** An object of any kind; for example, a ball, a lego piece, a kanga.

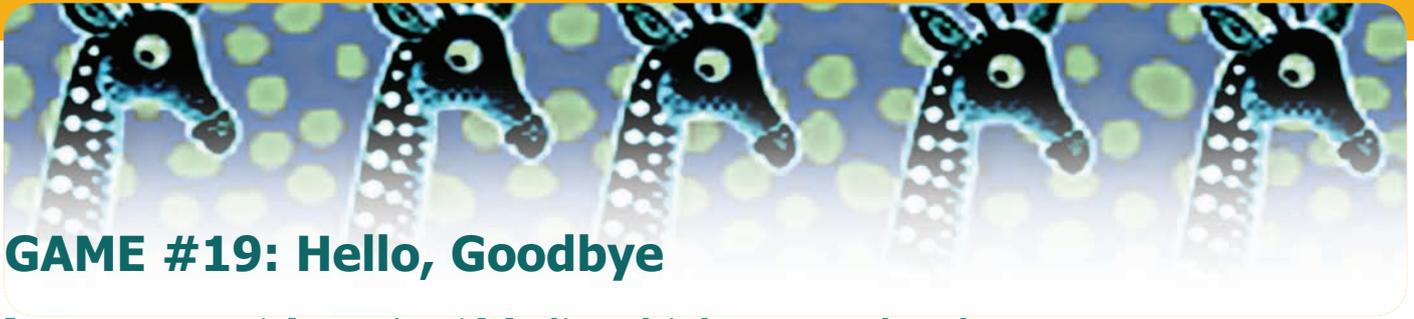
### Step by step:

- ▶ Ask the children to sit in a circle facing in.
- ▶ Explain to the children that this game is about being creative and using their imagination.
- ▶ Introduce the children to the object of choice and work with the children to describe the object. For example you can ask: "What color is this object? What other objects are this color? What is the shape of the object? Is it hard or soft?"
- ▶ Then, start by giving one or two examples to illustrate the following: "This is a magical object. As it moves around the circle, it can change shape and form and become whatever you would like it to be. For example, this (piece of lego) is an earring (demonstrate what an earring looks like). Or it is... a great big party hat (put the object on your head as if it is a hat)."
- ▶ Explain that you will now pass around this "magical object" and encourage the children to "imagine this" can be anything they would like.
- ▶ Then, pass the object around and witness as the children use their imagination to turn this "magical object" to a variety of different things.
- ▶ Ensure that each child gets a chance to hold and describe the object.



### Facilitator notes...

- ▶ Remember to stay imaginative as you lead and participate in this game. If a child's explanation is not understood, ask them a few gentle questions about their choice such as: "Wow, you are holding a parachute! Tell me, how does it work? Can you show us how you use it?"
- ▶ When providing examples, remember that the object can really take any shape or form. It can grow or shrink in size. It can become fluid or solid. It can really be anything of a child's desire. Imagine that!



### GAME #19: Hello, Goodbye

Large group / Ages 6+ / Medium-high energy levels

#### Objectives:

- ▶ To use a fun and movement based activity to explore the feelings associated with saying hello and goodbye.
- ▶ To engage the children in a role play activity.

**Purpose:** This is a good activity to do when at dealing with the start or closure of a group. For instance, this activity can be used on the last day of a program to open up the opportunity for conversation about the topic of goodbye.

**Materials:** None.

#### Step by step:

- ▶ Begin by asking the children to walk around the space, greeting one another as they pass.
- ▶ Explain that this game is about using your imagination to greet various people or creatures you come across. Explain that once the facilitator explains the type of greeting, the children should use their imagination to act out the type of interaction introduced.
- ▶ As the children are walking about, at random intervals, ask the children to stop, find a partner and say 'hello' in one of the following manners: Say hello to your mother; Say hello to a friend you have not seen for a long time; Say hello to a cat; Say hello to a person with food all over their face; Say hello to your teacher; Say hello to the president of Tanzania; Say hello to a talking flower; and any other examples you can think of...
- ▶ This time, ask the children to walk around saying 'goodbye' to other as they pass each.
- ▶ Now, at random intervals, ask the children to stop, find a partner and say 'goodbye' in one of the following manners: Say goodbye to your friend; Say goodbye to a lion who wants to eat you; Say goodbye to a person who smells very bad; Say goodbye to Dr. Trish; Say goodbye to someone you will never see again ; and any other examples you can think of...
- ▶ Finish this activity with a fun and uplifting example.
- ▶ Once finished, debrief the activity by touching on the topic of hellos and goodbyes.
- ▶ You may wish to ask the children who they long to say hello to, and what it feels like to imagine saying hello to that person. You may even wish to ask them to imagine who it would be difficult to say goodbye to and how they would go about it. How might that feel?

#### Facilitator notes...

- ▶ Keep in mind that when working with children with life threatening illnesses, you must be aware of and sensitive about the topic of saying goodbye. Mourning, bereavement and separation are very sensitive and emotion-filled topics for these children.
- ▶ If you have children in your group who are unable to stand or walk around, make sure to seat them in a position that they can make eye contact with others.



## GAME #20: Web of Support

Large group / Ages 5+ / Low levels

### Objectives:

- ▶ To create an opportunity for children to reflect on important people in their lives who support them in some way, and to consider the way each individual needs and is supported by a group of individuals such as family members, friends, teachers, doctors, community members.
- ▶ To feel connected to the group by sharing about someone you care about while also considering and reflecting on what it means, in general, to "care" for others.

**Purpose:** This activity physically connects the individuals in the group creating a feeling of being close to and supported by those who surround you.

**Materials:** A large spool of wool or string.

### Step by step:

- ▶ Begin by sitting as group in a circle, facing in.
- ▶ Start by providing an example and explaining the activity saying that the string will represent important relationships in your lives.
- ▶ Begin by holding the end of the string, and as you hold it, give an example of a person in your life who is important to you and explain why. For example: "An important person in my life is my mother because she loves me and cares for me. Whenever I am feeling sad, she holds me and shares supportive words" or "An important person in my life is my sister, Naela. She makes me laugh and I love playing games together. Also, when I can not sleep, she tells me good stories. She cares about me."
- ▶ Once you have given your example, keep holding on to a piece of the string and throw the rest of the spool to a person in the circle (ideally someone sitting across or further away from you).
- ▶ Instruct that person to hold on to a piece of the string and share with the group an example of a person who is important to them. Then pass on the rest to yet another person in the circle.
- ▶ Continue around the group until all members have had a chance to share about an important person in their lives. At this point you will have an interwoven "web" in front of you.
- ▶ Acknowledge how the string and web can be metaphoric for the support we each have in our lives and how we each have a few people (or many people) who care about us and who we can depend on for support.
- ▶ Open up the discussion to the group and see if anyone has anything they would like to add to the conversation before undoing the web.

### Facilitator notes...

- ▶ This is a good, inclusive activity to do when children are low in energy or when you would like to use the opportunity to connect group members.
- ▶ Ensure the safety of the children in the group by accepting that various children feel differently about what and how they like to share. Never force a child to share beyond what they feel comfortable with.



### ART ACTIVITY #1: What I Call Home

Individual and small group / Ages 5+

#### Objectives:

- ▶ To learn more about the group, what is important to them, and their ideas about "home".
- ▶ To allow an opportunity for children to share aspects of their life with other children.

**Purpose:** There is no denying that while at the hospital, the children's relationship to their home both changes and is challenged. To provide the children with an opportunity to reflect on their relationship to their home, we allow a space for expression of feelings and thoughts that may provide us with the knowledge necessary to better support a child.

**Materials:** Paper (one for each child) and drawing materials (pencils or crayons).

#### Step by step:

- ▶ Provide each child with drawing materials and paper. Ask the children to begin drawing images they associate with "home". Remind the children that there is no right and wrong in drawing and that they can either keep or discard of their drawing after the activity.
- ▶ Provide ample time for children to complete their drawings. Give a heads up when time is coming to a close (for example you can say, "Ok, children, you now have another 5 minutes to add to your drawing. Remember that if you do not finish your drawing, you can always take it with you and complete it later").
- ▶ Once the children have completed their drawing, ask them to sit in a circle facing you.
- ▶ Begin by sharing a drawing of your own and tell a story using the images you have used in your drawing. Elaborate on various images, using your imagination to create a story remembering that the story does not have to be true and it does not have to be a story about you.
- ▶ When you have completed telling you story, ask the children to sit with a partner or a small group and share a story about their drawing. Remind them that the story does not have to be true or a story that has happened to them. It can be fictional.
- ▶ While the children are sharing, go around from group to group and listen to some stories.
- ▶ After the sharing is complete, have the children sit in a circle and ask them each to share one word, going around the circle. This will help to close the activity.

#### Facilitator notes:

- ▶ If a child is having difficulty telling a story, work with them with their image. Begin by asking them an open-ended question such as: "Tell me, what do you see when you look at your drawing?" From there, you can ask more and more specific questions to help engage the child's imagination.
- ▶ Always encourage the children's sharing by letting them know that you appreciate their sharing and are interested in what they have to say. For example you could say, "Wow, Felista. That is a really interesting story. I especially liked the part about the girl who climbed the tree. She must be very strong. Thanks for sharing your story."

#### Reasons that children in your group will enjoy this activity...

- ▶ Provides individual time for children to reflect.
- ▶ Splitting the children into small groups and partners decreases the pressure of sharing with a large group.
- ▶ Allows for opportunities for facilitators to provide encouraging words to individual children and get to know each child better.



## ART ACTIVITY #2: Color My World

Individual, followed by whole group / Ages 4+

### Objectives:

- ▶ To allow children to explore various colors and learn the names of colors.
- ▶ To create opportunities to encourage children and opportunities for children to succeed.

**Purpose:** Learning about various objects and colors can be made more fun by keeping children stimulated and engaged in their imagination. Supporting children through a brainstorm session (one on one or as a large group) help children to build self esteem as they feel heard and acknowledged by the facilitator.

- ▶ **Materials:** Paper (one for each child), colored crayons, large flipchart paper (for facilitator).

### Step by step:

- ▶ Give one piece of paper to each child. Walk around the room and have each child choose (without looking) one colored crayon from a box or bag.
- ▶ Through giving an example, explain that they must each draw object(s) that are the same color as the crayon color they chose. For example if they chose a yellow crayon they could draw the sun or a banana; if they chose brown they could draw a cow or a table; etc.
- ▶ Give ample time for each child to work on their drawings. Support individuals if you notice that they are struggling. When children have had ample time, you can ask them to switch colors with someone else in the group and repeat the activity. This gives the children an opportunity to explore different colors.

### Facilitator notes:

- ▶ Provide supportive and encouraging words as you see the children's drawing even if you are unsure what they have drawn. For example you could say, "This looks interesting. Can you tell me a bit about what you have drawn?" or "Good work Hassani. You have drawn several things in blue. Can you tell me what blue things you see in your drawing?"
- ▶ Support children as they draw by giving them options for expanding their imagination. For example you can say, "I see you have drawn a yellow sun. Can you think of any other objects that are yellow?" If they can not think of any, you can encourage them by giving a hint or small example. For instance you can say, "I can think of something else that is yellow... It comes up in the sky at night, and there can be many of them at once. Can you guess what I am thinking of?"
- ▶ In the event that a child names an object that is not in the correct color category (for example you are brainstorming objects that are blue and a child says "tree"). Instead of telling them that they are "wrong", deflect the mistake by saying something supportive such as, "Tree is a good example of an object that is green and brown. The leaves on the tree are green and the trunk is brown. Try to remember that example for when we are brainstorming for either the color green or brown." If you have already gone through brainstorming for that color, you can add it to the list (i.e. if you already discussed green, you can say, "Tree is a good example for an object that is green. Let's add that over here to our list of green objects").

### Reasons that children in your group will enjoy this activity...

- ▶ This is a simple activity to stimulate thinking and learning about colors. It allows time and space for children to work individually and collaboratively.
- ▶ It is not important if a child knows how to draw well, however, it is important that they feel safe enough in the group to try and practice. Avoid asking questions which lower self esteem; e.g. "What is this?" Instead you can ask, "What do you see here?"



### ART ACTIVITY #3: Story Telling

Small-large group / Ages 2+

#### Objectives:

- ▶ To support children in reflecting on the importance of friendship and in helping them to define what friendship means to them.
- ▶ To participate in a team-building activity and create a visual art piece as a group (which the children could choose to put on display as a reminder of the importance of friendship).

**Purpose:** As the programme goes on, the children begin to build more meaningful relationships with one another, and yet, as typical of most large groups of children, there may be challenges between children. By offering the theme of friendship for discussion, you can provide children with an opportunity to conceptualize their own experience of friendship and vocalize what it means to them, thereby connecting them to others in the group.

**Materials:** Large paper, crayons, paint and paint brushes.

#### Step by step:

▶ On a large piece of paper draw large circles around the parameter of the paper, with each circle having a diameter of roughly 20-30 cm. Draw the circles slightly apart so that there is space for the children to sit around the paper, with each child having their own circle in front of them.

▶ Provide crayons to the children and ask them to spend time on their own drawing inside their circle, keeping in mind the theme and meaning of friendship. Provide examples of what the children may decide to draw inside the circle such as a picture of their friend.

▶ Once all children have had time to complete the images inside their circle, go around the group asking each child to share something about their drawing on friendship. When all children have shared, introduce the next part of the activity by explaining that you will now work as a team to bring the pieces of friendship on the paper together.

▶ With the help of another facilitator use the paints and paintbrushes to paint the palms of the children one by one, asking them to place their hand print around the art piece, connecting the circles with their hands. (the image of hand coming together and bringing friends closer to one another). Allow children to choose what color they would like to have on their hands for print. You may ask the kids what color they associate with friendship.

▶ Continue to add your prints to the piece until the group feels that the piece is complete.



**Begin this activity with a storytelling activity about friendship. This opens up the children's imagination and provides examples of what friendship may mean / look like.**

#### Facilitator notes...

- ▶ Ensure that the children are cooperating as they work on their collective piece, pointing to the fact that an important part of friendship is teamwork and being kind to one another.
- ▶ Acknowledge each child's sharing and thank them for their contribution to the group.
- ▶ Optional: you may wish to write out the word "friendship" ("urafiki" in Kiswahili) in the center of the paper and ask the children to decorate and color in the word.



## ART ACTIVITY #4: Friendship Connection

Large group / Ages 4+

### Objectives:

- ▶ To connect the group with a simple throwing and catching ball game.
- ▶ To engage the children in an imaginative game.

**Purpose:** This game allows children to think about something that is important to them at this time. This may be a real, imagined or symbolic object. Given that the children have had to leave behind many belongings at home when they come to ORCI and that many of the children must share a great deal of their belongings with others while living at the ward, this game provides the opportunity for children to voice what their wishes or desires are in terms of having something personal to keep. This game can give the facilitator a good indication of the children's emotional and/or mental head space.

**Materials:** Ball.

### Step by step:

- ▶ Ask the children to sit or stand in a circle facing in (based on children's ability).
- ▶ Begin by passing the ball around the circle at random (i.e. throwing it across in various patterns) and each person saying their name as they receive and then pass the ball on to another person in the circle.
- ▶ When everyone has had a turn and you have heard all group member's names, pass the ball around again this time passing the ball on as quick as possible.
- ▶ Next, ask the children to pass the ball around the circle again, this time giving them permission to hold on to the ball for longer. When they are holding the ball, ask them each to share one thing that they would like to keep. For example, "I really want to keep my school folder", "I would really like to keep this ball", "I would really like to keep my friends when I leave ORCI", "I would really like to keep all my snacks and not share!"
- ▶ Keep the tone of the game playful and lighthearted, allowing the children to imagine that they could have something they could keep and never let go of.
- ▶ When all children have had a turn, pass the ball around the circle again, going as quick as possible from one person to the next.
- ▶ Debrief with the group after the game, reflecting on the fact that often we have to give up things or do not get as much time as we would like with people or things we enjoy. Reflect on what it would feel like to get to keep something and that it is ok that sometimes we feel the desire to keep something for ourselves but that sharing is also very important.

### Facilitator notes...

- ▶ This should be a short activity used just to touch base with the children and get a sense of where they are at.
- ▶ This game originally developed during a "Passing the Ball" game when one child refused to let go of the ball.



### ART ACTIVITY #5: Me and My Hand

Small-large group / Ages 3+

#### Objectives:

- ▶ To allow children to reflect on things in their lives they enjoy doing and to share this with others.
- ▶ To encourage children to use their imagination and think about life from an "outside" perspective.
- ▶ To lead a group arts-based activity which will engage children of various ages and abilities.

**Purpose:** By focusing on one body part, the children are able to bring their awareness into themselves and then focus their energy towards connecting with their personal likes and desires.

**Materials:** Paper, crayons, pencils or felts.

#### Step by step:

- ▶ Begin by distributing paper to the children and ask them to choose a color or pencil that they like.
- ▶ Next explain that they will begin by tracing the shape of their hand. This can be done in partners (especially when it comes to working with younger children).
- ▶ Providing examples of your own, explain to the group that they will now draw images of various things they enjoy inside the shape of their hand, and color the outside of the hand with their favorite color or a color which they may associate with the images inside the hand.
- ▶ When working with younger children who may not be drawing particular images identifiable to you, always ensure that you do not judge their ability to draw, but rather focus on what colors they have chosen and communicate with them about why they have chosen those particular colors and what they associate with those colors.
- ▶ You may wish to ask the children or support them in writing their name on the page. This can be used as a title page for their folders. If you have additional art supplies, introduce these after the drawing has been completed for the children to decorate their piece.
- ▶ Once the children have completed their work, you can work one-on-one with each child, asking them about the images or colors on their page.
- ▶ Engage the children's imagination by asking them: "If your hand could speak, what would it say?" Take the child's lead from their response and follow their train of thought to allow for opening an opportunity to discuss "the voice from within". For example, a child may say, "My hand is saying goodbye." And you can follow this by inquiring, "It is saying goodbye. Where is it going? Or is it you who is going somewhere? Where is that? With whom are you going? How will you get there? What will you see/do along the way? Who/what will be awaiting you when you reach your destination?"
- ▶ Remember: When inquiring about the image with the child, ask ONE question at a time, allowing for the question to sink in and the answer to emerge comfortably. NEVER laugh at a child's response, no matter how odd it may seem to you.

#### Facilitator notes...

- ▶ Be sensitive to the physicality of this activity. Never do this activity if you have a child in your group without hands or who is unable to open their hands for tracing on paper.
- ▶ This activity can also be done with a focus on feet. The children can trace their feet and then consider places they would like to go and things they would like to experience (e.g. "My feet would take me to... the Serengeti where I would see lions and run with giraffes!")



## ART ACTIVITY #6: Dream Drawing

Individual or group / Ages 5+

### Objectives:

- ▶ To engage children in an imaginative activity, encouraging them to reflect on their dreams and hopes for the future.
- ▶ To support children's self-esteem by providing positive feedback in regards to future aspirations.

**Purpose:** Allowing children to reflect on and voice their hopes for the future can provide an opportunity to engage in dialogue with children about how they see their lives unfolding and the opportunity to support them to work towards various goals when possible. When working with children in challenging circumstances such as those living with life threatening diseases, it is imperative to remain sensitive.

**Materials:** Paper, crayons or paints.

### Step by step:

- ▶ Introduce the concept of dreaming about the future (i.e. focusing on hopes and aspirations) in a fun way, such as through stories, examples and creative visualization.
- ▶ If using creative visualization, make sure that the children are seated or laying comfortably, then begin by providing visual images which could help "transport them to the future". For example, you can create an image of a magic carpet that has the ability to take them to the future, to a place and time where they would wish to go. Alternatives could be using the image of a bird who would fly them there, or a genie who would make their wishes come true. Whatever image you choose to use to assist the children in taking them into an imaginative space, make sure that you elaborate the details of this image to support children in engaging their own imaginations.
- ▶ Once children have visualized what this dream/hope/goal/aspiration is, ask them to illustrate the image visually using crayons and paper.
- ▶ When all children have completed their piece, make sure that you give ample time for the children to share (either just with you, or with the whole group, depending on the relationship and atmosphere of the group) some aspects of this dream. They may wish to simply tell you about the images they have illustrated, or you can encourage them to tell you a story about this "future time". The story can include sounds, voices, various characters and even use of instruments and movement to illustrate what this "future time" entails.



### Facilitator notes...

- ▶ You could do this activity after a good story about dreams / aspirations and working towards them (allowing imagination to soar).
- ▶ Remain focused as you debrief with each child - take his/her hopes seriously into consideration and allow ample time and space for the child to share details about this dream/hope/desire. It is extremely important that facilitators encourage children to give positive energy to their dreams - they are working with children whose future can be scary at times.



### ART ACTIVITY #7: If I Were an Animal I Would Be...

Individual or group / Ages 4+

**Objectives:** To provide children with the opportunity visualize and imaginatively experience what it would be like to take a different form, focusing on various aspects and characteristics.

**Purpose:** This activity allows for a fun opportunity to connect with children about various aspects of life (both internal and external attributes of life), which may be interesting/exciting/freeing. By allowing children to imagine "being something else" we provide the opportunity for them to explain to us some aspects of life which may be difficult, important or intriguing for them.



**Materials:** Paper, crayons, pencils or other drawing materials, and writing materials for children who are able to write words.

#### Step by step:

▶ This activity can be done after a story which could help to engage the children's imagination and provide various examples of animals. Leading a quick debrief about various animals' abilities and behaviours can help children imagine more what animal they feel they can relate to at this time.

▶ Ask the children to imagine and then illustrate what animal they would be if they could be one. Drawing and writing can both be encouraged here.

▶ When all children have completed their piece, make sure that you give ample time for the children to share (either just with you, or with the whole group, depending on the relationship and atmosphere of the group).

▶ You can ask the children to speak about their image/

writing. Remember to stay with the image and ask questions which stay with the child's imagination. Here are some examples of questions you could ask: So if you were an animal you would be a cat. What color cat would you be? Where would you live? Do you live with humans or with other animals? When you are sleeping, what do you like to dream about?

**TIP:** Here is an example which can help you imagine this activity: a child may say he/she would wish to be a bird who would fly away. Stay with the image of the bird and support the child in exploring where the bird would fly to, and why.

#### Facilitator notes...

- ▶ Avoid interpreting what a child is saying - allow the opportunity, time and space for the child to verbalize to you the meaning of their images.
- ▶ If you feel that children are stuck and reluctant to engage in the activity, begin by providing an example of your own with thorough explanations of why you chose the particular animal.
- ▶ Depending on your group, you can use this activity lead into a story telling session.



## ART ACTIVITY #8: A House or A Home?

Large group (or even with just one child) / Ages 6+

### Objectives:

- ▶ To give the children time and space to reflect on "home", what they love about it, and anticipate returning to.
- ▶ To provide an opportunity to reflect on feelings about staying at ORCI and find positive aspects of this "home".

**Purpose:** This activity enables teachers and facilitators to broach a sensitive topic - "home". We are aware of the reality for some of ORCI's children and the challenges they must face prior to returning home; thus, it is important for us to acknowledge that the children have a very special relationship to their home and also to ORCI.

**Materials:** Paper, crayons, other drawing materials.

### Step by step:

- ▶ You might begin with a story about home or belonging. Then, brainstorm various aspects of what makes us "feel at home" or feel that we belong somewhere.
- ▶ Ask the children what are various aspects of their home that they love/miss. Acknowledge and reflect that it must be challenging to be away from home for extended periods of time and allow them to discuss with you what they look forward to celebrating when they do finally go home.
- ▶ Next, ask the children what are various aspects of ORCI that they appreciate/like. Acknowledge that there must be things that make it challenging to be at ORCI.
- ▶ Allow the children to brainstorm aspects of life at ORCI that they appreciate and even perhaps aspects they do not. Bring their attention to the sense of belonging and feelings of comfort.
- ▶ Then ask them to use the drawing materials to illustrate "home" or "what I appreciate about ORCI".
- ▶ When images are completed, allow for time for each of the children to share something about their drawing with you (the facilitator) or with the larger group. If appropriate, support the children in bringing together all their individual pieces and pasting them onto one large paper, which you may choose to put on display.



**There is no denying that children at ORCI are often wrapped up in ideas and thoughts of home - many express their longing to return home. This activity presents the opportunity to engage in conversations and reflections about "home" and should be handled carefully and with sensitivity.**

### Facilitator notes...

- ▶ It is critical that you stay sensitive to the sharing of the children. While many recognize that staying at ORCI is supportive of their health, they may still have feelings of pain, hurt and resentment for having to stay at ORCI. Given the challenging circumstances of living at the ward, it is very important to acknowledge and be sensitive to whatever thoughts or feelings the children are sharing.



### ART ACTIVITY #9: Welcome, Visitor!

Individual to large group / Ages 5+

**Objectives:** To engage the childrens' imagination by reflecting on who they would most like to be visited by, what that visit may entail and what they look forward to.

**Purpose:** To give the facilitator insight into each child's state of mind and emotions.

**Materials:** Paper, crayons, pencils or other drawing materials.

#### Step by step:

▶ This activity could be done after a story regarding themes of "visitation", "hopes", "desires", "connection", etcetera.

▶ Provide all children with paper and drawing materials.

▶ Ask the children to imagine (closing their eyes and doing a guided visual scene if possible) that they are at home. They hear someone at the door and go to see who it is. They have a visitor. They welcome the visitor into their home and sit together. The visitor then bring out a gift they have brought for the child. The child and the visitor then do an activity together.



▶ Ask the children to illustrate the arrival of the visitor at the door, the gift they have brought and/or what activity the two of them engage in.

▶ Provide ample time for the children to complete their drawings.

▶ Take the time to sit with each child individually or depending on the group, ask the children to share with the group the following:

- Who came for a visit?
- What gift did they bring?
- What did the visitor and the child do together?
- How did it feel to have the visitor?
- Did/would the child invite the visitor to stay?

#### Facilitator notes...

▶ Make sure that you pay attention to each child's sharing of the their story and take what they say seriously and empathize with the situation. Given that many of the children have been away from their homes for long periods of time, stay very sensitive to the children's sharing.

▶ If a child does not feel like sharing, never force them to share against their will. Let them know that they can keep their thoughts and feelings to themselves.



## ART ACTIVITY #10: Going on Safari

Medium-large group / Ages 4+

### Objectives:

- ▶ To engage children's imagination and create an opportunity to "leave" the hospital.
- ▶ To use arts in story-building and team-building.

**Purpose:** This activity can be used as a means to uplift the energy of the group by providing the chance for an "escape", an opportunity to go on a safari and experience something new and different.

**Materials:** Paper plates (one per child); elastics, string or ribbon; scissors; pastels, crayons or felt markers.

### Step by step:

- ▶ Have all the children seated, with working materials available in front of them.
- ▶ Demonstrate the drawing of a simple animal face (such as a lion or a tiger) on the paper plate, using the shape of the plate as the face. Begin by drawing the eyes (making sure that they are as far apart as your own eyes are on your face), then add in a nose, a mouth, whiskers, a mane, and whatever features are appropriate.
- ▶ Next, using a pencil, create 2 holes where the eyes are by poking through the paper plate.
- ▶ With the same pencil, create 2 holes on either side of the face, about half way down.
- ▶ Next, using a piece of elastic band, string or ribbon, secure the mask by placing the material through the 2 holes on the sides of the mask and securing it in place.
- ▶ Support and assist the children in making their own masks. Based on what materials you have available, you can create a variety of animals, adding pieces to the mask to make it more creative or elaborate.
- ▶ Once all the children have completed their masks, ask them to wear their masks and try to imagine what it may be like to be that animal. You may choose to then "go on a safari", making your way around the room or outdoor space available, experiencing "being" the animals. If you have a camera available, you may wish to act as a tourist, taking photos of the safari and lending the camera out to the children to also have this "safari" experience.



### Facilitator notes...

- ▶ Be mindful of children's visual abilities when making the masks.
- ▶ If children are unsure how to "be" their animal, suggest that they try to make the animal's sounds and that they try to walk / move like that animal.
- ▶ An alternative activity could be one in which you make masks of various human faces/expressions. This could be done as a means for the children to demonstrate feelings or emotions.



## ART ACTIVITY #11: Six Piece Story

Individual, then group / Ages 7-8+

### Objectives:

- ▶ To engage children in storytelling and allow them to share their own stories.
- ▶ To use the arts in a fun and creative way to gain insight into the "stories" of children's lives.



**Purpose:** While storytelling in this format does not necessarily directly correlate to a child's situation or "story", giving children a chance to tell stories is a great way to connect with them while engaging their imagination.

**Materials:** Paper (one per child), drawing and writing materials, puppets or dolls (optional, for follow up).

### Step by step:

- ▶ Distribute papers and drawing materials.
- ▶ Using your own (pre-made) 6 piece story example, introduce the activity as illustrated in the table to the left, just under the monkey picture <<<<
- ▶ Ask each child or help each child to divide their page into 6 pieces.
- ▶ Then, using the following format, ask the child to draw/illustrate the appropriate concept in each box.
- ▶ Walk around and support the children, as needed, while they draw in their story structure.
- ▶ When all children have completed their story structure, have each child tell you their story. Alternately, older children can write out their story on a separate page - in this case, invite them to share their stories with the facilitator or the group if they wish.
- ▶ As an optional follow up, toys or puppets can be used by children to tell their story to the group.

1. <b>HERO</b>	2. <b>GOAL</b>	3. <b>OBSTACLE</b>
4. <b>HELP</b> who/what helps hero	5. <b>ACTION</b> to conquer obstacle	6. <b>Conclusion</b>

### Facilitator notes...

- ▶ Stories can hold a great deal of emotions for a child; thus, if the story is close to a child's heart, it may feel too private to share. Never force a child to share their story against their will. Allow them share as much or as little of their story-making experience as they wish.
- ▶ You may wish to ask older children with writing skills to write out their stories, and then share that written story with the group or just the facilitator (however they prefer).



## ART ACTIVITY #12: Family Tree

Individual / Ages 6+

### Objectives:

- ▶ To engage the children in an arts based activity which helps explore the concept of family (birth and chosen) and the concept of support.
- ▶ To work with a metaphor about protection and support.
- ▶ To learn more about the important people in the children's lives.

**Purpose:** This activity allows for the opportunity for facilitators to learn more about a child's life and the important people in their life. Additionally, the facilitator can learn more about a child's relationships, and find out how supported a child may be feeling during a challenging life circumstance.

**Materials:** Paper (one per child), pencils, crayons or paints.

### Step by step:

- ▶ Distribute drawing materials and paper to each child. Explain that they will each be taking personal time to illustrate a family tree. Explain also that they are welcome to draw figures or symbols (and even write names).
- ▶ Ask them to illustrate themselves at the base of the tree, where the trunk of the tree is. Then ask them to create branches for each side of their family: mother's side, father's side, each with their own sets of siblings (ie. The child's aunts and uncles), grandparents, etc. The children can illustrate their siblings next to them below the tree. Each member of the family can be illustrated in whatever way the child wishes. They may even wish to add friends, cousins or neighbors to their "family tree".
- ▶ Once all members are illustrated, the children can use colors and other craft materials to complete their picture of the family tree by drawing in leaves, flowers, grass, etc.
- ▶ When all children have had the opportunity to complete their illustrations, you may wish to check in with each child individually, asking them if there is anything they would like to share about their family tree. Alternately, if there is a safe group environment, the children can be asked to share something with the whole group about their family.
- ▶ If time and energy allows, you may wish to ask each child to think of a favorite family memory or story to share with the group.

### Facilitator notes...

- ▶ The topic of family and home is a sensitive topic for children who are living away from their families (like the children at ORCI). Remain cautious and sensitive around this and allow children to only share what feels right for them, never forcing them to speak against their will.
- ▶ If you are doing this activity with older children, you can invite them to write a story about their family. Alternatively, you can invite them to write letter(s) to family members.



### ART ACTIVITY #13: Feathered Messenger

Individual / Ages 4+

**Objectives:** To use the arts and imagination to provide children with the opportunity to consider a message they would like to pass on to a loved one.

**Purpose:** This activity is particularly fitting when working with children who are living away from home (such as those at ORCI) who have few chances to connect with loved ones who are not around. By using a visual aid such as the bird, the children are able to imagine leaving their current circumstances to give a message to a friend or family member.

**Materials:** Paper (one per child), crayons or paints.

#### Step by step:

- ▶ Begin by using a creative visualization or story to bring the children's attention to the image of a bird. Distribute drawing materials and paper.
- ▶ Explain that they will each be taking personal time to draw an image of their own magical bird, who has the ability to fly to anywhere in the world.
- ▶ Explain that this bird will fly to deliver a message to whomever they choose. Examples can include family members, friends, strangers in other countries, angels, God. Ask them to consider such details as: the bird's size, color, beak, tail, feathers, eyes, etc. Once the children have an image in their mind, ask them to illustrate their bird.
- ▶ When all children have had the opportunity to complete their illustrations, you may wish to check in with each child individually, asking them if there is anything they would like to share about their feathered messengers. Alternately, if there is a safe group environment, the children can be asked to share something with the whole group about their magical bird and their message.



**This imagination game is very personal and sensitive for children who are separated from family and friends. Children will share with you one-on-one. They should only share with others if they expressly choose to do so! Be very sensitive and encouraging to every child's picture and words.**

#### Facilitator notes...

- ▶ Children who are living away from their families and friends (like the children at ORCI) may be emotional about sending a message. Remain cautious and sensitive about this and allow children to only share what feels right for them, never forcing them to speak against their will.
- ▶ As a follow up, if you are working with older children, you can ask them to write their message on the back of their illustration in the form of a few sentences or even a letter.





2 St. Josephs Avenue, Derry / Londonderry  
BT48 6TH Northern Ireland  
+44 (0)28 7126 9898

P.O. Box 23204  
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania  
+255 (0)22 277 5965

[infotz@childrenincrossfire.org](mailto:infotz@childrenincrossfire.org)  
[www.childrenincrossfire.org](http://www.childrenincrossfire.org)