



The Island Activity

I have used this activity to support children who are struggling to think about who is important to them in their life. It is important children are aware that the decisions they make can change as they grow older or circumstances in their family life change.

This activity allows children to design three different islands;

- The Child's Island
- The Island the Child Can See
- The Island the Child Can't See

It is important the activity isn't rushed and for children who like their islands to be precisely designed we have done the activity over two sessions.

Once the three islands are completed I encourage the child to think about all the different people in their life e.g. family, friends, professionals, neighbours and wider support networks. These can be written down or discussed before completing the activity.

Once the child has thought about all the different people in their life I like to spread the islands out physically e.g. 'The Child's Island' is right beside the child and 'The Island the Child Can't See' is in a different room. Then the child decides which island they would like each person in their life to go on.

It is important to have open dialogue with the child throughout this activity to ensure you have fully understood why they are placing different people on different islands. In the past this has helped identify that a child is fed up of social workers in their life all the time but recognised they needed to be there sometimes, the social worker was placed on 'The Island the Child Can See'. Another child didn't have a relationship with their birth mother and the father was reluctant for the child to see her. After

completing the island activity the child placed the birth mother on 'The Child's Island' and said that they would feel loved when they can see their Mum and Dad.

The activity allows the child to share their view of the relationships in their life which can help create conversation around changes they would like to make to their life.

The islands can then be used if the child allows at the decision making meeting e.g. TATC Meeting, Children's Hearing or Case Conferences. This is a good way to allow the child's work to be brought to the heart of the decision making meeting.

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