



My dream

place



Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to provide an opportunity for children who have experienced trauma to connect with internal resources and to explore and represent what helps them to feel more safe. We can invite children to think about and design their own special place that is wholeheartedly theirs. For each child this may look different. It's a chance for them to develop a deeper understanding of what helps them feel better and experience a sense of control over this place.



Who might use this activity:

This activity is useful for children, young people, and adults. This activity can be used in therapeutic spaces by counsellors and therapeutic specialists as well as professionals in reflective practice or self-care sessions.



What you will need:

A3 or A4 sized paper, coloured textas, pencils or pens.



What you might say and do:

If you got to come up with your own dream place that could be anywhere and have anything in it, what might you design? In this place you can experience feelings like happy, fun, calm, peaceful, safe and joyful. This place is entirely yours to create.

It might be helpful to have a think before drawing. What are some things you might need or want in this place? It can be anything you like! This place can be underground, in the sky, inside or outside, in the forest, in the jungle or at the beach, a music studio, a giant video game screen, sports arena, in the clouds, under water, in a special castle, in the trees or a garden, your favourite country or city, in another universe, or a house, or even just be a bedroom of your own. There are no limits.

Start drawing when you feel ready. You can use symbols, words, or drawings to bring this place to life.



Things to enquire about with the child:

- If the child hasn't situated her/his self somewhere in the place, invite them to do so. Note how they do this. How do they depict themselves? Alternatively, the child may also like to draw her/his self on another piece of paper and cut out the depiction, so that they can move the cut out in and around their dream place.
- What do you need to feel safe and protected in this dream place?
- Who (if anyone) would you invite into your safe special fantasy place or is it just for you? Why?
- Might you invite any animals into your dream place?
- What feelings do you have when imagining this dream place?
- When might people need their own safe dream place? When might you want to use a place like this?
- This safe dream place is available to you when you need it. You might like to explore the place with the child by involving the 5 senses. What does it smell like in your place, what do you like to look at the most there? What would certain things feel like to touch? Would you hear any sounds in this place?

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Safe Dream Place:

Draw your safe dream place here. You can design it in anyway that feels good for you. It can be a 'bird's eye view' or a side on picture, or 3D!

