

Learning Experience

Dream Catchers

Educational Purpose - Why is this important for children's learning?

Dream catchers, originally associated with Native American culture, symbolise protection and comfort. Traditionally, they are placed above children's beds and catch thoughts and dreams, allowing the good dreams to pass through and trap the bad dreams in the net.

Children can use their dream catcher to talk about their thoughts and feelings and as a coping strategy for stress and anxiety. Creating their own dream catcher gives children a sense of control which is important at times when things may feel out of control, as well as encouraging creativity and fine motor skills.

Resources needed

- A frame – which could be a paper plate with holes punched around the outside; or sticks and twigs tied in a square/ diamond shape,
- String, yarn or wool
- Feathers, beads, stickers or other decoration

Description of what to do including prompts for questions to ask children

1. Prepare resources by pre-punching holes in a paper plate or by assembling and tying the stick frame together.
2. Explain what a dream catcher is and that if they are feeling worried or anxious, they can use their dream catcher to trap their bad dreams.
3. Demonstrate or guide your child to thread the string through the holes in the paper plate or around the stick frame. Allow them to decorate as they choose. You might need to help tie the string on at the start and off at the end.
4. Encourage your child to talk about their worries and what they might do to feel better or more confident.

Possible extension

- You can repeat this activity by walking around your yard or the neighbourhood to collect sticks, leaves and feathers to create a dream catcher.
- Alternatively, you can collect natural objects to create a mobiles or windchimes such as shells from the beach or leaves.