



Understanding homelessness Activity 1-a

The following activities all relate to teaching children of all ages about what having a home means. In order for them to begin to understand what it means to be without a home, they must first define what a home is.

If you are doing this activity as a group, you will need to take the following into consideration.

- It is important to be sensitive to the varying definitions of home within the group.
- It is important to know the home situations of each of the participating children prior to beginning of this activity.
- Do you have a child who is or has been homeless? Do you have a child in the group who has lost a home to a fire?
- Don't assume that having a child with this reality is a reason not to teach this activity. Instead, a child who has been through the experience of not having a home can be a wonderful asset to teaching other children about what this experience is like.

Desired Outcomes:

- Children will begin to think and verbalize what it means to have a home.

Preparation Time: one hour

Activity Time: one hour

Materials Needed:

- a shoebox or other small box for each child
- paint and paint brushes
- construction paper
- markers and crayons or oil pastels

Basic Objective:

Children will construct a home using a shoebox or a small box

Background:

While constructing a home out of a box, the child will reflect on their own home and possibly the homes of others. For the child to develop a fuller appreciation of homes, they must first think about the physical structure. This lesson also launches children on the path to moving past the physical structure of the home.

Discussion:

- Have the child discuss different styles of homes, e.g., houses and apartments. How are they similar? How are they different? How are houses similar and different from one another? What about apartments?

Group Project:

- Have students work in groups to make one home, perhaps using a box bigger than a shoebox.

Source: <http://www.unitedwayla.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Facing-Homelessness-Curriculum.pdf>