

Disclaimer: Activities with children must always be risk assessed, including for allergies or choking. Children must always have adequate supervision. Resources and materials must always be appropriate for children's age and stage of development.

Effective adult-led group times

Adult-led group times provide a valuable opportunity for pre-school children to develop social skills, listening skills and to introduce new knowledge or ideas.

Here are some top tips to support adult-led group times to run effectively in your setting.

1. Dedicate a quiet space for adult-led group times so children can focus and you can assess learning and development needs
2. Ensure the space supports children to feel physically and emotionally comfortable, for example, natural light, uncluttered and room to sit comfortably
3. Keep the size of the group small. Three and four-year-olds should ideally be in groups of no more than six children otherwise they may become bored or distracted if they have to wait their turn
4. Ensure group times are short and carefully planned to meet children's needs, e.g. a welcome group time at the beginning of each session or a structured activity to teach a specific skill or broad message such as 'being kind'
5. Establish rules for group times such as listening to each other and waiting our turn. An object such as a talking stone which children can hold and gentle reminders such as, 'Thank you Sonny, I'm sorry to stop you there. We need to hear what the other children think.' can help children to develop an understanding of rules
6. Make adult led group times as interactive as possible so children have something to stimulate their senses such as a story to listen to or resources to hold
7. Utilise adult-led group times to allow children to experience higher risks that they are unable to do unsupervised, such as cooking activities
8. Introduce challenges and use open questioning to extend learning and language development during adult-led group time such as, 'How could you make your friend feel happier?' 'What does the coconut feel like?'



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NDNA products to support you

- Online course: [Characteristics of effective teaching and learning](#)
- Online course: [Exemplary practice with three- to five-year-olds](#)
- Online course: [Quality teaching](#)
- Face to face training: [Quality teaching in the early years](#)

Find more resources at www.ndna.org.uk/hub/myndna