

Caring Boots Levels A & B

GRATITUDE

To support early empathy by helping students experience caring actions in a concrete, visual way. By creating Caring Boots, students explore the idea that kindness and gentle actions help others feel safe. Linked to the Neptune theme from The Playful Astronauts, the activity reinforces that feelings can be deep and that caring responses guide how we move through the world.



Learning Intentions

Students aim to experience simple caring actions with adult support.

Students aim to notice others through shared creative activity.

Students aim to participate in a routine that promotes kindness and safety.



Success Criteria

I can help create my Caring Boots with support.

I can help create my Caring Boots with support.

I can respond to caring ideas using actions, visuals, or AAC.

I can stay with the activity for part or all of the time.



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Duration: 8 - 12 minutes

Objective

To support early empathy by helping students experience caring actions in a concrete, visual way. By creating Caring Boots, students explore the idea that kindness and gentle actions help others feel safe. Linked to the Neptune theme from The Playful Astronauts, the activity reinforces that feelings can be deep and that caring responses guide how we move through the world.

Players

Individual activity with adult support
Suitable for 3 - 16 students

What You Need

Large paper with pre-drawn boot outlines (recommended for Levels A–B)
Coloured pencils
Optional: stickers, stamps, textured shapes
AAC devices, switches, or communication boards as required

Setup

Prepare all boot outlines in advance to reduce fine motor demands.
Arrange students at tables, trays, or lap desks with minimal visual clutter.
Introduce the activity using simple, concrete language:

"These are caring boots."

"Caring boots help others feel better."

Link gently to the Neptune theme:

"Neptune reminds us to be kind."

"When we are kind, people feel safe."

Show a completed example and allow students to touch or look at it.

Confirm AAC devices are switched on and open to simple words such as help, kind, friend, safe.



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Gameplay

Step 1: Explore the Boot Shape

Give each student a pre-drawn boot outline.

Students may:

- Touch the outline
- Colour/decorate anywhere on the boot
- Place a sticker/stamp or images on the boot
- Watch while an adult assists to decorate the boot

Adults narrate calmly:

"We are making great boots together!"

"You are doing a great job of decorating your boots!"

Step 2: Add Caring Actions

Adults model one caring idea first, using drawing, symbols, or AAC, for example:

"Helping others."

"Playing nicely with a friend."

Invite students to add one caring idea only (more if appropriate):

- A symbol or sticker that represents their idea
- A scribble that the adult narrates as a caring idea
- An AAC selection

Adults narrate meaning without pressure:

"This helps us to think about being kind to others."

"That is a very kind idea, well done."

Step 3: Gentle Sharing (Optional)

Students may:

- Hold up their boot for the class or teacher to see
- Point to a symbol or sticker on the boot
- Activate AAC
- Sit calmly while an adult shares on their behalf

Model respectful language:

"Thank you for caring for others."

"Your boot shows that you want to care about others."



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Debrief / Reflection

Keep reflection brief and concrete.

Ask one simple prompt with wait time:

"Did you like to make your caring boot?"

"Can you try and do your kind idea today?"

Accept responses through AAC, gesture, eye gaze, facial expression, or stillness.

Reinforce:

"Caring helps people feel good."

Winning the Game

There are no winners or losers.

Success is shown through participation and shared kindness.

Sensory-Specific Learner Variation

Purpose: To support regulation, comfort, and engagement.

Adjustments may include:

Using one large boot only instead of two.

Offering textured or raised stickers.

Completing the activity in two short sessions.

Allowing observation-only participation.

Providing a quiet or low-stimulus workspace.

AAC-Specific Supports

Prepare AAC in Advance

Ensure access to symbols such as: help, kind, friend, safe, me.

Single-message switches (kind, help) are appropriate.

Model AAC Consistently

Adults activate AAC while narrating:

"Kind."

"Help."

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Accessibility and Inclusion Notes

Pre-drawn templates should be standard for Levels A–B.

Accept participation through colouring, touching, choosing, or watching.

Do not require sharing or verbal explanation.

Ensure materials are accessible at seated or standing height.

Celebrate all expressions of caring equally.

Teacher Notes

“Caring Boots – Levels A & B” introduces empathy as a felt and visible experience, not a concept to explain. The boots act as a concrete symbol that caring actions guide how we move through our day. Linked to the Neptune theme, the activity reinforces that kindness, listening, and helping are gentle ways to support others and ourselves.