

Kindness Catch - Levels A & B

PLAY

To support students working at Levels A-B to experience kindness, turn-taking, and shared attention through a structured ball game. The activity builds early social awareness, communication, and a sense of belonging, while introducing the Playful Astronauts' first stop on Earth, where caring for people, animals, and the planet is important.



Learning Intentions

Students aim to notice and respond to kind actions during a shared group activity.

Students aim to communicate a kind action or preference using movement, gesture, visuals, vocalisation, or AAC.

Students aim to participate in a simple turn-taking routine with adult support.



Success Criteria

I can participate in the group by holding, touching, or responding to the ball.

I can show or choose a kind action using my body, pictures, sounds, or AAC.

I can take a turn with help from an adult.

I can respond to others by watching, listening, or showing interest.



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Duration: 8 - 12 minutes

Objective

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Players

Whole class or small groups

Suitable for 3 - 16 students

Played seated on the floor, chairs, or wheelchairs

What You Need

Soft foam ball, fabric ball, or large soft object

Optional: kindness visual cards (help, share, smile, listen, care)

AAC devices, switches, or communication boards as required

Setup

Seat students in a small, clear circle so everyone is visible and close together.

Ensure students are positioned comfortably with access to their AAC or visuals.

Hold the ball and explain using simple, consistent language:

“We are going to roll the ball.”

“When you get the ball, we show kindness.”

Model calm body language and slow pacing.

Confirm AAC devices are switched on and open to a page with basic social or action words.

Gameplay

Step 1: Adult Modelling

The teacher begins the game every round.

Hold the ball and clearly model the expectation:

“When I have the ball, I show kindness to someone.”



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Model one simple action, for example:

- Smile at someone in the circle
- Gentle hands - give someone a high five or a gentle pat on the shoulder
- Point to someone in the circle and say a compliment to them
- Press a kindness symbol on AAC

Say the word aloud while modelling the action.

Slowly roll or hand the ball to the next student.

Step 2: Students Turn

When the student receives the ball, allow time for them to respond in any way, including:

- Holding or touching the ball
- Looking at the teacher or peer
- Making a sound or gesture as they receive the ball
- Pointing to someone in the circle and smiling or vocalising their kindness in anyway
- Activating an AAC with any sound they like

The adult narrates the student's response clearly and positively, for example:

"You are showing kindness."

"You chose to smile."

Support is provided as needed through hand-over-hand guidance, modelling, or choice-making.

Step 3: Passing the Ball

With adult support, the student passes, rolls, or places the ball to another peer.

The adult names the next student whose turn it now is:

"Your turn is finished."

"Now it's Sam's turn."

Continue until all students have had an opportunity to participate.

The activity may stop earlier if students show signs of fatigue or dysregulation.

Debrief / Reflection

Use one simple question at a time with visuals and wait time:

"Did you like the ball?"

"Who showed kindness?"

"Can we be kind now?"

Accept all responses including eye gaze, gestures, vocalisations, or AAC.

Reinforce the message:

"Kindness helps us feel safe together."

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Winning the Game

There are no winners or losers.

Success is shown through participation, shared attention, and any attempt to engage with others.

Sensory-Specific Learner Variation

Purpose: To support students who need additional sensory input or regulation.

Adjustments may include:

Use a textured, weighted, or vibrating ball if appropriate.

Allow students to sit on wobble cushions or beanbags.

Permit standing, rocking, or gentle movement during turns.

Reduce expectations to simply touching or watching the ball.

Provide short regulation breaks and rejoin when ready.

AAC-Specific Supports

Prepare AAC in Advance

Ensure access to symbols such as: kind, help, friend, yes, no, smile, finished.

Use single-message switches for students at early communication stages.

Model AAC Every Turn

Adults activate AAC while speaking aloud to model use consistently.

Supported Choices

Offer two clear options visually or verbally, for example:

“Help or smile?”

Use partner-assisted scanning if required.

Alternative Responses

Accept eye gaze, pointing, switch activation, gestures, or vocalisations as valid communication.

AAC Reflection

Ask:

“Did you like kindness?”

Students respond using AAC, gesture, or yes/no signals.

Accessibility and Inclusion Notes

Keep the group small and predictable.

Use slow pacing and repetition.

Ensure all communication attempts are acknowledged equally.

Adapt ball passing to suit physical access needs.

Maintain consistent language and routine each time the activity is played.



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Teacher Notes

“Kindness Catch – Levels A & B” supports foundational wellbeing outcomes including joint attention, early social interaction, turn-taking, and communication. It aligns strongly with Levels A–B Personal and Social Capability and Health and Physical Education outcomes, and works well as a short, repeatable circle-time routine to build trust, connection, and belonging.

