

Stick

by Me

ACTIVITY

PACK

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ABOUT THE SHOW

Andy Manley's performance for young audiences, *Stick by Me*, is a quirky, non-verbal show about friendship and play, and the importance of treasuring little things. The show, is specifically created for children aged 3-6 years.

Created by the duo behind the critically acclaimed play, *White*, Andy Manley and Ian Cameron's new performance, *Stick by Me*, builds on their vast experience of creating work for very young children.

The show won the award for Best Production for Children and Young People at the 2019 CATS Awards.

HOW TO USE THIS PACK:

This pack is designed to help teachers and parents in leading discussions and designing activities around the themes of *Stick By Me*. These include friendship, play, rules, sticking together and treasuring ordinary things.

This is a mix and match activity pack. These activities can either be completed on their own or used together. For example, activity 5, *THE TREASURE OF EVERYDAY OBJECTS* could be used to create the HOME FOR STICK (activity 6), or these activities can be done separately.

Please also use our suggestions to create your own activities and discussions. In the spirit of the show, which is very much about play, we encourage you to be led by the children and see what happens!

Acknowledgments

The activities pack is created by Red Bridge Arts and Lynda Radley, written by Lynda Radley
Production images by Mihaela Bodlovic

ACTIVITY 1. BEFORE THE SHOW

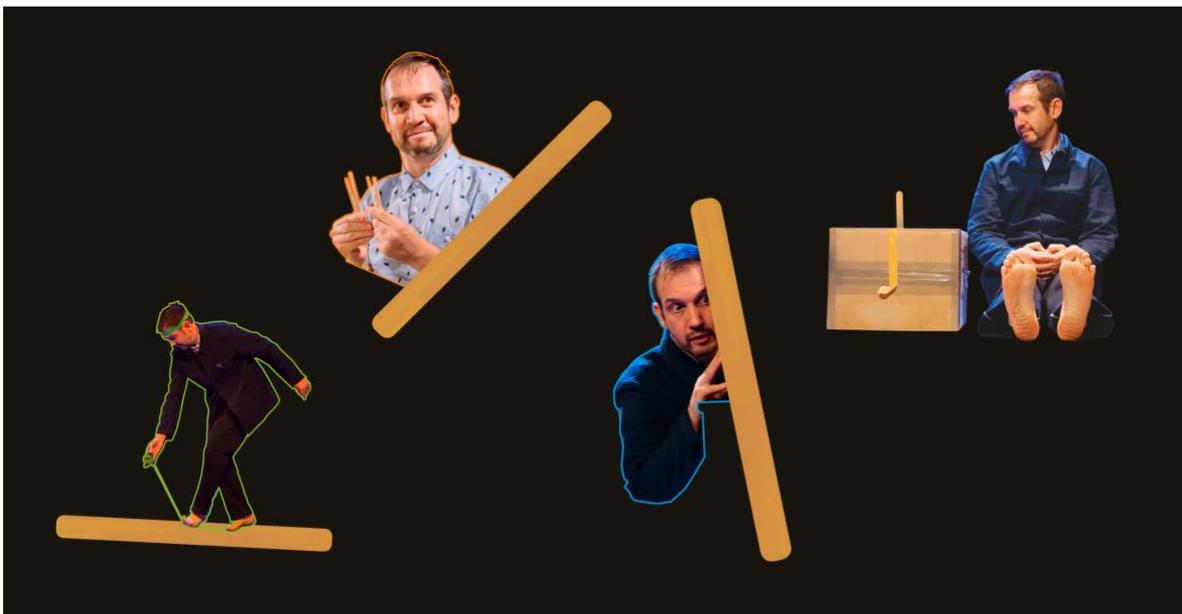
Talking about what you are going to see, and preparing children for what happens in a theatre space can help everyone to feel more relaxed and comfortable.

- Show them the poster, flier or website for the show so they know what its called and can see images
- Talk about going to the theatre and what to expect

ACTIVITY 2. REMEMBERING THE SHOW

Making time to talk about and reflect on the experience after attending a performance can help extend children's enjoyment, develop their thinking skills, and answer questions they may have.

1. What do you remember seeing and hearing in the show?
2. How did the performance make you feel?
3. What was your favourite part? Why?
3. Do you have any questions about the show?



ACTIVITY 3: BRINGING YOUR STICK TO LIFE

Resources needed

- Lolly sticks
- A mixture of arts and crafts materials such as: colouring pens and pencils, paint, fabric, stick-on eyes, feathers, string etc.

Background info

During the performance Andy befriends a lolly stick. At the end of the show all children are given a stick to take away. This activity will encourage the children to explore how to design and create a friend to play with, to think about the push and pull of friendship and to physically explore how we meet and make friends.

Activity

- Use art supplies to transform Sticks into new friends.
- Draw or paint on a face. Stick on eyes.
- Make clothes for Stick using markers or fabric; use feathers, wool or string to make hair, playdough to make it stand etc.



Introducing our Stick friends to each other

When the Sticks are decorated introduce the new friends to each other. Who is your stick? What is their name? What do they like to play?

Exploring with our Stick friends

Encourage the children to take their Stick friends to explore. Take them for a walk around the room. How do they move? Are they shy or confident? Do they move slowly or quickly? Let your stick explore their surroundings. What do they see and say? How are they feeling?

What's it like being friends with your stick? Do they always want to go where you want to go? Do you ever move apart? How can you work together?

Extension Activities:

Maybe your stick might like to meet the other sticks of children in your group. How do they make friends?

Do they say hello?

Do they play together?

Do they dance or chase together?

Do they play hide and seek?

ACTIVITY 4: PLAYING WITH RULES

Resources needed

- Paper and pen to write down rules.
- Stickers for voting, if needed (a show of hands will also work).

Background

In the play Andy is sometimes told, “NO!” At the end, when he wants to leave the space, he is told, “YES”. This activity will encourage discussion and exploration of rules, the value of rules, setting reasonable rules, and what it is like to be told what you can or cannot do.

Discussion

- Why do we have rules?
- What is it like to be told what to do?
- Could we create some rules for our sticks?

Making rules

- Encourage the children to propose rules, and to vote on them to create a short list of rules for the sticks.
- What rules could we make for them about staying safe?
- What rules could we make for them about being kind?
- How can we explain to our sticks why we’ve made these rules?

EXTENSION:

The children can then take turns overseeing the play and making sure the Sticks keep to the rules...

- What is it like to be in charge?
- What is it like to be told what to do?
- Why do we feel like breaking rules?
- Are there rules we should never break?

ACTIVITY 5: THE TREASURE OF ORDINARY THINGS

Background info

The set of *Stick by Me* is made up of ordinary objects, but Andy uses them in unusual ways. This activity is designed to encourage active looking, and heuristic play. It will encourage the children to see the possibilities in objects that are not specifically designed as toys.

Finding treasure

Go for a walk in nature and encourage the children to look for small things they want to treasure and play with. Examples might be small stones, pine cones, leaves, small sticks, sand, shells etc. They could also be things that humans have left behind as long as they are safe to play with.

Back at base, ask each child to pass their object(s) around and talk about why they like them. Explore what the objects look like and how they feel to touch.

By gathering all the treasure you can create a treasure chest or bag of everyday objects for future play, or you can use these objects in the next activity.

ACTIVITY 6: A HOME FOR STICK

Resources needed

- Paint or coloured pens/pencils and card or space on a shelf.
- A collection of everyday objects, either found in nature or around the home. Examples include pebbles, sand, string, pine cones, toilet tube inners, cotton wool, fabric, ribbon, avocado stone, orange peel, rice, dried pasta etc.

Activity

- Using everyday objects such as those found in nature, or around the home, encourage the children to create a home for their stick.
- Option 1: A display shelf where they place their found treasure objects around their stick.
- Option 2: Using card as background encourage the children to draw or paint around their treasure objects and to place their stick somewhere in their picture.
- Encourage discussion about the placement of objects, what each object looks and feels like, and how it interacts with the child's stick.

ACTIVITY 7: YES/NO.

Resources needed

- Tape or string to mark a boundary.

Background info

During the play Andy is told “No” and “Yes”. This game is a physical exploration of rules and boundaries. HAVE FUN!

Activity

Create a space with a boundary, such as a square by using tape/string on the floor as a marker. Make sure there’s enough room for everyone.

An adult will be the leader.

Demonstrate physically the activity for each command.

- When the leader says NO then you must stay inside the square.
- When the leader says YES then you can leave the square and walk around the outside of it.
- When the leader says IN THE MIDDLE then everyone must get to the centre of the square. Don’t bump into anyone!
- When the leader says TO THE CORNERS then everyone must go to the corners of the square. Take care of your friends!
- When the leader says JUMP you must jump.
- When the leader says CROUCH you must crouch down.
- When the leader says FREEZE you must freeze.
- When the leader says GO you must walk around.

Adapt the activities and commands appropriately to the needs and abilities of your group or child.

At first just let everyone get used to the game. As it progresses children may be “out” if they are not quick enough or if they do not obey the command. Alternatively they can perform a task like star jumps and then re-join the game.

EXTENSION:

If you think the children are ready, and would enjoy it, you can play ‘opposites’ where JUMP means you must crouch and CROUCH means you must jump etc.

ACTIVITY 8: WHEN THINGS BREAK

Resources needed

- A collection of “broken”, “old”, or “used up” object. Please risk assess, making sure they are safe to play with. Examples include: broken toys, broken plastic cutlery, old make up brushes, old fabric scraps, broken crayons or pencils, broken jewellery, broken buttons etc.
- It may be useful to have some craft materials available as well.

Background info

During the performance Stick breaks and Andy tries to repair them. This activity will encourage the children to consider how we can repair and reuse things, instead of throwing them away.

Activity

- Either provide, or ask the children to bring in, broken, but safe for play, objects.
- Look at each object. Ask the children to touch and describe it.
- What was it for/what was it’s use? How is it broken, used up or old?
- What should we do with it now?
- What happens when we throw things away? What does it mean? Where do they go?
- Maybe we shouldn’t give up on this object: If we keep this object how could we use it? What else could it be?
- Can you demonstrate a different way to use this object? Let’s see how many different ways we can discover together.