

MEET-A-TREE ACTIVITY



Now that it's starting to warm up again, head outside and become closer to nature with this outdoor activity that can be adapted to work with kids of all ages. Don't forget, trees need hugs too!

For this activity, you will need a partner, a blindfold and a woodsy area with a good amount of trees.

How-To:

1. Find a partner to team up with.
2. Decide who will be "the guider" and who will be blindfolded.
3. The guider will lead the blindfolded around through the trees in an unrecognizable pattern. Be careful, you want to disorient them but still be a compassionate and gentle leader. Remember, it will be your turn next!
4. After successfully disorienting the blindfolded person, lead them to a single tree.
5. The blindfolded person then gets to know the tree as well as they can without seeing it. Don't forget to hug it high and low, smell it, listen for birds, touch it, and anything else that might help remember this tree. There is no time limit so spend a good amount of time finding identifying characteristics about this tree.
6. After the blindfolded participant feels they have spent enough time with the tree, lead them back to their starting point. Make sure you take them on a few detours on the way back, so they won't remember how they got to the tree.
7. Then take off the blindfold, and have them try to find "their tree."
8. Switch! Change positions so the initial guider is now the blindfolded person and repeat the activity.

For younger kids, five to seven years old, you can show them the area that you will lead them to first before blindfolding them. This will give them an idea of which trees they might end up near and a better chance of identifying. Also, you might choose to lead them in a straight line to and from the tree.

For kids under five years old who might not want to be blindfolded, you can adjust the activity and simply compare and contrast a few different trees. Find trees in your neighborhood, or at your local State Park, and compare some of their differences. Some potential differences could include: size, smell, leaf shape and color, bark's texture, nesting animals, etc. Use your imagination to find ways that differentiate these trees. There is no limit to how many differences they really have.

This activity was adapted from the *Coyote's Guide to Connecting with Nature* by Jon Young, Ellen Haas, and Evan McGown.