

Odd Threads : Bodies: Sitting

<https://www.oddproject.co.uk/provocations/bodies/#sitting>

Sitting

As adults, how can we explore our embodied knowledges, to understand something about children's experiences?

Who is this for?

Adults who work with or care for children, or who are training to do so.

Duration:

Individual exercise : 8 minutes activity + reflection time.
Group exercise: 8 minutes activity plus time for discussion / sharing per participant

What you need:

A quiet time and space for this duration, or headphones.
Something to write with.

If sharing remotely - A shared Padlet or other shared online space for text / image (optional)



Above: a participant's drawing of Amanda sitting during school assembly, in 'Position of Child'

Guidance

Listen to Anna's guided 'Sitting' activity here. (8 mins)

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Afterwards, take 5-10 minutes (or more if you need) to reflect on your experiences. If working in a group, you may choose to share and discuss the experience.

Sitting

How we have used similar activities so far...

In January 2021, Amanda and Anna delivered a workshop for undergraduate students training to work with children as teachers, teaching assistants, play workers and educational psychologists. After taking part in a similar guided activity, calling our attention to how sitting feels, student participants were invited to share their experiences of sitting.

Participants reflections so far...

Amanda's experience of her time in school, was interesting for many of us and encouraged us to start looking at things from the child's perspective. An awareness of our own bodies can help us connect with children's experiences (Horner,2017). Hence, the session on affective methods helped us become more aware of our bodies- reflecting upon the times we were children at school, and how we would feel when asked to do different things. Reflecting upon my own experiences helped me become more attuned to the children's experiences.'

'...Timmons, (2016) states that it is 'odd' that there is no recognition that children have different body types- particularly developmentally as there is a difference in the development of the bones in every child. Timmons (2016) further argues that as practitioners it is important to reflect on this and think about the child's body and put ourselves in their position.'

'This made me reflect on the way the body is seen in education as very uniform; as thirty different students with varying bodies, heights and of different backgrounds are all expected to sit in the same way, and if they do not, the child is seen as not being complacent, even if it is uncomfortable. In turn, the feelings of children are often forgotten and so too is the fact that their feelings hold significance.'