

## nurturing potential



### A Metaphor for Life – Giant Snakes & Ladders

#### Preparation;

Obtain giant (garden) snakes and ladders game.

Worksheets for this session can be handed out during the next session due to time constraints.

#### Objectives

This activity has several objectives for Coach and kids, and is ideally suited to be the second Stress-Free-Kids™ session;

- Observing Team work
- Observing responsibility
- Observing pupil reactions to the twists and turns the game will provide
- Providing important and relevant points of reference and examples for future sessions

It does not matter if the game is not finished the idea is to create the ideal observation platform for Coach and teachers, and some fun for the kids. A perfect metaphor for life – sometimes the going is good, other times you can feel like you're not making progress or things are against you.

#### Playing the Game – allocate 30 minutes

Ask for two to four volunteers (depending upon the size of the group) to be referees and to take responsibility for running the game and making sure that everyone adheres to the rules. Divide the rest of the group into several teams, no larger than 5 per team (one person will play the role of marker). Ask each group to select an individual to be the team marker.

Ask the markers to line up with team number 1's marker on the start square. Organise the teams so that order can be maintained and confusion reduced.

Coach may decide on a system that works for them however, one way to organise them is to have the teams stand in rows on one side of the board, the person at the front of each row roles the dice, then moves to the back of their team row, thereby ensuring that they take it in turns.

#### Start the game.

Coach makes mental or written notes during the game.

At the end of the allocated time discuss with the kids how they felt at different points in the game. This is a start to understanding feelings about change and when 'life' doesn't go their way, or even when it does.

Refer to the session worksheet for more details for concluding the session and discussing feedback.

**Finish session** with 5 minutes relaxation to calm down before they go back to class. See '**Relaxation**' notes for details.



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<b>Name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Session Number:</b>	<b>Session Name:</b> <b>A Metaphor for Life</b>

## So, we've played a fun game of giant Snakes & Ladders but what was the point?

Snakes and Ladders was actually invented as a game to demonstrate how life can feel – and provides a wonderful metaphor for life, that is, the things that happen during the game are like some of the things that can happen to us in life. OK you ask – HOW?! There are a number of things to think about;

As we move across the board one square at a time, this is how we go about doing and achieving things in life. If we want to learn something we have to work at it until it feels easier and more comfortable. Sometimes we come across or are given the opportunity to move ahead more quickly – these situations are the **LADDERS** in life. Things are going well, and life feels great. Sometimes others get offered the ladders first and we may feel cheated or that it is unfair.

Sometimes we feel like we're going backwards – making no progress, or feel that the effort has been wasted – these are your **SNAKES**. Effort is NEVER wasted – unless you keep trying the same things that aren't working or haven't worked in the past and expect different results.

**Remember if you always do what you have always done and it doesn't work for you, you will always get the same result unless you change your behaviour.**

**SNAKES** give us a chance to review our situation, if something didn't work, go back a few steps, or even to the beginning and look at the situation in another way. As with the game you get another role of the dice – another chance to try again in life. At first it feels as though the world is against you – but you're better than that and often something better will show up.

**"STING" squares** provide similar feelings as the **SNAKES** and **LADDERS**. If you're winning and have to go back its "unfair", if you're losing you've had a major break and want to make the most of it. Just like life – see that whether you feel you're winning or losing is up to you – whatever your situation.

**"Stand on one leg or go backwards next go"** – sometimes we have to do things we think are silly or difficult to get to what we want. **"Double Dice"** – sometimes you will get a chance to have more, sometimes this is a good thing, but you may also land on a snake if you're not careful!

**Referees** – so being a referee is not the most exciting part of the game. There will always be others to make sure you play by the rules. Sometimes it will be you. There will always be times in your life when you need some guidance and support, and times when you need to give guidance and support.



Where we had teams in the game you all had ROLES to play – you all wanted to be the counter on the mat, but this is not always possible. Learn to understand what your role is even if you feel it is not important. There are many successful people who are successful because of the people that work with them in the background.