

Teddy in a Bottle (Under 2 years)

Learning objectives:

To start conversations with children about how litter is dangerous for wildlife and how we can help.



cadwch keep
gymru'n wales
daclus tidy



Practitioner knowledge:

Litter is defined as waste in the wrong place, and it can be found almost everywhere.

It causes a great deal of damage to our wildlife and environment, the effects of which are often long-lasting and felt far beyond where the litter was discarded.

Litter in our streets can eventually make its way into rivers and streams, blown by the wind or carried by the rain. Many discarded items also find themselves going down the drain and ending up in the marine environment.

The main threats to wildlife from litter include injury and food poisoning. Many creatures find themselves stuck inside littered objects, some dying of starvation or dehydration. Others will eat litter thinking of it as food, making them extremely ill and causing blockages and malnutrition.

Litter is something that most children are aware of from a young age. Unfortunately, it is all around them, but it is an issue that they can do something about, helping them feel empowered. By understanding the problems litter causes, positive action can be taken, protecting animals from the harm of litter is simple!

Make sure our rubbish is disposed of properly, by reusing, recycling or putting it in a bin!

You will need:

A large, clear plastic bottle.

A soft toy animal – ideally a wild animal children may recognise from their local environment (e.g. bird, fox, hedgehog, rabbit or rat).

Preparation:

Place the soft toy inside the bottle. If it fits through the top, insert it that way. If not, carefully cut a small opening in the back of the bottle, just large enough to place the toy inside, and tape it securely closed.

How to use the activity:

Before the children enter the outdoor area, place the bottle where it can be clearly seen. Allow the children to discover it naturally during their play.

As they notice the bottle and begin to comment or ask questions, move closer to listen, observe and gently support their discussion.

Use this resource as a guide to encourage thinking, such as:

Why is the teddy in the bottle?

Why is the teddy sad?

Should bottles be on the ground?



This visual prompt helps children explore and understand why litter can be dangerous for wildlife in a meaningful and age-appropriate way.

If you would like all children to be involved, the bottle can also be introduced during group or circle time to guide a shared discussion.

Teddy is stuck in the bottle!

“Oh no look! Hedgehog is stuck! What is this?” (Point to hedgehog)

“Hedgehog.”

“What happened?” “Stuck.” **“Yes, hedgehog is stuck.”**

“Is hedgehog happy or sad?” “Sad.”

“Hedgehog is stuck. He is sad.”

“Can we help?” “Help.” (adults to carefully pull hedgehog out of the bottle)

(Refer to empty bottle) **“This is litter. Animals can get stuck in litter.”**

“Is this good or bad?” “Bad.” **“Yes, litter on the floor is bad.”**

“Should we put it on the floor or in the bin?” “Bin.”

