

Little Monsters



Psychological Safety

TIMING: 20 mins
WHAT: Movement Activity
WHEN: Warm-Up or Cool Down
WHO: Group

SET-UP AND GEAR

- Players are to be organised into groups of 4-5.
- No gear is necessary, but players can use nearby objects to add to the fun of the activity if they wish.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Players have the opportunity to be a bit silly and have fun!
- Developing a positive and open environment at training.
- Demonstrating to players that it is okay and even encouraged to make mistakes at training.

ACTIVITY SUMMARY

This is a creative activity that fosters psychological safety amongst players as it encourages them to embrace looking silly. Working as a team, the players transform themselves into a monster, the scarier the better. In this activity, you want to energise your players and create a positive team spirit where players are encouraged to try new things without the fear of judgement.

Activity Outline

2 mins (set-up) The coach explains the activity and sets the challenge; make the most monstrous monster in groups of 4-5, using their bodies, voices and/or any objects that might be nearby.

Divide the players into groups and outline that they can approach this challenge in several ways – everything from carrying each other, to not having contact with each other at all.

3-5 mins The players have approximately 3-5 minutes in their groups to “build” their monster. They should also give their monster the weirdest and most monstrous sound possible.

5 mins When the time is up, ask all the groups to showcase their monster to the rest of the wider group.

Activity Outline (CONTD.)

5 mins

Optional extension discussion

Ask your players (show of hands) if they worry about making mistakes or looking silly when trying a new drill, skill or activity. Explain that when developing new skills, you don't expect players to get it right straight away and that you expect them to make mistakes along the way.

Ask your players for ideas on how as a team they could support one another to ensure the environment at training is a safe and positive one (e.g. words of encouragement, not laughing if someone messes up, making sure everyone is included, being friendly etc.).

Tips & Tricks

- Emphasise the more silly, ugly, and weird the better! Encourage the players to really be crazy.
- Consider as a coach whether you also want to share your monster – either by yourself or in a group. Being a role model in this activity will make the players feel safer with you and lower some of the pressure they might feel to perform in front of you.
- Be aware that some players might not feel comfortable with physical touch, so emphasise they can be creative with how they make their monster.

PILLAR INSIGHTS

In teams, psychological safety refers to team members believing that they can take risks and make mistakes without fear of negative consequences like being judged or laughed at by other team members. To have a psychologically safe environment, it's important that the act of trying something new is encouraged and celebrated.



PSYCHOLOGICAL

As the coach, it's important that you set the right tone at training i.e. verbally noting out loud when players are working hard (even if they haven't yet fully mastered a skill). Framing 'mistakes' or 'failures' as opportunities to learn, grow and improve.



SOCIAL

Positive interpersonal relationships between coaches and their team, as well as team members themselves, play an important role in developing psychological safety in a team environment. It's important to take the time to actively foster and develop these relationships.