



William Gilpin Forest School Risk Assessment

Activity: Using hand tools

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Reference			
Status	DRAFT/ACTIVE		
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GENERIC HAZARDS				PEOPLE	RATING (RISK = L X S)			RISK CONTROL								
A	Stairs	B	Stair gate	C	Doors	SEVERITY (S)	3. HIGH Major Injury/Fatality	3	6	9	HIGH DO NOT PROCEED, Further controls required					
D	Windows	E	Flooring	F	Shelves							2. MEDIUM Notifiable Injury	2	4	6	MEDIUM Further controls required unless not reasonably practicable. Only continue under strict control.
G	Small movable objects	H	Knives	I	Cooker											
J	Water	K	Food	L	Chemicals/Harmful substances		LIKELIHOOD (L)	1 LOW	2 MED	3 HIGH						
M	Fire	N	Electric sockets	O	Lifting/stooping / twisting trunk											
P	Cars	Q	Visitors	R	Strangers											
S	Estranged parent	T	Climbing	U	Child exiting the building unsupervised											
V	Radiators	W	Animals	X	Chicken pen											
Y	Tool	Z	Plants	A1	Rubbish											
B1	Lost Child	C1	Uneven pathways and protruding roots	D1	Branches at eye level											
E1	Falling deadwood	F1	Wasps & Bees	G1	Extreme weather conditions											
H1	Extreme hot weather	I1	Extreme high wind	J1	Claustrophobia/Fear of the dark											
K1	Falling objects															

Benefits of the activity:	Children need access to the means to create and build as a normal feature of their play experience.
Is the risk acceptable?	Yes

ACTIVITY	HAZARD	RISK	PEOPLE AFFECTED	UNCONTROLLED RISK RATING			CONTROL MEASURES	RESIDUAL RISK RATING		
				L	S	R		L	S	R
All Tools	Y - Tool	Personal injury (hitting fingers or head)	1 & 2	3	2	6	Discuss safety issues when using tools and all tools to be introduced with a tool talk. Keep tools in good working order and check regularly. Appropriate level of supervision. Ratios may change as children become more confident.	1	2	2



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							<p>Only have out as many tools as can be supervised safely.</p> <p>Put tools not in use away from child access (apart from peelers and mallets).</p> <p>Ensure tools have cover/safety guard on when not in use.</p> <p>Adults always model good tool use.</p> <p>Ensure the appropriate tool is used for the job.</p> <p>Teach the children how to carry tools safely and role model this at all times.</p> <p>Ensure tools are used at a safe distance from other participants e.g. two arms lengths and a tool away.</p> <p>All tools should be used in the relevant tool use area e.g. whittling area, saw horse, chopping block for bill hook etc</p>			
Whittling knife	H – Knives	Personal injury (cuts self or third party)	1 & 2	3	3	9	<p>As above – see All Tools.</p> <p>Children must be confident and competent using a peeler to whittle before moving onto a knife.</p> <p>When a knife is first introduced the child must be shown how to use it safely, taught to put the knife back in its cover when not being used and if someone approaches them to place it on the ground and ask the other person to step away because they are using a tool.</p> <p>The first time a knife is introduced or reintroduced at the start of a session, 1:2 supervision must be given to start with and the child must be reminded of the group rules e.g. do you remember what you need to do when you've finished using the knife?</p> <p>Whittling only takes place in the designated whittling area and while seated on the whittling stumps/seats.</p> <p>Children are required to wear a glove on the non-knife hand and shown how to whittle safely e.g. The stick is placed under the left arm and held by the left hand. The knife is held in the right hand and the blade pushes away from body, running</p>	2	2	4



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							<p>down the stick towards the ground.</p> <p>The knife is put in its cover and handed straight back to the adult after it has been used and stored out of reach of the children. NB Normally tools are left on the stump/table where they are being used.</p> <p>If more than one knife is used, the knives are counted out and counted back and all knives must be accounted for.</p>			
Using a mallet	Y - Tools	Personal injury (cuts self or third party)	1 & 2	3	2	6	As above – see All Tools.	2	1	2
Peeler	Y - Tools	Personal injury (cuts self or third party)	1 & 2	3	2	6	<p>As above – see All Tools.</p> <p>Children are shown how to use the peeler for whittling e.g. The stick is placed under the left arm and held by the left hand. The peeler is held in the right hand and the blade pushes away from body, running down the stick towards the ground.</p> <p>The peeler is left on the whittling stump after use ready for the next person.</p> <p>Whittling only takes place in the designated whittling area and while seated on the whittling stumps/seats.</p>	2	1	2
Bill hook	Y - Tools	Personal injury (cuts self or third party)	1 & 2	3	3	9	<p>As above – see All Tools.</p> <p>Ensure good communication between individuals working together.</p> <p>Make sure participants stay focused.</p> <p>Ensure the bill hook is placed horizontally on top of the wood to be split. Ensure the person holding the bill hook has hands over the top pinching the bill hook between their fingers and not underneath the blade and that the bill hook is on the far side of the wood being split, not next to the person holding it to avoid it slipping and causing leg injuries.</p> <p>Ensure the activity is taking place on a solid surface e.g. tree stump/ flat log.</p>	2	2	4



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							<p>Start with small taps with a mallet or small log and then build up once accuracy increases.</p> <p>Make sure children don't try to pick up wood split off the log while the bill hook is in use (in case it slips)</p> <p>1:1 supervision at all times when the bill hook is in use.</p>			
Sawing with a bow saw, hack saw or Laplander	Y - Tools	Personal injury (cuts self or third party)	1 & 2	3	3	9	<p>As above – see All Tools.</p> <p>Two children or one adult secures the log (to be cut) in position by sitting astride it or holding it down firmly if smaller.</p> <p>The Forest School Leader places the saw horizontally on the wood and draws backward two or three times to make the first cut and secure the blade in the cut.</p> <p>Once the blade is embedded in the wood, bring the child to the saw so that they can hold the saw grip with their dominant hand and hold their other hand behind their back, out of the way.</p> <p>The Forest School Leader holds the other side of the saw and sets the pace, slowly drawing it back and forth, with each participant drawing the blade towards them.</p> <p>Make sure that the participant stays focused and looks at the blade at all times.</p> <p>Towards the end of the cut, proceed with caution as the blade will drop and the tension is released. Make sure the people securing the log are aware that the cut is about to be complete.</p> <p>The Bow Saw must be used with 1:1 supervision until the child is deemed competent enough to saw with another, equally, competent child. This again must be done under adult supervision.</p> <p>The hack saw may be used by a child on his/her own or in pairs</p> <p>Laplander may be used by a child when they have sufficient co-ordination and strength. The blade is VERY sharp despite appearances and should be treated like a bow saw in terms of risk of injury. The child should be shown how to use the saw</p>	2	2	4



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							and the importance of keeping their other hand away from the blade (in case it jumps out of the cut onto their hand).			
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