



# The Future of Childhood

ACTIVITY PACK

Raising children's voices  
about the future



Save the  
Children

# Information for Children

Thank you for helping us find out what children and young people think childhood should be like in the future.

We want to ask you to share your ideas through some activities. Your teacher or group leader will explain the activity to you. Then, we will share these ideas with people who make the decisions that affect our lives – people who work in our communities, our schools or local councils, or who make decisions across the country.

Don't worry about giving us the right answer, or the same answer as your friends. We want to hear as many different ideas as possible.

If you don't want to take part just let your teacher or group leader know. If you'd like to take part but don't want your ideas or activities to be shared with Save the Children, that's OK too – just let your teacher or group leader know.

We also want to hear what you felt about doing these activities. Let us know if there are ways to make them better or more fun!

Thank you,  
The Save the Children Team

# Information for teachers/facilitators

**Thank you for helping us to find out what children want childhood to be like in 2040. We've designed some simple activities that will encourage the children in your class or group to think about some of the things that might be important to children, and what society should be like for children in the future.**

## **What is the Future of Childhood project?**

We will be hearing from children aged 4-11 across the UK about what they think childhood should be like in the future. We'll then be sharing this with local and national decision-makers to encourage them to work towards making children's vision a reality.

We know that decisions made today will inform what happens in the future. That's why we want to understand children and young people's hopes and aspirations for childhood, from what they want childhood to be like in the future to the language they use to describe it. We want to help children visualise and vocalise a better future.

We'll also be talking to experts from across the children's sector to understand what childhood is likely to be like in the future. We'll then be comparing children's vision with the expected reality to challenge ourselves, other organisations, governments and other decision-makers to make the changes we need now to make children's vision for the future a reality.

Every school or community group who takes part will be credited in the report. You will also receive a copy of the report and a certificate of participation.

## **Guidance notes**

The activities in this pack are designed to be flexible, and can be adapted. Please choose an activity – or more than one if you have time – that's best suited to your class or group, or adapt the activities to meet their needs.

If possible, keep your discussions realistic and grounded in what the children would actually like to see for children in the future. This will make it easier for us to present their ideas to decision-makers.

## **Safeguarding and consent**

The information collected through this research will be used as part of a final report which will talk about children's vision for the future of childhood, and how this compares to what we currently expect childhood to be like in 2040. The information may also be used for the following purposes:

- As part of events or promotional material associated with the report or Save the Children's work
- To inform Save the Children's future strategy and work
- Data may also be divided by geography and used to inform Save the Children's work in local communities.

**As this is a piece of research to understand children's views, parents and carers will need to consent to their children taking part. Before carrying out any activities, please send parents and carers the consent form and information sheet you have received with this pack. You will not need to send these back to Save the Children, but by sending us completed activities you are confirming that you have received the consent needed from parents and carers.**

At the start of the lesson or session, please use the information for children on page one of this pack to explain what we would like them to do.

If any child does not wish to take part or if their parent/carer has not consented to them taking part, we'd suggest using the same activity but asking them to think about a different topic or a topic you've covered in class. Please ensure you don't share any completed activities with us if the parent/carer has not consented or if the child has expressed that they don't want their activities shared.

We would also ask that you don't share anything with us that could identify the children who've taken part. For example, please ensure children don't include their name on activities, and that any photos taken don't include any identifiable information.

Thinking about a good childhood may raise concerns or be upsetting for some children. If this happens, please follow your usual safeguarding and support procedures.

If you would like to raise any issues or make any complaints about the activities or the Future of Childhood project, please contact Beth Stout, project lead, at [b.stout@savethechildren.org.uk](mailto:b.stout@savethechildren.org.uk).

## **Sharing the outputs with Save the Children**

We really want to capture children's views in different ways, so they're welcome to complete the activities verbally, pictorially, or in writing.

To share any pictures or written contributions, please put them in the stamped addressed envelope we'll send you and post them back to us as soon as possible. If any children would prefer to keep the original copies of their work, please send us a photocopy.

If you are sending us any photos or recordings, or would like to send us photocopies instead of hard copies of activities, your contact at Save the Children will send you a password-protected file where you can upload these.

# THEMES

We are excited to hear what children want childhood to be like in the future.

Below are several themes that can be used to shape the activities on the pages that follow.

These themes have been taken from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Sustainable Development Goals. The descriptions include prompts to help spark children's imaginations. Please feel free to add or discuss any other themes that interest the group.

## Happy and healthy

Physical health, mental health, exercise, healthy eating. How will children stay happy and healthy in 2040?

## Learning

Learning in schools and nurseries, as well as in their own time. What should a classroom be like in 20 years' time? How will children learn? What would make learning fun?

## Play

Thinking about the importance of play. What do you think toys should be like in 20 years' time? Will all children be able to play with them? What do you think children might do for fun in 20 years' time?

## Home and family

Considering where children live and who they live with. What should homes look like in 2040? In your vision for the future, what does family look like?

## Your local area

Community, places to go, spaces to enjoy. What should your local area look like in the future? What things should there be for children to do?

## Our world

Creating a vision for the world around us. Do you think all children in the UK have the same opportunities as each other now? How would you want that change in the future?

## Taking part

Considering how children are involved in decisions about the things that affect their lives. Could children be involved in deciding what to learn about at school? Adults vote to have their say – how might children have their say about big issues?

# **Activities**

# Activity 1

## Pictures of childhood

### Plan

We've provided a selection of photos representing key aspects of childhood. One set of cards shows childhood images from the past and one set of cards shows the present. This activity will encourage children to think about the differences between the past and present, and to draw what they would like these images to be like in the future (2040).

### Deliver

Introduce children to the past cards. What do they see? What looks good? What could be better?

Show the group the present cards and ask them the same questions. The cards should provide a rich discussion among the children and generate ideas that they can use to think about the future.

Share the past and present cards with children on paper or on screen. Ask them to choose one or more cards they would like to develop a 'future card' for (this can be done on plain paper).

#### Ask them:

- What did you think could have been better about the pictures we looked at?
- What would make a future child happy?
- What would need to happen so that every child could have this experience?

If possible, encourage them to write a few words or a sentence describing their picture.

After the activity, please send the completed future cards back to Save the Children using the stamped addressed envelope provided. If children would like to keep their pictures, please send us a photocopy using the link provided.

### About the activity

#### Age and ability:

Suitable for children aged 8-11 years

#### Preparation time:

10 minutes

#### Delivery time:

20-40 minutes depending on discussion time

#### Resources required:

- Past and present cards (these can be printed out or shown on a screen)
- Plain paper to make 'future cards'
- Pencils or pens and colouring materials



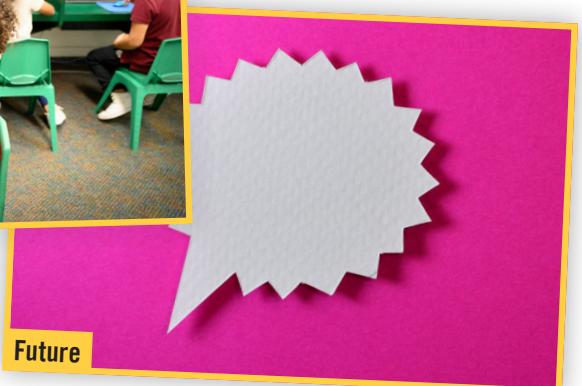
# PAST AND PRESENT CARDS

## Healthy and happy



- What did children do to stay fit and healthy in the past?
- How is it different now?
- What could be better in the future?

## Learning



- What makes a good place to learn?
- What makes learning fun?
- What could be better in the future?

## Play



Past



Present



- How have toys changed over the past 20 years?
- Can all children afford them?
- What are the differences in how children like to play and what they like to do now?



Future

## Activity 2

### Chatterbox

#### Plan

This activity will help children think about what's important to them and what will be important for children in the future. At the end of the activity, children will have made a 'fortune teller' or 'chatterbox' that represents their views of what childhood should be like for children in 2040.

#### Deliver

Ask the children to create a paper 'chatterbox' using the template provided. The front of the chatterbox will include the themes of play, learn, happy and healthy. .

The next layer of the chatterbox features a set of questions. Ask the children to discuss these in pairs or small groups. They can record their answers on the final layer of the chatterbox.

Once they've completed their chatterboxes, the children can play with them in pairs by asking their partner to pick a theme, then a question, then asking them to guess what they wrote in the box for that question.

For older groups, you might want to discuss the following questions as a group:

- What would need to happen so that every child could have the experiences we have talked about?
- Is there anything we can do now to help make this happen in the future?



After the activity, please send the completed chatterboxes back to Save the Children using the stamped addressed envelope provided. If children would like to keep their chatterboxes, please send us a photocopy using the link provided.

#### About the activity

##### **Age and ability:**

Suitable for children aged 7-11 years

##### **Preparation time:**

10 minutes

##### **Delivery time:**

30-40 minutes

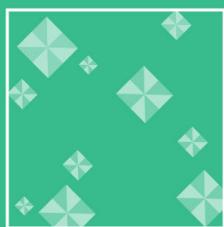
##### **Resources required:**

- 'Chatterbox' template (printed for each class or group member) or plain paper for each class member to make their own
- Pencils or pens and colouring materials

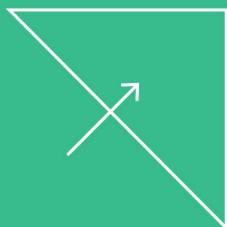
# Fortune Teller

## HOW TO MAKE YOUR FORTUNE TELLER

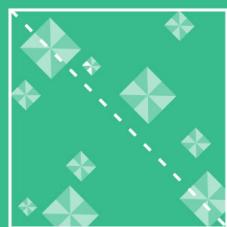
### Folding instructions:



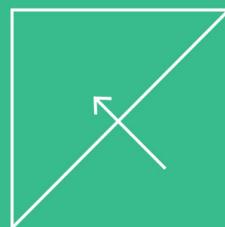
Take the printed square of paper.



Fold it over like this.



Unfold it.



Now fold it the other way.



Unfold it and it should look like this.



Fold all 4 corners to the centre of the square.



Your paper should look like this.



Flip the paper over so the folds you just made are faced down.



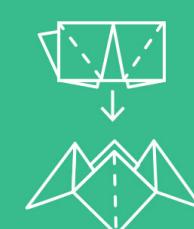
Fold the corners to the centre again.



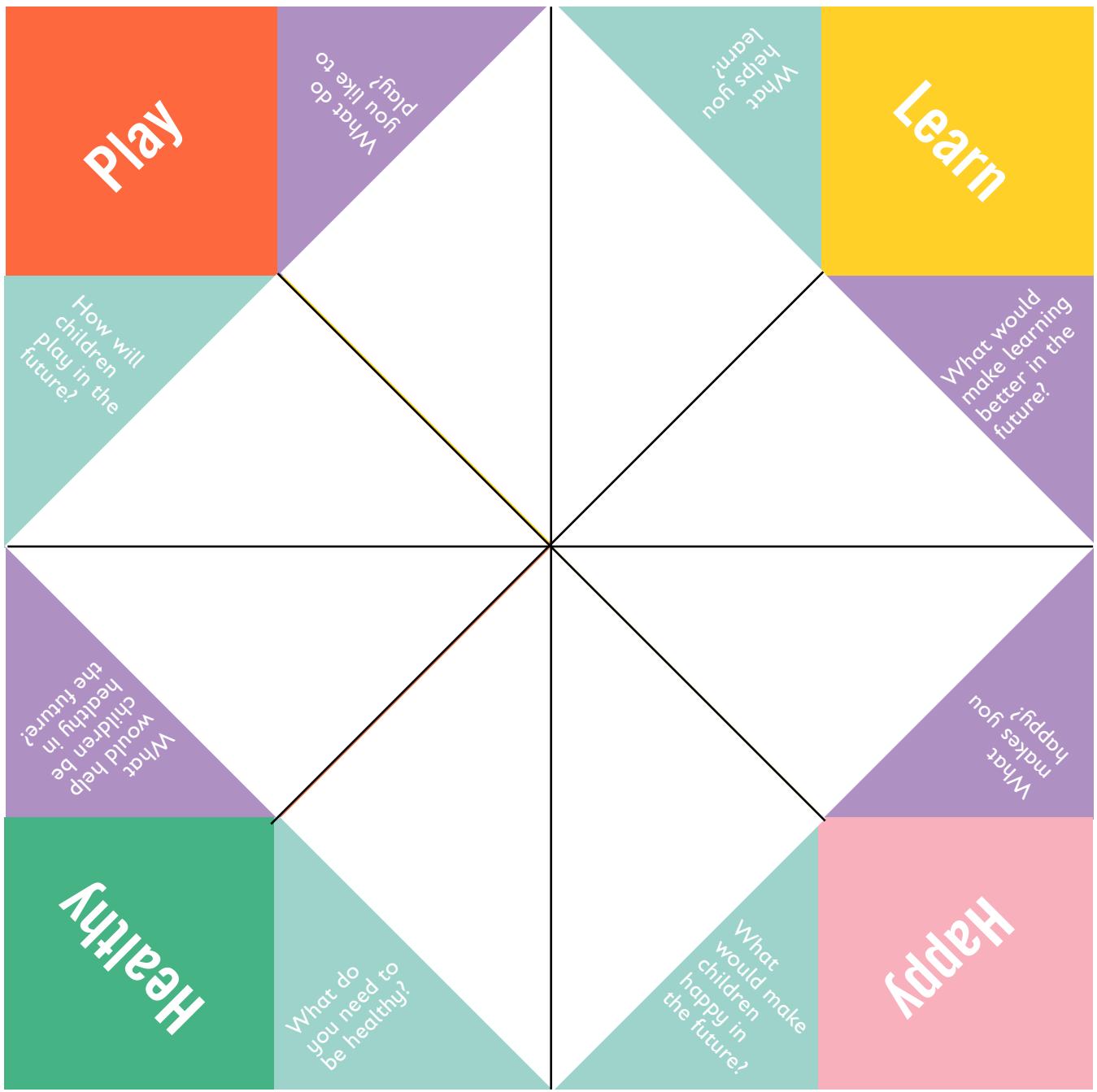
Your paper should look like this.



Fold it sideways then unfold it. Then fold it lengthways.

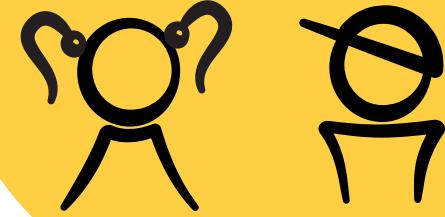


Put your fingers under the corners. It should look like this.



## Activity 3

# Storytelling using characters



## Plan

This activity centres around a diverse group of fictional children from 2040, who are a similar age to the children taking part. We want to know what children think life should be like for the fictional children. We have included a short bio for each character to support the children's storytelling.

## Deliver

Share the character information sheets with the children.

Use the following questions for this activity:

- What makes these children happy?
- What do they enjoy learning?
- How do they spend their time playing?
- What is their school like?
- What are their relationships like?
- What is their local area like?

For younger groups, discuss these questions as a class. You can either record the discussion or take notes to share with Save the Children.

For older groups, discuss some of the questions as a group to help the children think about the future, then ask them to choose a fictional child and answer the questions on behalf of that child. You might also want to discuss:

- How do these children have a say in things that affect them?
- What would need to happen so that every child could have the experiences we have talked about? Is there anything we can do now to help make this happen in the future?

The children can discuss their answers with their classmates.

After the activity, please send the completed story sheets back to Save the Children using the stamped addressed envelope provided. Please upload any audio files to the link sent with this pack.

## About the activity

### Age and ability:

Suitable for children aged 4-11 years

### Preparation time:

10 minutes

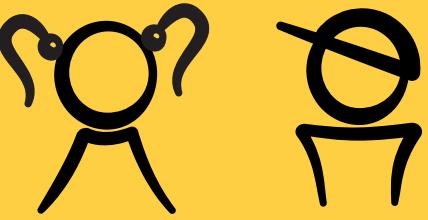
### Delivery time:

40-50 minutes

### Resources required:

- Lined paper for children to create a story about the characters
- Character information sheet printed or shown on a screen

# CHARACTER INFORMATION SHEET



**This is Dominic, he is eleven years old and lives in the countryside. He has two older brothers. He enjoys gymnastics and art.**



**This is Rose, she is six years old and lives in the city. She is an only child. She is interested in science, especially space.**



**This is Amara and she is eight. She lives just outside a city. She has a little sister and a pet cat. She loves animals.**

# Activity 4

## Class Mural

### Plan

This activity allows the whole class or group to contribute to a shared vision of what they want the future to look like for children in 2040. This can include a discussion about the different themes at the start of the pack and which ones they would like to focus on, or you can select a theme to discuss (for example, a theme that fits in with an existing class project).

### Deliver

For the youngest children, aged four to six, pick some themes from page 5 of this pack to discuss. Ask them to draw a picture showing what they would want the future to be like for children. They might want to combine their drawings with photos, or add stickers, words, or other cut-outs. If possible, encourage them to add some words to help us understand their vision.

For older groups, ask the class/group completing this activity to agree a theme(s) to focus on. This may involve a class discussion about the different themes and how they relate to childhood. Ask the children to draw or create a picture of what they would want childhood to be like in 2040 relating to their chosen theme. If possible, encourage them to write a description or some words about their pictures to help us understand their vision.

Children can create their image however they like, including drawing, painting, writing, or making collages.



### About the activity

#### **Age and ability:**

Suitable for children aged 4 - 11 years

#### **Preparation time:**

15 minutes

#### **Delivery time:**

30-60 minutes depending on the age of children

#### **Resources required:**

- Paper (a big roll of paper or sheets of plain A4)
- Pens/crayons
- Scissors
- Glue
- Any other creative resources you may have
- Catalogues/magazines/newspapers/stickers/any other crafty bits
- Clippings of images/words/things they like or would want to see in 2040



For older groups, you might want to discuss the following questions as a group once they have completed the activity:

- What would need to happen so that every child could have the experiences we have talked about?
- Is there anything we can do now to help make this happen in the future?

When their creations are complete, they can be displayed together as a class mural. If you are displaying the creations as a class mural, please photocopy them and upload them to the link provided with this pack. Alternatively, you can send the creations back to Save the Children using the stamped addressed envelope provided.



# Activity 5

## Photo collage

### (Home learning activity)

#### Plan

This activity allows children to bring a creative vision for 2040 to life in a collage form. It's a chance for them to be as creative as they like! It's about combining images, drawing, painting, sticking, cutting and words to show their vision of the future for children. They might want to record an audio clip describing their creation. Photos or creations could be used to create one giant class or school mural (see the previous activity for more information about creating a class or school mural).

**Note: If you would like to use photos in the activity, please use it as a home learning activity and ask parents and carers to send any photos back to you, so we know they are happy for the photos to be used.**



#### About the activity

##### Age and ability:

Suitable for children aged 4-11 years

##### Preparation time:

15 minutes

##### Delivery time:

60 minutes or more depending on the age of the children

##### Resources required:

- Smartphone camera/iPad camera/digital camera/instant camera
- A parent/carer to take or send the photographs
- Printer (if children will be printing their photos to use in the collage)
- Paper or cardboard
- Scissors
- Pencils or pens and colouring materials for drawing or adding drawings to their photos
- Glue or tape
- Clippings of images or words they like or would want to see in 2040

# Deliver

For the youngest children, aged 4 to 6, pick some themes from page 5 of this pack to discuss. Ask them to draw a picture showing what they would want the future to be like for children. They might want to combine their drawings with photos, or add stickers, words, or other cut-outs (see example below). If possible, encourage them to add some words to help us understand their vision.



Collage: Delphine Diallo/ The Maison Rose / Save the Children

For children aged 7 to 11, choose one of the themes at the start of this pack. Ask children to take photos that represent what they would want children to have in the future. For example, for 'happy' they might take a picture of friends, a toy or something else that they think would make a child happy. Encourage them to write a description or some words about their photos to help us understand their vision.

Alternatively, ask them to create their dream 2040 for a child. They could create scenes to represent the different themes, or make an imaginary town or community. Encourage them to write a description or some words about their photos to help us understand their vision.

For older groups, you might want to discuss the following questions as a group once they have completed the activity:

- What would need to happen so that every child could have the experiences we have talked about?
- Is there anything we can do now to help make this happen in the future?

After the activity, please send the creations back to Save the Children using the stamped addressed envelope provided. If children would like to keep their pictures, please send us a photocopy. Please upload any photos to the link provided.

**Note: please only share photos of children if their parents or carers have consented to this.**



# Activity 6

## Past, Present, and Future (Home Learning Activity)

### Plan

The aim is to encourage children to think about what childhood was like in the past, what it is like today, and what it might be like in the future. This activity allows children to talk to parents, carers, grandparents or teachers about what childhood used to be like, so it can be done at home or at school. It could include pictures, drawings and/or writing.

### Deliver

Select a theme for each class/group completing this activity using the themes on page 5. Ask the children to think of two to three questions for each theme.

They might want to ask parents, carers or grandparents what childhood used to be like.

Relating to their chosen theme, ask children to draw or write about what childhood used to be like, what it is like now, and what they would want childhood to be like in 2040.

Encourage them to be creative by suggesting they use whichever medium they are most comfortable with – whether that's drawing, painting, writing, or making collages. If possible, encourage them to write a description or some words to help us understand their vision.

For older groups, you might want to discuss the following questions as a group once they have completed the activity:

- What would need to happen so that every child could have the experiences we have talked about?
- Is there anything we can do now to help make this happen in the future?

After the activity, please send the completed worksheets back to Save the Children using the stamped addressed envelope provided. If children would like to keep their worksheets, please send us a photocopy.

### About the activity

#### Age and ability:

Suitable for children aged 7-11

#### Preparation time:

10 minutes

#### Delivery time:

30-60 minutes

#### Resources required:

- Worksheet divided into three columns – Past / Present / Future
- Pens/colouring pencils

Past	Present	Future



# The Future of Childhood



**Save the  
Children**