



**Rock Buddies:** a great way to introduce den building and imaginative/creative play!

**Suitable for any age-** I have used these with nursery age children, primary, secondary and adults as well as family groups.

**How to introduce them-** you might hide them in a 'crater' in the woods and tell the group aliens have landed in the woods. You may hide them around the boundary of your site for the group to find, perhaps with their name on a card by their rock buddy. You could introduce them as a family and discuss with the group what they may need to survive in the woods, this can lead to a myriad of activities...

For example, with one group (8-12yrs), we introduced rock buddies and they created a whole village. They coordinated an election for the council to manage the settlement (democratic of course!) and then the leaders introduced the idea of a road being built through the wood and their settlement. The children then planned a protest campaign to save their village and the woodland, generating brilliant discussion regarding the environment and the impact of development on communities and the wider area.



#### **What do I need to make a rock buddy?**

- Rocks! We prefer smooth ones, you can buy really nice smooth pebbles from stores such as B and Q or you can forage for them in nature.
- Goggly, boggly eyes
- Super glue (you really need superglue to fix the eyes on otherwise they fall off).

To make: glue the eyes on! Be careful to not get the glue all over you. Adults should make these.



Top tips: always have a few spare in your pocket for the session as children loose them! We've found that people like to take their rock buddies home, so be prepared for this. It's a great way for them to continue reviewing their experience and to remake their dens etc in the garden.

If a rock buddy looses an eye, we have found that children like making patches and eye slings or building hospitals in the woods!