

# Lala's Journey Activities

## Sample of Curriculum

Register to receive the full curriculum and training! Contact [Home@FirstAidfortheSoul.org](mailto:Home@FirstAidfortheSoul.org).

### Session 1: Knots are normal

Materials & Equipment	Preparation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paper for journals or coloring</li> <li>• Pens/pencils for coloring</li> <li>• Snacks (suggestion: high in protein, low in sugar)</li> <li>• Attendance Sheet and stickers</li> <li>• String or jump ropes</li> <li>• String or more jump ropes for final activity</li> <li>• Whiteboard for journal prompts (optional)</li> <li>• Props for the goodbye song (if using).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set out supplies for free drawing time (blank paper or journal covers).</li> <li>• Cut pieces of string 20cm long so each member of the group can be given one.</li> <li>• Prepare larger tangled and knotted balls of string (1m length of string for every 2 people in the group. Each tangle should contain a maximum of 6 pieces of string. If the group is larger (more than 12) use multiple bundles. Make sure both ends of each piece of string can be reached).</li> <li>• Print out image of knots (Appendix B).</li> <li>• Decide if sharing a personal story (see Learning and Reflection, below).</li> <li>• If using journals, write out prompts on a whiteboard.</li> <li>• Choose whether to use a goodbye song and prepare anything you might need for the song (e.g. words printed, music).</li> </ul>

#### C1: Introduction and The Name Game

The purpose of this beginning part is to help children feel comfortable by helping them engage with the teachers and each other.

If you do not already know the children in attendance, or if they do not know all of the leaders, consider spending an additional week at the beginning getting to know each other. See the website for ideas, or write to [home@FirstAidfortheSoul.org](mailto:home@FirstAidfortheSoul.org).

Lay out drawing/coloring materials (blank paper or journal covers). As the children arrive, invite them to draw/color.

Welcome the group. Enjoy a snack together. If helpful, take attendance. (Use the Attendance Sheet in Appendix X or make your own.)

- Let's all **stand** in a circle.
- **Think** of something you like or like to do and couple that word with your name e.g. *Dancing Melissa, Pony Kate*.
- Now **introduce** yourself with your name combination.

*Do several rounds of this, making sure everyone gets a turn. Repeat each week if desired.*

*Idea: Turn this into a memory game by adding a bean bag or ball. Have them toss it to each other by saying each other's word + name combination before throwing it.*

*Grounding: Finish game time with a breathing or stabilizing exercise from Appendix C.*

### C2: "Lala's Journey," Chapter One

- **Listen** to this story about a girl named Lala.
- **What kinds of feelings did Lala have about her journey so far?**
- **What kinds of ways did Lala's experiences affect her?** Look back at the story for clues if you need to.

*(Some extra comments for discussion, if needed):*

- Most people who have experienced sad and challenging circumstances struggle for a while afterwards.
- It can be very difficult to move on from the events, and recovering can take time. Did you know? Painful and scary experiences can affect our minds, our hearts and our bodies.

### C3: Jump Rope

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Take</b> your piece of string and try to <b>tie</b> a simple knot in it.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Give each child a piece of string. Use jump ropes if possible.</i></p> <p><i>As children are tying knots, describe:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When you tie a knot, you take the ends of the string on a journey.</li> <li>• Because of the journey the string takes, looping in and out, and up and down, it becomes tied up resulting in a knot. This is the expected outcome. It is normal.</li> <li>• In a similar way when we have been through certain journeys, aspects of our life can become knotted too. When we face a painful or frightening situation we are like a piece of string being looped around. A knot is the usual result of these journeys.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Look</b> at the knot in your string. Can you <b>trace</b> its journey with your finger?</li> <li>• Now, <b>look</b> at this picture of many kinds of knots. Are some more complicated than others?</li> <li>• Try <b>tying</b> two of the complicated knots, or you can make up your own.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Give enough time for the group to finish tying knots in their string.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When you're done, <b>hold</b> up your piece of string. <b>Look</b> at the knots each of you have tied. Some knots may be big and complicated. The one you tied before is probably smaller and simpler. Some knots can easily come loose and others are more difficult to untie.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Discuss:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The knots created through a hard journey like Lala's can also be difficult. They can affect different parts of our lives. Sometimes they come loose over time, and other times we may need help to untie them.</li> <li>• Sometimes, Lala might feel like there is a knot in her mind. She keeps thinking of the same situation over and over. She might have trouble sleeping or have nightmares.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>What do you think one of Lala’s friends said to her when she was feeling this way?</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>Allow any children to respond who want to.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Here’s what one friend said to her, “Do not worry if you are having these experiences. It does not mean there is something wrong with you.” Remember, a knot like this in your mind is the natural outcome of the journey you have taken, just like a knot in a jump rope. Many other people have had the same experience.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Look</b> back at your string. Let’s <b>untie</b> the simple knot. <b>Notice</b> the journey the end of the string takes. <b>See</b> how some parts come loose easily and others take more effort. As you untie the knot <b>remember</b>, knots are normal. You are not alone. Others have been on this journey before you.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Give time for the group to untie the simple knot.</i></p> <p><i>Then say:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sometimes a knot is more complicated. It can affect the way we think and feel too. Like Lala, some may find it hard to concentrate. Some feel anxious or guilty or sad. Others have trouble sleeping or have pain in their body for no reason. All of these feelings can be a normal result of the painful events.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lala isn’t the only person who has felt this way. <b>Untie</b> the second of the knots in your string.</li> <li>• <b>What did Lala do with the knot in her jump rope?</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>Give time for the group to untie the second knot.</i></p> <p><i>Then say:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knots are normal. And sometimes they take time to untangle.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let’s <b>use</b> our jump ropes with one knot left in it – let’s <b>jump</b> and <b>have fun!</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lala learned she could live with a knot still in her jump rope. It was not enough to stop her from doing what she wanted to do next.</li> </ul> <p><i>Give the group time to jump rope.</i></p>
<p>OPTIONAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let’s <b>sit</b> back down and <b>look</b> at our knots. <b>Take</b> one end of string from a leader.</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Look</b> at the knots in your string. With your finger, try to <b>follow</b> the route the string takes through the knot. Sometimes a knot can seem to be just a confusing tangle.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To tie a knot, the string has to go through a journey, and to untie a knot the string has to go through another journey too. Sometimes, when the knot is so tight that we need help untangling it. It's the same way in life, we often need each other!</li> </ul> <p><i>Hand out the bigger tangled pieces of string or jump rope (see "Preparation") making sure each child starts off holding the end of a piece of string. Involve leaders if possible.</i></p> <p><i>Give time for the group to try to trace the route of their piece of string through the tangle.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maybe it seems like the knot never ends, but let's see if we can figure it out. As a group, <b>work</b> together to <b>untangle</b> and <b>untie</b> the knots in your piece of string.</li> <li>• <b>How many people did it take to untangle that big knot?</b></li> <li>• We can help each other with the knots in our lives!</li> </ul>	<p><i>Give the group time to untangle their piece of string.</i></p>
<p>C4: Reflection</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>What do YOU want to remember about knots in life?</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>Have a leader tell a story about a knot in their life, choosing one that will be an example of living with a knot, or seeing a knot resolved. Avoid sharing about something too painful for the children to hear about.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each week we will write down a truth that we learn from Lala. <b>What is a good sentence to use for this lesson?</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>Create a sentence together or use: "Knots are normal." Write the sentence on the board.</i></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Who are the people that can help you with the knots in your life?</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>Remember, every knot is the normal outcome of things we go through in life. We can learn to live with the knots and untie them, one knot at a time.</i></p>
<p>OPTIONAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let's <b>write</b> in our journals! <b>Choose</b> something to write in your journal to remember today's lesson.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Prompts for journaling:</i></p> <p><u>Write:</u> <i>Our truth of the day.</i></p> <p><u>Answer:</u> <i>What do I want to do about knots that happen in my life?</i></p> <p><u>Draw</u> <i>a picture of someone who helps you with the knots of life.</i></p> <p><u>Draw:</u> <i>A picture of myself, like Lala, jumping rope.</i></p>
<p>***C5: Closure A closing song, chant, gesture serves as a sort of bonding ritual, allowing everything to tie up and end well. It could include the journaling, above, as a regular way of summarizing.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let's <b>sing</b> our good-bye song together, <b>learning</b> and <b>doing</b> the actions that go with it.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Pick a goodbye song or theme song to sing each week that has motions. Teach to children.</i></p> <p><i>Thank everyone for coming and participating. Share the date of the next session.</i></p>