



Nerf guns, water pistols etc.

There is no official policy from the Methodist Church on the use of nerf guns, water pistols or any other toy guns as part of a game in a youth group setting.

Here are some suggestions that may be helpful going forward:

- Suggest to leaders that there should be an awareness of, and sensitivity regarding, the emotive language of 'gun' or 'war'. And maybe other words would be more appropriate to use in this context.
- Ask people to think about the style and nature of the games they are playing, perhaps changing the context to a quest or challenge, not the context of war and killing.
- Encourage setting ground rules for using nerf guns or similar, so that there is a shared understanding of context and what is appropriate, as well as recognition that certain attitudes or behaviour with the guns are not appropriate.
- Make sure the young people understand the context of the challenge, quest or game and the reasons why they are playing in this context. And when games are played using Nerf Guns or similar, make it clear that the game and the use of guns isn't in the context of pretend war or violence.
- Leaders could use this as an opportunity to lead the group into a facilitated discussion about violence, war and guns in society and the impact of this on communities. The Quakers have a really interesting resource called [Teach Peace Pack](#).