Punch and Judy Play About Going to the Doctor: Punch Gets a Check-up

Punch has a cough but won't go to the doctor for anything, until the doctor explains each step first and Punch gets to listen to a heartbeat himself.

Age
from about 3 years

Time
about 7 minutes, about 15 minutes with the talk afterwards

Puppets
3 hand puppets: Punch, Judy, Doctor

Materials
a scarf for Punch, a toy stethoscope, a lolly stick or wooden spatula

Getting ready

1 person: Punch on your right hand, Judy and the Doctor one after the other on your left. With two people, the second person plays Judy and the Doctor.

Roles

Punch
has a cold and a cough and is scared of going to the doctor

Judy
Punch's friend, goes with him and gives him courage

Doctor
kind and calm, explains everything before doing it

What you need

- ✓ scarf for Punch
- ✓ toy stethoscope
- ✓ lolly stick or wooden spatula

Getting ready

Wrap the scarf round Punch's neck before the show starts. Hang the stethoscope round the Doctor's neck or put it behind the stage within easy reach, along with the lolly stick.

Tips for the performance

1. The Doctor can just as well be a woman. Simply change 'he' to 'she' in the stage directions.
2. The Doctor speaks calmly and slowly; Punch starts off croaky and nervous and is back to his lively self by the end.
3. Where the children join in (feeling their heartbeat, saying 'Aaah', breathing deeply), give them time. These moments carry the play.
4. If a child has a doctor's appointment coming up or has just had one, Punch can try out that very check-up. Ask the child beforehand whether they'd like that.
5. Don't promise anything in the play that might be different at a real doctor's. That's why the Doctor is honest that an injection hurts for a moment.

Script

Stage directions are in grey. The children's calls are suggestions: every answer is welcome.

Punch comes up slowly, a scarf round his neck.

Punch: *(croakily)* Hip, hop, hooray … *(coughs)* Is everybody here today?

Children: *Yeees!*

Punch: Shh, not so loud. My throat hurts. *(coughs)* And my nose is running. Atishoo!

Judy comes in.

Judy: Punch! You've been coughing all morning. You need to see the doctor.

Punch: The doctor? No, no, no! I'm not poorly at all. *(coughs)* That was … a laugh. Ha. Ha. *(coughs)*

Judy: Children, was that a laugh?

Children: *Nooo!*

Judy: See? So why don't you want to go to the doctor?

Punch: *(quietly)* Because I don't know what he'll do to me. Maybe he'll give me a jab. Or he'll look in my ears and find something in there!

Judy: Are you scared, Punch?

Punch: Me? Scared? *(looks at the children)* A tiny bit. All right, a big tiny bit.

Judy: Children, have you ever been to the doctor? What did the doctor do?

Let the children tell her. Judy picks up on some of the answers: 'The doctor listened to your chest? With one of those tubes?'

Judy: Hear that, Punch? The children have all been to the doctor. And now here they are, sitting happily on the carpet.

Punch: Hmm. Will you come with me, Judy?

Judy: Of course. I'll wait outside for you. And if there's something you don't know, just ask the doctor.

Judy goes off. Punch looks around nervously.

Punch: *(whispers)* Children, maybe I'd better hide. Then the doctor won't find me.

Punch ducks down behind the stage. The Doctor comes in with the stethoscope round his neck.

Doctor: Hello! I'm looking for Punch. He's got a nasty cough. Children, have you seen Punch?

The children usually point straight away. If not, Punch coughs behind the stage.

Children: *Down there! He's hiding!*

Doctor: Hello, Punch? It's all right, you can come out.

Punch peeps out halfway, ducks back down and then comes all the way up.

Punch: Will it hurt?

Doctor: I'll make you a promise: I'll always tell you first what I'm going to do. And you can ask me anything. Is that a deal?

Punch: It's a deal. *(points at the stethoscope)* What's that? A telephone?

Doctor: Nearly. It's a stethoscope. I use it to listen to your heart beating and to your breathing.

Punch: *(talks into the stethoscope)* Hello? Hello, heart? Are you there?

Let the children laugh.

Doctor: *(laughs)* You don't talk into it, you listen with it. May I?

The Doctor holds the stethoscope to Punch's chest.

Doctor: I can hear it. Ba-dum, ba-dum. Children, put a hand on your chest. Can you feel your heart too?

Let the children feel and quietly say it along.

Children: *Ba-dum, ba-dum.*

Doctor: Now take a big breath in, Punch … and out again.

The children breathe along.

Punch: That didn't hurt at all!

Doctor: Now I'm going to look in your throat. I'll use this little wooden stick. It might tickle your tongue a bit. Open wide and say: Aaah!

Punch: Aaah!

Doctor: Children, will you help Punch? All together: Aaah!

Children: *Aaaah!*

Doctor: Your throat is red. You've caught a cold, Punch.

Punch: *(trembling)* And now it's time for the injection?

Doctor: Not today. For your throat you need a warm drink with honey, your scarf and lots of sleep.

Punch: And what if I need an injection one day?

Doctor: Then I'll tell you first. It hurts for a moment, and then it's over. And you can hold Judy's hand while it happens.

Punch: That's good. *(thinks)* Doctor, can I have a listen too?

Doctor: Of course. *(holds the stethoscope out to Punch)*

Punch: *(listens)* Ba-dum! Doctor, your heart's beating too!

Doctor: Of course it is. Doctors have hearts too. Get well soon, Punch! Goodbye, children!

Children: *Goodbye!*

The Doctor goes off. Judy comes back.

Judy: Well, Punch? How was it?

Punch: Judy, the doctor explained everything! He looked in my throat, and I got to listen to his heart!

Judy: Were you still scared?

Punch: At the start, yes. Then not any more. Children, do you know what helped me?

Let the children answer: asking questions, Judy came too, the doctor explained everything first.

Punch: Now we're going home to make a warm drink with honey. Bye-bye, children! *(coughs)* Oops. That one really was a cough!

Children: *Bye-bye, Punch!*

After the show: questions for the children

- What was Punch scared of?
- What did the doctor do so that Punch wasn't scared any more?
- What helps you when you're scared of something?
- Who would like to be the doctor and listen to Punch's heart with the stethoscope?

Suitable puppets: Punch and Judy from a set of traditional glove puppets; for the Doctor, any human hand puppet will do if you drape a white fabric coat over it.
Traditional glove puppets at Daliono

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