



Growing stronger together

Activity
book
5-12 years

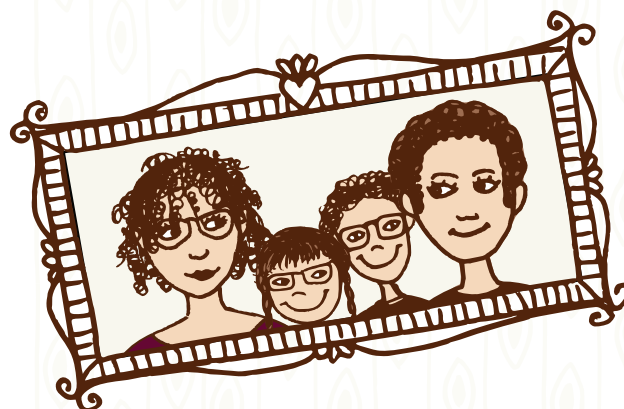
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Health New Zealand
Te Whatu Ora

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For the grown-ups

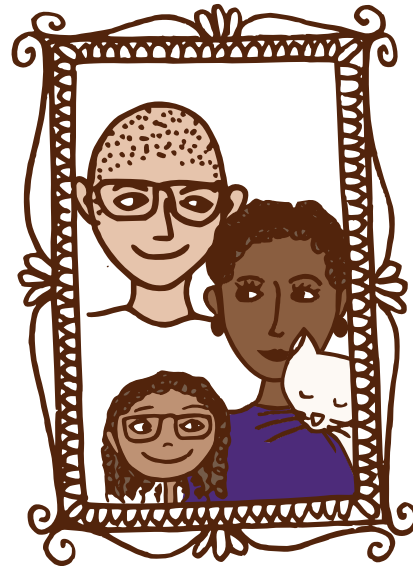
This activity book was developed for children whose parents are physically or mentally ill.

Examples of physical illness may include:

- Diabetes
- Heart problems
- Recovery from surgery
- Brain tumour
- Long-term health problems, e.g. thyroid disease
- Auto immune disease

Examples of mental illness may include:

- Depression, including postnatal depression
- Anxiety
- Bipolar disorder
- Post-traumatic stress disorder
- It can be very hard for children when a parent is ill. Most children don't understand much about illness. Children who don't understand illness can feel anxious, scared, stressed or angry. This activity book is meant to be shared by a parent (or other caregiver) and their child.

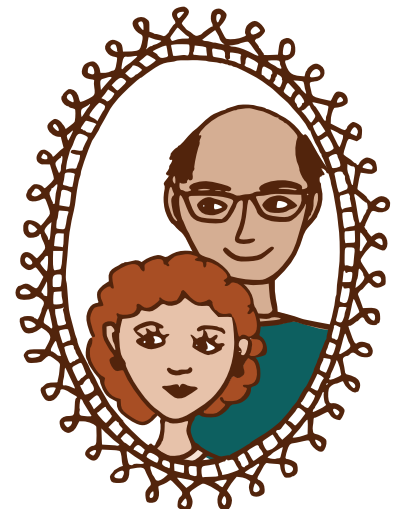


It aims to help parents and their children to:

- Talk about being ill
- Talk about feelings
- Find ways to reduce the intensity of uncomfortable feelings
- Build strong relationships
- Problem solve together
- Have a stronger sense of hope

The activity book includes information, interactive questions, fun activities and tools to deal with the impact of parent/caregiver's illness on their children.

Please see pages 41 and 42 on how to make the best use of this activity booklet.





About me

Draw or paste a picture of yourself here

A large, hand-drawn style frame made of thick brown lines. The frame is rectangular with rounded corners and a decorative, wavy border. A blue arrow points from the top right corner of the frame towards the center of the page.

My name is

.....

All about



I am

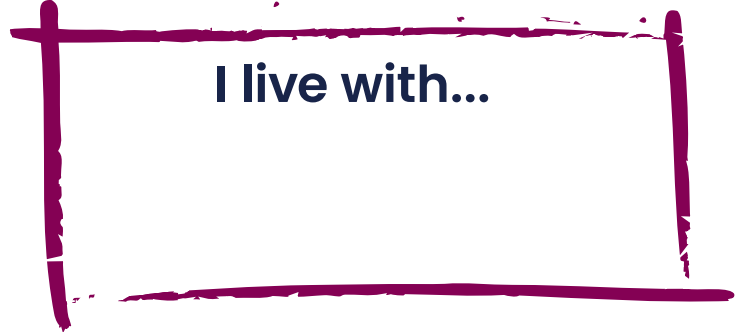


years old

My friends are...



I live with...



I like to watch...



My favourite

- Colour:
- Food:
- Book:
- Animal:



My favourite things to do are...



When I grow up I want to...



I am good at...

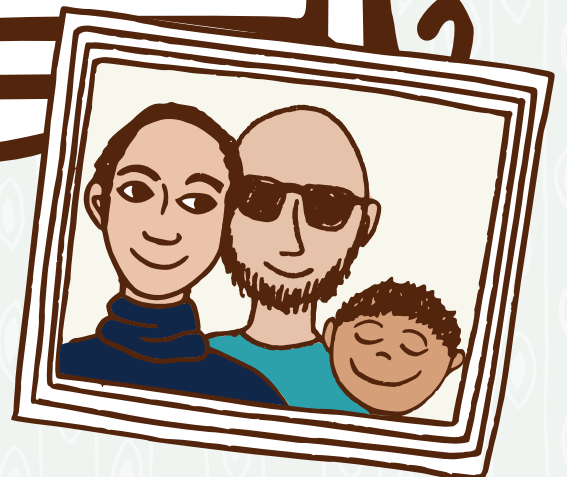
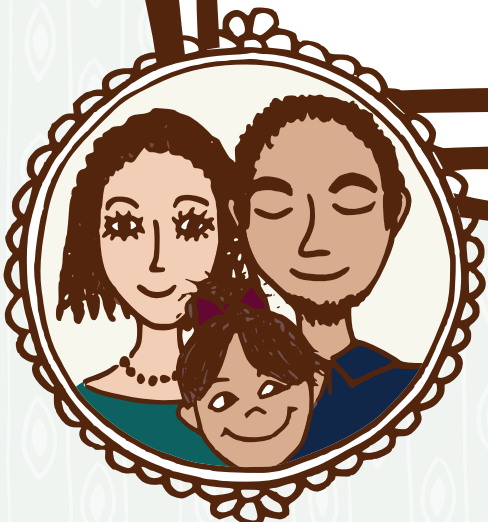


My family/whānau

Draw a picture of your family

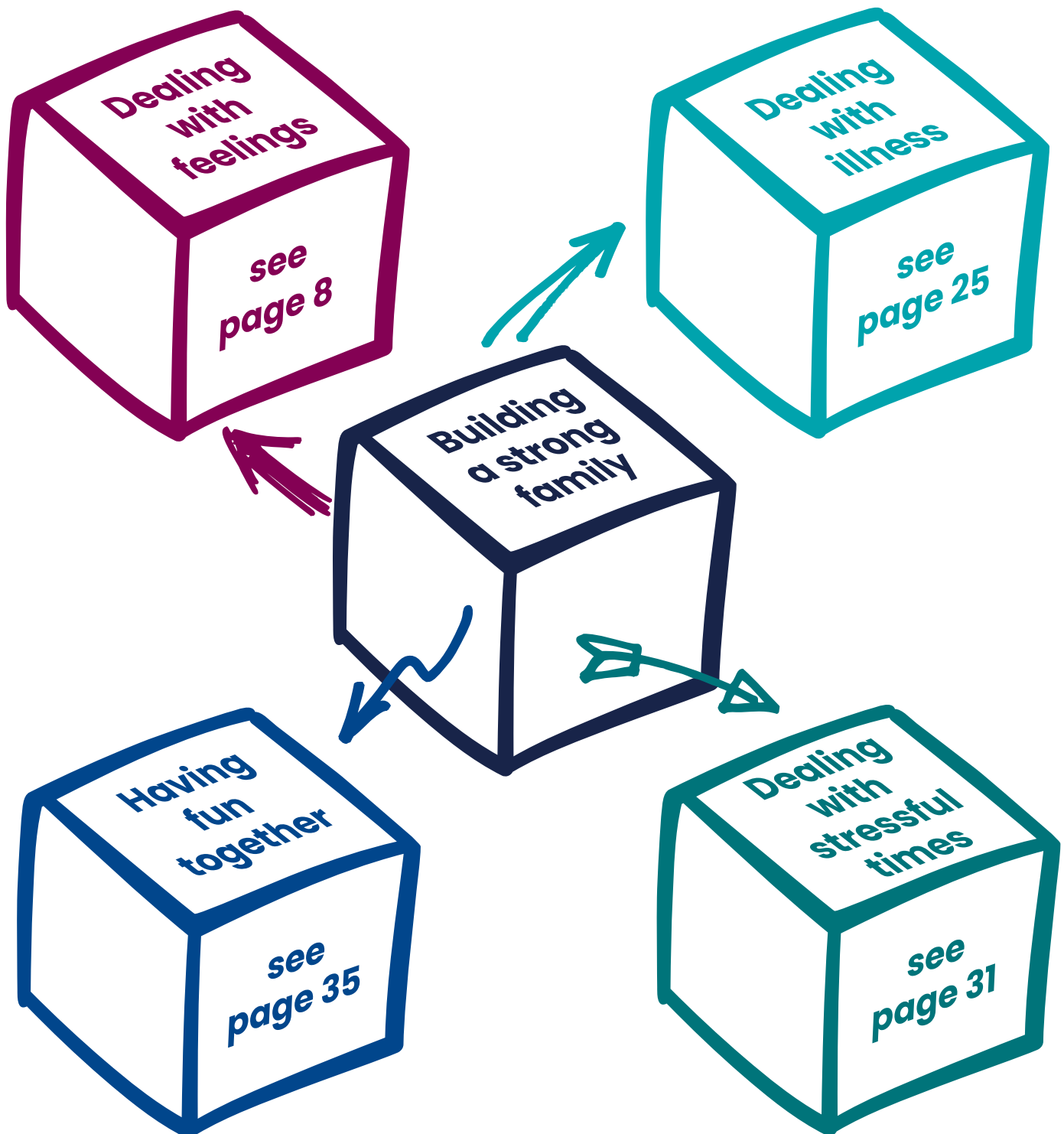
Tip for parents/
caregivers

Praise and
encourage the
child's ideas and
creativity. Do not
expect perfection!



Building blocks to have a strong family

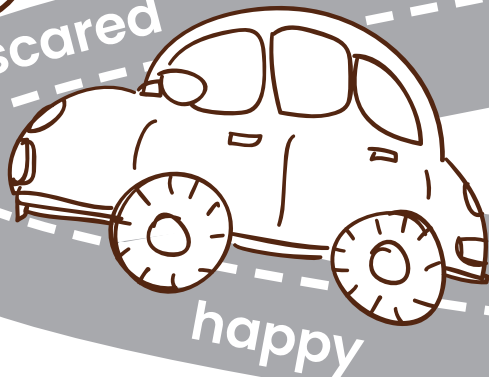
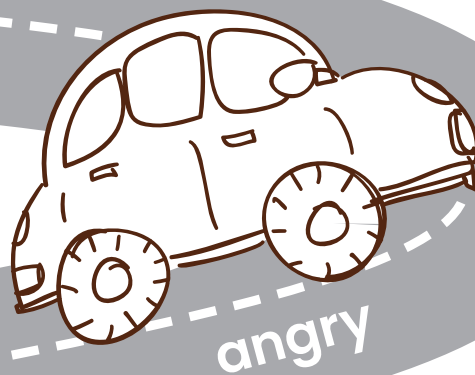
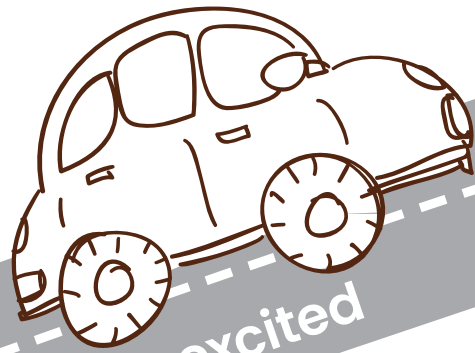
This activity book includes 4 building blocks to build a strong family:



1. Dealing with feelings

Colour the cars that describe some of the feelings you had during the last week.

Tip for parents/caregivers
Thinking about how you like to be treated when you are upset or worried will help you to understand your child's needs better.



Word search

Find and circle the following 'feeling' words
(the letters must be in touching boxes):

afraid loved unhappy
angry mad worried happy
excited scared sad

a	s	w	r	f	s	h	a
f	r	o	o	s	c	h	n
r	g	r	i	m	a	d	g
a	u	r	a	w	r	e	r
i	n	i	c	i	e	t	y
d	h	e	l	v	d	i	p
s	a	d	o	x	l	c	p
k	p	o	v	u	s	x	a
a	p	a	e	h	l	e	h
b	y	s	d	v	a	e	d

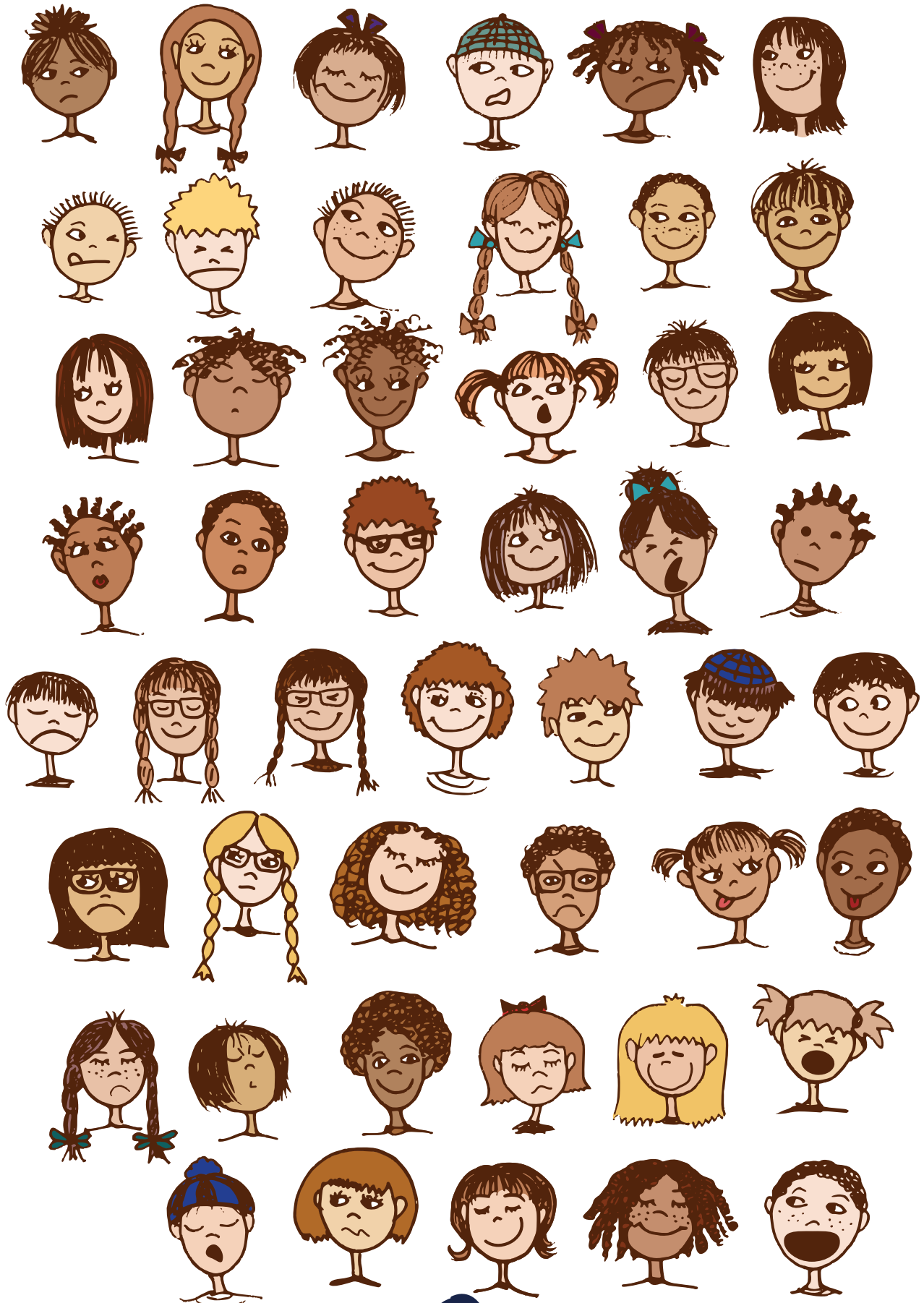


Your happy place

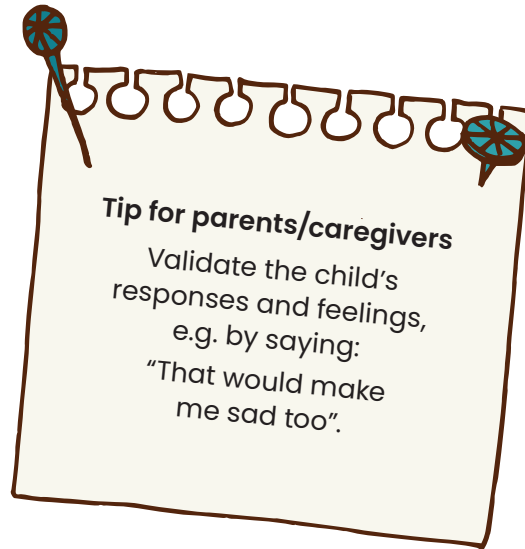
Make a drawing of your happy place:

A large, irregularly shaped white area with a thick brown border, intended for drawing. The border is hand-drawn and wavy, giving it a sketchy, artistic feel. The area is completely blank, providing space for the user to draw their 'happy place'.

Circle the faces that show how you are feeling



What happens when people are unhappy or sad?



They cry

They don't smile

They feel horrible inside



Things that make me unhappy or sad

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Things that I can do to make me happier

1. Play with a friend
2. Do a puzzle
3. Colouring
4. Talk to a grown-up about what makes you sad
5. Sing
6. Read

7.
8.
9.
10.
11.
12.
13.
14.



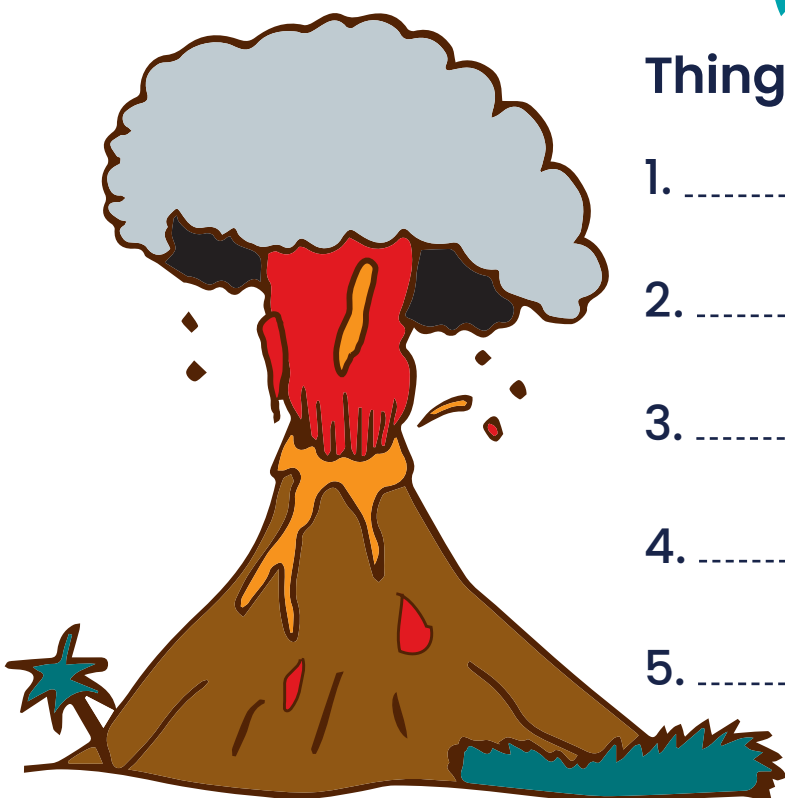
Feeling angry

Everybody gets angry sometimes. Anger can feel like a volcano inside you.

Sometimes kids get so angry that they do things that are not OK.

Yes, some kids scream, slam doors, break or throw things and hit the wall or someone else.

We can use our brain to think of helpful things to do with all that anger energy instead.



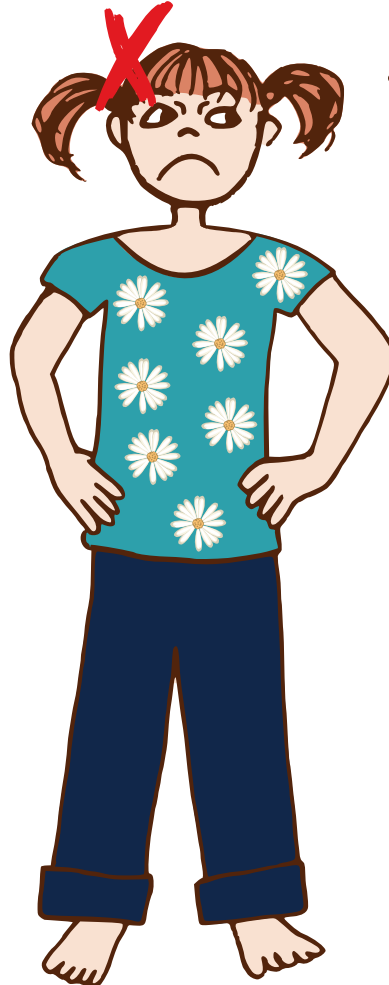
Things that make me angry

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Where in your body do you usually feel anger?

Show the area and write down what you feel

e.g. head feels dizzy



**Tip for parents/
caregivers**
Acknowledge the
child's feelings, for
example, say: "You are
very upset that you
cannot go to
your friend now."

When I get angry I...

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Things you can do when you are angry

Underline the things that you could do when you are angry. What else could you do?

Do physical activities:

- Play outside
- Play with a ball
- Do sport
- Dance
- Jump up and down



Talk to someone:

- Tell someone what is making you angry.
- Put your feelings into words. For example, say: "I feel angry when I need to stop watching TV and go to bed."

Other things I could do:

1.
2.
3.
4.

Feeling worried

Kids sometimes get worried about things.

When kids are worried:

- They feel nervous or scared
- Their heart beats faster
- Their stomach feels strange or sore



Things that I worry about:

1.
2.
3.

When you are worried:

1. Let someone know how you feel
2. Ask for help
3. Breath in and out slowly
4. Drink cold water
5.
6.



Feeling scared

Everyone feels scared sometimes.



When kids feel scared:

- Their heart beats loud and fast
- Their body trembles and shakes
- They feel like hiding in a safe place
- They want to run away

What are you afraid of?

1.
2.
3.

When I feel scared, I...

1.
2.
3.

A callout box with a scalloped top edge and a blue pushpin on the left side. It contains text providing advice for parents and caregivers.

Tip for parents/caregivers
Resist the temptation to make things better by minimising feelings, e.g. do not say: "There is no reason to be scared." Rather help your child to label feelings by saying: "You are very scared because you don't know what will happen."

What makes me feel better when I am scared?

- Telling someone I am scared
- A hug
- Ask/yell out for help

1.

2.

3.



Puzzle

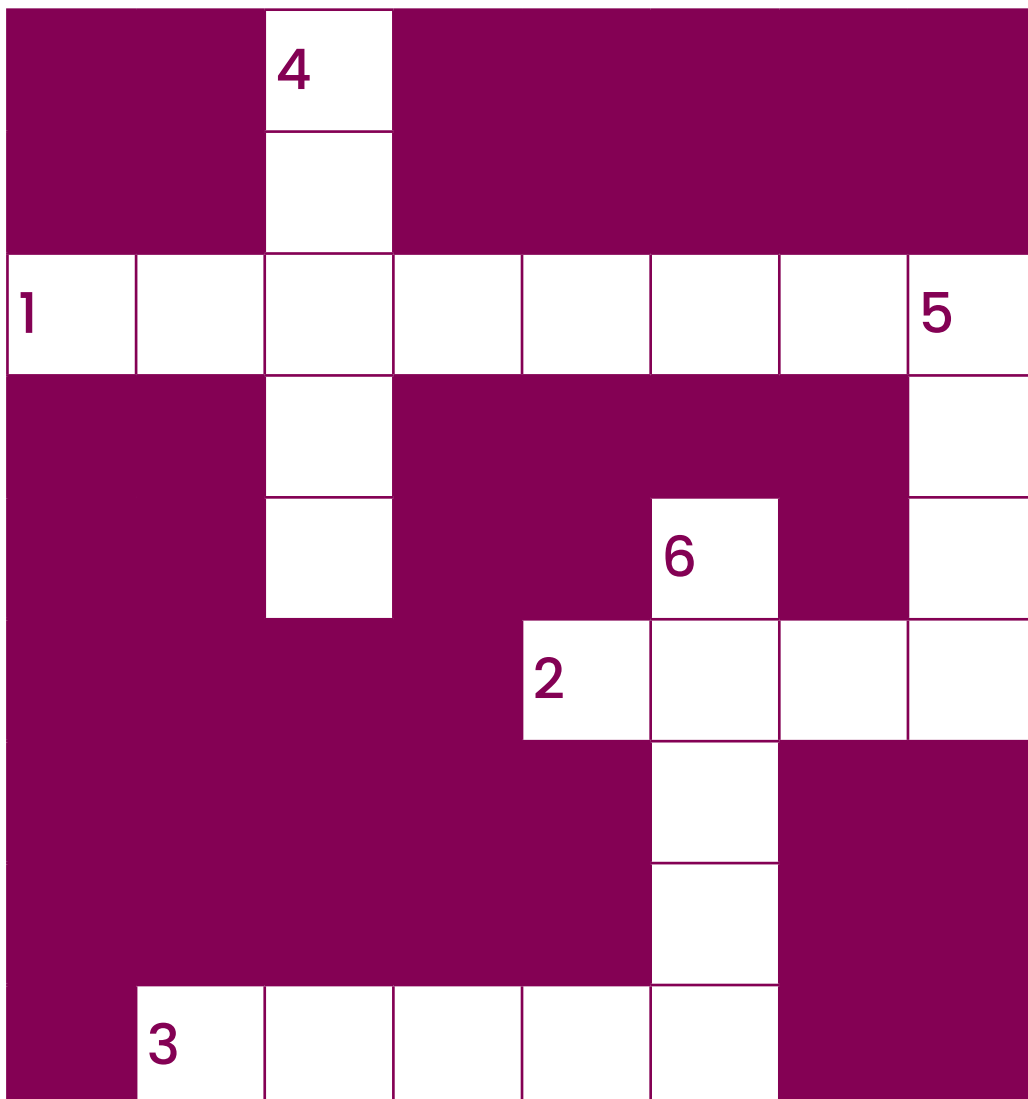
Complete the crossword puzzle.

Across:

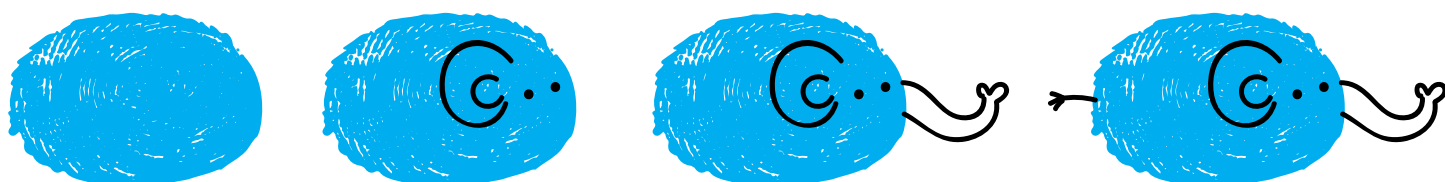
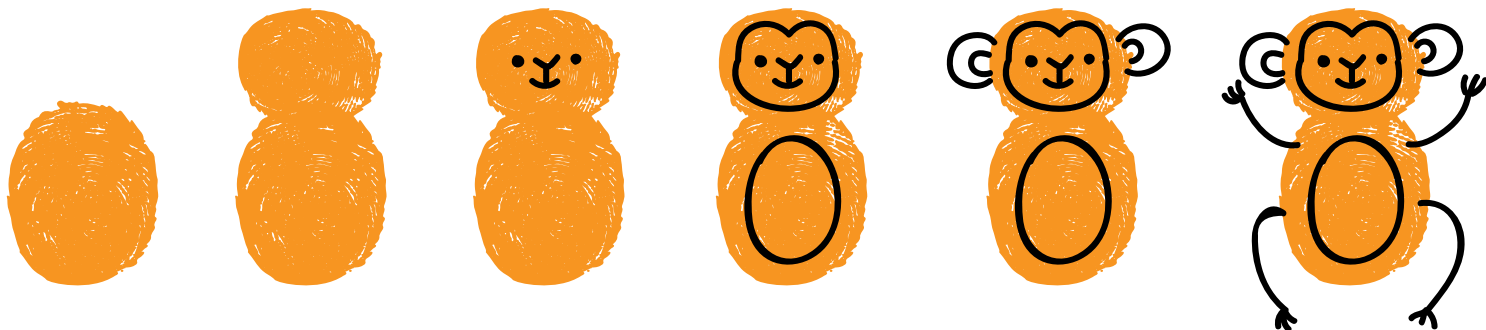
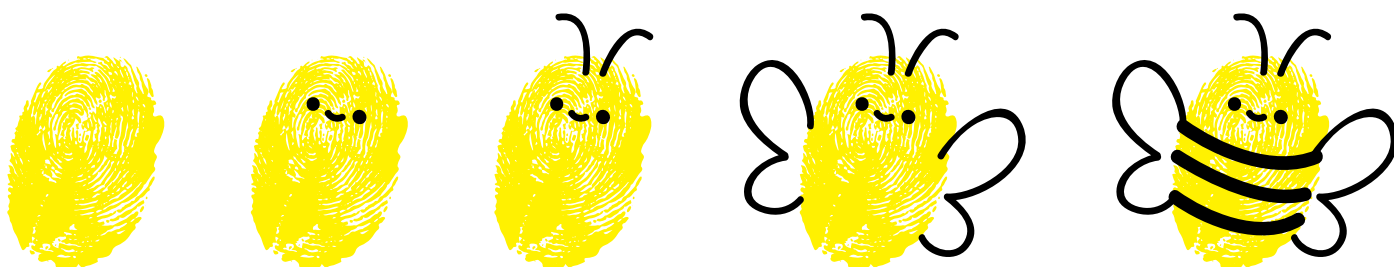
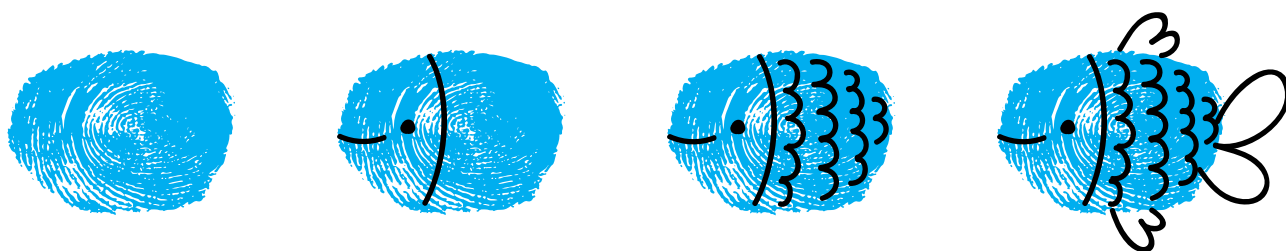
1. It helps to talk about my f_ _ _ _ _ when I am sad.
2. It helps to t_ _ _ to someone when I am scared.
3. I w_ _ _y when the wind blows very strong.

Down:

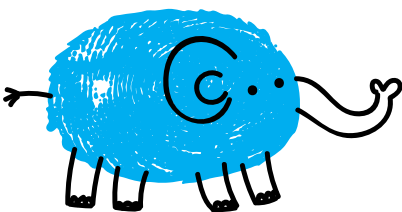
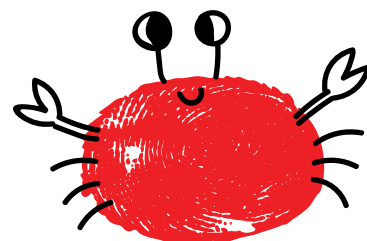
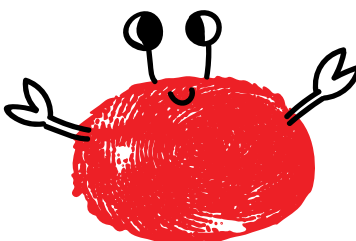
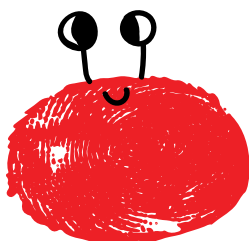
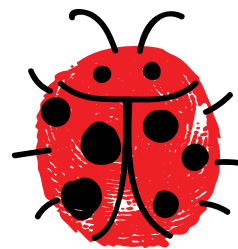
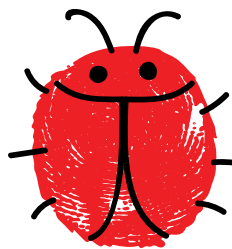
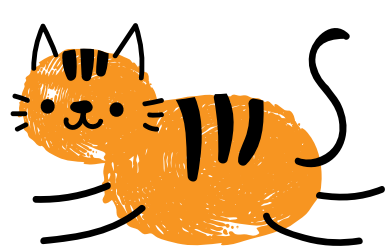
4. I s_ _ _ _ when I feel tired.
5. I feel sad when someone in my family is s_ _ _.
6. I smile when I am h _ _ _y.



FINGERPRINT ART

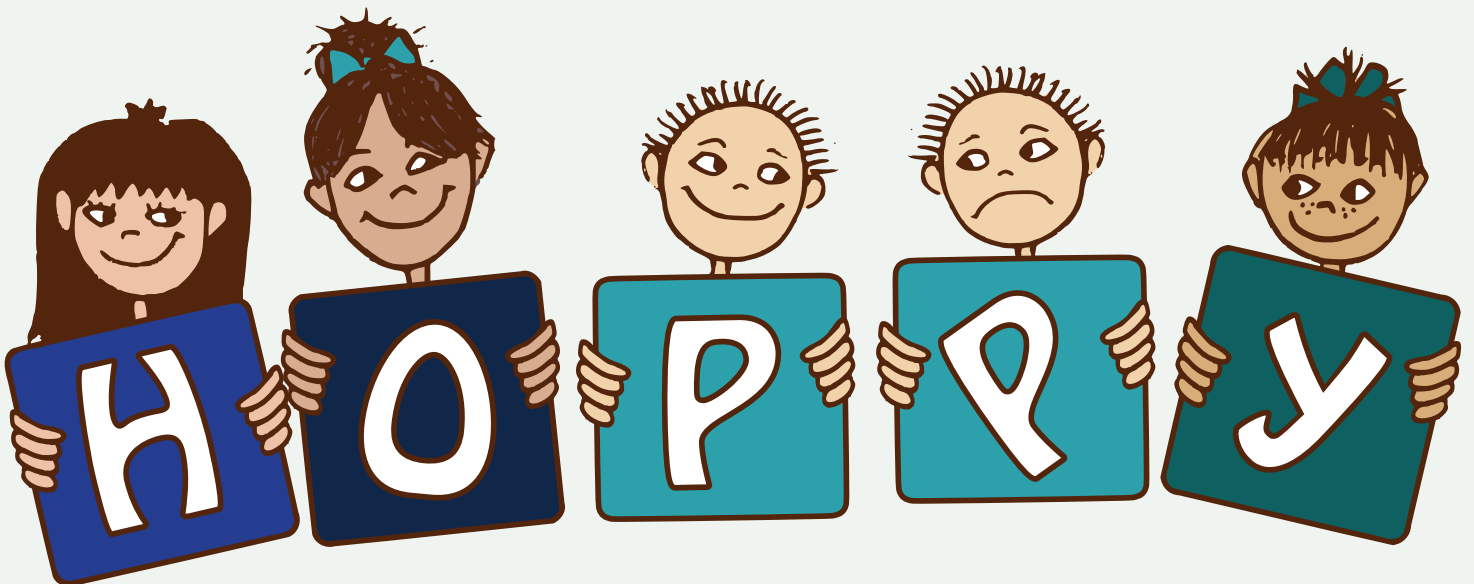
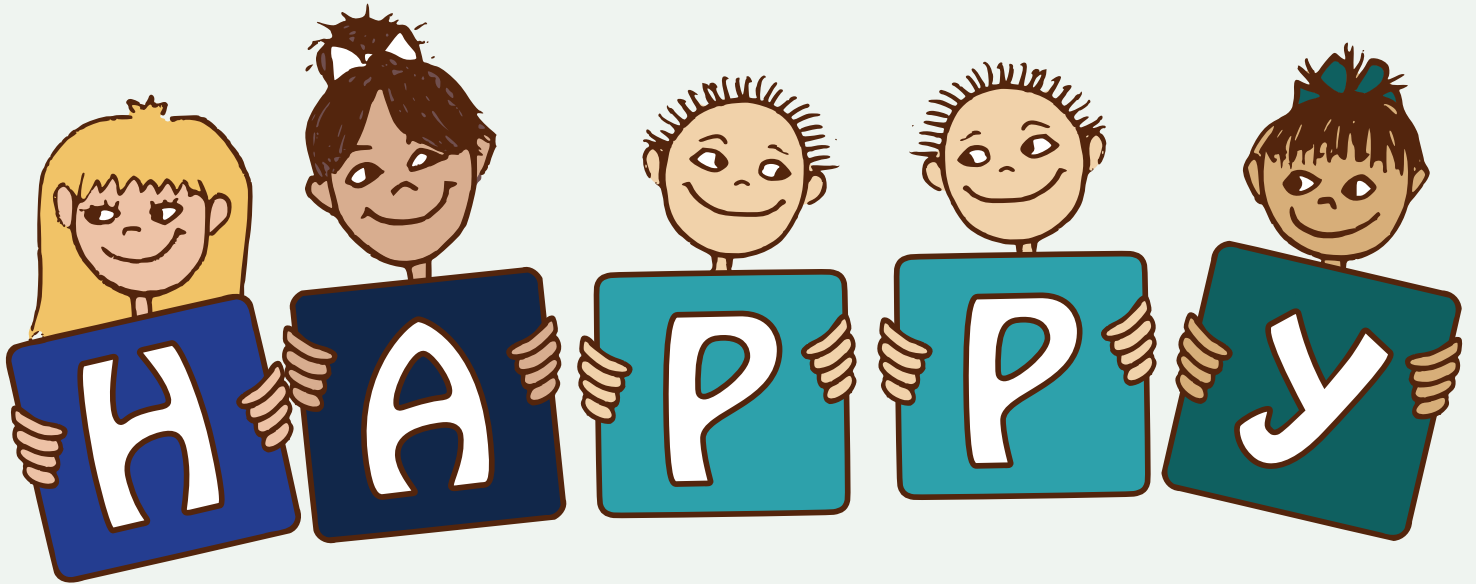


Follow the steps



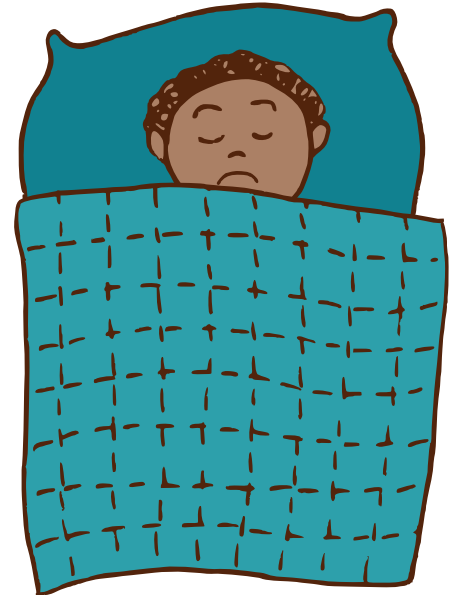
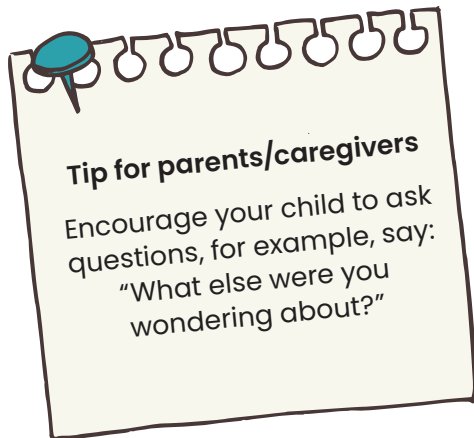
Spot the differences

Circle 7 differences



2. Dealing with illness

Not everyone feels or acts the same when they are sick. Some people get angry; some are quiet and others just want to be left alone.



Complete the following sentences:

When I am ill, I feel...

.....

When the person who looks after me is ill they feel

.....

When the person who looks after me is ill, I feel

.....

The person who looks after me has an illness called

.....

What I know about their illness:



What I want to know about their illness:

The treatment they get for their illness:

Other help they get for the illness:

Things I find hard when is ill

How many cats can you count?

Tip for parents/caregivers
Do not jump to conclusions.
Ask more questions to get a
better understanding of what
the child means.



Plan for when the person who looks after me is ill

Who will take care of me?

.....

Who could I talk to?

.....

Who will prepare food?

.....

Who will take me to kindy, school or daycare?

.....

Who will take me to the doctor when I am sick?

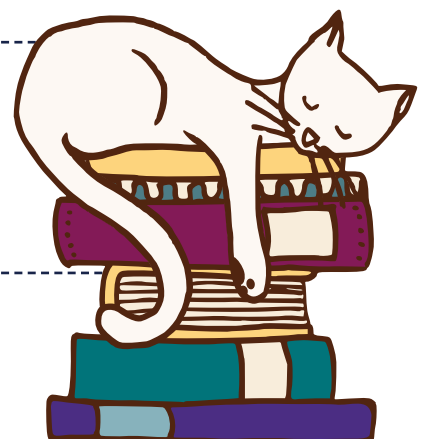
.....

Who will help me with my homework?

.....

Who will read books for me at night?

.....



Spot the dog...



3. Dealing with stressful times

What is stress?

People can feel very uncomfortable, worried and sad when things are not going well in their lives. This is called stress.

I get stressed when:



.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

My body can feel stress in lots of different ways. Some are listed below. **What else can you think of?**

dizzy

struggling to sleep

headache

weak muscles

feeling cold

eat a lot or not much

tense muscles

racing heart

feeling warm

stomach pain

sweaty

tired

shaking

Below is a list of feelings that you get when you are stressed. What else do you feel? **Write them in the boxes.**

nervous

upset

angry

lonely

**When I am stressed my thinking changes.
Underline the ways you sometimes feel:**

I feel stupid

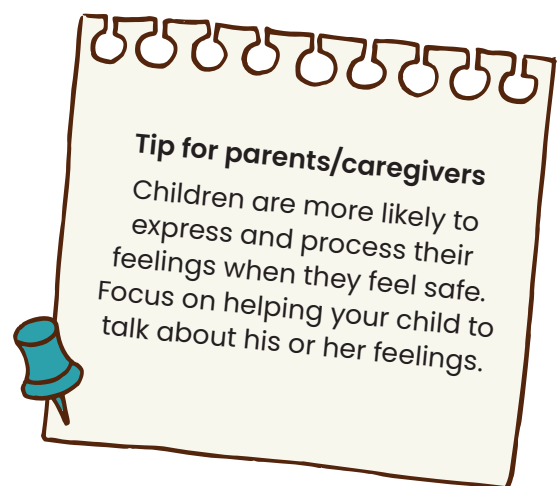
It's hard to concentrate

It's hard to listen

I don't want to talk

I can't think clearly

I forget things



What to do about stressful times

Here are things that you could do during stressful times. **What else could you do?**

1. Blow bubbles
 2. Sing or dance
 3. Play with a ball
 4. Play with your toy
 5. Play with a pet
 6. Never give up
 7. Run or jump
 8. Talk to someone
 9. Make a drawing or paint
 10. Ask for help
-
-



4. Having fun together

Things I could do to have more fun:

Be myself:

With my family:

With friends:



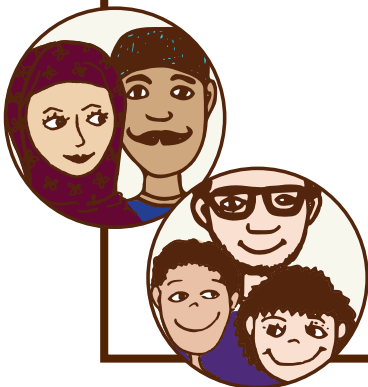
My wishes for...

Draw or write what you wish for yourself and your family/caregivers.

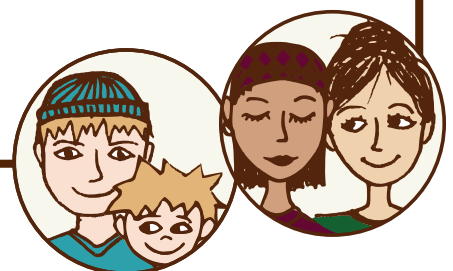
My wishes for myself:



My wishes for my parent (s) or caregiver(s)



My wishes for my brother(s)/sister(s):



Certificate of Achievement

This is to certify that

.....
has completed the activity book

Growing Stronger Together

with

.....
Date: Signed:





Who can help me and my family

Support

Asian and Ethnic Health Services

www.asianhealthservices.co.nz

0800 88 88 30

Asian Family Services (AFS)

www.asianfamilyservices.nz

0800 862 342

Asian Network Inc. (TANI)

www.asiannetwork.org.nz

09 815 2338

Birthright

www.birthright.org.nz

0800 457 146

Brainwave Trust

www.brainwave.org.nz

(09) 528 3981

Email: info@brainwave.org.nz

CNSST Foundation

www.cnsst.org.nz

(09) 570 1188

Ember

www.ember.org.nz

(09) 443 3700 North

(09) 523 2790 South

Family Action

www.familyaction.org.nz

0800 326 327

Family Works

www.familyworks.org.nz

Auckland Central – 09 639 2016

Lower North Island & South

– 0800 337 100

Great Potentials Foundation

www.greatpotentials.org.nz

(09) 377 5384

Kāhui Tū Kaha

www.kahuitukaha.co.nz

(09) 531 4040

Kiwi Families

www.kiwifamilies.co.nz

Lifeline

www.lifeline.org.nz

0800 543 354

Text: HELP (4357)

Mainly Music

www.mainlymusic.org.nz

0800 003 223

Parent Help

www.parenthelp.org.nz

0800 568 856

Problem Gambling Foundation

www.pgf.nz

0800 664 262

Te Puna Hauora o Te Raki Paewhenua

www.tepuna.org.nz

(09) 489 3049

Youthline

www.youthline.co.nz

0800 376 633

Free text: 234

Counselling/therapy

Albany Psychology Clinic

– Massey University

Email: massey.clinic.albany@massey.ac.nz

(09) 213 6095

Diversity Counselling New Zealand

www.diversitycounselling.org.nz

0800 143 269

Family Court

www.justice.govt.nz

Grief Centre

www.griefcentre.org.nz

(09) 418 1457

0800 331 333

Hearts & Minds

www.heartsandminds.org.nz

0800 468 288

Strengthening Families

www.strengtheningfamilies.govt.nz

Wingspan

www.wingspan.org.nz

(09) 630 8961

Mental Health

After hours Mental Health Service

North Shore: (09) 486 8900

West Auckland: (09) 839 0000

Anxiety NZ Trust

www.anxiety.org.nz

0800 269 438

Asian Mental Health Service:

Waitematā

www.asianhealthservices.co.nz

(09) 487 1321

(09) 486 8920 ext. 47321

CADS Auckland Community Alcohol and Drug Services

www.cads.org.nz

0800 845 1818

CARE Waitakere Trust

www.carewaitakere.org.nz

(09) 834 6480

Depression.org.nz

www.depression.org.nz

0800 111 757

Marinoto Child and Youth Mental Health Services

(09) 489 0555

Mental Health Foundation

www.mentalhealth.org.nz

Māori Mental Health & Addiction Service (Waitematā)

(09) 822 8557

Self-help resources

www.getselfhelp.co.uk

www.copmi.net.au

www.blackdoginstitute.org.au

Skylight Trust

www.skylight.org.nz

0800 299 100

Vision West Counselling

www.visionwest.org.nz

(09) 818 0700

Violence

Are You OK | Family Violence

www.areyouok.org.nz

0800 456 450

Man Alive

www.manalive.org.nz

(09) 835 0509

Oranga Tamariki : Ministry for Children

www.mvcot.govt.nz

0508 326 459

Fathers

Father and Child Trust

www.fatherandchild.org.nz

(09) 525 1690

Websites

www.getselfhelp.co.uk

www.copmi.net.au

www.blackdoginstitute.org.au

www.panda.org.au

How to make the best use of the activity booklet

Encouragement for parents and caregivers

- Parenting is sometimes challenging especially when you are unwell. Be kind to yourself. Try to create opportunities to relax or do something that you enjoy.
- Feeling guilty about not always being there for your child may mean that you really want the best for him or her.
- Acknowledge disappointments, but invest your energy and time in making the best of the moment.
- Talk to someone, e.g. your health professional, or get extra help when your feelings are too overwhelming. It is easier to support your child when you feel in control of your emotions. Also see the resource list in the back of the activity booklet.
- Ask someone else to go through the activity booklet with your child if you are unable to do so.
- People cannot always change their situation, but they can change how they think about the situation, for example, it is more empowering to think: "Illness may cause loss and grief, but it can also build strength" than to think: "The illness took over my life and is destroying everything". Also see getselfhelp.co.uk for ideas on how to focus on more helpful thoughts.

Support the child

- Encourage your child to do the activities in the booklet. Take a break or continue on another day when your child gets tired.
- Get down to your child's height if you can. Sitting next to your child could show you care.
- Give the child your full attention. Putting your mobile phone or tablet away communicates that you value your child.
- Decide beforehand how you will explain the illness to the child.
- Thinking about how you like to be treated when you are upset or worried will help you to understand your child's needs better.

Prompt the child

- Invite discussion about the child's perception of the illness. Then offer age-appropriate explanations.
- Acknowledge the child's feelings, for example: "You are very upset that ..."
- Encourage your child to ask questions, for example, say: "What else were you wondering about?"
- Try digging a little deeper, for example, ask: "What do you think?" or say: "That's interesting." "Tell me a bit more about it."

Give the child space

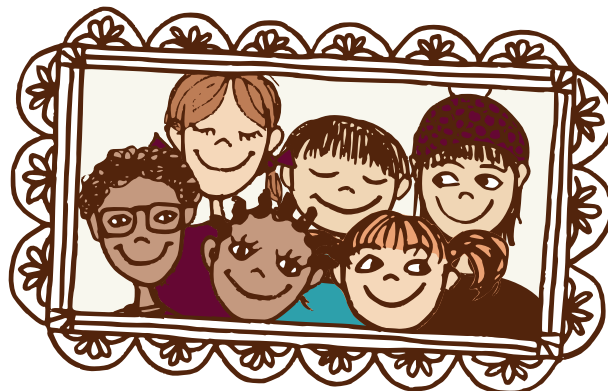
- Let your child decide which colours he or she wants to use when colouring a picture.
- Allow your child to try first before you offer help. Learning to problem solve will build the child's confidence.
- Listen to what your child is saying before you offer information or solutions.
- Put yourself in your child's shoes and think about the situation from their point of view.
- Choose a place or create a space where your child will feel free to talk.

Validate the child's responses and feelings

- Accept your child's feelings. Focus on helping your child to manage his or her feelings.
- Acknowledge the fact that everyone sometimes feels lonely, scared, sad or angry.
- Resist the temptation to make things better by minimising feelings, e.g. do not say: "There is no reason to cry." Rather help your child to label feelings by saying: "You are very sad that ..." "I can see that really hurt your feelings." "That would make me cross too".
- Praise and encourage the child's ideas and creativity. Do not expect perfection!

What to do when you are concerned about the response of the child

- Ask more questions to get a better understanding of what the child means.
- Talk with a spouse, family member or friend about your concerns.
- Build a partnership with the child's daycare provider or school teachers and strive to maintain regular and effective communication.
- Get professional help if you continue to be concerned, e.g. see your GP or talk to a nurse or other health or mental health professional.
- Have a look at some self-help websites in the list of support organisations and websites at the back of the activity booklet.



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How many dogs can you count?





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