The Moodsters™

Life Lessons for Children

FIRST AID FOR FEELINGS™

A Workbook to Help Kids Cope During the Coronavirus Pandemic

By Denise Daniels, RN, MS

YALE CHILD STUDY CENTER
+ SCHOLASTIC COLLABORATIVE
for Child & Family Resilience

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A Letter to Grown-Ups

Childhood is an amazing time of discovery. Nearly every moment of a child's life offers opportunities to teach important emotional intelligence skills, such as caring, listening, empathy, problem-solving, self-regulation, and resilience. That holds particularly true in challenging times such as these.

During the current pandemic, families have been thrust into extraordinary circumstances that may be life-changing, with short- and long-term effects on children's well-being. Past experience during global crises has taught us that caring grown-ups in children's lives can make an enormous difference by providing safety, comforting reassurance, age-appropriate information, and helpful guidance. Helping children learn to be smart about feelings can help alleviate their emotional stress, improve concentration, boost their immune system, and enhance brain development.

This **First Aid for Feelings** workbook for children was designed to help you do just that. By using the simple coping strategies found in this workbook, you can encourage children to express thoughts, questions, and feelings. These life skills may help reduce and manage children's stress or anxiety, and provide some sense of control within their changing lives.

Children may be upset by seeing people wearing masks, overhearing anxious conversations, being physically distant from people they care about, and having their routines completely disrupted. It's important to observe their behavior while listening carefully to what they are saying. Once their immediate physical needs have been met, meeting children's emotional needs is key to helping them deal with their confusion, anxiety, or fear.

The emotional support offered through this workbook will provide resilience strategies that will serve children well beyond the current crisis. These activities will help children learn to cope with the everyday challenges of growing up and will help equip them with the emotional tools for a happy, healthy, and successful life.

All of us are working to ensure our children's physical and emotional security during this challenging time—and we will get through this together!

Denise Daniels, RN, MS
Founder of the National Childhood Grief Institute

This workbook is for YOU!

My name is _____.

I live in _____, _____.
City State

Today's date is _____.

A Changing World

The world is changing all the time. Some changes happen suddenly and last for a short time, and others are longer. Even though change may seem scary, it can also be a chance for you to learn and grow.

The big change that lots of people are talking about right now is the coronavirus. If you're like most kids, this may be a pretty confusing time for you. Maybe your school has been temporarily closed, or maybe a family member is worried about not working, or perhaps you're upset because you can't get together with your friends.

Use the space below to list some of the changes you are currently facing.

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What I Know... and Want to Know

Your family love you and want to keep you safe. They can be your very best source for information. Lots of kids are wondering, what IS the coronavirus? Scientists tell us that the novel (or new) coronavirus is a different type of virus. It's a tiny germ that can spread to people and make them sick.

That's why we are taking so many safety precautions—like asking you not to touch your face and to wash your hands frequently. Now is an important time for you to have information about the virus.

Use the space below to tell what you have heard about the coronavirus.

Asking questions is a good way to help you understand what is happening. There are no wrong questions, so don't be afraid to ask! There are lots of places you can go to find the answers to your questions, like asking a grown-up, your teacher, your doctor, the City Hall where you live, the internet, or the library (online for now)!

Make a list of some of the questions you may have:

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What To Do When I Feel Afraid

If you're like a lot of kids, you may be feeling a little overwhelmed. We really aren't sure what's going to happen next, and that can feel scary. When you are afraid, here are some things you can do to feel better.

Circle the ones you would like to try.

Turn off the TV!

Drink a glass of cold water.

Listen to calming music.

Write in a feelings journal.

Talk to a caring grown-up about feeling afraid.

Take some deep breaths and exhale slowly.

Tell yourself to be brave and that you'll be okay.

Curl up and read your favorite book.

Get the facts.

Draw a picture of what you are afraid of.

Get and give hugs (virtually, if needed!)

Your feelings send messages to your brain that affect how you think, feel, and act. When you express them, others can understand what you're going through. **Remember:** All feelings are okay… but keeping them inside can cause aches and pains.

Circle the feelings you are having right now.

Loved	Sick	Confused
Frustrated	Grouchy	Nervous
Trusting	Happy	Angry
Bored	Lonely	Thankful
Afraid	Brave	Excited
Proud	Relieved	Sad
	Tired	Stressed
	Worried	Surprised

Other Feelings:

_____

_____

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Taking Care of Family

Now would be a good time to have a family meeting to talk about how your family members are taking care of their health. It's also a good time to practice certain ways you can take care of yourself.

Circle the ones you are already doing.

Stand six giant steps away from your friends or neighbors.

Wave instead of shaking hands.

Call or video chat with your friends whenever you are lonely.

Cough and sneeze into your elbow.

MAKE SURE you don't touch your face, eyes, or nose.

Exercise your body and your brain.

Get lots of rest, even on weekends. Rest will help protect your body.

Wash your hands before you eat, after using the bathroom, and after sneezing or coughing.

Wash your hands for 20 seconds (sing "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" two times to make sure you're washing long enough).

Eat a healthy diet with lots of fruit and vegetables, and be sure to drink plenty of water.

Most of all, listen to your body. If you don't feel well, tell a grown-up how you are feeling.

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Make a Daily Plan

When you are going through big changes, it's helpful to stick to your normal routine. Do your homework every day, get some fresh air and exercise, and have regular mealtimes and bedtimes. **If you don't already have a daily schedule, use this chart to create one. Ask a grown-up to help you list all the things you do each day and what time of day you do them.**

Morning	Afternoon	Evening

Calming Corner

A Calming Corner is a safe and comfy place you can go when you need to calm down. Having time to yourself is important during times of stress.

Circle what you want to add to your Calming Corner.

Beanbags	Squeeze ball	Journal and crayons
Glitter jar	Pinwheel (for taking slow, deep breaths)	Fish tank with goldfish
Soft rug		

Other ideas: _____

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People Care About Me!

In difficult times, it's comforting to spend extra time with those you love and care about. Reading together, playing board games, working on a puzzle together, or if allowed, hiking or going for a walk or bike ride are some good ideas to help your family to stay connected. **Use this space below to make a list of all the people who care about you and what you like to do together. (You might be surprised at how many people there are!)**

People Who Care	What We Do Together

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The Helpers Who Keep Me Safe

It's important for you to know that many caring and courageous heroes are working hard to keep you healthy and safe. When there are emergencies, people always come together to help one another, especially the kids, and that's a good thing for you to know! Some of the people who are working hard to keep you and your family healthy are:

All the grown-ups in your life who are protecting you

Health care workers, including doctors, nurses, and others

The president, governor, mayor, and leaders of other government agencies

Teachers and principals

Men and women serving in the National Guard

Scientists

Emergency responders

Police and firefighters

Pharmacists

Bus drivers

Other countries

People who work at your local grocery store

Public workers who keep our cities clean

Truck drivers who bring us food and medical supplies

There are many helpers all around you. Can you think of any others?

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Let Those Feelings Out!

Remember when we talked about expressing your feelings? Here are some good ways for you to let your feelings out.

Circle some of the ones that work best for you, and add other ideas.

Draw a picture of how you're feeling right now.

Laugh out loud.

Talk to someone who cares about you.

Make a feelings collage from old magazines: cut out pictures that show people feeling different emotions.

Have a good cry when you need to!

Help those in need. Helping others is a good way to help yourself.

Find a quiet place to meditate (think calming thoughts).

Send positive thoughts about those who have been affected.

Make a happy memories scrapbook.

Read a book about feelings, such as *The Grumpy Monkey*, *When Sophie Gets Angry*, or *The Way I Feel*.

Spend time playing with your favorite pet.

Make your favorite meal with a grown-up.

Write in a feelings journal.

Do something creative, like make a piece of jewelry, a sculpture out of clay or art dough, or a cheerful card for someone who is sick or lonely.

Do something nice for someone else.

Dance while listening to your favorite music.

Other ideas:

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Sometimes It's ANNOYING!

If you're like most kids, there might be times when you feel frustrated or even angry because you aren't able to be with your friends or do the things you would like to do. It's natural to feel this way when everything around you seems upside down. It's important to find healthy ways to express angry feelings. Here are some things you can do to help you manage those really big feelings.

Circle the ones that work best for you, and add other ideas.

Get some exercise– it's the #1 stress buster!

Watch a funny movie.

Take a s-l-o-w deep breath, then exhale s-l-o-w-l-y. Do this several times to calm down.

Count from one to ten.

Call or video chat with friends to share how all of you feel.

Paint a picture.

If allowed, run around outside. It's a great way to let off steam.

Plan to have some future fun. Decide what you would like to do when you are able to be with your friends again.

Do some stretches or yoga poses. (You can make up your own, such as making an animal shape with your body, or pretending you're reaching for the stars.)

Write a letter to yourself about why you're feeling frustrated.

Yell into your pillow.

Listen to loud music while stomping around.

Pound some play clay.

Talk to a caring grown-up about why you're angry.

Close your eyes and imagine you're in one of your favorite places.

Other ideas:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Remember, all feelings are okay, but it's never okay to hurt yourself or others to feel better!

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Same and Different

Remember when we talked about change? Some changes are easy, but some are harder. Maybe you have just moved, or you are going to a new school, or your family members are living in different places. Those can be really big changes for everyone! **If you are going through a big change, you may use the chart below to talk about your big change, and then fill in the chart.**

Things that will change	Things that will stay the same

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Every ending brings a new beginning . . . and good memories last forever!

Looking Forward

Many people are upset about the changes caused by the coronavirus. But with all of us working together, in time things will settle down and get back to normal again. In times like this, it's really helpful to make plans to look forward to in the future.

List or draw some of the things you would like to do with your family and friends once things get back to normal.

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Take Your Feelings Temperature

Scientists and doctors are hard at work to figure out the coronavirus and how to keep us all safe and healthy. In the not too distant future, you'll be able to go back to school, play sports, and hang out with your friends. The parks, our places of worship, libraries, stores, and restaurants will open, and you'll be able to do all the things you enjoy.

Your family loves and cares about you. They will always do their best to keep you safe and healthy. The best thing you can do to help during this time of uncertainty is to take good care of yourself, because there's just one you!

Taking care of yourself includes checking in on your emotions.

Use this Feelings Thermometer to keep track of your moods... and be sure to let all the people who care about you know how you're doing!

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Congratulations on all the hard work you have done in your First Aid for Feelings workbook. You have learned many important things about how to take care of yourself in difficult times. Pat yourself on the back for a job well done!

FIRST AID FOR FEELINGS™

Congratulations!

_____

has completed the First Aid for Feelings workbook with flying colors.

_____ Date

_____ Signature

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Further Resources

Scholastic Learn at Home
scholastic.com/learnathome

Teaching Our World
scholastic.com/coronavirus

Yale Child Study Center+Scholastic Collaborative for Child & Family Resilience
medicine.yale.edu/childstudy/scholasticcollab

The Collaborative for Child & Family Resilience recognizes the power of story and social connectedness to foster resilience among children, families, and communities in times of crisis. We are committed to helping children and families develop coping strategies, create supportive networks, and rewrite the narratives of their futures.

Denise Daniels, RN, MS
Creator of The Moodsters

Denise Daniels, RN, MS. is a Peabody Award-winning broadcast journalist, child development expert, and author, whose workbooks have reached more than 15 million schoolchildren. She is frequently called upon for her expertise and parenting advice during times of national and global crisis, emergencies, and natural disasters.

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The Moodsters™

The Moodsters help children learn how to recognize, understand, and manage their emotions.
www.themoodsters.com

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