



## SCHOOL-TO-HOME CONNECTION: ACTIVITY SHEET

Grades K-2

**COMPETENCY:** Self-Control

**THEME:** Manages Overwhelming Thoughts and Emotions

**OBJECTIVE:** The student will be able to shape habitual thoughts to positively impact personal goals.

### DINNER DISCUSSION - Guided Questions



Explain to your child that stress is what you feel when you are worried or feeling uncomfortable about something. Stress can affect your body in different ways: sometimes physically and sometimes emotionally. At times, stress can make you feel isolated, like you are all alone with your feelings. Reassure your child that although stress can be a common part of life, there are many ways to manage the uncomfortable feelings of isolation associated with it.

Ask your child the following questions:

1. Can you think of a time you might have felt stressed? What made you feel this way?
2. How did your body react to feeling stressed? Did you have a hard time expressing your feelings with words?
3. Reassure your child that sometimes, you feel stress too. It's important to remember that when we feel the effects of stress and isolation, we're in charge of calming down our mind and body. What strategies help you feel calm and more in control of your feelings?
4. Remind your child that stress is temporary. Share ways that you try to remain hopeful during uncertain times. Ask your child to share what makes them feel safe and hopeful during times of uncertainty and stress.

### TIPS...

1. Remember to remain calm and loving when talking with your child. Be mindful of your tone and overall delivery when discussing feelings of stress and isolation. As always, your child will look to you as a guide for how to manage their feelings and embrace the new normal of uncertain times.
2. Remind your child that sometimes things happen that are outside of our control, like getting a fever on your birthday or when it literally rains on a parade. This can undoubtedly lead to stress, and canceled plans and sudden changes can leave us feeling isolated physically or emotionally. Reassure them we all can learn how to be flexible when things don't go as planned. During your dinner discussion, try your best to shift the conversation to focus on positive ways to manage these uncomfortable feelings, rather than the negative feelings themselves.



3. Consider working with your child to create a box of stress management tools to keep in a special place. Together, brainstorm certain items that would bring your child comfort during times of uncertainty. For example, items could include a pad of post-its and a few markers to draw and doodle, as well as slime or putty to play with while practicing deep breathing.

## NIGHTTIME REFLECTIONS - Read aloud Activity



### SEL Story: Luna's New Normal

Luna feels worried about what learning from home will be like. Her parents tell her to try her best to have an open mind about her new normal. If you were in Luna's situation, how would you try your best to have an open mind?

Luna's parents make reading, math, and science extra special for her. She was able to learn in ways that she wouldn't normally be able to in her classroom at school. Can you brainstorm some creative ways you could practice reading, math, and science at your house? How would you make learning from home an adventure?

The blizzard affected Luna's whole family's routine. Not only is she having to do school from home, but her parents were working from home as well. If this happened to your family, what could you do to work together as a team while you adjust to your new normal of all being stuck inside together?



## NIGHTTIME REFLECTIONS - Role-Play



Have a conversation with your child reminding them that in life, there are many things that will happen that are out of our control. At times, these unfortunate events can lead to us being isolated from our normal routines and loved ones. Although a shift in normalcy may bring on feelings of stress, guide your child to embrace the disruption as an opportunity to do regular things in a new and exciting way!

Tell your child that you are going to practice a few role play scenarios to practice managing their feelings of stress and isolation



## 1

### SCENARIO 1:

Tomorrow is your birthday and you can hardly wait! You are especially looking forward to seeing all of your classmates at your party. You wake up in the morning and you don't feel very well. Your tummy hurts badly. You make it to the bathroom just in time; you've thrown up. Then you remember it's your birthday! What will happen to your party? It's so unfair to be sick and away from your friends on your birthday. What will you do to manage your disappointment? How could you embrace this unfortunate situation? What would you do in this situation?

## 2

### SCENARIO 2:

It's the last day of school and your friend is hosting a pool party for your class! You've been looking forward to this group playdate to celebrate summer for as long as you can remember. On the way to the party, your Dad's car gets a flat tire. It's going to take two hours for a tow truck to come and by then the party will be over. You feel very upset and can feel the tears forming behind your eyes. You don't know how to express the feelings bubbling inside of you. What strategies can you use in this moment to stay calm? How would it feel to know that all of your peers are celebrating without you? What would you do in this situation?

## ART ACTIVITY



### Prep & Materials:

- Embroidery floss (variety of colors)
- Tape
- Scissors

Have a conversation with your child about gratitude. *What does it mean to be grateful for something?* It means being thankful and showing appreciation for what you have in your life. When feeling stressed and isolated, one way to remain hopeful and optimistic is to practice expressing gratitude for all of the blessings in your life that make you feel happy.

Explain to your child that together you will create a Gratitude Tree. Using whatever paper you have on hand at home, begin by drawing a tree trunk. As you draw, have a conversation about trees. *How does a tree grow? What is the job of a tree trunk? How does a tree benefit from rain? From sunlight?* Guide your child to recognize the connection between the growth of a tree and times of stress and isolation. In order to grow, trees need both rain and sunlight; just like we need both good times and bad times to help us learn!

Once you've completed the tree trunk, pause to explain how you will create the leaves. Share with your child that each morning or evening, they will use a marker to trace their hand. With your support, have your child cut out the tracing of their hand. Using each finger, have them write something that they are grateful for. For example, *I am grateful for my family.* When the hand is complete, tape or glue it to the tree as a new leaf.

Over time, as you watch your tree grow, remind your child of the positivity that is spreading. What was once a leafless tree is now full of beautiful gratitude leaves!



## VIRTUAL CONNECTION - Activity

Early elementary aged children are social people! Staying connected to their peers during times of stress and isolation is essential to their social emotional development. Below are a few fun ideas to stay creatively connected virtually.

- Build a virtual story hour into your new routine and schedule. Collaborate with loved ones to set up a time for your child to have read alouds with them. Whether it's a you-read, I-read, or we-read together format, virtual storytime is not only a great way to connect face to face, but it's also a wonderful way for your child to practice decoding, recognize their sight words, and build fluency.
- Let's face it, in uncertain times nothing is better for the soul than sharing a laugh with someone. Using a video chat platform, set up a group call with your family and friends for a virtual comedy show! Help your child research a few jokes and encourage others to do the same. Grab some snacks and take turns sharing your jokes. Before you know it you'll be laughing so hard you'll all forget you're not in the same room!
- Young students love playdates at their house because it's an exciting opportunity for them to share their space and their most cherished toys and belongings with their peers. Why not have a virtual show and tell playdate? Arrange a time for your child and a friend to get together on a video call. Prior to the playdate, help your child select a few items they'd like to share. Encourage them to share why they selected the items and why they are special. Guide them to ask their peer thoughtful questions about the items selected.

