

Talking about Domestic Abuse

by the same authors

Talking to My Mum

A Picture Workbook for Workers, Mothers and Children Affected
by Domestic Abuse

Cathy Humphreys, Ravi K. Thiara, Agnes Skamballis

and Audrey Mullender

Foreword by June Freeman

Illustrations by Suzan Aral

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A Photo Activity Workbook to Develop
Communication between Mothers and Young People

*Cathy Humphreys, Ravi K. Thiara, Agnes Skamballis
and Audrey Mullender*

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We have adapted several activities, including the Tree of Life (The Feelings Tree), which have been developed and used elsewhere since the 1980s, and which have been revised for work with mothers and young people in this resource.

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Foreword

This resource was born out of the growing concern for abused women and children living in refuges. Historically refuges were set up to help women who wanted to escape their partners' violence. From the beginning, however, women brought their children with them and refuges took them in.

As a result refuges soon found they were accommodating, on average, twice as many children as women. Something had to be done, if only to cope with the management of the noise and turbulence children always generate. But refuge staff also began to notice children who were unnaturally quiet, children who threatened to burst with aggression, children who glued themselves to their mothers and whose screams threatened to bring the house down if she left the room without them. There were also the 10- and 12-year-olds who wet their beds and the children who suffered from terrible nightmares. As refuge workers learnt more about the mothers' experiences, however, their real surprise was that so many refuge children were so normal. Yet, while their admiration for the resilience of children who'd lived with domestic violence grew, so did the evidence that such children badly needed understanding, care and attention in their own right.

For years, however, refuges had to muddle along, getting people to give a few hours a week to run play groups, though it was obvious that play sessions scarcely scratched the surface of what was needed. Children who had lived with domestic violence had special needs and required specially trained staff.

When the Big Lottery Fund launched a research programme, Colchester and Tendring Women's Refuge was therefore immediately interested. Like many other refuges we had replaced the title of playworker with the more appropriate title of childworker some time ago, but still only had two part-time children's staff. Undeterred we made contact with the University of Warwick where much of the cutting edge academic work on children living with domestic violence was being done. A year, and a lot of hard work, later we had a partnership with Warwick, a grant and a research team.

The first aim of the research has been to construct a practical programme of action, for helping children who have lived with domestic violence. This programme has adopted a perspective which has received too little official attention to date, namely, the need to facilitate quality communication between such children and their mothers.

Following some sensational cases of child abuse and subsequent public concern about child protection, current thinking has emphasised the child's rights as an individual and tended to concentrate on the need to keep children out of danger. Despite the good intentions behind this as a policy it can be deeply alienating socially for the child. It also diverts attention from the fact that human beings develop into secure and socially productive adults through positive and constructive interaction with significant others. Hence the title of the overall research project: *Talking to My Mum*. It is vital for the social growth of abused mothers and their children that they find ways of working through the experience of living with domestic violence together.

The research method adopted was that of action research. This deliberately blurred the divide between researchers and participants and it ensured that the responses of mothers and their children trying to deal with living with domestic violence would continually shape the course of the project. It also constantly alerted the researchers to the conditions needed for constructive and healing conversations to take place between abused women and their children.

Even routine interaction with children is high octane work and it was increasingly clear that women, ground down by abusive relationships, needed to regain some personal equilibrium before they could explore the issues their children had. The idea of 'readiness' that the researchers discuss in the manual was found to be critically important.

The research project on which this book and its companion volume *Talking to My Mum* are based has been a positive and fruitful exercise. First and foremost, it has developed a practical programme for helping abused women and their children forge a relationship that could help them move towards fully realising their capacities as productive members of society. Subsequent academic publications will develop more generally the ideas that shaped this programme. The project has shown that small front line organisations and large academic institutions can work positively and fruitfully together when they are joined by good will and passionately committed to the same social goal.

June Freeman
Colchester and Tendring Women's Refuge
Chair of the Steering Committee

Introduction and guidance

The activities in this workbook have been developed with the help of mothers and young people who have lived with domestic abuse. Workers from refuges, outreach services and community-based programmes working with women and young people have also guided us in thinking about activities that were helpful and about what was needed. While we take responsibility for the final book, we want to emphasise that this has been a joint effort, to which at least 100 people have contributed.

This resource is part of an action research project that involved working with mothers, children and young people to understand better the effects of domestic abuse on their relationships with each other. At the same time, activities were created with the help of mothers, workers and young people to develop and build on the communication between them so that they were not waiting until the end of the project to find out what might be helpful, but instead the ideas were put into action as we went along.

Comments from mothers

It's definitely helped talking about issues that worry myself or him. And I've also learnt to explain things to him, difficult issues, rather than push it to one side. (Sandra, mother of two children)

It felt like through talking to each other we could lighten our hearts. The children were interested in what we were doing and through this they asked a lot of questions about what happened. It was a really good opportunity for me to feel my children's sadness and happiness. (Manreet, mother of three children)

Comments from children

It was fun, and a good way of spending time with Mum instead of just doing my own thing, watching TV or playing on my PlayStation. It was something different and it was spending time with my mum. (Raj, 11-year-old boy)

It was fun, I got to spend time with Mum and talk about what happened. It made me think about the things that had happened. (Sarah, ten-year-old girl)

Who is this workbook for?

The activities in this workbook were developed for mothers and children who have lived with domestic abuse. This resource was particularly developed for older children and young people. Another workbook, *Talking to My Mum*, is available for younger children and their mothers. A section later in this guidance is particularly written with mothers in mind and draws from the many things which women told us as the activities were being developed.

Workers, including refuge workers, children's workers, counsellors, psychologists, family therapists, health visitors and social workers will find the activities useful when working with mothers and their children. On p.20 we address issues highlighted by the research carried out for this workbook which are relevant to professionals working with domestic abuse.

An immediate question for mothers, young people and workers is what we mean by older children and young people. For the most part, we have found that children from five to seven years old really prefer the *Talking to My Mum* workbook, which is based around woodland animals rather than photos. However, it is very dependent upon the child or young person. Many young people up to and over the age of ten years also enjoyed and preferred the activities in the woodland animals workbook. Others found this resource, which uses photos, more to their liking. There are many activities in common between this workbook and the other one. It really depends on the child or young person which workbook they find more fun to work with.

Mothers and young people from different ethnic backgrounds who helped develop the activities found that sometimes they needed more help from workers when English was not their first language. This can also be true for mothers and young people for whom reading does not come easily, so you will notice that these activities have a strong visual element.

Most of the activities are about having 'quality time' together, helping to build the young person's self-esteem, learning to talk about feelings and developing communication and understanding between mothers and their children. This workbook will therefore have many activities that are also helpful for all mothers and young people, not just those who have been through domestic abuse. Some mothers may be unsure whether they have been living with domestic abuse or not. When there has not been any physical violence, or very limited use of physical force, then it can be particularly confusing for mothers and young people to know whether they have suffered domestic abuse.

If women are still living with domestic abuse, then some of the activities may not be appropriate. There may not be a safe enough place to talk about some of the issues that are raised, which may put the mother or child in a difficult position. Even the title of this resource may create danger, as perpetrators of domestic abuse do not usually like the issue to be named so clearly in this way.

This brings us to the question of dads. Many workers have suggested that fathers (whether they were abusers or not) are also in need of a resource such as this. While we agree, we have not consulted with fathers about the development of these activities. That would be an important but different project.

Another issue that is important to bear in mind when working with this material is whether the person is ready. Are the mother and her child in a position to be able to concentrate and spend 15 to 20 minutes of quality time together at least twice a week? It may not sound a lot, but if a mother is newly separated and dealing with new housing, new schools, managing health problems or having difficulty sleeping, she may not feel that it is the right moment to be doing these activities.

A woman using this workbook with her child also needs to be in a place where she is not so worried about her own survival that she is unable to hear and listen to what is happening to the child. Some aspects of the workbook require a readiness to see and hear that the child has been affected by the domestic abuse as well, and this can be painful.

However, many of the activities in the workbook are just about relaxing and having some fun together. Again, if you are feeling low it may be difficult to find the energy to spend this time with your child. So not all mothers will be ready to do this. Mothers need to be in a position where this time to be with their child or children is possible.

Do mothers need a support person?

The activities have all been developed and tried out with women and young people as 'stand alone' activities where they do not need a worker to be with them to do the activities. However, we would recommend that mothers have someone they can 'check in' with on a regular basis so that support is available when it is needed.

Most women tell us that at points along the way they have really appreciated the support of someone, usually a refuge worker or a counsellor, particularly when young people let them know how much they have remembered, seen or heard. If a woman has worked hard to be protective of her child or children, then understanding how they have been affected by domestic abuse can be upsetting. At other times it can be reassuring to know how well they are getting along.

Women and young people also tell us that it is easier to find the motivation and time to keep doing the activities together if there is someone to talk to who is interested in following up what they are doing. A worker/support person can provide this added source of encouragement.

Many workers find that 'take-home' activities help when they are working with mothers or young people and that these are a way of strengthening and encouraging the changes being made in individual or group sessions.

What do we know about domestic abuse?

If women have lived with domestic abuse, then they are the experts on what this means for them. However, they have told us that they find it helpful to have a 'bigger picture' because the nature of domestic abuse can make it hard to see it for what it is. At the heart of domestic abuse there is usually someone who wants to blame the victim for the abuse they are experiencing – that somehow it is all their fault. This 'messed up' thinking can make women (and young people) feel as though they are 'going crazy' and it can make it hard to name domestic abuse.

Here are two frequently asked questions about domestic abuse.

What is domestic abuse?

Domestic abuse or domestic violence typically involves physical, sexual or emotional abuse and intimidation, which often escalates in frequency and severity over time. Emotional abuse can include intimidation, harassment, damage to property, threats and financial abuse. It can be understood as the misuse of power and exercise of control by one partner over the other in an intimate relationship. Young people living with domestic abuse can also suffer harm either from the same person who is hurting their mother or by hearing or seeing the harm which their mother is experiencing.

Domestic abuse and domestic violence are the same thing. Women often prefer the term domestic abuse because it seems to describe more clearly the emotional and mental abuse which can be more frequent than physical abuse. Sometimes actual physical abuse does not occur. Other people prefer the term domestic violence because it recognises the seriousness of the abuse as violence (even if this is emotional violence) and helps to acknowledge that much of the violence is a crime and should be treated as such.

Is a man always the abuser and how many people are affected?

More women than men report being the victims of domestic abuse. The British Crime Survey showed that 13 per cent of women and 9 per cent of men reported some form of domestic abuse.¹ However, when the most serious abuse is considered, based on the number of attacks, the range of forms of violence and the severity of injury, women are overwhelmingly the most victimised. Women are twice as likely to be injured, and three times as likely to report living in fear than men: 90 per cent of incidents of domestic abuse reported to the police involved a female victim and a male perpetrator.²

1 Walby, S. and Allen, J. (2004) *Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking: Findings from the British Crime Survey*. Home Office Research Study 276. London: Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate.

2 Scottish Executive 2003.

Some women also report that the man's relatives, including mothers and sisters, can be involved in the abuse. Men and women in same-sex relationships report the same levels of domestic abuse as those in heterosexual relationships. Disabled women report that their carers, sometimes but not always including their partners, can be involved in domestic abuse.

A UK study of 2869 young adults showed that 26 per cent had witnessed violence between their parents at least once and for 5 per cent the violence was frequent and ongoing.³ Each year 23,500 children will live in a refuge, escaping from the violence with their mothers.⁴ The Department of Health estimates that 750,000 children in the UK are living with domestic abuse.⁵ In other words, domestic abuse is a widespread social problem. It has been estimated to cost employers £1.3 billion a year and the government £3.1 billion a year in the UK alone. This includes the costs through the criminal justice system, health care, social services, housing and civil legal services.⁶ It does not include the human and emotional costs, which are huge.

An attack on the mother–child relationship

The reason that this resource for mothers and young people has been developed is because research undertaken by ourselves and others shows that domestic abuse also needs to be understood as an attack on the relationship between mothers and their children.⁷ This may be the direct undermining of the relationship between mothers and children through mothers being criticised and insulted in front of their children, or where children are encouraged to be physically and verbally abusive towards their mothers. It may be more indirect through mothers needing to make sure that their partner's needs come first all the time, or mothers becoming depressed and anxious and therefore having difficulty parenting. Sometimes women may be physically hurt by an attack and unable to act as a parent for a time. Young people may become very close to their mothers, but may need to deal with the 'adult world' in helping to support them through a difficult time. There are many, many ways in which hurting the relationship between mothers and their children can be part of the abuse.

Only a small proportion of mothers and their children may actually be able to talk together about the domestic abuse. It can be like 'the elephant in the living room' – obvious to everybody but everyone also pretending that it is not there.

3 Gorin, S. (2004) *Understanding What Children Say: Children's Experiences of Domestic Violence, Parental Substance Misuse and Parental Health Problems*. London: National Children's Bureau and NSPCC.

4 www.womensaid.org.uk

5 Department of Health (2003) *Women's Mental Health: Into the Mainstream*. London: The Stationery Office.

6 Walby, S. (2004) *The Cost of Domestic Violence*. London: Women and Equality Unit.

7 Mullender, A., Hague, G., Imam, U., Kelly, L., Malos, E. and Regan, L. (2002) *Children's Perspectives on Domestic Violence*. London: Sage.

Whatever their situation, mothers and young people experience a period of transition and change when they separate from a situation of domestic abuse. Sometimes children don't know how to react when they are no longer living with the same level of fear. Sometimes women don't know how to react when they have to 'get into the driver's seat' because in the past they have been allowed to make very few decisions. There are many changes to get used to.

We have developed these activities because we have heard from mothers, young people and workers that leaving a situation of domestic abuse does not immediately make everything better. Everyone needs time to recover and to work out how to live in a different situation. Being able to communicate how mothers and young people are feeling and how they experience their situation can help this process along. This is what we hope these activities will help mothers and children to do.

What is in the workbook?

The workbook is made up of different activities for mothers and young people to do together. There are two or three parts to every activity. First, there is an explanation or description about the activity. Second, there is often (but not always) a photo. These photos can be used to 'trigger' your own thoughts and ideas. When an activity has a photo, we suggest that mothers and young people look at the photo while reading about the activity. Third, there is the activity itself.

The workbook is divided into three sections:

1. Early days – activities for getting started and activities to address any recent changes in living arrangements.
2. Talking about things that matter – activities for opening up talking points about both the present and the past.
3. Moving on – activities for leaving, finishing a group or moving to a new place.

Should mothers and young people do every activity?

Not necessarily! We recommend a 'pick and mix approach' where mothers and young people (and often a worker) choose a range of different activities which they would like to do together, and which seems appropriate to them.

Activities have been developed to reflect the different experiences of mothers and young people – what is right for one young person and their mother is not necessarily right for another. Every activity in this workbook has been tested with women and young people and was found to be really helpful or positive for at least some people. Mothers and young people don't need to do them all to experience lots of benefits.

What if a woman has more than one child?

Whether to use this workbook with one child or with all the children is up to the family. In testing these activities, mothers had very different approaches to this issue. One child might really want to do the activities and another not at all. One child might be in need of some 'quality time' and special attention. The resource provides activities which allow mothers to give this time. Other mothers have tried doing activities with all of their children – or at least setting up something for one child to do while sitting down with another. Sometimes a friend or worker can help out if a mother needs quality time with just one child, or if a child is too young or too old to be involved.

Can mothers and young people write or draw in the pack?

The activity sheets for mothers and young people are fully photocopiable, but equally a family can write and draw in it together if they have their own workbook.

Sometimes writing or drawing might feel like 'hard work'. The activities are to help mothers and young people talk and play together. They can be used to help mothers and young people talk together if they don't feel like writing down answers to questions.

The advantage of writing and drawing is that there is a record that mothers and young people can both look back on together, or something which can be easily shared with a worker.

Mothers and young people who helped to develop these activities found that drawing and talking are often more fun than writing. Although a space may look as though it is created for writing, drawing and talking can work just as well or better – do what works for you. Women who have difficulty reading in English may need support from a worker or friend.

Introduction for mothers

Before getting started, it may be helpful to sit down with a support person and go through some things together. Some of the points below may be helpful reminders before starting:

- First, and most importantly, the way women think about themselves is often one of the more damaging after-effects of the abuse they have suffered. Rebuilding yourself as a person, looking after yourself and learning to think about yourself as positive and worthwhile are as important as helping your children to think about themselves in a positive way. Children's recovery is often linked to their mother's recovery from abuse experiences.

- Young people look to the most important people in their social network to build their sense of self. One of the most important people (often *the* most important person) is the child's mother. This is why we have developed activities for mothers to do with their children.
- Mothers often try extremely hard to stop their children from being hurt by the violence and abuse which they are experiencing. It is not their fault that they have been hurt and experienced domestic abuse. Nor is it their fault that this may have affected aspects of their relationship with their children. It may be worth remembering some of the ways in which you have tried to protect your child and share these with a worker or support person, or just write them down as a reminder for yourself.

Things I did to try to protect my child or children

1.
.....
.....
2.
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3.
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What are some of the positive things in the relationship with your child which you will be building on when you are working together on these activities?

1.
.....
.....
2.
.....
.....
3.
.....
.....

Ground rules for getting started

1. There are no right or wrong answers, correct or incorrect ways of doing the activity sheets.
2. Sometimes your child may be very distracted and not want to do the activity sheets. Don't force the issue, just try again some other time. It may be that it is not the right activity for them so perhaps try something else.
3. Some young people are very active and will need to be engaged in more physical activities. A list of suggestions is provided at the back of the workbook.
4. Choosing the right time can be really important. You will have to plan when is the right time for you. You may need a children's worker or friend to look after your other children while you do this. Fifteen to 20 minutes of quality time may be all that is needed for each activity.
5. Privacy is important. This is your child's time with you. You will need to talk about whether you can share with other people what you have done together. Sometimes your children will want to share, sometimes they may wish to remain private. We know this can be difficult if you live with other people, particularly in a refuge.
6. Sometimes your child may tell you things that distress you and are hard for you to hear. These occasions may not be easy for you. However, this is a moment of trust and it is important to try to listen and respond to what your child is saying to you. It is also a time when you may need to see a worker for some extra support. Five positive responses to your child are:
 - I believe you.
 - I am glad you told me this.
 - I am sorry that this happened to you.
 - It is not your fault and never was.
 - I am here for you and if you want to talk more about this you can.

This photo workbook is important for young people. Finding the words and trying to understand your child (even when they are being difficult) is a challenge for every mother and may be even harder when you have come through a tough time together. There are many things to celebrate as well as many barriers to get over.

Tips for workers

Many people who work with women and young people affected by domestic abuse have contributed to this workbook. In their experience, the services for women and children have become separated in ways that are inappropriate and unhelpful, and this book provides ways of bridging this divide. We recognise that the best resource for a young person is to have a mother who is in a position to be able to love, protect and understand them and that anything which workers can do to strengthen and support this relationship is extremely positive. A number of ideas for workers using this workbook have emerged from their experiences:

- Act as a support person for mothers and young people, check in with them regularly and actively encourage them in working on the activities together. In particular, it is good to be there at times when difficult issues arise. Women often need emotional back-up to continue if activities bring to the surface strong feelings and memories raised by their children.
- Use the activities as 'take-home' activities to support other group or individual work you are already doing with mothers and/or their children.
- Youth workers and children's workers should have the workbooks visible and easily accessible so that young people can become interested and excited by the activities they are shown, and the inclusion of mothers becomes a natural extension of this work.
- Advocates and support workers for women should have the workbooks in view or in the waiting room, which can provide an easy means for women to access the resource. Most women are very keen to strengthen the relationships with their children. However, be aware of the issue of 'readiness'. These activities work best for women and young people who are not in a chaotic or crisis situation.
- Look after other children in the family if it has been agreed that the mother spend 'special time' with one child either due to the difficulties they are experiencing or due to age or time constraints for the other children.
- Photocopy the activities so that they can be used by many women and young people as they pass through the service.
- A reflection sheet and feedback form has been placed towards the back of the workbook. If mothers and children want to let workers know how they felt about the activity, it is useful to photocopy this sheet for them to fill in.

Final comments from mothers

You've got to learn to talk to your children. They are young people but they fully understand. And you've got to explain to them what is going on. And that's what I've learnt with him. (Jenny, mother of eight-year-old boy)

To talk, rather than to argue, we've learnt not to war... And for me to stay calm as well in a situation. (Deidre, mother of two children)

Final comments from children

I wanted to do it because it would help me to understand my mum's feelings and my feelings. And it did help. I could let out my feelings and tell her what's locked up in my heart. (Kirah, ten years)

It would be good for other children and their mums. If they went through what my mum went through, it could help them to understand each other and what happened. (Aisha, ten years)

Further information

Helpful phone numbers and websites for women and young people in the UK, USA, Australia and Canada are listed at the back of this workbook.

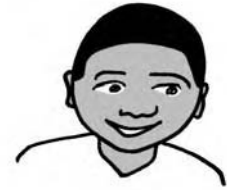
SECTION I

EARLY DAYS



Activity I: Things about me and Mum

This activity is to get you started and used to the idea of spending time together on the photo activities.



This activity helps you to focus on the positive things about each other.



Naming people can help you to identify and talk about important people in both your lives. However, this may also raise issues about people who you may not be in touch with at the moment. There is no easy way to deal with this. It is just important that you listen to each other and identify people you think are important. It may also raise happy memories about people who care about you both.

This activity is a way of helping you to say something about who you are. A good way for this to be a shared activity and for you to reinforce your sense of who you are is to take things that you both like and put them in the frame as suggested.

If you don't want to draw you may like to use a small photograph instead. The important thing is for you both to do the activity together.

At the end you may want to put this activity on your fridge or stick it somewhere where it can be seen.



After you finish you may like to ask each other what it was like to do this activity together.





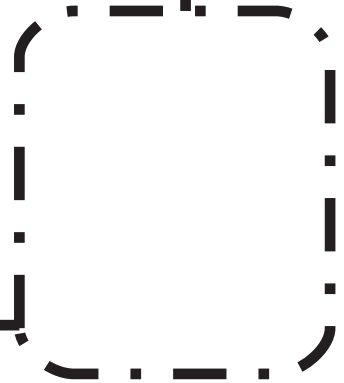
You would know Mum because she has:
(name)

. eyes and hair.

She is tall and she is years old.

While Mum is not perfect (!) she is special because:

.
.
.
.



You would know my child because:
(name)

she/he has eyes and hair.

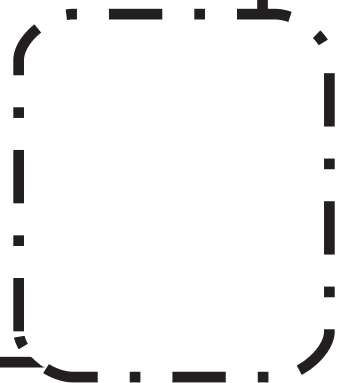
. is years and months old.

Important people in 's life are:

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While is not perfect (!) she/he is special because:

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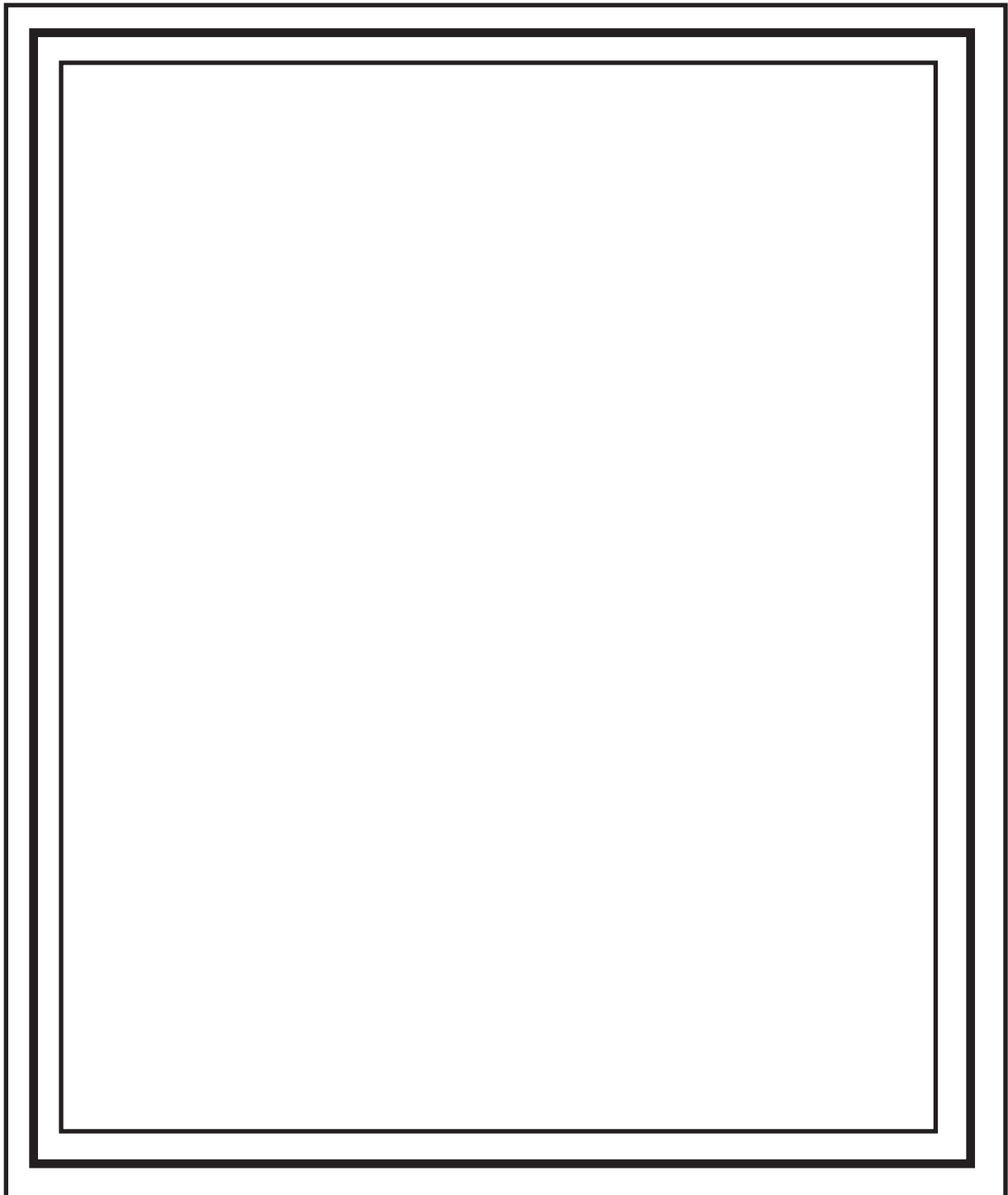
If you have small photos of yourselves you may like to put them in the frames.



Things about me and Mum

In the photo frame you and Mum can draw or stick a photo of yourselves and decorate the frame together in a way that suits your style. You may also like to write or draw three or four things around the frame that you like. You may need to help Mum do hers as well.

Me





Mum

A large rectangular frame with a double-line border, intended for a drawing or illustration.



Activity 2: Feelings tree

This is a good activity for helping you to look together at the changes you have made. Some mothers and young people use the 'feelings tree' as a 'check-in' to point to how they are feeling today, without having to really say anything or explain themselves.

The 'feelings tree' can be used by anybody. It is a way of being able to share with each other how you are feeling now and where you have been.

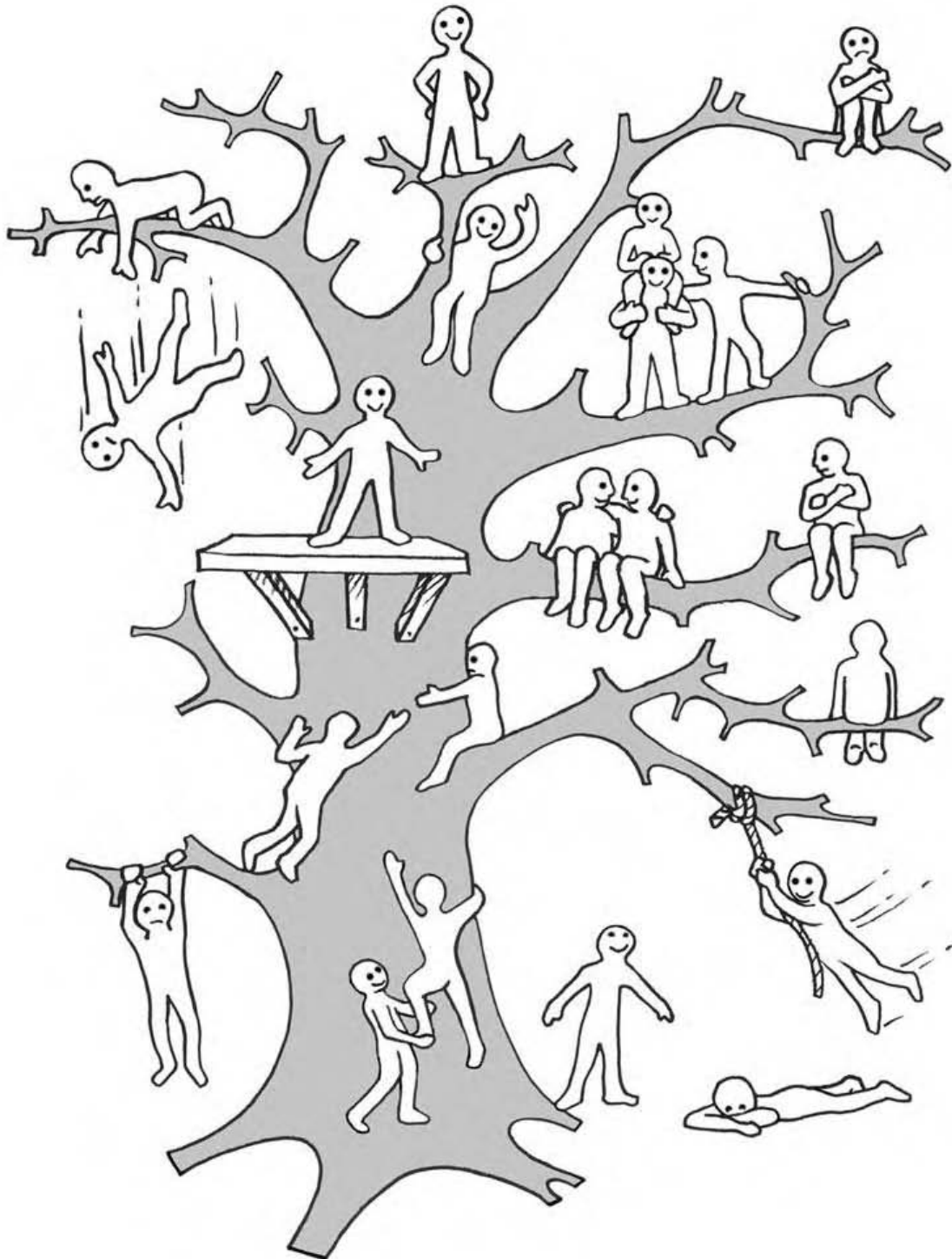
You can sometimes ask further questions such as: 'What has happened that makes you feel like this today?' 'Is there anything I can do to help you to another part of the tree?'





Feelings tree

Life has its ups and downs. Can you and Mum talk about where you both are on the tree at the moment? You may have been in more than one place on the tree over the last few months. Can you tell each other about this?





Activity 3: What makes us feel good

This is one of the most important activities in the pack and one you may like to keep coming back to. Building on what makes you feel good and finding more and more things that make you feel this way is the key to enjoying using this workbook together.

Sometimes when we are feeling low it can be hard to remember what makes us feel good. Finding things that make us feel good and reminding each other of them is really helpful. This could be hard for you at first. However, remember that it is the small things which are often the most important (for example, a smile, a compliment, a hug, sunshine or your favourite song).

You might not have shared this with each other before.

You might like to keep on coming back to this activity when you discover more things that make you feel good.

Remember, if something makes you feel good but makes someone else feel bad, then this won't be helpful in the long run.



Activity 3

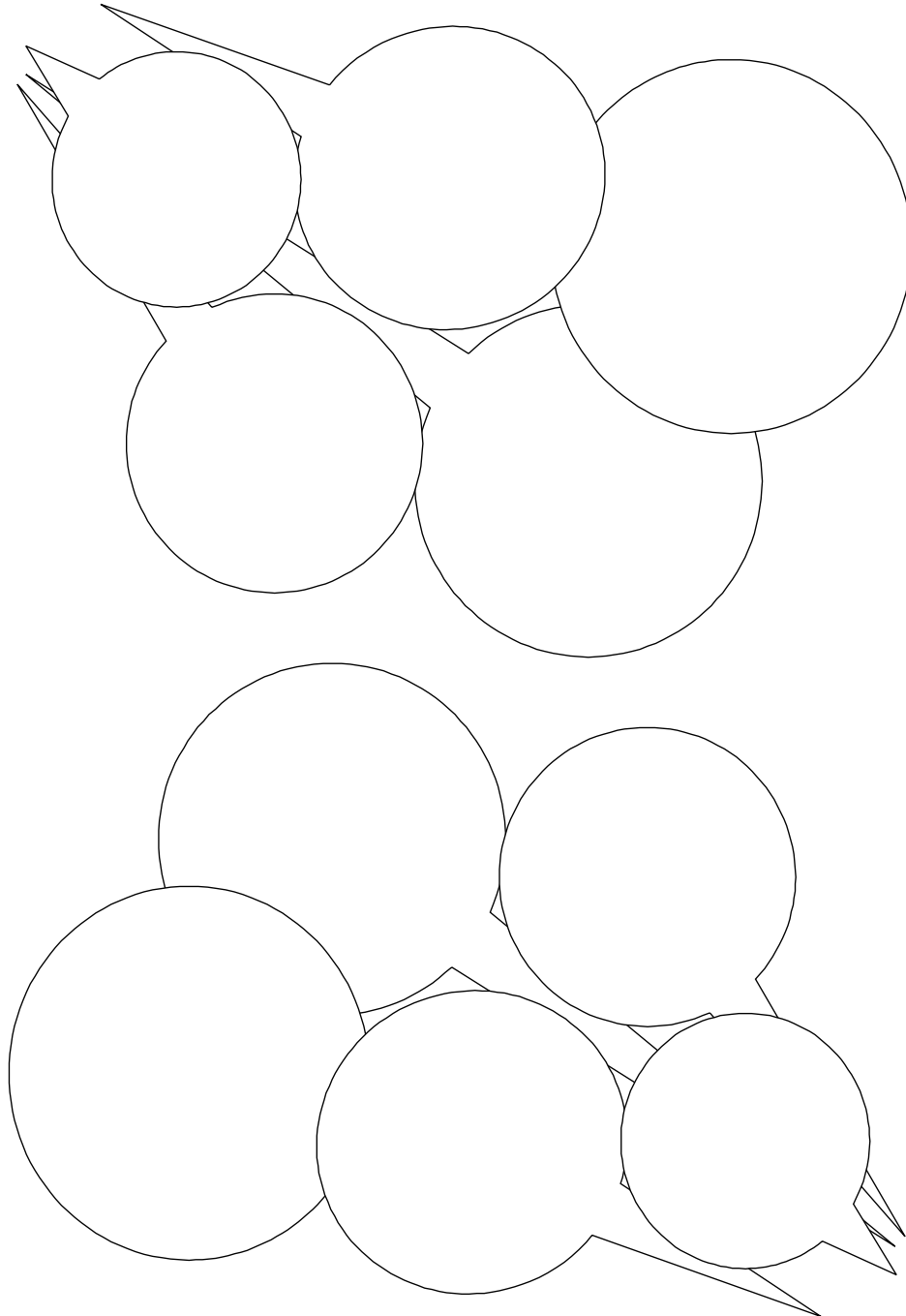




What makes us feel good?

Even during difficult times, there are things that can make us feel good. Can you and Mum tell each other about what makes you feel good?

Things that make me feel good



Things that make Mum feel good



Activity 4: What I think about the place where I live now

You might have moved recently, you might be in temporary housing or you might still be in the same place. Where you live can be very important to how you feel about your life. This activity allows you both to express what you think about where you are living at the moment.

Few places are either all good or all bad. It is important to be able to share both and recognise that you might feel quite differently about where you are now. It might be helpful to look at ways you can help each other with things that you are not so happy about.

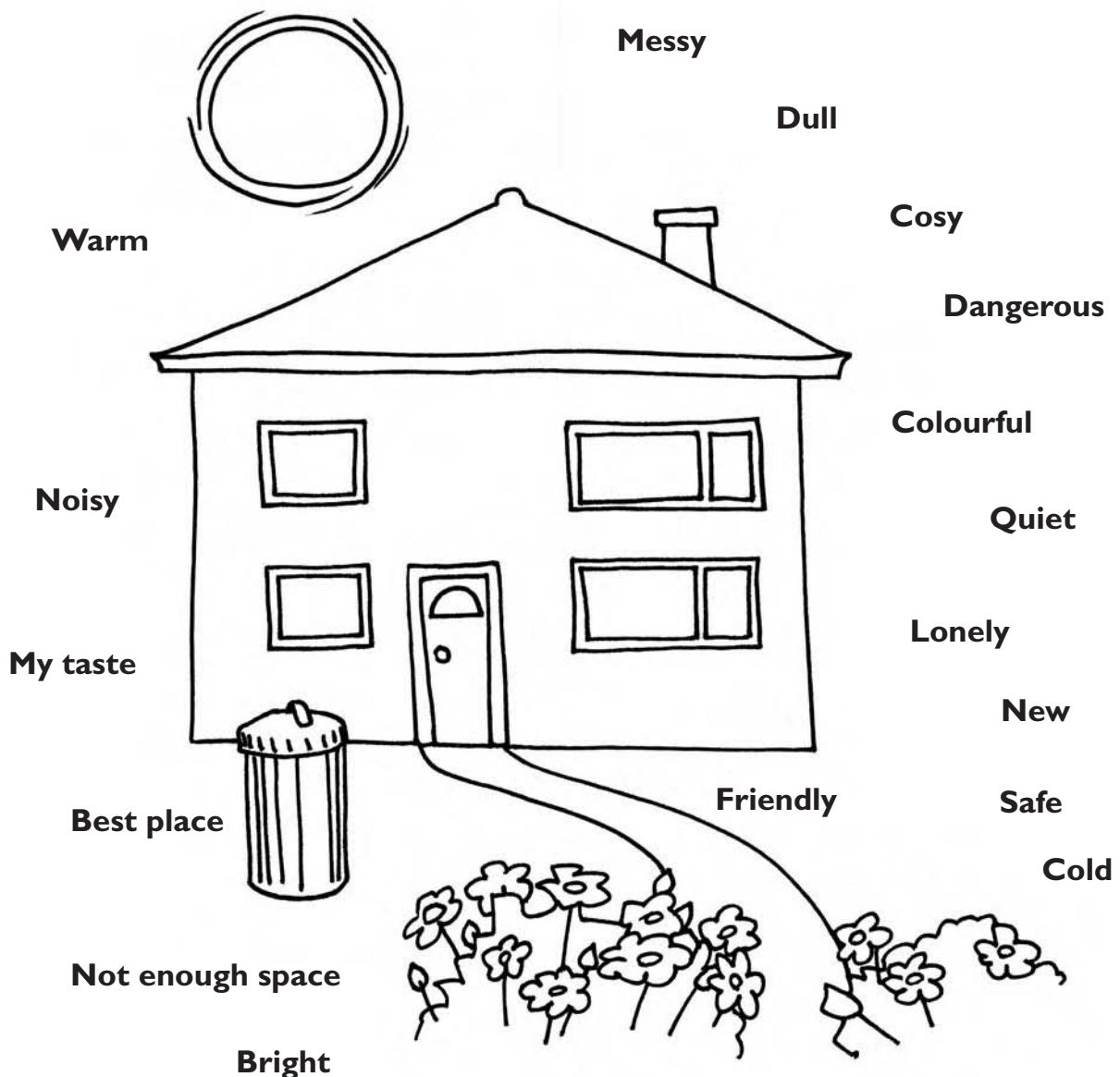
Doing this activity might raise issues, both positive and negative, about where you have lived before. Take the time to listen to each other about these issues and remember that there were probably very good reasons why you needed to move.



What I think about the place where I live now

Many young people and their mums have had to move house. Others will have stayed in the same house but life might be different.

Around the two houses (one below and one overleaf) are words and pictures. Circle those that reflect the way that you think or feel about where you live. You may like to add your own words or pictures. Remember that any place can have both good things and bad things. You and Mum might have very different ideas. Talk about these. Make sure that you have helped each other find at least one good thing about the place where you live now.





My house



Mum's house

Things we could change:

.....

.....

.....

.....



Activity 5: Shared living areas – what’s the big idea?

This is an activity for young people and their mothers living in refuges. You may be used to sharing your house with other people. However, for many people this is a new way of living.

When refuges were first begun in the early 1970s, it was recognised that it was not only cheaper for people to share housing, but also provided a way for women, children and young people to be able to support each other. While there may be problems about sharing a place with people you don’t know, it can also be very lonely moving to an area where you don’t know anyone. Refuges provide a ‘half-way’ house where people can recover and spend time with other people before moving on.

Check in with how you are both finding living in the refuge. Use the ‘feelings tree’ on p.30 if you like.



Activity 5





There are reasons why refugees believe it is a good idea for families to share living arrangements. You and Mum might have ideas about what works and what doesn't work for you. Your point of view and your mum's might be the same or different.

What are the *difficult* things?

Your point of view

Mum's point of view

- 1.
.....
- 2.
.....
- 3.
.....
- 4.
.....

- 1.
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- 2.
.....
- 3.
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- 4.
.....



What could be the *best* things about shared living?

Your point of view

Mum's point of view

- 1.
.....
- 2.
.....
- 3.
.....
- 4.
.....

- 1.
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- 2.
.....
- 3.
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- 4.
.....





Activity 6: Having a bad day

We all have our good days and bad days. You may be having a good day when Mum is having a bad day, or the other way around.

If you are finding life tough at the moment, then it is easy to make it more and more difficult for people to talk to you. They will often blame themselves for your bad day, but it usually has nothing to do with them.

The first step is being able to name what the feeling is about. Look at the photos opposite and think about what you think each of the young people might be feeling (not to mention the mother). Then turn to the next page.







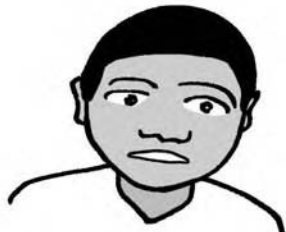
Having a bad day?

Things aren't going well for Amari today – same for Joe. Have you had any days when you felt like this?

How do you think Amari and Joe are feeling?



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Would Mum have seen you like this? She probably has her own ideas about why she thinks you have some bad days. Can you talk to her about what you have been thinking or feeling when you have had some bad days?

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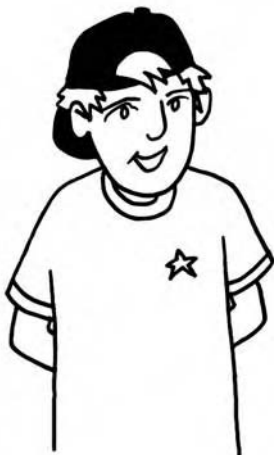


Activity 7: Feelings puzzle

Trying to work out what you are feeling can be a real puzzle. Here are some words which express feelings. Young people are often better at doing these puzzles than their mothers. You might like to take it in turns to find a word lost in the puzzle.

If you enjoy doing this activity, there are loads of puzzle books at the local newsagent. They can be a good way of winding down at the end of the day.

Here is a feelings puzzle. See if Mum can help you find the feeling words. Put a circle around them. Put a tick against the ones which you have felt today.



- | | | |
|----------|-------|--------------|
| ANGRY | UPSET | SAD |
| CONFUSED | COOL | SAFE |
| EXCITED | HAPPY | FRIGHTENED ✓ |
| GLAD | SUPER | BORED |



Activity 8: Checking in

This activity is a way of checking in with each other and finding out the different ways you might be affected by the things you have been through. We often find that people can be living alongside each other and not know the day-to-day problems they are having with basic things such as sleep.

If you have been living in a situation where you were sometimes scared, then this can affect you in different ways and it will take a while for your body to get back to normal. You may need to ask Mum for some help with this.

She may also be 'doing it tough' herself and be a bit moody and finding it hard to sleep. It can be important to know that this is not your fault.

Sometimes you won't be aware that something is on your mind, but you might have nightmares or appear to be angry for no reason. Other times the memory/pictures are very clear. Just take your time with this activity to let each other know what is happening for each of you at the moment.





Checking in

If you have just come out of a situation where you felt scared or unsafe you may need to look after yourself more for a while. You will know you need to take greater care of yourself at the moment if you answer 'yes' to any of these questions. Mum might like to answer these questions too.

- Do you find it hard to go to sleep?

Me.

Mum.

- Are you waking up very early in the morning or during the night?

Me.

Mum.

- Do you want your mum or other people close by all the time?

Me.

Mum.

- Are you feeling very moody?

Me.

Mum.

- Are you getting very angry very quickly?

Me.

Mum.

- Are you having nightmares?

Me.

Mum.

- Are you getting pictures which scare you?

Me.

Mum.

- Do you want to be by yourself all the time?

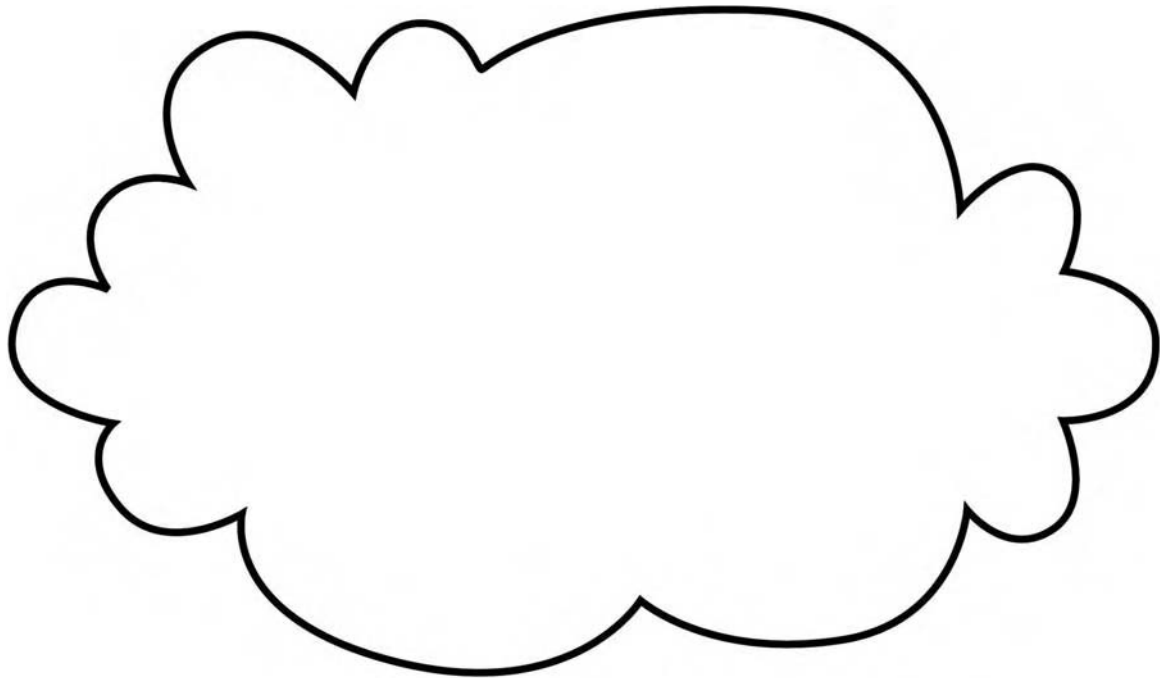
Me.

Mum.

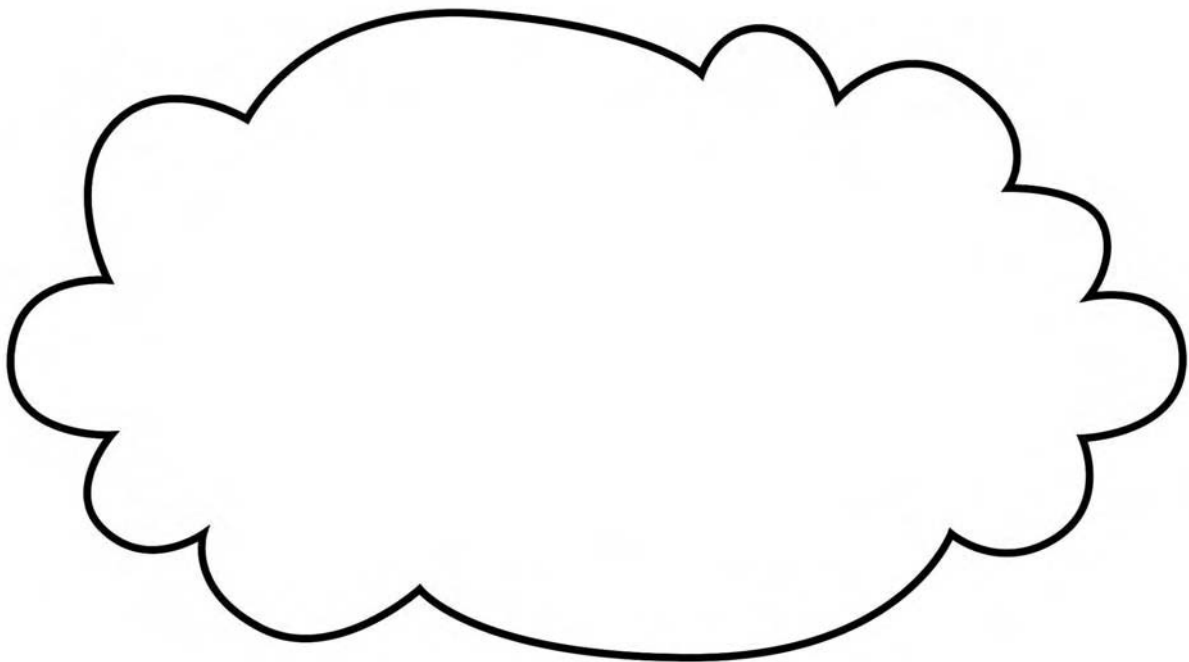


Activity 8

What could be some extra ways of taking care of yourself at the moment? For example, 'time out for talking', 'Mum waiting for me while I go to sleep at night', 'more hugs', etc. You may like to write some ideas down.



You might like to talk or write a bit more about why you feel this way and whether things are getting better or worse for you at the moment.



SECTION 2

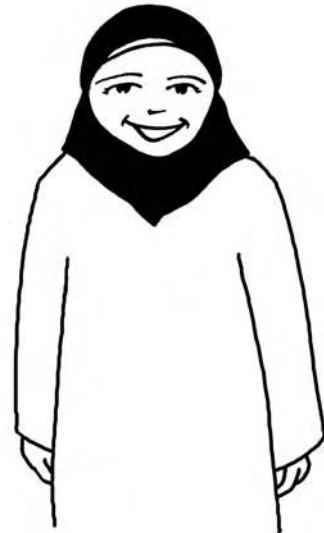
TALKING ABOUT THINGS THAT MATTER



Activity 9: Sharing the good times: a starring memory

It is often too easy to focus on problems. It becomes possible to think about more difficult issues if you are building on and remembering good times together. These may only be small moments – often these are more important than big events. It may be a time when you had a laugh together, a time when you felt listened to or a time when you helped each other out.

If this activity is difficult, then spend some more time on it. There will be times which you have enjoyed together. You may need a third person to help you think about and talk about these good moments. The main thing to remember is that these may not have seemed important at the time, they may not seem significant to anyone else, but they provide an important part of the story of your life.



Photos may have been left behind if you moved house, or you may not have a camera. However, if you have some photos with you, you may like to search through these and find one which reminds you of a time you enjoyed together.



Activity 9



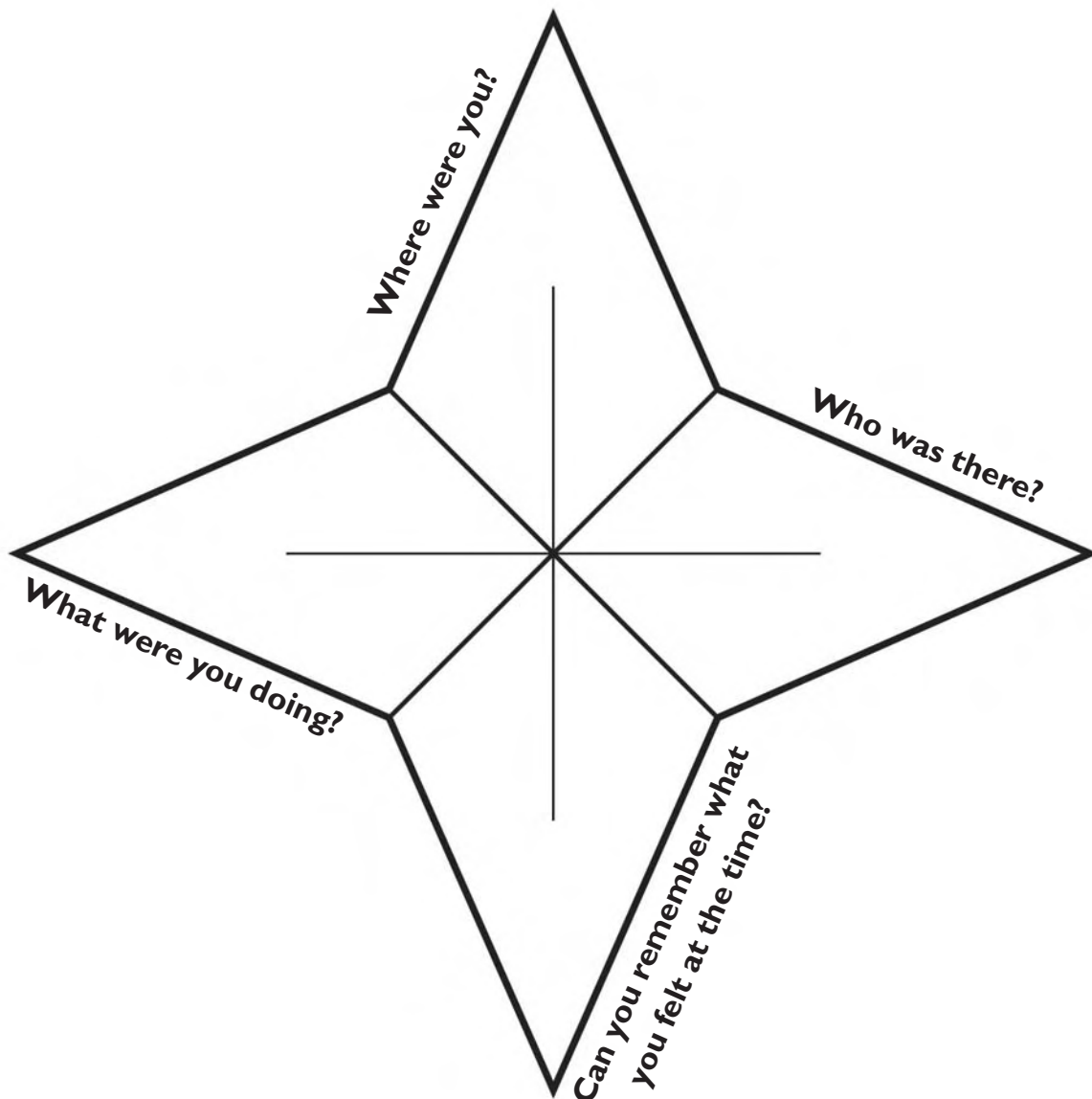


Sharing the good times

Families often develop a 'secrecy habit' where they stop talking to each other about things that matter to them. This can be about good things or perhaps bad things, big things or small things.

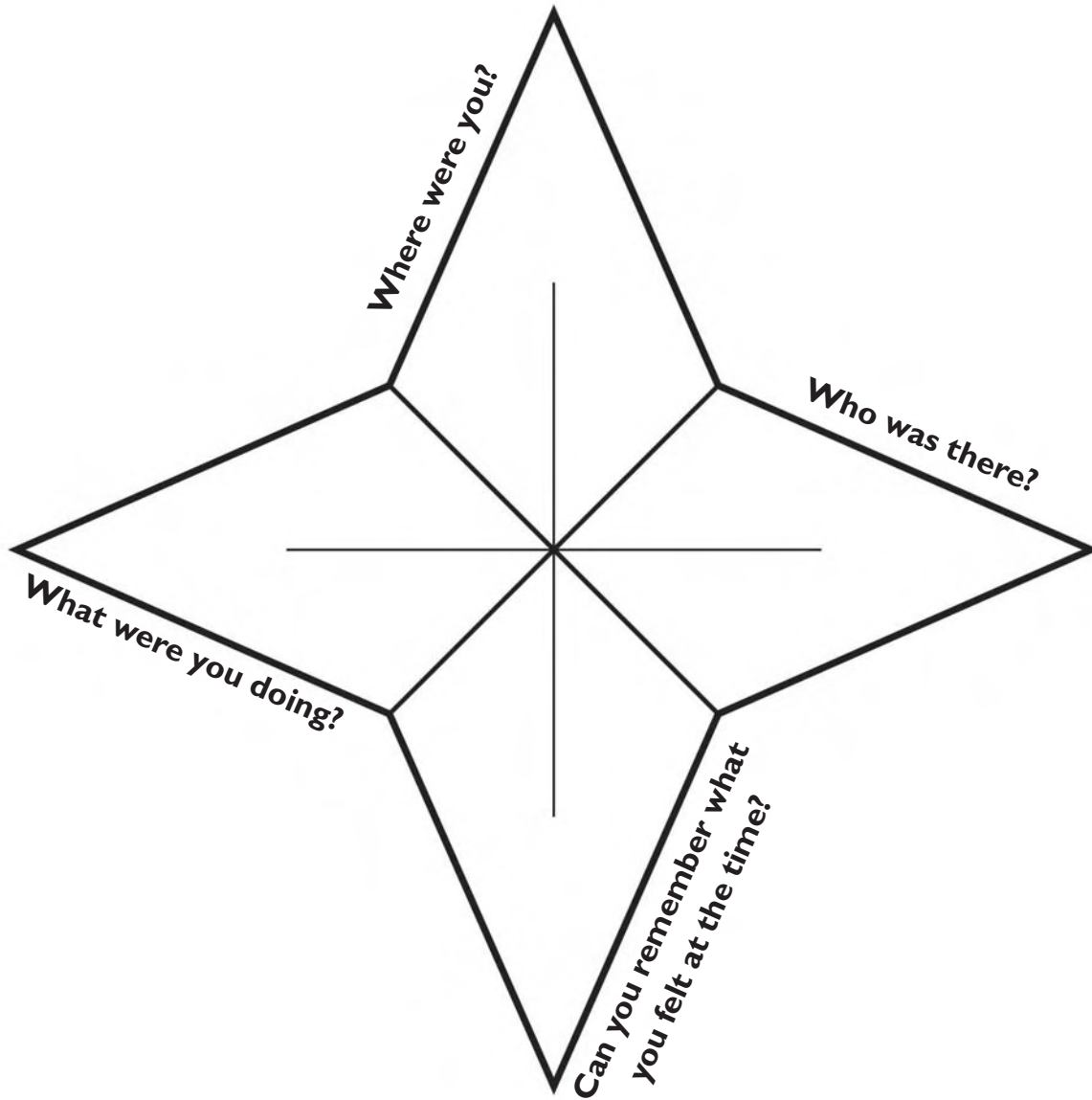
You and Mum might like to think of a good time you had – perhaps a time shared between you and Mum, though other memories are fine. You can tell each other about this memory or write it down.

Your memory





Mum's memory





Activity 10: The secrecy habit

Try this quiz. It is easy to get into the habit of not talking to each other, particularly if it felt safer not to talk about what was happening to you. Or you may have been so busy just trying to get through each day that you forgot how important it is to keep talking to each other.

You may have given off a lot of messages that said 'don't talk to me'. While that may have been the way to survive at the time, it would be good to develop some different ways of being together.

If you have always been good at talking with each other, then this is a helpful reminder about how well you are doing.

We may need some rules here:

- make the time to listen
- don't criticise
- don't get angry
- don't overreact
- give the message that you have heard.

This doesn't mean never getting angry – just not when you are doing an activity like this, when trusting each other is important.



Activity 10





The secrecy habit

Often young people and their mums learn not to talk to each other about ‘things that matter’, particularly if they have been living in difficult circumstances. It may even have felt unsafe to talk. It might be worth thinking about whether you and Mum have developed the habit of not talking with each other, particularly about things which happened in the past and which you didn’t talk about at the time. Try doing this quiz together to see where you stand.

Young person’s questions *(circle the right answers for you)*

I don’t talk to Mum about some ‘things that matter’ because:

? There are some things I want to forget about. If I talk about them, then I have to think about them again.

Yes

No

Maybe

? I am worried that Mum might get angry if she knew about some things.

Yes

No

Maybe

? Mum already has enough problems without me putting my stuff on her as well.

Yes

No

Maybe

? Sometimes I can’t find the words to talk about some of the things that matter to me.

Yes

No

Maybe

? If I am unhappy, I have learnt to talk to my friends or other people, not Mum.

Yes

No

Maybe

I talk to Mum about some ‘things that matter’ because:

? We talk about everything – sometimes it’s like being another grown-up.

Yes

No

Maybe



Mum's questions *(circle the right answers for you)*

I don't talk to (name) about some 'things that matter' because:



I think that it is easier for young people to talk to children's workers or friends than their mothers about things that matter.

Yes

No

Maybe



I have been depressed/feeling pretty low and finding it hard just to get through the day. Sometimes this means that I am not easy to talk to.

Yes

No

Maybe



I feel that has been through a hard time and it is better just to 'move on' and not talk about things that might upset him/her.

Yes

No

Maybe



If we talk about things that matter, I might get upset.

Yes

No

Maybe



I've been very stressed with all the problems at home and shouting a lot. This means it might have been difficult for to talk to me.

Yes

No

Maybe

I talk to (name) about some 'things that matter' because:



We talk about everything, sometimes like adults.

Yes

No

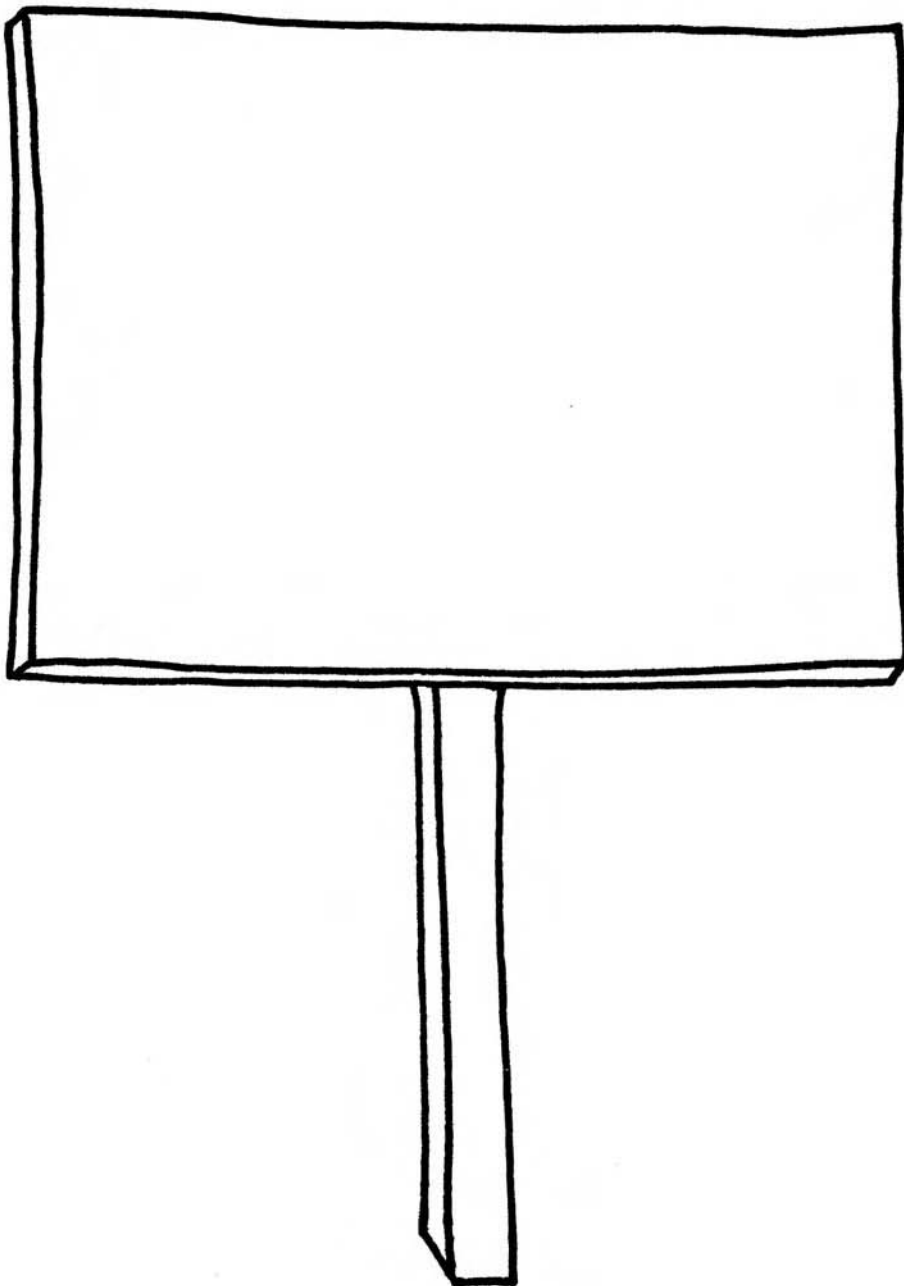
Maybe



Can you think of one thing that would need to be different if you and mum were to talk about 'things that matter', particularly from the past – for example, making time in the day to listen to each other.

You may like to write this down as a reminder.

REMEMBER!!!





Activity 11: Don't bottle it up! Talking about feelings

In this photo workbook are activities designed to help you talk about feelings. Naming the feeling is the first step. This activity is about trying to 'read' from someone's expression what they might be feeling. Always remember that you can get it wrong. We actually don't know what other people are feeling, but sometimes we can make a good guess and this may help them feel understood.

The other tricky issue is that sometimes people don't know what they are feeling.



This activity and several of the other activities are about developing our 'feeling language' so that we are able to tell people what we are feeling. Without this 'language' people can get very frustrated. They often start to just 'act out' or withdraw into their own world. A 'feeling language' gives you more choices about how you are going to let people know what you are thinking and feeling.

Start this activity by looking carefully at the photos.







Don't bottle it up! Talking about feelings

Sometimes naming a feeling can be hard. What do you think the people in each photo (on pp.58–60) are feeling?

Take one photo that stands out for you. Why does this photo stand out? Does it say or reflect something about you and how you feel? You and Mum might want to take turns to do this.

Photo that stands out for me

Photo that stands out for Mum



Activity 12: Excitement and fear

There are different sorts of fear. Sometimes we can deliberately put ourselves into situations which are terrifying – but it feels really, really exciting. Theme parks are full of rides that can ‘scare you to death’ (not all of us can handle this sort of thrill!). Some people like watching movies that make them scared – particularly if you are with a group of people sometimes this can be fun (some of us spend half the movie with our eyes closed!).

Both you and Mum may have these sorts of experiences.

The difference of course between excitement and fear is that with excitement no one gets hurt and the danger is not real (fun rides have lots of safety mechanisms to keep you from getting hurt).

However, there may have been other times when you have been full of fear because the danger was real and someone was actually getting hurt or threatened with being hurt.

We often try not to remember these times and hope that if we don’t talk about them they will go away. People often do move on and ‘time heals’. However, sometimes you may have a picture that stays with you, or you have nightmares, or you find that you are overreacting to things, or that there were things you never talked about at the time which still bother you. An important step in ‘moving on’ and putting things behind you is to talk about things which may still be bothering you.

Our experience with testing out these activities with other mothers and young people is that sometimes mums get very upset when they find out how much their children knew about things that were happening. While this can be difficult, mothers and young people also told us that this was one of the most important activities in rebuilding trust and talking about things that matter to them.

This is the point where mothers often find it helpful to talk to a worker to get some extra help and support. This doesn’t mean these issues shouldn’t be talked about – just that you may need some extra help at this point.

It can be important after this activity to do one which reminds you again of some of the good times you have had together or even to do the ‘chilling out’ activity.





Excitement and fear

Sometimes it's fun to be scared – other times it's not! Many people love the thrill of the rollercoaster ride and other exciting (and sometimes scary) activities.

Are there some scary/exciting things that you like to do, or would like to do?

... that Mum likes to do?

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There may have been other times when you were living at home when you were scared. Can you talk to Mum about one time when you felt scared either for yourself or for her, or for other people in the family?



Where were you?

Where was Mum?

What did you think was happening?

.....

.....

.....

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.....

What did you do?

Was there anything you would have liked to have done but you couldn't?

How do you feel about this now?

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Activity 13: Let's talk about anger

If you have lived with domestic abuse, then anger can be the most difficult feeling to express and talk about.

Anger is a natural emotion. However, you may have learnt that expressing anger was dangerous and people got hurt. More often this may have been about one person trying to control another and that other person being punished when they did not do what was wanted of them. It may not have been to do with anger in the first place.

Learning how to express your anger with another person without hurting them is a skill which needs to be learned. Saying you are angry and why – 'I am angry because...' is a good start. It works better than shouting at people or physically lashing out, or banging doors.

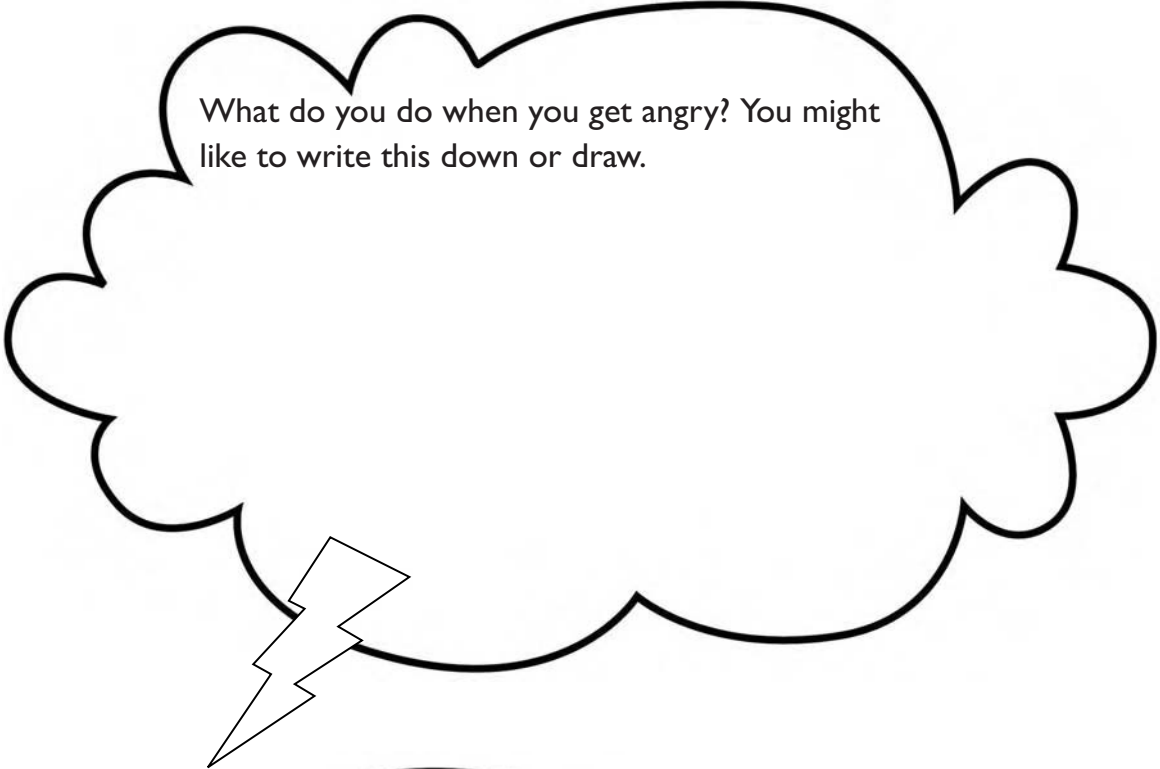
Some people find anger hard to express or talk about. Other people seem to have only one feeling – anger. Anger can cover other feelings. What might you be feeling if you weren't angry? Perhaps talk about this. See what doors open and try to keep that conversation going.






Let's talk about anger

Different people express anger in different ways. When you have been living in a situation where there is domestic abuse, this can be even more confusing.



What do you do when you get angry? You might like to write this down or draw.

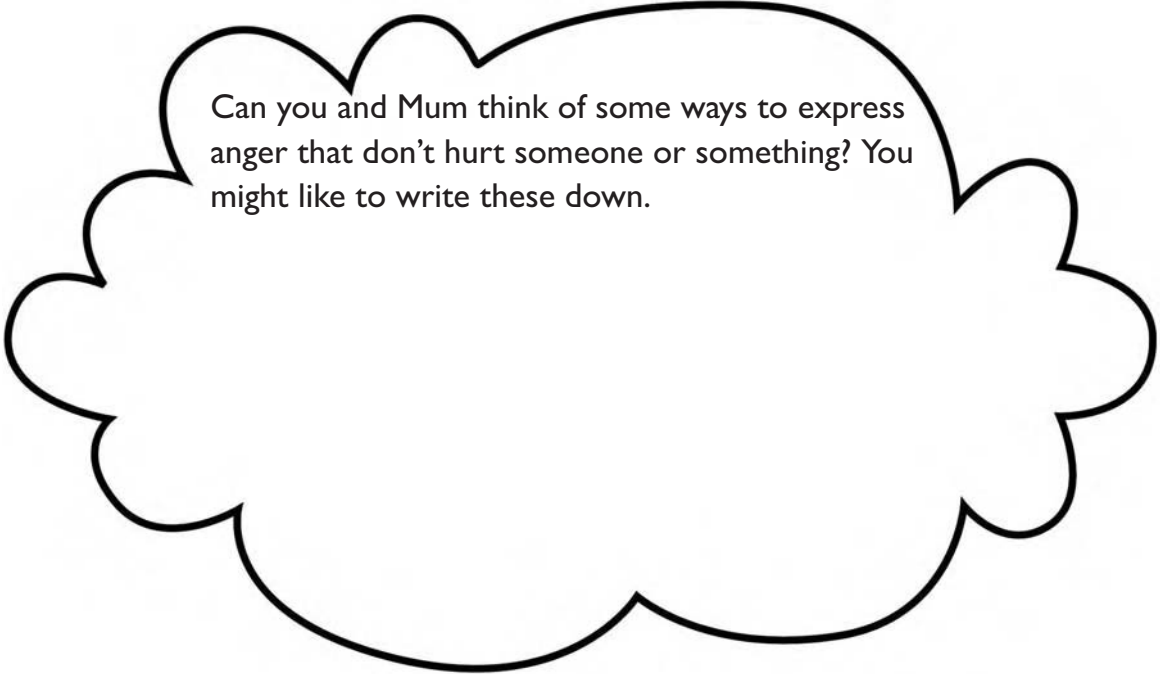


What does Mum do when she gets angry? You might like to write this down or draw.

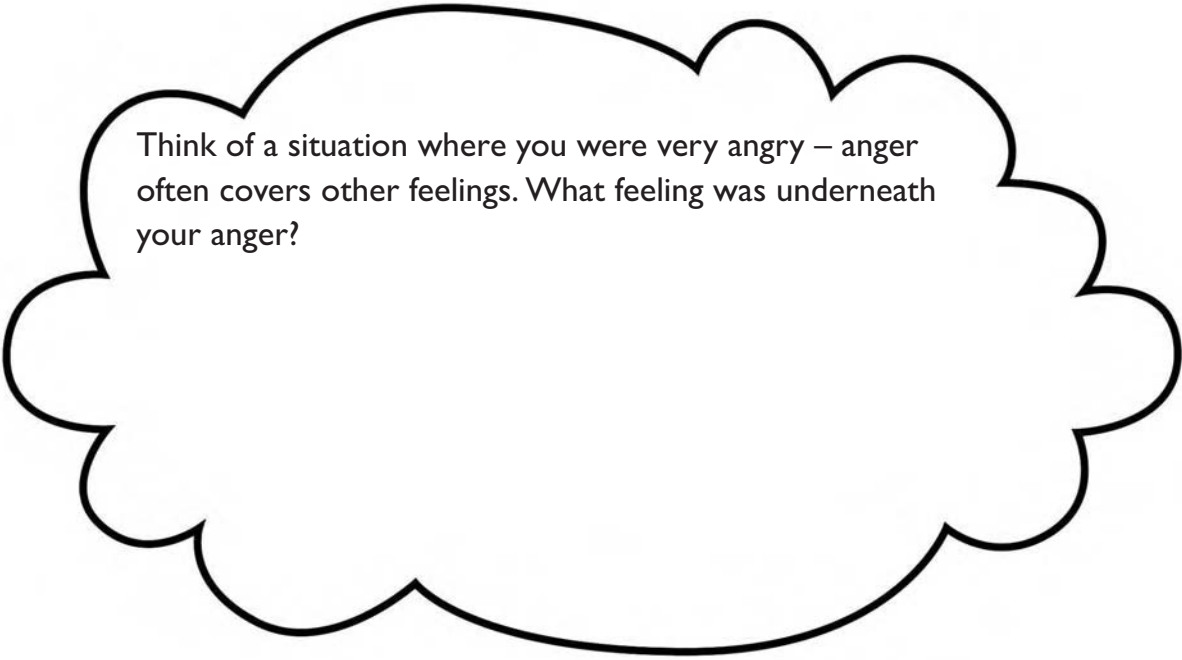


Activity 13

It's okay to feel angry but it's not okay to hurt someone or something.



Can you and Mum think of some ways to express anger that don't hurt someone or something? You might like to write these down.



Think of a situation where you were very angry – anger often covers other feelings. What feeling was underneath your anger?



Activity 14: Things I like and things Mum likes

This activity is just what it says it is – a way of telling each other about the things you like.

Respecting the fact that you may have some things in common and some things which are different is important. Don't get too upset if you think your mum's taste in music is dreadful! Imagine yourself in 20 years' time ...

On the other hand, music may be one of the things you share in common.



Our favourite things

You and your mum will have things that you both like and other things that are different.



Favourite music

Me Mum

Favourite colour

Me Mum

Favourite TV programme

Me Mum

Favourite food

Me Mum

Favourite drink

Me Mum

Favourite thing to do

Me Mum

Favourite person outside the family

Me Mum





Activity 15: Changes in my family

The next two activities ('Changes in my family' and 'Feelings about Dad') are linked but separate activities.

Families are changing all over the UK. Many children don't have parents that are married to each other. Many children are living in households where there is only one parent, who is usually the mother. The photos that follow show one or two different family types but of course there are many more.

This activity gives you the chance to fill in as many of the people on your family tree as you can. Some people will know everyone in their family and others will know very few of them. However, we all seem to like to know something about our family identity. If you are adopted or living with a foster family you will need to discuss which family you are identifying in your tree.

This activity may raise lots of questions and issues for you. You may need to talk with other people – friends or family members – to gather some more information.

Sometimes there are some painful memories associated with people who have died, moved on, or who you no longer see. Other times this will raise lots of very positive feelings about people who care about you or who you plan to get in touch with soon. With all the ups and downs you have been through, understanding more about your family and sharing stories and memories can be important. Sometimes it can simply be about recognising that at the moment the family is 'me and you' and that making the most of life together is the important thing.

This activity may encourage you to seek out further help and support either in tracing more of your family tree or in dealing with some of the important issues which come up for you both.



Activity 15

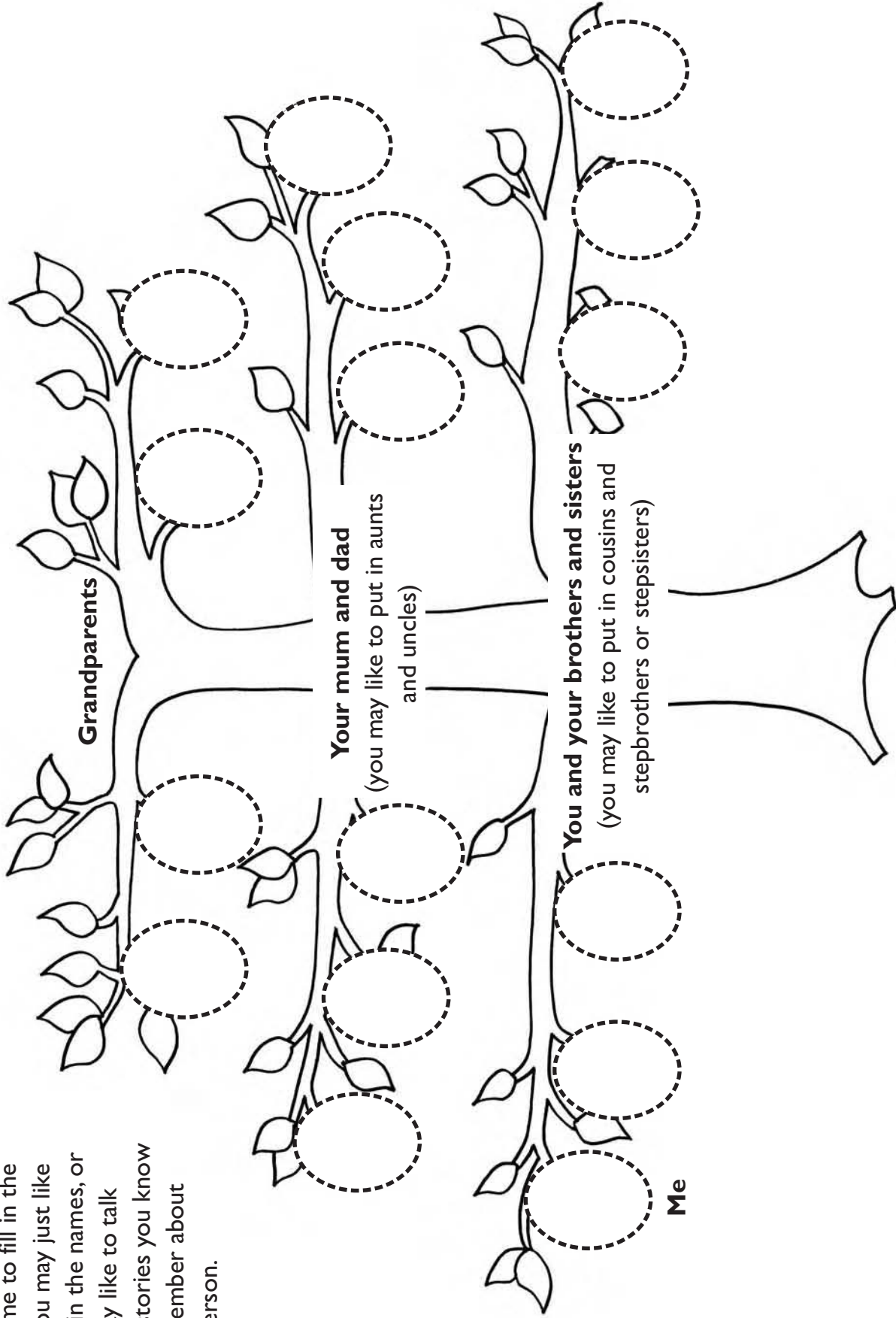






Activity 15

Take time to fill in the tree. You may just like to put in the names, or you may like to talk about stories you know or remember about each person.





Activity 16: Feelings about Dad

Young people have very different feelings about their dads particularly if they are not living with them.

You will have different feelings about your father depending upon your memories and whether you see him regularly at the moment. Some of these memories and experiences will be good and some of them may be very unhappy. This is an opportunity for you to talk about these things.

You may also have more than one person who has acted as a father or in a 'father role' to you – a grandfather, uncle, stepfather, foster father. You may like to talk about these people when you do this activity.

A message to mums

You may find that your son or daughter's feelings about their dad are something you have talked openly about. On the other hand, this may be one of those discussions which has been in the 'too hard basket'.

You may have some very strong feelings of your own about your son or daughter's father. During this activity it is really important that you listen to their feelings and thoughts without criticism or judgement. It can be a very trusting thing for them to share these thoughts and feelings. It is an important aspect of building your relationship with them and recognising that they have thoughts and feelings, memories and experiences which are both similar to and different from your own.

You may also need to discuss whether there is any realistic (and safe) possibility of things being the same or different in the future. They may want more contact or less contact. They may wish to search out a father they have lost contact with. They may feel very different from one week to the next. Don't promise what is not in your power to deliver. However, do listen with respect to what they have to say.

Again, this is an area where you may all need some extra support. We have found from testing out this activity with other mothers and young people that no two experiences were the same and for some families this was a particularly important discussion. Sometimes nothing changed in any practical way, but an important conversation had happened and young people and their mothers felt more able to talk.





Feelings about Dad

Every young person who no longer lives with their dad will have a different attitude or feeling about seeing their dad. Some young people won't know who their father is. Some won't have seen him for a long time. Others might be seeing him quite regularly. Some young people have several fathers, so if this is the case for you, decide which one you are talking about in this activity.

Your feelings about your dad may be very clear, a bit mixed up, or they might change all the time.

Here is a list of feelings. When you think about your dad which feelings match for you? Put a circle around the most important ones for you.



- | | | | |
|---------------|---------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Warm | Worried | Hurt | Happy |
| Angry | Sick | Unhappy | Sad |
| Loving | Disappointed | Confused | Scared |
| Secure | Bored | Nervous | Excited |

If you thought you were going to see your dad, what feelings would you have? These might be the same as or different from the ones before. (If you have never seen your dad, or haven't seen him for a very long time, this question might not be one you can answer.) Fill the bubbles with your feelings and tell Mum about the feelings you have.



Mum's thoughts

Talk with your son or daughter about your feelings, about what she or he has said and the practical problems that might be involved. You may like to write these down.

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Are there any other people you need to talk to about any of these things?



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Activity 17: Chilling out

This is a relaxation activity. You may have been taught something like this by other people (Mum may have done something like this in birthing classes before you were born). This is our own variation to suit the photo workbook.

Just a few points to keep in mind:

First, we know it is very difficult to make the time and space to do this activity together. There is usually too much going on – the TV, other children in the family needing attention, homework, housework, other people visiting.

Second, we know that if you haven't done something like this together before, it may feel a bit weird.

Third, the people who need it most – young people and their mums (or others) who feel quite 'hyped' up, anxious or can't sleep – are the ones who find this activity the hardest to do.

Three ideas about relaxation are used for this activity.

1. It is easier to relax if you have first tensed up every muscle in your body.
2. Slowing your breathing down is really important.
3. A trigger to distract your mind like a photo can be really helpful.

Finally, if you are talking or thinking about anything which is difficult for you, then it is really helpful to have a positive picture in your head to come back to.

We can only suggest that you 'just have a go!'



Photo by Philippa Bolton



Chilling out

Here is a photo that you and Mum might like to use if someone can photocopy it so you can put it in front of you. If that isn't possible, then find another photo (in a book, photo album or on a poster) of a place that makes you feel good. The photo for you might be different from Mum's.

Place the photo in front of you. Your turn first – then you do it for Mum. Find a comfortable place to sit with the photo in front of you or on your knee.

Mum reads the following:

- Look at the photo, breathe in slowly and then breathe out. Breathe in again and out.
- Now clench and tighten every muscle in your body, from your toes, up your legs, through your tummy and up to your shoulders. Hold for a moment and then let it go. Do this one more time. Clench and tighten every muscle, from your toes up to your shoulders and even your face and eyes. Hold and then let go.
- Look at the photo and breathe in and breathe out slowly. Do this again.
- Close your eyes and now see if you can still see the picture with your eyes closed.
- Breathe in and out. Open your eyes again and breathe the picture in and out again.
- Close your eyes one more time and hold on to the picture.
- Open your eyes and just look at the picture while you breathe in and out for as long as you want.

Now it's your turn to read this for Mum.

This is a picture you might like to return to whenever you want to find a place to chill out in your head.



Activity 18: Other issues outside the home

The things which are happening at home may be a big or small part of your life. Often other issues outside the home are of equal or more importance. These may be very positive or very negative for you.

Young people may be very concerned about very personal issues (relationships, dieting, bullying) or very political issues (the environment, the Iraq war) and everything in between.

It can be important to fill Mum in about issues which concern you – particularly if she doesn't have the latest update. It may be that there are things which can be done and where two heads are better than one. It may be that you just need to talk about things, but don't want any action at this point.

Without putting adult problems on to young people, it may be important for mums to talk a little about issues which are of concern to them outside the home.

Mum may be worried about housing or the area you are living in, racism or other sorts of discrimination. Sharing these concerns and how they affect you may help your son or daughter understand a bit more about the current situation and any particular stresses and strains you are under at the moment.



Demand for inquiry as weapons' use escalates

RACISM ALIVE AND STILL KICKING

boy trouble

Schools are failing to stem growing tide of abuse between children

Hate crime hits third of disabled Scots

IS ANOREXIA AN EPIDEMIC?

'The music industry must stop churning out material that celebrates violence'

HOMELESSNESS
Better standards for temporary housing

ICE CAP MELTDOWN

BOMBER BLASTS FUNERAL PARTY

Police hunt knife killer

Violent culture leads to bullying

Think radical

GLOBAL WARMING HITS HIMALAYAS

MOST RACIST ATTACKS ON BRITISH MUSLIMS

PUBLIC ORDER
Critics say curfews criminalise youth

DISABLED YOUNG PEOPLE DEMAND RIGHTS IN SCHOOLS



Other issues outside the home

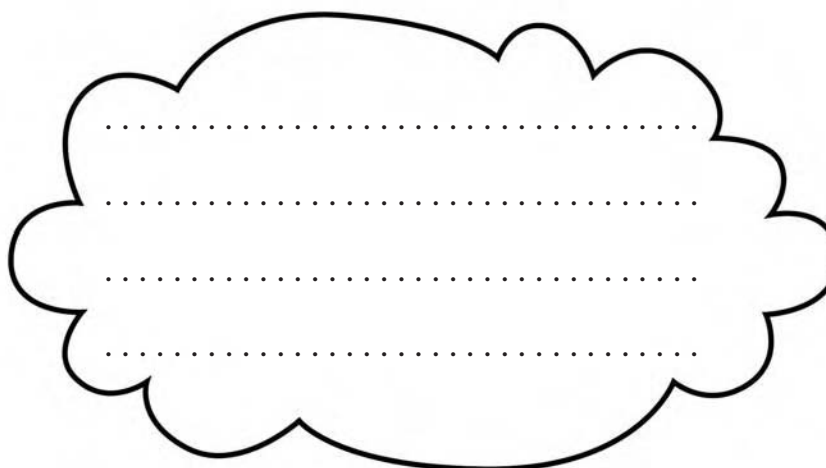
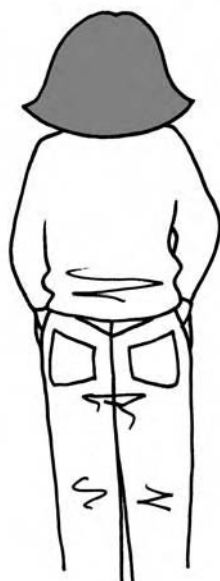
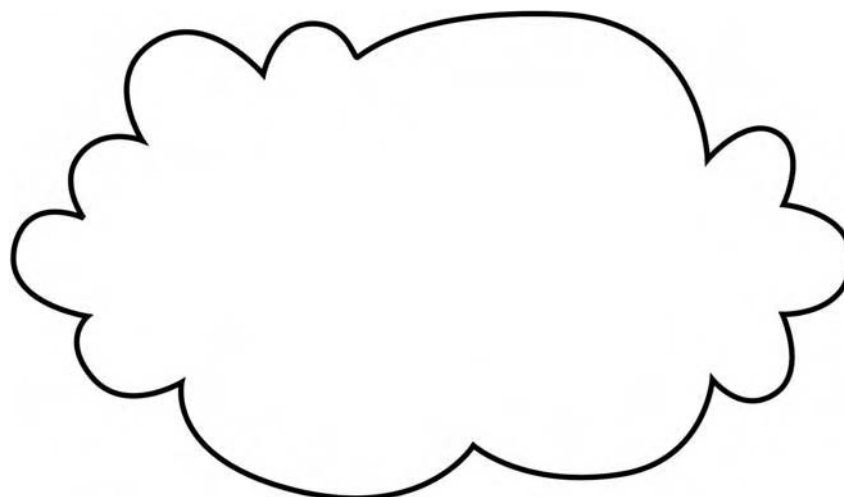
From the headlines you can see there are many issues that affect young people. You might have been feeling bad about some things happening at school (e.g. bullying, racism, dieting, drugs) which you might have felt you can't tell Mum about in case it upsets her.



You and Mum might like to talk about some of these things:

- What is it?
- How does it make you feel?
- How have you dealt with it?
- Why do you think it is happening?
- Is it still bothering you?
- Is there anything you can do about it?

You can draw or write about some of these things here:



SECTION 3

MOVING ON



Activity 19: Keeping track of my life

If there have been lots of moves and changes in your life it can be easy to lose track of where you have come from. It can be really interesting to see the things that are the same and different between yourself and your mum at the same age.

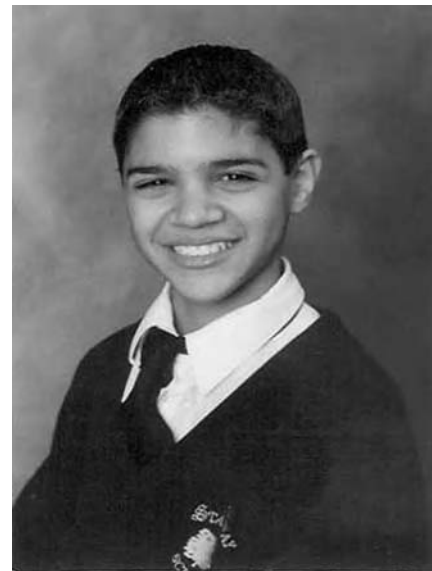
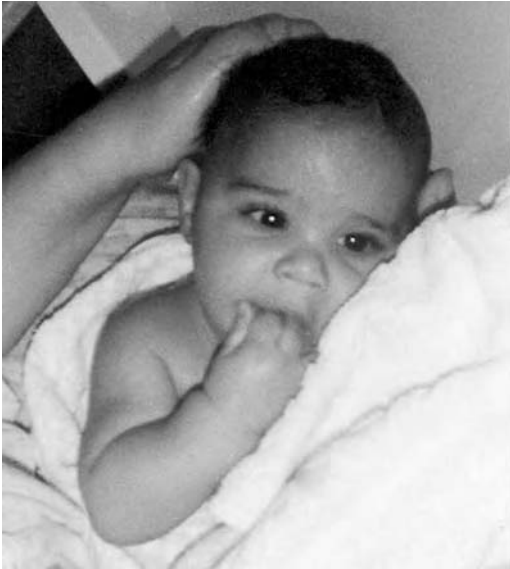
Milestones can be things like:

- when and where you were born
- if and where you went to pre-school
- houses you have lived in
- times when brothers or sisters were born
- family upheavals like a divorce or separation
- schools you've been to
- turning points where something different happened.

A message to mums

When we were checking out this activity with young people and their mothers we found that some young people were really interested to know about their mother at the same age. However, you need to be careful not to make this into a competition – 'look how good you've got it compared with when I was young', etc., etc. Such an idea can be turned around into 'Great to see we're not repeating some of the same old patterns'.

If you are worried that some things you were unhappy about in your own life are repeating for your son or daughter, then check it out. They may feel differently from the way you felt. Are there things that can be done which would make a difference? Do they see this as a problem or is it just you thinking this? Do you need to get some further help and support?







Keeping track of my life

Sometimes life seems to go slowly and other times so fast you feel as though you can't keep up. Keeping track of your life can be important in understanding who you are. Sometimes you need to look back before you can move forward. With the help of your mum, see whether you can remember important milestones. For example, moves you've made, times when new people have come to live with you (this includes new brothers and sisters), new schools, even holidays if these have been important. Mum might like to do her own journey so you can compare what you were doing at the same age.

My milestones

Mum's milestones

The graphic shows a road with a central grey path and a white dashed line. On either side of the path, there are six numbered boxes (1-6) for recording milestones. Each box is on a set of dotted lines.

My milestones	Mum's milestones
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6



Activity 20: Worries and excitement

This is another activity about worries and concerns, but it also has a flip side. Sometimes if you allow yourself to stop ‘worry’ overtaking you, then there are also things you could get excited about.

Get the worries out of the way first.

Using the worry scale on the next page, write down one or two (or three or four??) things which worry you. Think about whether these involve total panic or just a bit of a drag (low level). If things are at ‘total panic’ you may need some more help. What helps to keep ‘worry’ from taking over your life? Talk about this with Mum.

Once you have got ‘worry’ out of the way, have a think about possible things to get excited about. This may be too hard – but give it a go. Please don’t forget that small things are important.



Worries and excitement

There's nothing like worries to spoil a good time! Of course there are lots of things to worry about. However, sometimes you can develop such a 'worry habit' that you can't enjoy anything, or you do things to cover up your 'worry habit' that might be very unhelpful.

On the side name any worries (big or small) that you might have. For each worry tell Mum what your temperature is on the 'worry scale'.

WORRY SCALE

I'm worried about:

1.
.....
.....

Temperature:

2.
.....
.....

Temperature:

3.
.....
.....

Temperature:



Off the scale – total panic!

High – talk to me and get my temperature down

Normal – a bit worried but I'm handling it



Is there anything that Mum or anyone else can do to help you with some of these worries?

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Now take a big breath...

Ask yourself: 'If I put to the side any worries I have, what would I be excited about?'
Ask Mum to do the same.

Things I could be excited about

Two rows of four overlapping dotted circles, intended for writing down things the child could be excited about.

Things Mum could be excited about

Two rows of four overlapping dotted circles, intended for writing down things Mum could be excited about.

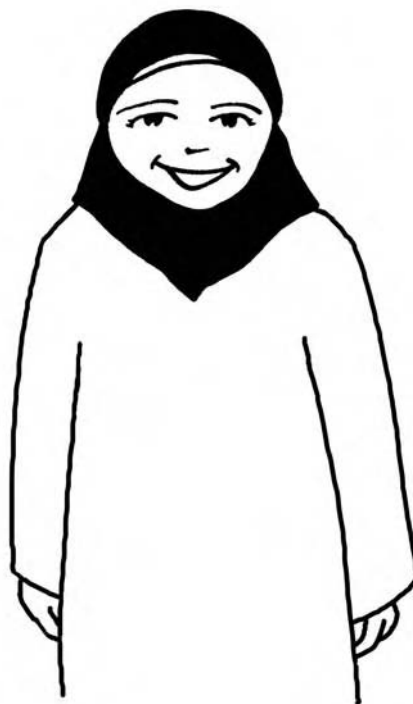


Activity 21: Risks and safety

Finding the right balance between taking risks and staying safe can be difficult. If you have been through a time when you were both afraid in your own home, this can make you feel anxious about everything. Outside the house may have sometimes felt safer than inside. This can lead some young people to take risks other people wouldn't take.

Learning to look after yourself in ordinary ways can be a challenge. Working out together what is reasonable to expect of each other in terms of ground rules about safety may take time. Some mothers find that when the 'fear' is taken away some young people feel there are no rules. Other times young people have learnt to be afraid and need to find ways to be more adventurous.

Learning to 'stay safe' can take time. Making clear safety rules that are understood on both sides is important.



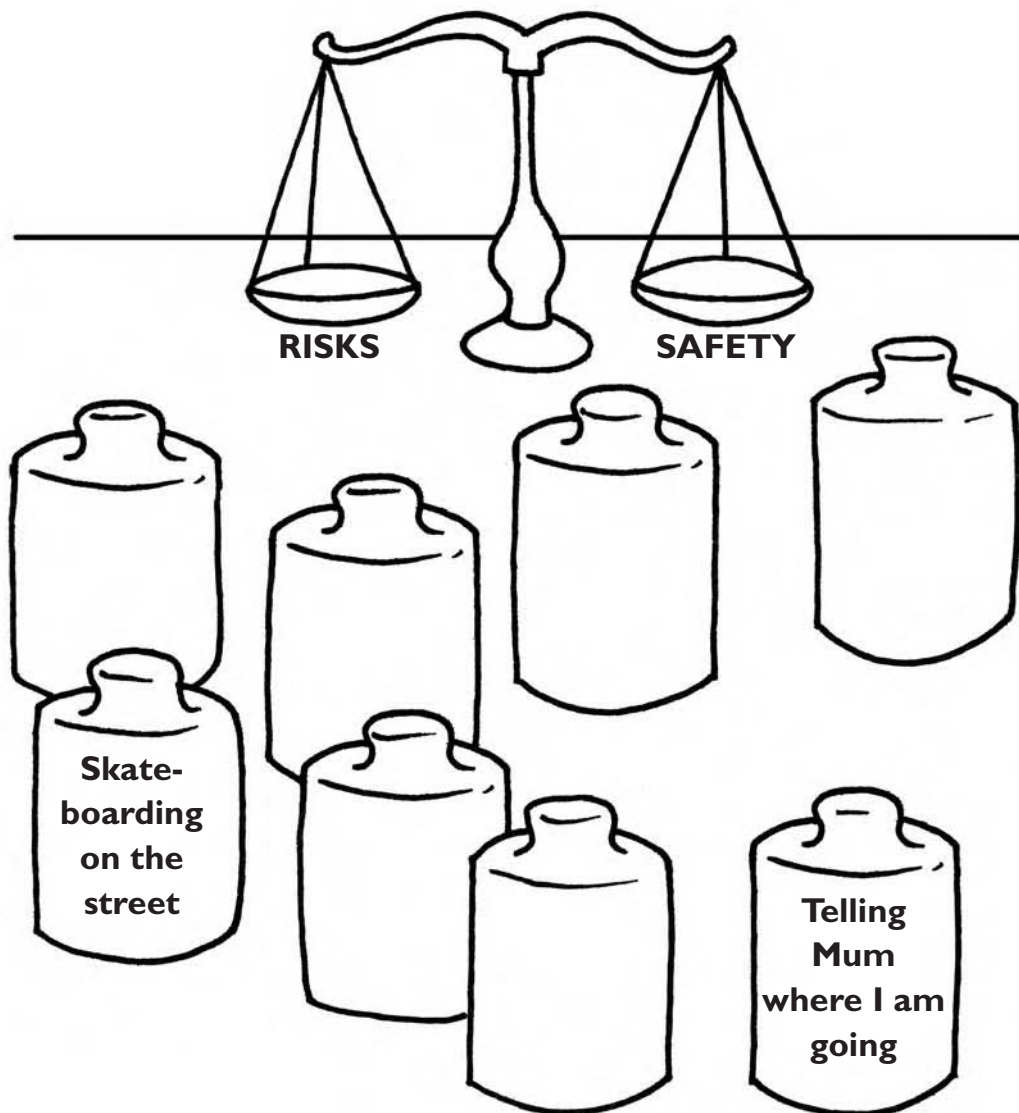




Risks and safety

If you and Mum have moved recently or your situation has changed, you may need to set some new ground rules. Weighing up risks and balancing these with safety needs to be talked about. You and Mum may have very different ideas or you may be able to agree without a problem about safety and risks.

Here are some weights with some examples of safety groundrules and risks – you will need to write your own as every family is different – depending on age, different experiences and where you live. Put arrows to show whether they belong with risks or safety.





Activity 22: Changes we have made

Let's go back to the 'feelings tree' to think about any changes that have happened for you since you started some of these activities.

You may like to compare this with the first tree at the beginning of the photo workbook.

There are no right or wrong answers or ways of feeling. You may have moments when you have felt right on top, and others when you felt 'out on a limb' or down at the bottom.

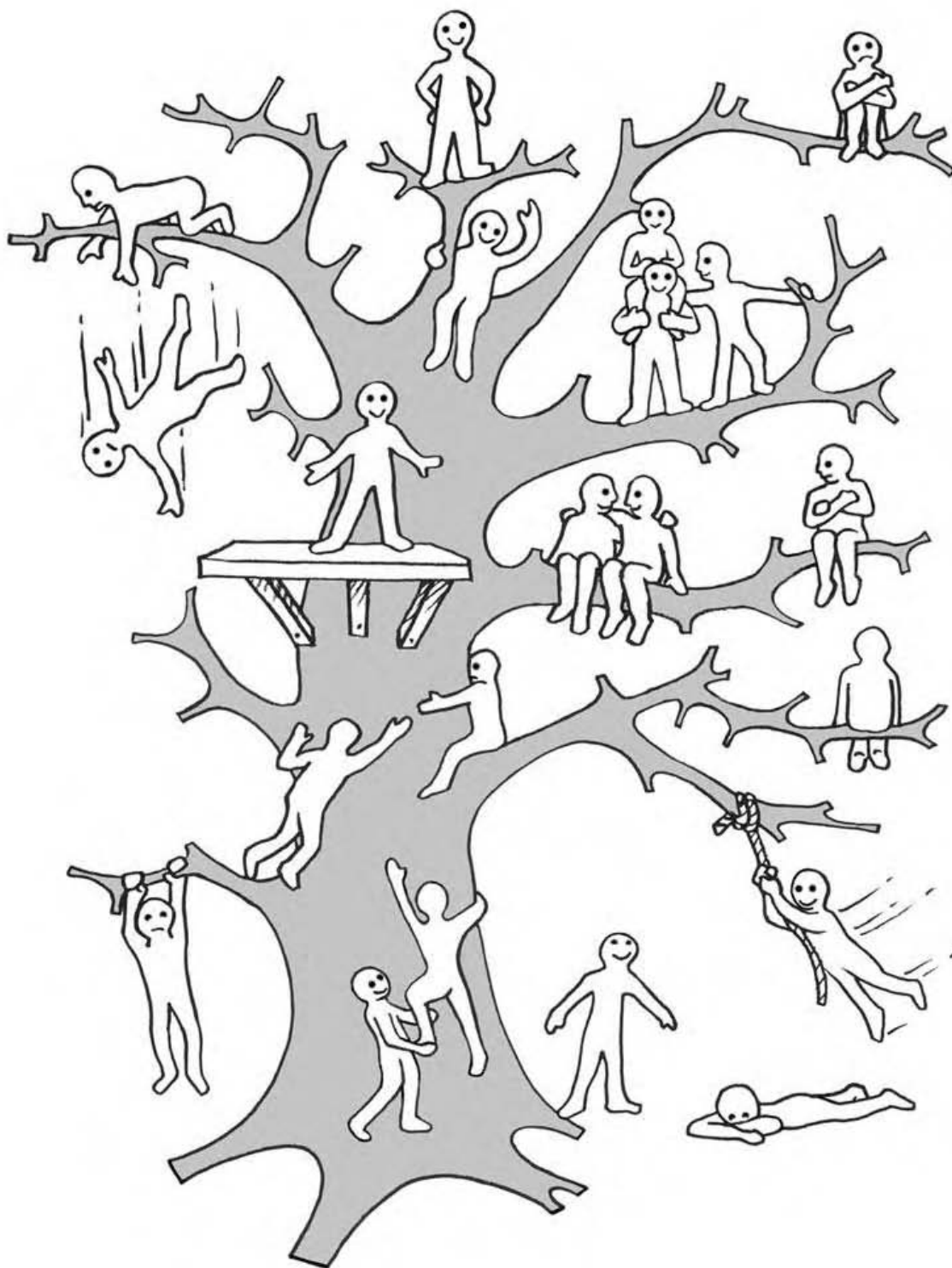
Just check in with each other.



Changes we have made

Think back to when you first started these activities. You might have felt scared, tired, exhausted, relieved or shy.

Look again at the 'feelings tree'. Where are you now? Where is Mum now?





Do you feel a little different about yourself now? How? You might like to write this down.

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Does Mum? How?

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How might this help you in the future?

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Activity 23: Moving on – where next?

Sometimes moves are planned and sometimes you may feel you have to move very quickly. If you are leaving a situation where you are living with domestic abuse, then sometimes this may be unplanned because of a bad incident. If you are leaving a refuge, then you may have a lot of notice about the place you are moving to. Other times you may only have one day's notice. Sometimes waiting to find a suitable place to live can seem to take 'forever'.

Whether you have time to plan or whether you are moving unexpectedly, it's worthwhile trying to find out something about the place you are moving to. Helping each other out with new information can be important. You might find out about where the shops are. Mum might find out about the buses. If you are able to use the internet at school, the refuge, a library or a shopping centre, you could search for information about the town you are moving to.

Moving can be a worry but it can also be exciting. Go back to Activity 20 about worries and excitement to check out with each other what you are concerned or excited about.





Moving on – where next?

When you move from one place to another, sometimes you have a lot of time to find out about where you will be living next. Other times you may only find out the day before you move.

If you have some idea where you will be moving to, what would help to prepare you for the move?

What would help Mum to prepare her for the move?

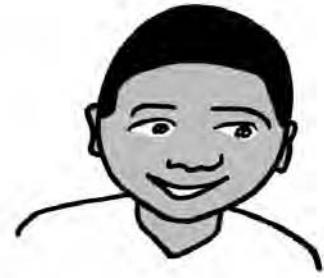
Here are some ideas. You may need a children's worker to help you. You may need to go out and visit the new area with your mum.

Can you start by getting a map of the area or town you might be living in?

Circle the answers to some of the following questions on the map or fill in the boxes over the page. You may like to keep this information on your fridge or home noticeboard.



Useful information about my area



MY NEW PLACE

Internet outlets?

Shops?

Cinema?

Trains and buses?

Parks or playing fields?

Hangouts for young people?

Leisure activities or groups for young people?



Hospitals and GPs?



Activity 24: Looking backwards, looking forwards

This is an activity for you and Mum if you are moving to a new place. It is easier to move on if you have said goodbye and let people know how you feel about moving.

These are just a couple of ideas. You may have lots of others.

If you are not moving on but have simply come to the end of the photo workbook then you may like to write each other a text or flower message.

You've done a brilliant job doing some or all of these activities. We hope it has been of some help to you.

GOOD LUCK!



Looking backwards, looking forwards

Some people find saying goodbye very hard. However, it is easier to move on if you have said goodbye to people who are important to you.

Here are a few ideas:

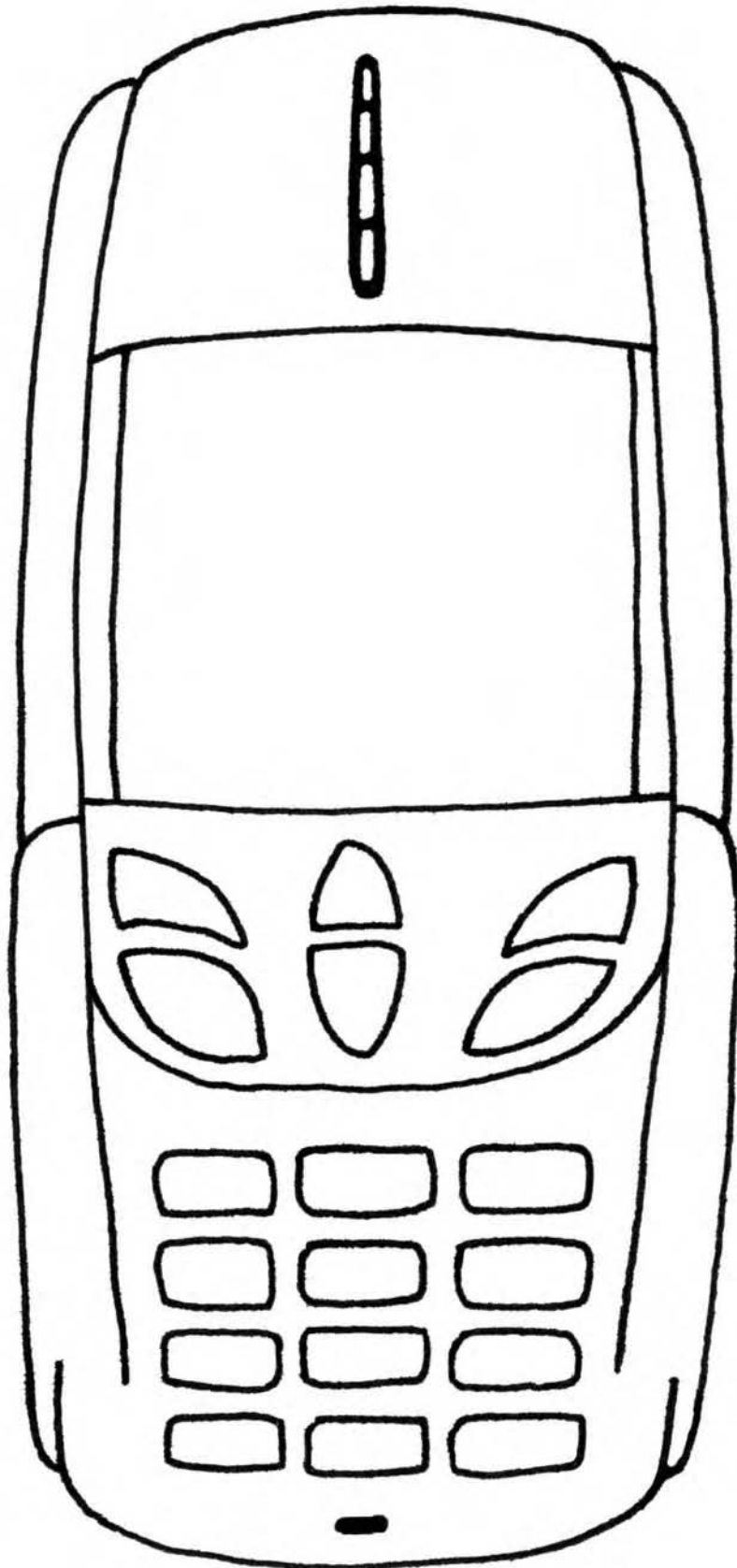
1. Imagine you are sending a text to a special person. On the next page, cut out the mobile phone, put in your text and give it to the person. Of course if you actually have their mobile number and you have a mobile then send a real text.
2. There is a flower on p.106. Cut out the flower. In the centre write the name of the person and on the petals write a message. Then fold in the petals and give it to the person.
3. Think about someone who has meant a lot to you. Write a note to them mentioning three ways in which you have appreciated them.

GOOD LUCK!



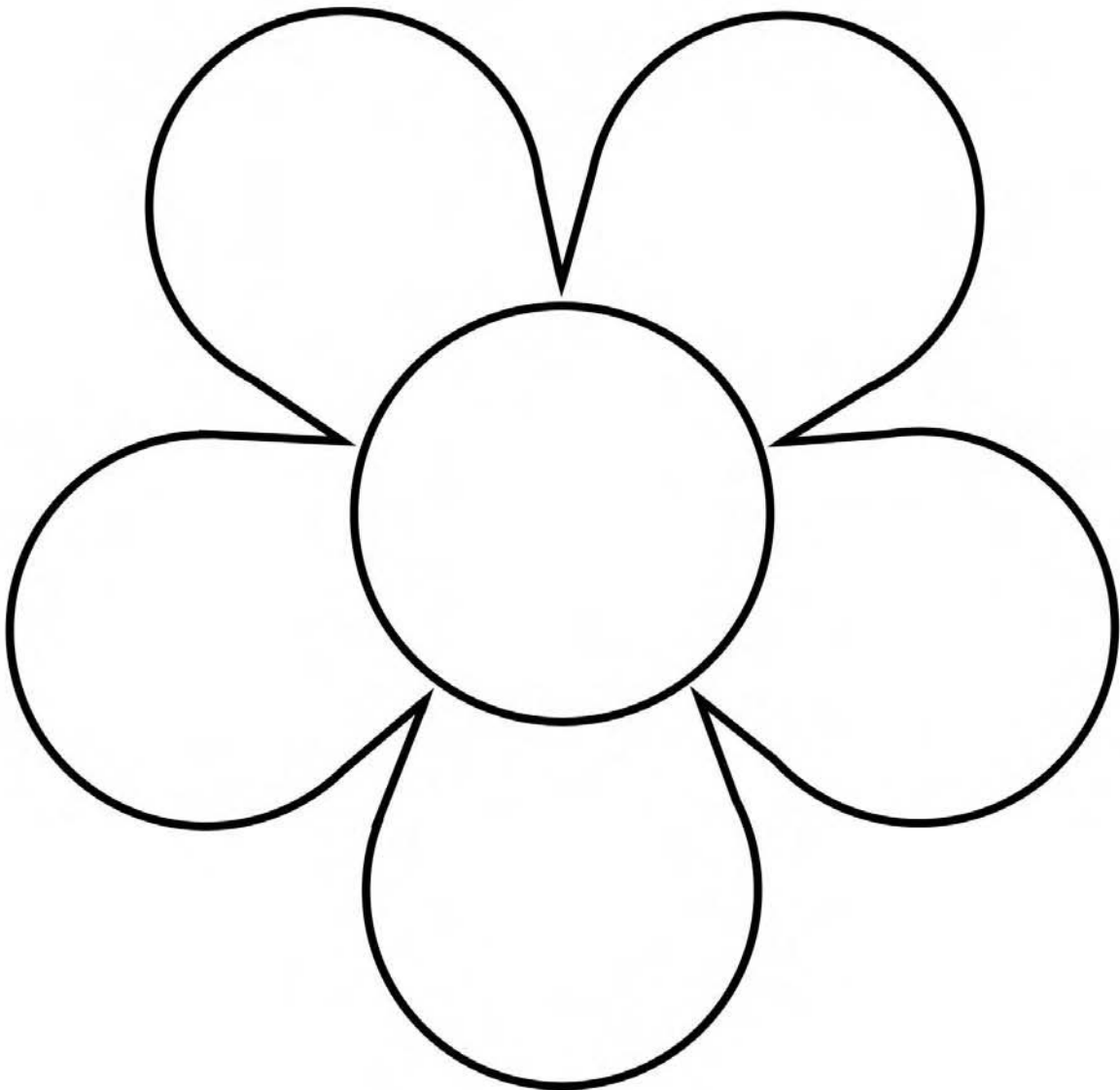


Saying goodbye





Saying goodbye

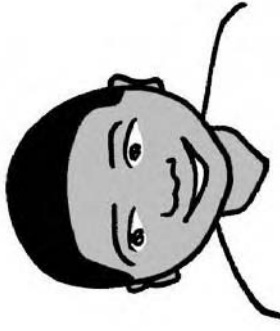




CONGRATULATIONS TO

.....
.....

**for completing the activities in
*Talking about Domestic Abuse***



.....

Signature

Date



Please fill in and give to the worker

Which activity do you want to comment on?

Date: Name:

Young person's comments

What I felt about doing this sheet. Circle the face:



Is this a good activity for other children?

Any comments?

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.....
.....

Mum's comments

How did it feel to work on this sheet with your child for both your child and you?
For example:

Was it upsetting?

If yes, why?

Child couldn't concentrate? Why?

Was it a really good way to spend time together?

Was the activity suitable for your child's age? If not, was it too hard or too easy?

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There may be all sorts of other things you want to say below.

Thank you for your time.

Conclusion

This workbook is only one of a thousand ways for mothers and young people to spend time together.

We are also hoping that people who are more 'techie' than us will develop new interactive ideas for websites and computers. When developing the activities in this workbook with workers, mothers and young people, we found there is sometimes a 'technical divide' between mothers and their children. We also found that many of the refugees we were working with at the beginning didn't have computers that were readily available for mothers and young people. Therefore, we have started with basic everyday activities which most mothers and young people can do together needing nothing more than pencil and paper. However, the electronic media with CD-ROMs, interactive websites and videos would suit the needs of many women and young people and we assume these will be developed in the future.

We are also aware that some young people are very active and need to be engaged in more physical activities than are provided in this workbook. Here are some suggestions and we know that you will be able to think of many more.

- If there is a playground close by or a backyard, then go out and play. Encourage them to kick a ball, throw a frisbee or even just go for a walk.
- Put on some music. Listen together, make up a dance or do karaoke. See how many words of the song you know.
- Go on an outing together.
- Try outdoor activities you know your child likes – swimming, running, climbing, football, netball, cycling, kite flying, etc.
- If you live in a refuge, ask the workers whether you can go to the playroom and play with dough or clay. All sorts of feelings can be expressed with dough and clay – have a go together.
- Painting activities can allow mothers and young people to have a go at 'free painting', looking for colours to express the way they feel at the moment. Or they may like to paint things they miss and things which make them happy or feel at peace.
- If you have a camera (some disposable cameras are quite cheap), then taking photos can be a great activity for older children.

Perhaps make your own list of things here which you have done or might like to do together.

Useful contacts

UK

National Domestic Violence Helpline

Tel: 0808 2000 247

This is a freephone 24-hour domestic violence helpline.

Women's Aid

Website: www.womensaid.org.uk

This website provides comprehensive information for all survivors of domestic abuse in the UK.

Children

Childline

Tel: 0800 1111

Website: www.childline.org.uk

ChildLine is a free helpline for children and young people in the UK.

Children and young people can call to talk about any problem (including domestic abuse). Counsellors are there to help sort out problems.

The Hideout

Website: www.thehideout.org.uk

Special website developed by Women's Aid for children living with domestic abuse.

NSPCC

Tel: 0808 800 5000

Website: www.nspcc.org.uk/kidszone

Website for children and young people with helpful information and support across a wide range of areas.

Black and minority ethnic women and children

Apna Ghar

Tel: 0207 474 1547 (24 hours)

Apna Ghar is a helpline for Asian women experiencing domestic violence.

Languages spoken include: Bengali, Hindi, Punjabi, Gujarati, Tamil and Urdu.

Muslim Women's Helpline

Tel: 0208 904 8193; 0208 908 6715 (Monday to Friday, 10 am – 4 pm).

Email: mwhl@amrnet.demon.co.uk

Website: www.mwhl.org

Muslim Women's Helpline provides a telephone counselling service for all Muslim women, regardless of ethnicity. It provides information and refers to local services when appropriate.

Newham Asian Women's Project

Tel: 0208 472 0528

Email: info@nawp.org

Website: www.nawp.org

Newham Asian Women's Project is based in the London Borough of Newham. The project supports South Asian women who are experiencing domestic violence and offers a resource centre, refuges for women and children, counselling services and projects for teenagers and young women.

Southall Black Sisters

Tel: 0208 571 9595

Email: sbs@leonet.co.uk

Website: www.southallblacksisters.org.uk

Southall Black Sisters is a resource centre mainly for Asian, African and Afro-Caribbean women. It provides advice and information on domestic violence, racial harassment and welfare, immigration and matrimonial rights.

Disabled women

UK Disability Forum

Website: www.edfwomen.org.uk/abuse.htm

For disabled women experiencing domestic violence, the website gives information about getting help to tackle violence and abuse.

USA

National Domestic Violence Hotline

1 800 799 SAFE (7233)

Website: www.ndvh.org

Hotline advocates are available for victims and anyone calling on their behalf to provide crisis intervention, safety planning, information and referrals to agencies in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands. Assistance is available in English and Spanish with access to more than 140 languages through interpreter services.

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Website: www.ncadv.org

Provides good information about protecting yourself and making safety plans. There are 50 state coalitions and contact information is provided in the resources section of the website.

The Family Violence Prevention Fund

Website: www.endabuse.org/

The website contains information relevant to immigrant women and children.

Childhelp USA

1 800 4 A CHILD (1 800 422 4453)

This is the most widely known child abuse hotline in the US.

Australia

Services in Australia are based in different states and any of the general helpline numbers will provide information to more specialised services.

National helpline: 1 800 200 526

Website: http://ofw.facs.gov.au/womens_safety_agenda/domestic_violence_help

ACT	6280 0900
New South Wales	1800 656 463
Northern Territory	1800 019 116
Queensland	1800 811 811
South Australia	1800 800 098
Tasmania	1800 633 937
Victoria (Melbourne)	9373 0123
Victoria (rural)	1800 015 188
Western Australia	1800 007 339

For children and young people the following contacts are available:

Kids Help Line

Tel: 1 800 55 1800

Email: counsellor@kidshelp.com.au (for email counselling)

Website: www.kidshelp.com.au (web counselling: Monday to Friday, 3 pm – 9 pm)

Kids Help Line is a national counselling service for young people aged 5 to 18 years. It is a free, anonymous and confidential service which kids can call or they can chat to a counsellor online.

Canada

Services in Canada are based in different provinces and any of the general helpline numbers will provide information to more specialised services.

National Domestic Violence Hotline

1 800 363 9010

Domestic Violence Hotline (which also serves the US)

1 800 799 723324

Young people's bilingual helpline

1 800 363 9010

National Clearinghouse on Family Violence

Website: www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ncfv-cnivf/familyviolence

Each state also has its own domestic violence resources for women and children and the National Clearinghouse on Family Violence provides resources and information for each state.