SUMMER MENTAL HEALTH ACTIVITIES for Kids

Elementary School
Introduction

Our Summer Mental Health Toolkit for Parents offers a series of resources to help parents support their children’s mental well-being in a whole new way while promoting self-care practices and destigmatizing mental health during the summer break. The best part is that it’s tailored to seamlessly blend into your family’s summer activities. Whether you’re planning a picnic, a beach day, camping, or a backyard barbecue, these resources are designed to complement your existing plans. From interactive games to mindful exercises, each activity is crafted to foster both fun and mental well-being. By weaving these tools into your summer routines, you not only create memorable moments with your children but also nurture their mental health in a natural and positive manner. Let this toolkit enhance your summer experiences, fostering deeper family connections and leaving a lasting impact on your loved ones’ well-being.

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Summer Mental Health Worksheets

These easy and engaging activities could help foster a safe and supportive space where children can learn about themselves and develop valuable strategies when dealing with their emotions and challenges during the summer break.

**How to use: Writing and drawing activities**

**Explain the purpose** of the activity. Writing and drawing can help your child express their emotions and communication skills, develop and strengthen coping strategies, and participate in self-reflection.

**Encourage your child** to think about the emotions or ideas they want to convey through the exercises. Emphasize that there are no right or wrong answers in art, which will foster a supportive and nonjudgmental atmosphere.

**Provide inspiration** to spark creativity and imagination. Eg: Artwork that depicts various emotions, gratitude journals, stories or a self-portrait collage that centers on navigating challenges.

**Set up the workspace** or an environment that ensures your child has access to the necessary material, like crayons and markers. Head outside to enjoy the outdoors during the activity – soak up the sun and create a space to allow them to be creative and expressive.

**Prompt your child to discuss** their artwork by creating an open dialogue so your child feels comfortable sharing their thoughts and feelings behind their creations.

**Celebrate and showcase opportunities** for your child to display their artwork, whether through a gallery wall at home, or a spot on the fridge.

Sample

Think about a place that makes you happy.
Draw it below.
Write 3 things you like about yourself.
Visualize 5 of your hopes and dreams and write them down in detail below.
How do you feel today?
Draw it!

Need to vent?
Text SUMMER to 741741
Think about a place that makes you happy.

Draw it below.

Need to vent?
Text SUMMER to 741741
Doodle one thing that brings you joy.

Need to vent? Text SUMMER to 741741
How can you help?
Write down 3 ways you would help a friend when they have a bad day.

Need to vent?
Text SUMMER to 741741
**How to use:**

### Quotes

**Explain the purpose** of the activity and that you will be reading and discussing inspirational quotes related to feelings and emotions and emphasizing the value of self-expression and emotional well-being.

**Read the quote aloud** and pause to allow your child to reflect on its meaning. Encourage them to listen and consider how the quotes connect to their own experiences and emotions.

**Use open-ended questions** in a discussion about the quotes such as "What does this quote mean to you?" or "How does it make you feel?". Foster an inclusive and respectful environment, allowing your child to share their own thoughts and interpretations.

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**Reinforce positive messages** by emphasizing the importance of kindness, self-confidence, and the ability to ask for help when needed. Convey the message that it’s okay to experience a range of emotions and that seeking support is a sign of strength.

**Summarize the key messages** from the quotes and the discussion. Encourage your child to carry the positive messages with them. Here are some ideas: stick the messages on the bathroom mirror or on the fridge, or keep them in a visible place in the playroom or bedroom.

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**Sample**

“**All the people who knock me down only inspire me to do better.**”

—Selena Gomez
The most important thing, in anything you do, is always trying your hardest, because even if you try your hardest and it’s not as good as you’d hoped, you still have that sense of not letting yourself down.

– Tom Holland

Need to vent? Text SUMMER to 741741
Life isn’t how to survive the storm, it’s about how to dance in the rain.

–Taylor Swift
“Everything negative – pressure, challenges – is all an opportunity for me to rise.”

- Kobe Bryant
All the people who knock me down only inspire me to do better.

–Selena Gomez
Ways to deal with tough situations

**How to use:**

- **Explain the purpose** of this resource, emphasizing the importance of understanding and developing coping skills for dealing with emotions and challenges.

- **Provide relatable examples** on when and how to use these techniques, such as "ways to help us feel better when we're upset or facing something difficult."

- **Start a brief discussion** about different emotions and situations that may require your child to use some of the ways exemplified on this resource.

- **Highlight** that there are no right or wrong answers, and that the goal is to explore and discover what works best for your child.

**Address support and resources** by reassuring your child that they can talk to you or another trusted adult if they have any concerns or need additional support. Your child can also reach out to Crisis Text Line by texting **SUMMER** to **741741** for free, 24/7, and confidential emotional support or they can reach out through our **webchat service**.

**Pro Tip**

Remind your child that it’s okay to seek help and that learning about their emotions is an important part of growing up. Emphasize the value of empathy, self-reflection, and the diversity of emotional experiences.

**Sample**

**Ways to deal with tough situations**

- **Take time to rest**
  - Resting your body and mind will help you reset and feel better.

- **Create art**
  - Practice a hobby or try something new. Art and creative activities can help with difficult emotions and allow you to be present in the moment.

- **Listen to music**
  - Play your favorite songs and feel the music as you sing or dance. Music can help you brighten your day!

- **Seek mental health support**
  - Need more help? Reach out to Crisis Text Line by texting **SUMMER** to **741741** or using our **special offer** to start a conversation with a volunteer counselor.
Ways to deal with tough situations

**Take time to rest**
Resting your body and mind will help you reset and feel better.

**Seek mental health support**
Need more help? Reach out to Crisis Text Line by texting SUMMER to 741741 or using our webchat service to start a conversation with a volunteer counselor.

**Create art**
Practice a hobby or try something new. Art and creative activities can help with difficult emotions and allow you to be present in the moment.

**Listen to music**
Play your favorite songs and feel the music as you sing or dance. Music can help you brighten your day!

**Connect with loved ones**
Spending time with your family and friends is key. Find a moment to meet with them, play, talk, or joke together. Your support system is a game changer!

**Play with pets**
Pets are fun and cute. If you don’t have pets, you can ask to play with your friends’ or family’s pets and show them some love.

**Physical activities**
Exercise can help boost your mood and make you feel and sleep better. Choose any activity you like!

**Reading time**
If you like reading, pick any book you want and spend some time enjoying the story.

**Quiet time**
Find a quiet place to connect with yourself. Doing this can provide a sense of calm, balance and relaxation.

For more resources, visit https://www.crisistextline.org/resources

Need to vent? Scan to chat
Poster

Help us spread awareness and empower children to seek assistance by bringing our mental health posters to your child’s summer camp or daycare. Our posters feature a question to prompt children to check in with themselves and provide Crisis Text Line as a resource for your child to use when needing mental health support by texting SUMMER to 741741 or using our webchat service by scanning the QR code.

How to use: Posters in your community

Promoting Awareness: Displaying mental health posters in prominent areas, such as local businesses, libraries, and other community gathering areas, can help raise awareness and normalize discussions about mental well-being.

Providing Information: Our posters offer information about Crisis Text Line as a mental health resource and easy ways to get in touch with our live trained volunteer counselors.

Fostering a Supportive Environment: By displaying these mental health posters, parents can create an inclusive and supportive environment that validates and prioritizes the mental well-being of all children.
How are you feeling today?

TEXT SUMMER TO 741741 if you need someone to talk to.

Free - 24/7 - Confidential
¿Cómo te sientes hoy?

ENVIÁ VERANO AL 741741
si necesitas hablar con alguien.

Envíanos un mensaje

Gratis, 24/7 y confidencial

CRISIS TEXT LINE
Stickers

Positive images, turned into stickers, are a great way to remind your child about self-love and positive affirmations. Stickers can be a fun and versatile tool for parents to use at home with their children. Stickers can add an element of motivation to things like chores or summer school. They can reinforce positive behaviors and allow children to express themselves in creative ways.

How to use: Stickers at home

Create a reward chart where your child can earn stickers for completing tasks or demonstrating good behavior. Once they collect a certain number of stickers, they can exchange them for a reward, such as extra screen time, a small toy, or a special activity.

Encourage creativity by providing stickers for art projects. Your child can use stickers to decorate greeting cards, make collages, or embellish homemade bookmarks. Stickers can also be used to personalize items like notebooks or pencil cases.

Use stickers to encourage your child to express their emotions. Create a feelings chart with different facial expressions represented by stickers, and encourage children to choose stickers that reflect how they're feeling each day.

Explain the word “empathy” to your child: The ability to be aware of the feelings of other people and put yourself in their shoes to try to understand their thoughts and emotions.

What you need

1. Print the sticker sheet adhesive paper or regular paper, depending on whether you prefer the stickers to be peeled and stuck or simply cut out and glued. Gather any additional supplies such as scissors, markers, and a suitable surface for sticking the stickers.

2. If you have a die-cutting or card machine, you can use it to print and cut the stickers for your children.
Sticker Mule Template
6 x 7

To use with die-cut machines
(Cricut, AccuCut, Silhouette Portrait, Gemini)

Download individual stickers at
https://crisistextline741741.com/SummerStickers
Affirmation Cards

What are affirmations?
Affirmations are words or positive statements that can be repeated to oneself silently or out loud to help develop a consistent and healthy routine of self-worth and self-love. Affirmations encourage children to focus on their strengths and capabilities, promoting a growth mindset that emphasizes perseverance. This mindset not only equips children with the tools to navigate life’s ups and downs but also encourages a more optimistic outlook.

How to use: Affirmation cards at home

Get creative with it!
Encourage your child to use the affirmation cards by repeating the words to themselves or reading them out loud as a family activity. You could also ask them to choose their favorite affirmation and motivate them to repeat it to themselves throughout the day.

Other ways to use them:

- Drawing a picture of themselves embodying their favorite affirmation.
- Writing sticky notes with their own affirmations as reminders.
- Morning affirmation routine: Repeating together one affirmation per day in the morning.
- Have your child make a poster or collage representing the affirmations on the cards and their own affirmations.
- Brainstorm with your child on other ways they’d like to use or incorporate the affirmations at home.

What you need

1. A printer
2. Paper
3. Scissors

Sample

I am strong

Sample

I am loved
I am important

I am loved

I can do hard things

I love me for who I am

I am strong

I am special
# Coloring Sheets

Coloring is a fun and easy activity that promotes mindfulness for children. Over 1 in 10 texters from our own research mentioned arts and crafts as helpful ways to feel better. Young people in crisis also identified that engaging in visual arts is a resource needed to help them cope.

## What you need

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>A printer and paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Crayons, markers or colored pencils. You could also use water colors, paint, and brushes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## How does it work?

As children concentrate on selecting colors and maintaining precision, their attention is solely absorbed in that specific moment. This allows them to tune out the distractions and dedicate their mind to experiencing the movements, sensations, and emotions of the present moment.

## How to use this page?

You could dedicate a special time outdoors, or in your favorite place at home for you and your child to do this activity together. Explain how this relates to their mental health and remind them that it’s ok if their minds wonder. All they have to do is refocus on the activity.

## How to use: Coloring sheets at home

Sample
CRISIS TEXT LINE
Affirmation Dice

Affirmation Dice are a fun way to teach and practice positive affirmations and coping skills with your child. Developing strong positive thinking and self-talk skills can be an effective coping strategy for a number of mental health challenges, including anxiety, anger, depression, and more.

How to use: Affirmation dice at home

Explain what positive affirmations are and why they’re important. Affirmations are statements we repeat to ourselves to cultivate positive beliefs about ourselves and our abilities.

Children choose positive affirmations or thoughts and either write or draw them on the different faces of the dice.

You and your child can choose to do one roll a day for a daily affirmation, or roll three times for the top three and repeat them throughout the day.

What you need

1. A printer and paper.
2. Glue or tape.
3. Crayons, markers or colored pencils.

Sample