

# Fluffy Finds a Safe Space

A Story with Safety Planning Worksheets  
for Children Dealing with Parents Fighting



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## Preface

"Fluffy Finds a Safe Space: A Story with Safety Planning Worksheets for Children Dealing with Parents' Fighting" provides a story, guide for professionals and worksheets to help children think about and practice safety strategies for dealing with domestic abuse/parental conflict situations at home. The booklet has three components:

1. A story about a bunny named Fluffy who finds a safe space away from his parents' fighting. This narrative normalises the child's experiences and models positive coping strategies.
2. Sample scripts for professionals to have sensitive conversations about safety planning, including:
  - Finding a safe place inside and outside the home;
  - Avoiding getting involved in the parental conflict;
  - Calling for help and the emergency services;
  - Identifying trusted adults to talk to;
  - Understanding the conflict is not their fault.
3. Interactive worksheets for children which allow children to apply the lessons from the story to their own lives. The activities focus on identifying safe spaces and activities, calling for help, expressing feelings, and building resilience.

Together, the empathetic story, guidance for professionals, and engaging worksheets provide a comprehensive approach to empowering young children affected by domestic abuse to prioritise their safety, seek support, and build resilience.

Once upon a time, there was a little bunny called Fluffy. He lived in a meadow full of flowers. Fluffy liked to hop around and play with his friends and his mummy and daddy.

But sometimes, his mummy and daddy would shout at each other and fight. This made Fluffy feel very scared and sad.



One day, he talked to his friend Timmy Turtle and he told him he gets scared when he sees his mummy and daddy shouting or fighting at home. Timmy wanted to help, so he gave Fluffy some good ideas.



"First, when they shout or fight,  
find a safe  
place to go said Timmy."

Fluffy thought this was a good  
idea. He picked a cosy hole under a  
big tree as his safe place.

"You can listen to music or draw  
pictures there," Timmy added.

"Next, don't go near the shouting, wait for it to stop first." said  
Timmy. "It might not be safe, and it's not your job to protect your  
mummy or daddy." Fluffy nodded.

He understood it was not his job to make his mummy  
and daddy stop shouting or fighting.



"Also, remember. You didn't make your mummy and daddy argue, it's not your fault," Timmy told him. Fluffy felt better. He had thought maybe he did something wrong, but now he knew it wasn't his fault his parents were arguing.



"Remember, fighting is not good. It's dangerous and against the rules," said Timmy. "It's okay to love your mummy and daddy, but not love all the things they are doing."

Fluffy felt stronger knowing this. He knew it was not okay for his parents to shout and fight and he knew it was OK not to like some of the actions they do.

"Last thing, when you are very worried, you should call for help,"  
Timmy said. "You can call the owl police."



"And don't forget, you're not  
alone, Fluffy," Timmy said.  
"You have many friends, and we  
all care about you and you can  
talk to us about your feelings  
any time."

Fluffy felt much better  
after talking to Timmy. He knew  
what to do the next time his mummy and daddy  
started arguing and he felt worried.



And sure enough, the day came when he heard loud voices again. Quickly, Fluffy hopped to his safe hole under the big tree. He felt much safer there. He took out his little drawing book and started to doodle to keep his mind off the noise.

The voices got louder and scarier. Fluffy remembered what Timmy said about calling for help. So, he hopped over to the phone and called the number for the owl police and said

"Help, police, please can you help me!"

The owl police flew down and listened to Fluffy. They were kind and said they would talk to his mummy and daddy. They told Fluffy to go back to his safe hole and wait.



The next morning, the owl police came to visit Fluffy. They had talked to his mummy and daddy. They said it would take time, but they were trying to help them stop fighting.



Fluffy felt much better. He thanked the owl police for helping him and his family.



Days went by, and sometimes his mummy and daddy still argued. But now, Fluffy knew what to do.

He would go to his safe hole, stay away from the loud voices, and call the owl police if he needed to. Fluffy also knew he was not alone. His friend Timmy and other friends in the meadow were there for him. They played games and had fun and shared their worries with each other. And he also shared his worries with his

teachers and his grandma. They all helped him feel better.

Slowly, things at home started to get a little better. Fluffy's mummy and daddy were fighting less. It looked like they were listening to the owl police. Fluffy felt hopeful that maybe things will get better at home.



So, if you ever feel scared at home, think of Fluffy and remember Timmy Turtle's words:



Find a safe place.

Don't go near the fighting.

Call for help if you need to.

Understand that fighting is bad and against the rules.

Know it's not your fault.

Remember, you're not alone and can talk to others about your feelings and to ask for help.





# 1) Sample script for professionals to cover in their conversation with a child/youth about finding a safe place<sup>1</sup>:

- a) Figure out ahead of time a safe place you can go to inside your home when there is fighting, arguing, and/or loud voices that make you feel scared or worried.
- A safe place in your home is anywhere where the fighting, loud noises and arguing are not happening.
  - Going to your safe place does not mean that you have to hide. It just means getting away from the fighting. Stay there until the fighting stops.
  - If there is a lock on the door of a room, this might be good place to choose because you can lock the door.
- b) While keeping yourself out of the way of the fighting, you might want to do something that makes you feel better, like:
- Listen to music or watch television.
  - Read a book or look at the pictures.
  - Write, draw pictures, or play a video game.
  - Be with any of your brothers/sisters and talk or play a game together.
  - Remember to give yourself positive messages and use techniques you have learned to help keep yourself calm such as breathing techniques (take a deep breath and count to 10) and going to a space/room that makes you feel calmer.
  - Call the Kids Help Phone at ..... and talk to someone if it is safe to do so.
- c) If you think you might be safer outside of your home during the fighting, think ahead of time about some safe place(s) to go to. Talk with your safe parent/ caregiver about where that safe place will be so you can meet up together after the fighting, when it is safer. Figure out how you will get there:
- Walk
  - Ride your bike
  - Take a bus
  - Call someone for a ride
  - Call a taxi
- d) Try to keep some money in your pocket, purse, or room, for things like making a call from a public pay phone if there is one, or buying a bus ticket.

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<sup>1</sup>All the 'sample scripts' in this booklet have been reproduced from *Safety Planning with Children and Youth: A Toolkit for Working with Children and Youth Exposed to Domestic Violence*, Ministry of Justice.

# Finding a safe place



Remember how Fluffy went to his safe place, the cosy hole under the big tree, when his mum and dad were fighting? Let's think about where you can go to be safe when there's fighting, loud noises, or arguing.

Draw or write the places where you think might be a good idea.

You can also circle the pictures.



Your bedroom



Your bed



Bathroom



Wardrobe



Garden



Behind the sofa



Neighbour's house



Kitchen

A large empty rectangular box for drawing or writing.



## 2) Sample script to cover in your conversation with a child/youth about not getting in the middle:

- a) Don't get in the middle (of the fighting, arguing, loud voices).
  - Sometimes when adults are fighting, arguing, or using loud voices, some kids want to help, such as by staying in the room, or yelling to stop the fighting. But it is safer for you, and for your mother [replace the name of the safe person as required], if you do not get involved in trying to stop the fighting.
  - If you feel like you need to stay close by, then stay out of sight and as far away as possible, and try to have a phone nearby.

# What I can do in my safe space



When Fluffy found his special safe place, away from the noise and fighting at home, he was drawing pictures to make himself feel better. Now, think about what you can do to feel better when you're in a calm place. Draw, write, or circle the things you can do to feel safe and happy.



Listen to music



Read a book



Hug or play  
with your  
sister/brother



Play a video  
game



Draw a picture



Watch TV



Take a deep  
breath and  
count to 10



Call a child line  
Number:

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### 3) Sample script to cover in your conversation with a child/youth about calling for help:

- a) You are not responsible for keeping your mother [replace the name of the safe person as required] safe, but you may be able to get help.
- b) Talk with your mother about a code (special) word that only the two of you will know, that she can say out loud to let you know when you should call for help.
- c) You could also talk with your mother about a signal only the two of you will know that she can use to let you know something is going on. For example, if you are not at home when the fighting is starting, your mother and you could agree that, if possible, she will turn on the porch light, or close certain window blinds to let you know to go somewhere safe.
- d) Know how to phone to get help from emergency services if you think someone is getting hurt, or if you don't feel safe, or if you hear your mother say the code word.
- e) Try to use a phone that is not in the room where the fighting is happening or use a cell phone. Even if your cell phone minutes are used up, you can still dial the police number and get through. Perhaps go to a neighbour's house and use the phone there, or to another safe place, such as a local shop, to make a call.
- f) ) This is how you make an emergency call [change, depending on your country]:
  - Push the buttons 9-9-9/9-1-1/1-1-2 etc. on the phone for emergency services.”
  - The people who answer will say, “This is emergency services. Do you need police, fire, or ambulance?”
  - You say: “Police”
  - You say: “My name is . I am years old.
  - You tell the problem: “I need help. Send the Police. Someone is hurting my mother.”
  - You say: “I am calling from (give complete address) ”
- g) After you have said these things, the best thing for you to do, if you can, is to stay on the phone. The person on the phone might need to ask you some more questions, or you might want to talk to them some more. If you do hang up the phone, the phone operator may try to call you back, which could make it dangerous for you and your mother/caregiver.
- h) If you cannot stay on the phone because you do not feel safe, tell the person on the phone you are just putting the phone down without hanging it up.
- i) Wait for the police or help to come.



## Calling for help

Fluffy, the little bunny, knew that when he felt very scared, he had to call the police, and they would come to help him. If you ever feel scared, you can call the police too, or if it's safe, you can run to your neighbour or a nearby shop to ask for help.

Before calling the police for the first time, Fluffy practiced with Timmy the turtle how to do it. Would you like to practise too?

- Push the buttons \_ \_ \_ on the phone for emergency services.
- The people who answer will say,  
"Which emergency services do you need?" or  
"This is emergency services. Do you need police, fire, or ambulance?"
- You say: "Police"
- You say: "My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am \_\_\_ years old."
- You tell the problem: "My parents are fighting."
- You say: "I am calling from (give complete address) \_\_\_\_\_"

Practise pressing the right buttons and making the call:





## 4) Sample script to cover in your conversation with a child/youth about finding others to talk with about their feelings:

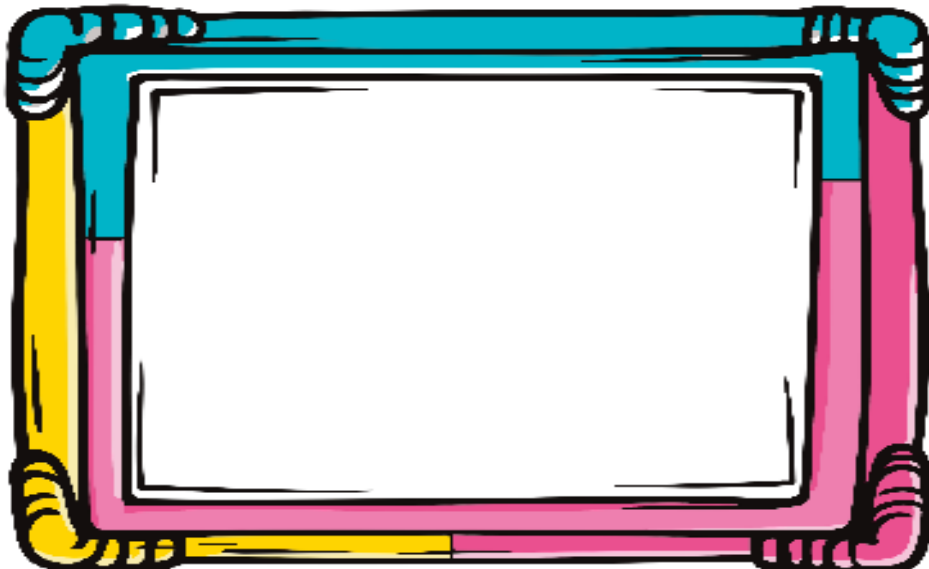
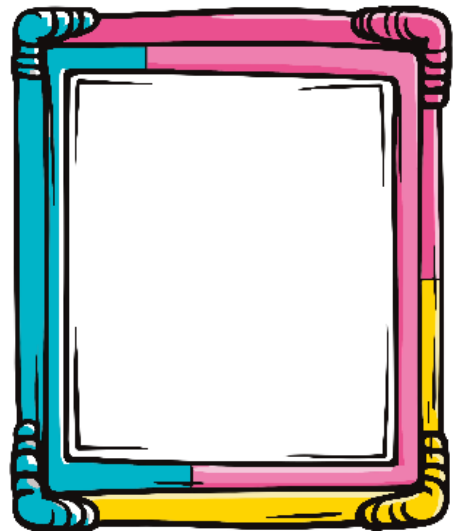
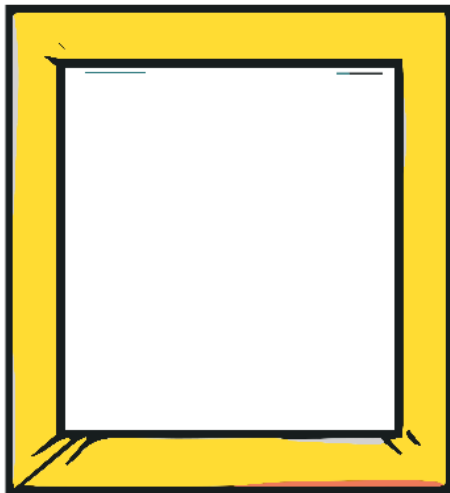
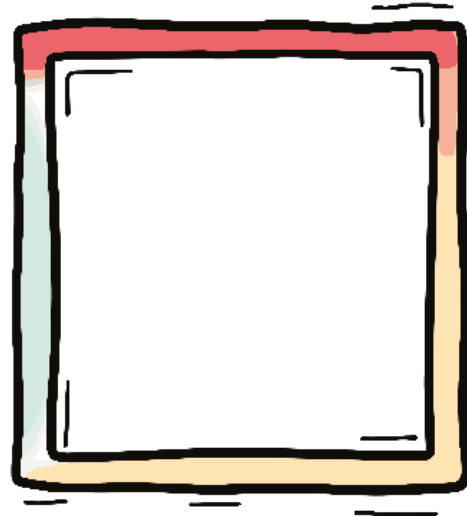
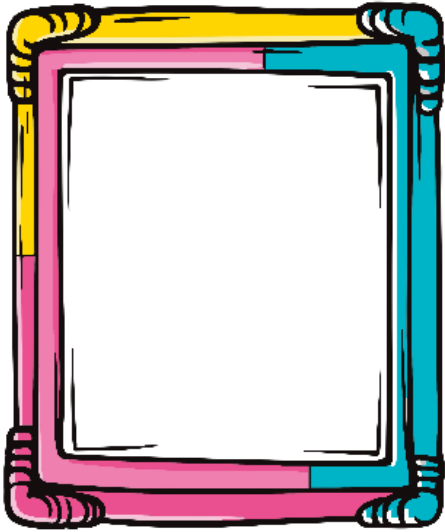
a) Make a list of people you trust and can talk to about your feelings about the violence that is happening in your family. Here are some ideas:

- Another person in your family (elder, aunt, uncle, grandparents, cousin, foster parents, mother, caregiver)
- A friend
- A friend's parent
- A neighbour
- A teacher, principal, counsellor or other support staff at your daycare/school.
- Your babysitter
- Your (girl guide/boy scout/group) leader, or a coach or mentor
- The imam, leader, minister, priest, or rabbi at your church/mosque/synagogue/temple
- A help line.



# People I can talk to

Fluffy spoke with his teachers, grandma, and friends about his worries and other feelings. It made him feel so much better. Who can you talk to?





## 5) Sample script to cover in your conversation with a child/youth about how the fighting at home is not their fault:

- a) No matter what, the fight is not your fault, even if you hear your name in the fight or if you are worried the fight is because of you, for example because you did not clean up your toys or get a good grade in school.
- b) Adults have many ways to solve conflict/problems but violence should never be one of them.
- c) You cannot make a person behave violently or be abusive; how a person behaves is their choice, and you are not to blame for their behaviour.





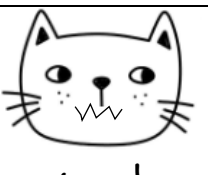
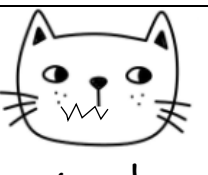
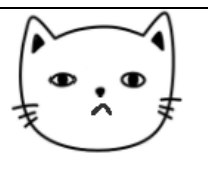
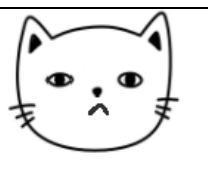
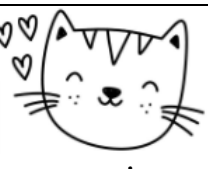





# The way my parents make me feel

Fluffy felt happy when he was playing with his mum and dad but scared and sad when they were shouting or fighting. How do you feel about your mum and dad?

1. Colour in the faces that shows how you feel when you are with your mum and dad.
2. Draw or write about what makes you feel this way next to it.

Remember, it's okay to share your feelings, just like Fluffy did with his friend Timmy.

Mum		Dad	
 happy		 happy	
 sad		 sad	
 scared		 scared	
 angry		 angry	
 loved		 loved	
 hurt		 hurt	



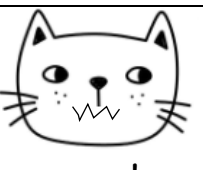


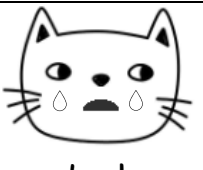
# The way \_\_\_\_\_ makes me feel



Fluffy felt happy when he was playing with his mum and dad but scared and sad when they were shouting or fighting. How do you feel about \_\_\_\_\_?

1. Colour in the faces that shows how you feel when you are with \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Draw or write about what makes you feel this way next to it.

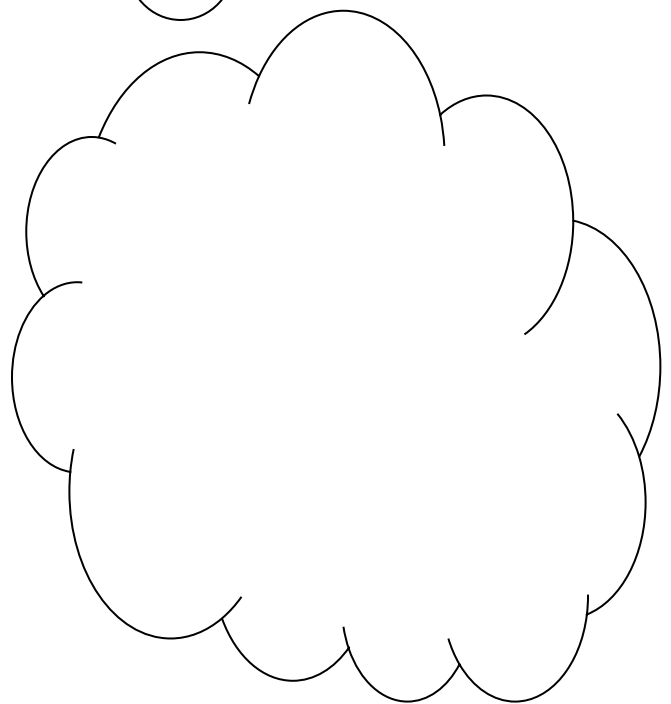
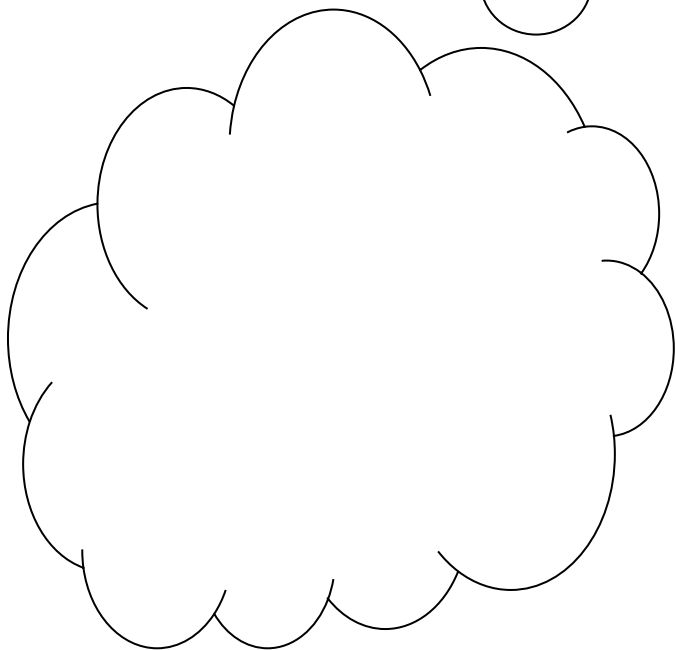
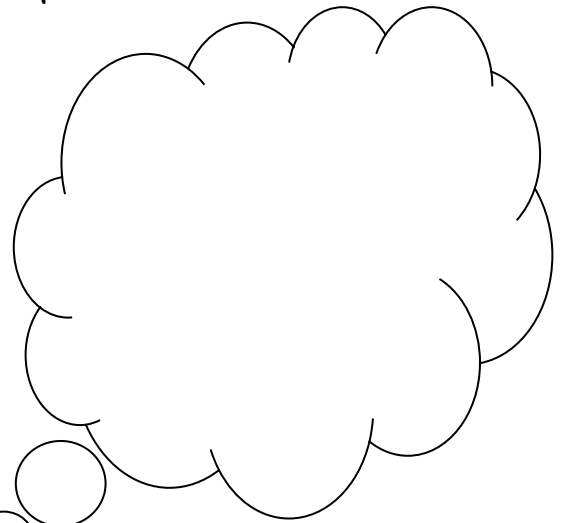
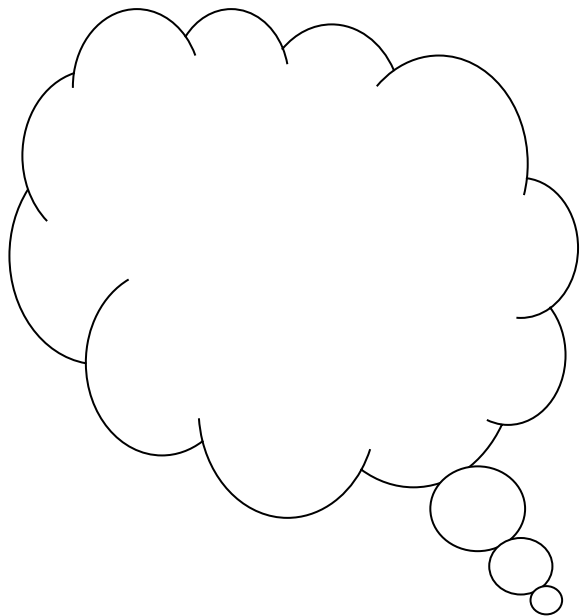
Remember, it's okay to share your feelings, just like Fluffy did with his friend Timmy.

 <p>happy</p>	
 <p>sad</p>	
 <p>scared</p>	
 <p>angry</p>	
 <p>loved</p>	
 <p>hurt</p>	



# Kind thoughts

Whenever you feel bad about yourself, what kind things can you think about yourself to make you feel better?





## 6) Sample script to cover in your conversation with a child/youth about the dangers of domestic abuse:

- a) Domestic abuse is dangerous and people can get hurt.
- b) It is against the law to hurt someone.
- c) It is okay to love the abusive parent but not their behavior.

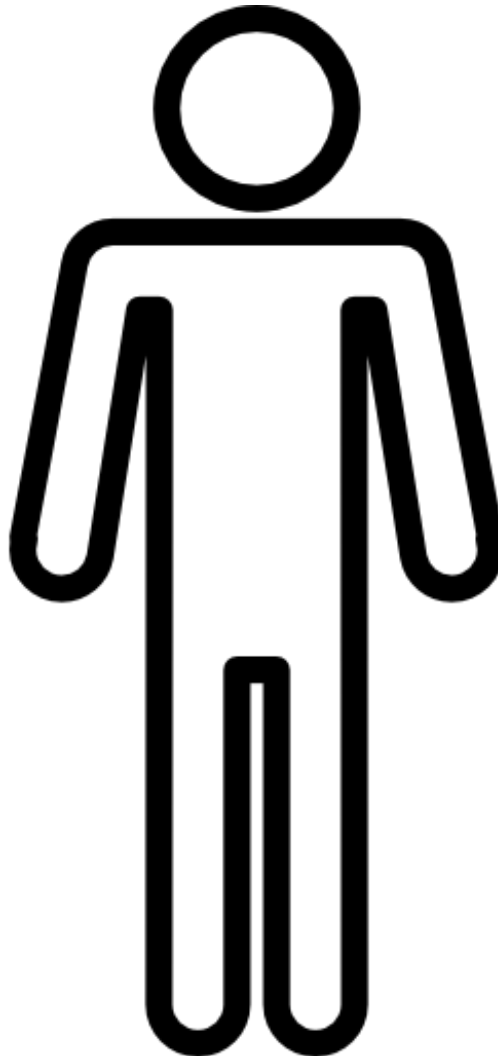
# The way I feel about my dad



Like Timmy said, it's okay to love your mum and dad, but not all the things they are doing. Let's explore the two sides of your dad. On one side, write or draw the things your dad does that show he cares about you and makes you feel good. We'll call this side 'Dad's Caring Side.' On the other side, write or draw the things your dad does that are hurtful or make you feel badly. We'll call this side 'Dad's Struggling Side.' This will help you understand your feelings and talk about them, just like Fluffy did with his friend Timmy.

Dad's Caring Side

Dad's Struggling Side



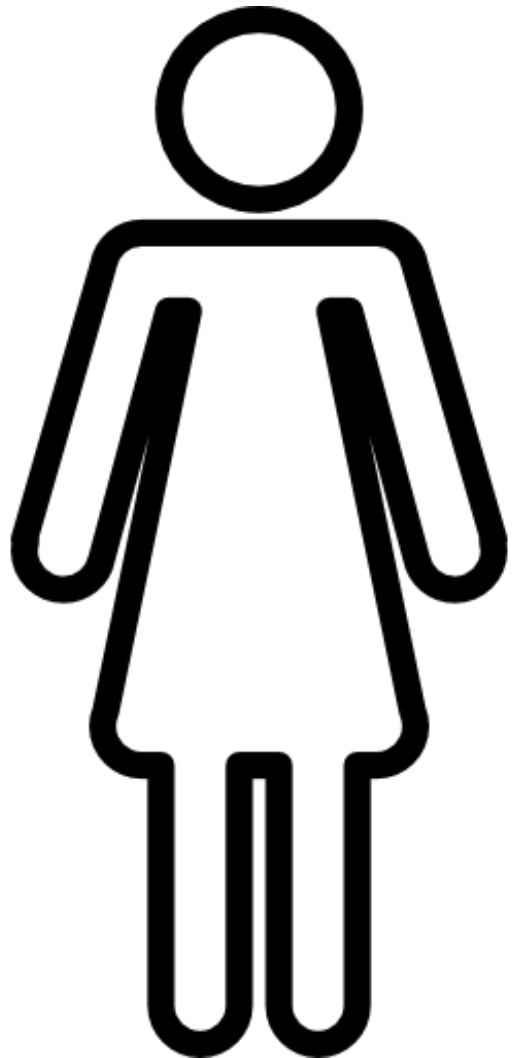
# The way I feel about my mum



Like Timmy said, it's okay to love your mum and dad, but not all the things they are doing. Let's explore the two sides of your mum. On one side, write or draw the things your mum does that show she cares about you and makes you feel good. We'll call this side 'Mum's Caring Side.' On the other side, write or draw the things your mum does that are hurtful or make you feel badly. We'll call this side 'Mum's Struggling Side.' This will help you understand your feelings and talk about them, just like Fluffy did with his friend Timmy.

Mum's Caring Side

Mum's Struggling Side

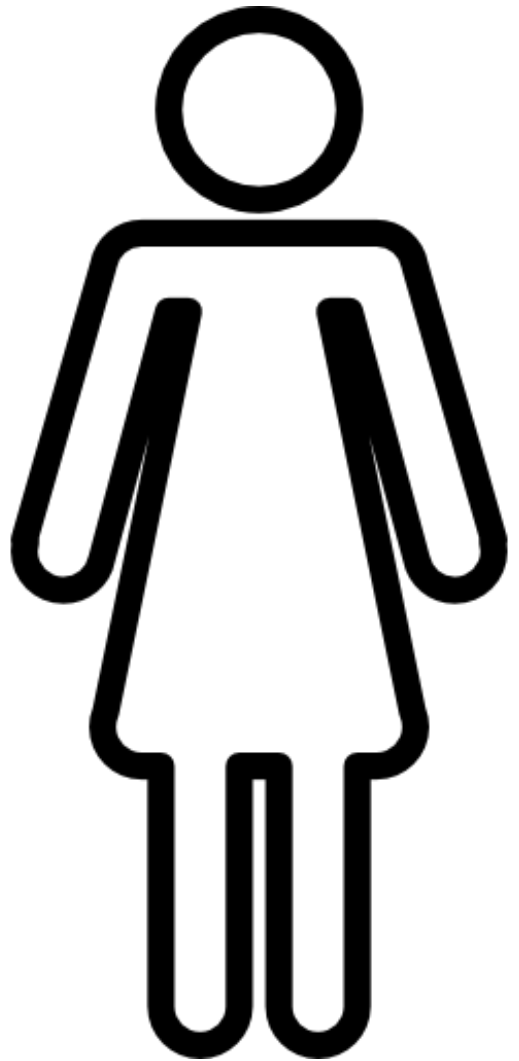


# The way I feel about ....



Caring Side

Struggling Side



# The way I feel about ....



Caring Side

Struggling Side

