



My Hurricane Story

A Guided Workbook for Children

My Hurricane Story

By

I started this book on _____ (date).

I am _____ years old.

Here are a few things for you to keep in mind as you begin this workbook:

- This workbook is for you. Write your name in it so everybody knows it's yours.
- You may want to keep your book in a special place that is safe
- Keep a pencil, pen, crayon, or marker near the book.
- You can look at the book a little bit at a time, and start on any page you'd like. There is no special order. You can take as much time as you need.
- You can work on it alone if you want. There may be some times when you will want someone you trust to help you with the book, to listen to your thoughts and feelings. Think about a grown up that could help you when you need it.
- Don't worry about spelling or making everything look just right. This is your private workbook. It is your choice when and how to use it.
- If you'd like, you can add stickers, pictures, or photos to decorate your workbook.

My Hurricane Story

A Guided Workbook for Children

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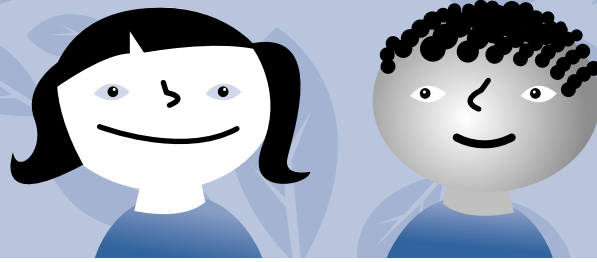
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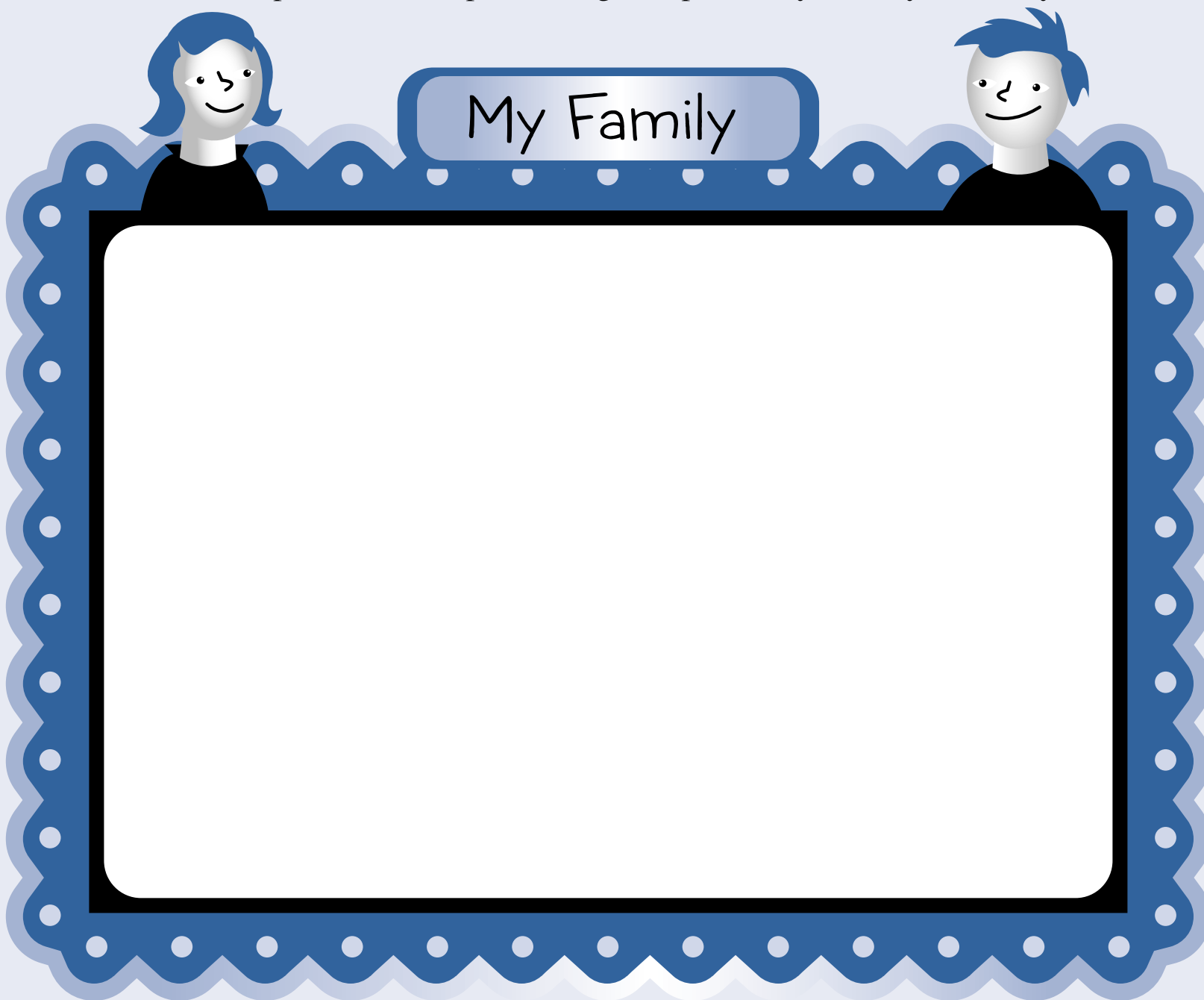
My name is _____. I am _____ years old.

The date I started this book is _____.

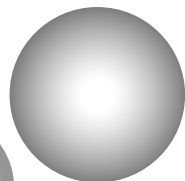
I have _____ sisters and _____ brothers in my family.

The people who usually live with me are:

Use this space to draw a picture or glue a photo of you and your family.



Friends that I have are: _____



What is something that you really like about your friends?
Write or draw something in the space below.



My Hurricane Story

Now, here's my personal story about things that happened when the hurricane and the flood started. Let's start with who, what, when and where.

Who I was with: _____


What I was doing: _____

When it happened: _____

Where I was: _____

The first thing I heard about the hurricane was _____

The most surprising thing I saw was _____



The most confusing thing was _____

The scariest thing was _____

The saddest thing I saw was _____

Something I heard grownups say was _____

Some people were doing really good things to help others.
One good thing that happened was _____

Here is a picture or drawing about the hurricane:



Grown Ups

Sometimes after something big like a hurricane grown ups might be tired and sad and mad. They might yell or be extra quiet. They may even cry. Some kids feel like it is their fault, like they did something wrong. But it is not their fault. Everyone has big feelings after a big thing like a hurricane.





sad



scared



surprised



guilty



mad



uncomfortable

Feelings

You may have had many different feelings about the hurricane. There is no right or wrong way to feel. Circle all of the feelings that you had.

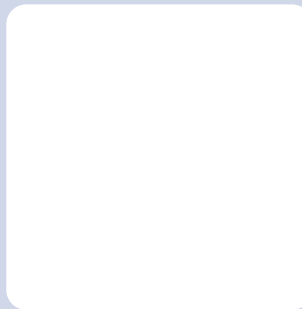
Are there some you could add? If so, draw those feelings in the boxes below.



relieved



thankful



lost



exhausted



cranky



hopeless



my body hurts



lonely



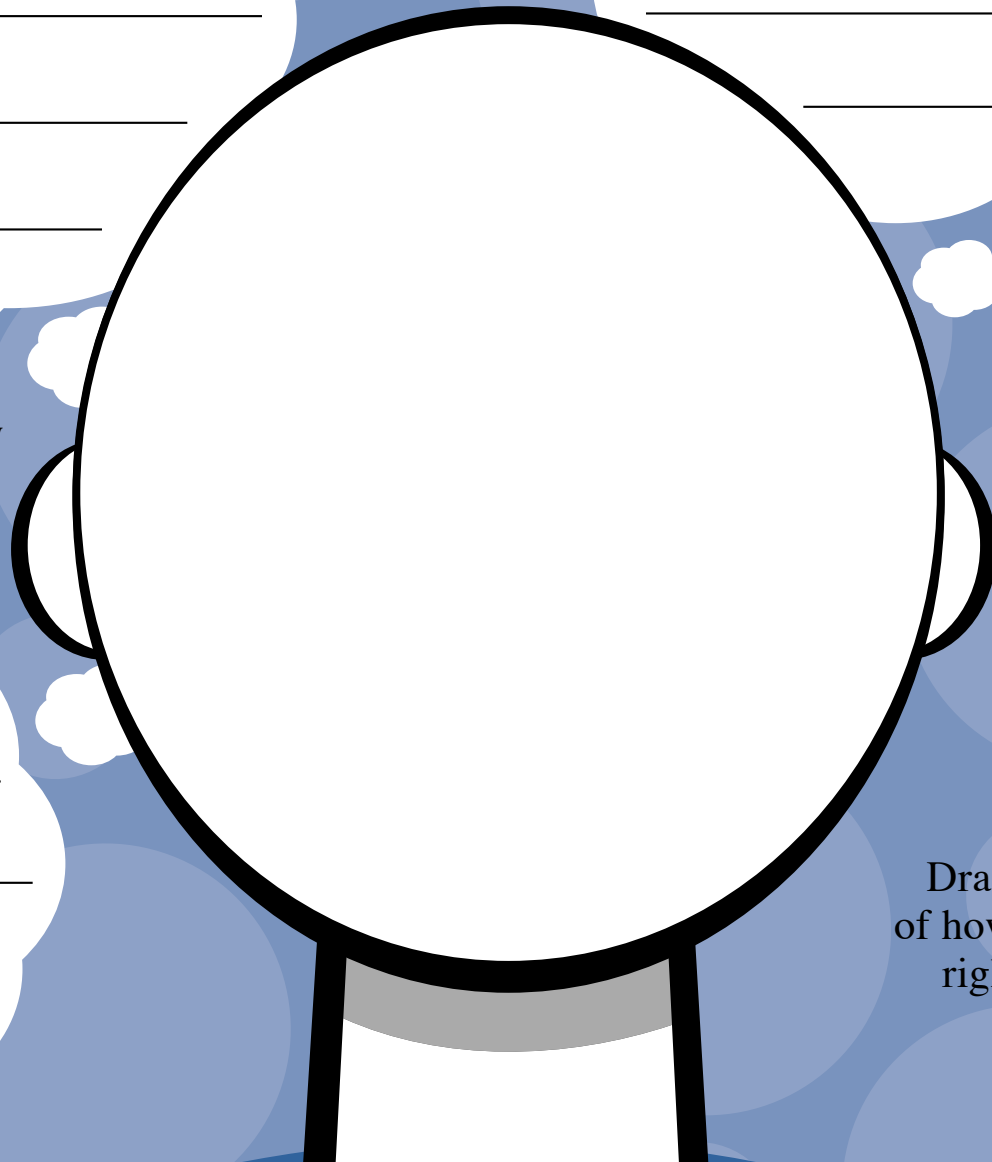
worried

Feelings:

What I miss most is _____

Feelings:

Me:



People can sometimes have many
different feelings at once.

Feelings:

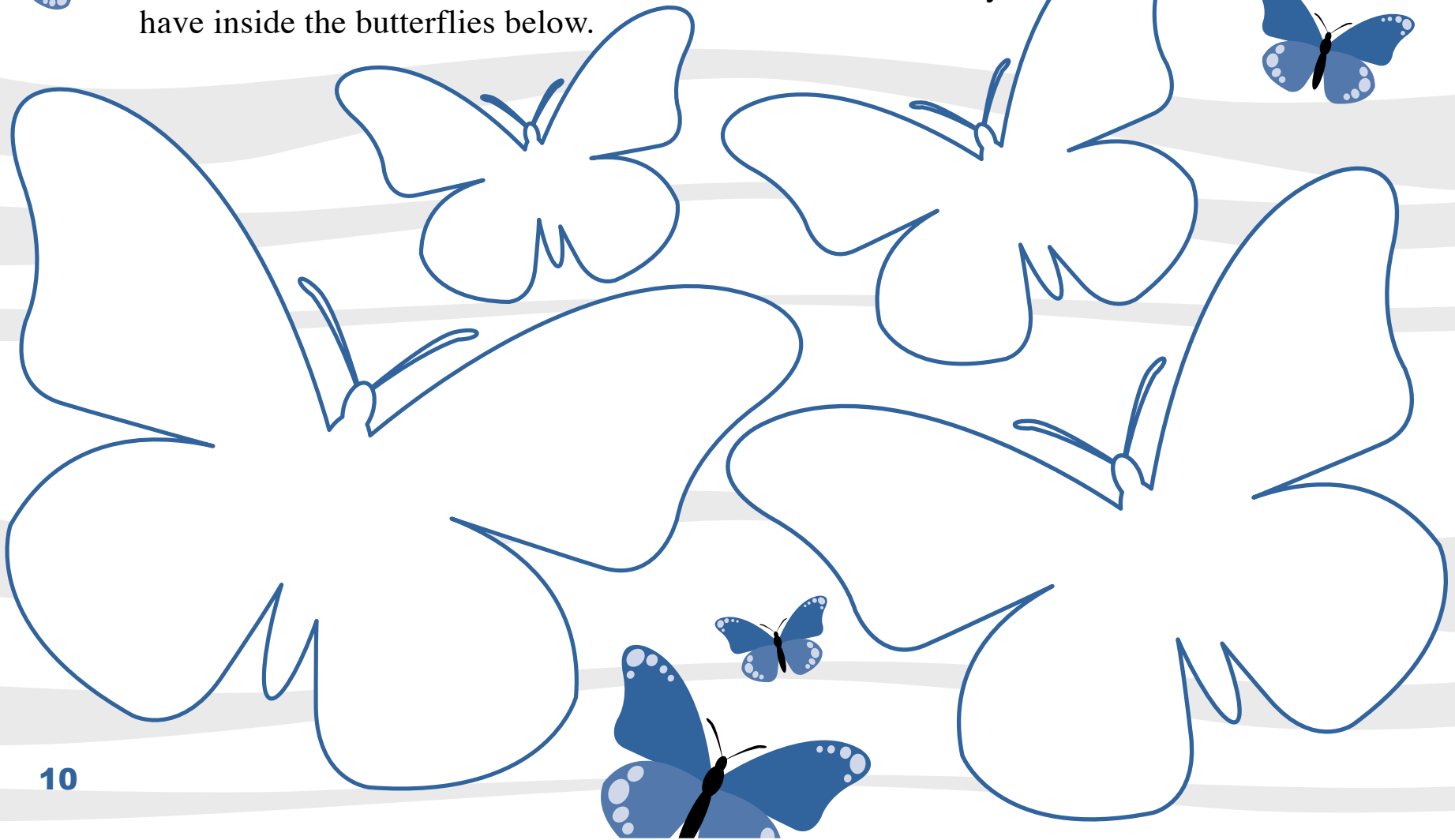
Draw a face
of how you feel
right now.

What are some ways that you can let these feelings out and take care of your feelings?

Have you ever heard people say that they had butterflies in their stomach? It means that they feel worried or scared about something, and they can feel it in their body, sort of like butterflies fluttering in their belly.



After the hurricane, some people had worries, big worries and even small ones. Draw or write down some of the worries or fears you have inside the butterflies below.



It's so dark everywhere.



My family and friends said they were worried or afraid about:

When are the phones going to work again?



Too much wind really scares me now.



What is going to happen to my toys and stuff?



Some people that I trust to talk about my worries and feelings are:

Here are some things other kids have tried to help them with their feelings and worries. Are there things on this list that might help you?

- say a prayer
- rest
- bounce or kick a ball
- cry by yourself or with someone you trust
- do an angry dance
- jump up and down

- tell someone you are mad
- find some quiet time in the day
- listen to music or make my own music
- play with friends
- take a deep breath
- draw a picture

- hit a pillow
- play with a pet animal
- talk about sad feelings
- take a walk or run
- play a fun game
- ask for a hug
- make a wish
- look at or read a book

What are some things I can try to help me with my fears and worries?



Dreams

Children may have different kinds of dreams after the hurricane. It is natural to have some good, comforting dreams or to have scary, sad or weird dreams. It is OK to get help or talk about a dream that bothers you with someone you trust.

Write about a dream you have had since the hurricane or draw a picture of a dream or nightmare.



Sometimes kids have trouble falling asleep, or they wake up during the night and then they can't fall back asleep right away. Other times, kids feel that they sleep too much or just feel tired or cranky a lot. Many children have talked about changes in their sleep after the hurricane. Have you had changes in your sleep? What can you do about it? Here are some ideas:

★ Try to go to sleep and wake up at the same time every day.

☾ Do something relaxing before you go to bed, like read a book or listen to some gentle music.

★ Make bedtime special.

☾ Bring a favorite thing of yours into the place you sleep at night for comfort.

★ Ask for help.

☾ If you have trouble sleeping, take lots of slow, deep breaths and think about something that makes you feel really safe and happy.

★ If you have a bad dream, you may want to write or draw about it the next day. You can even change parts of the dream now that you are awake! Someone you trust can help you change the story of the dream to make it feel better for you.



Do you have other ideas that might help you with your sleep?

Needs

After a hurricane like Katrina, you may have certain things that you need. It is good to try and tell people what you need and ask for help. You can't do it all yourself! Maybe you need a hug, or something that will help you feel more comfortable or being around someone who cares about you.

Write or draw a few things that you need:

What are some things I can try to help me with my fears and worries?

Find the following words
in the word search:

TEDDY BEAR

DAD

MOM

GAMES

FOOD

SUPPORT

HUGS

LOVE

TOYS

FRIENDS

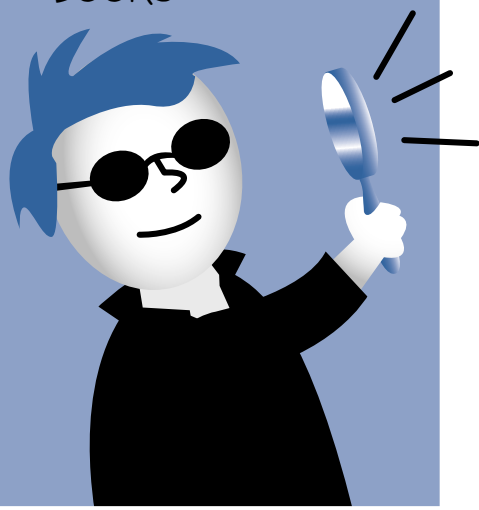
FAMILY

MUSIC

BLANKET

QUIET

BOOKS



G	F	R	I	E	N	D	S	E	O	B	A	Q	M
K	A	Y	B	O	O	K	S	N	T	E	I	U	Q
W	M	R	Q	J	A	S	W	B	I	D	S	T	O
U	I	O	F	W	F	G	Q	S	H	I	F	K	R
P	L	X	T	Q	V	U	A	N	C	N	D	A	D
E	Y	B	M	R	H	O	L	M	L	M	E	T	H
S	M	E	I	F	O	O	D	F	E	B	Y	B	N
T	H	O	C	D	V	P	A	N	Y	S	I	L	C
A	D	S	M	E	Q	X	P	D	S	P	L	A	Y
L	P	Q	Y	S	J	Q	D	U	R	M	S	N	B
K	T	Y	C	O	L	E	A	Q	S	F	C	K	A
V	J	A	H	L	T	F	U	L	A	N	D	E	X
A	B	L	E	K	R	L	H	U	G	S	Q	T	P
N	A	P	U	J	O	P	I	Y	K	D	W	U	I

Are there any more words you can find? If so, list them here:

Write, draw or decorate this page however you'd like.

Remembering

Some children remember a lot about what happened with the hurricane. Others do not remember much at all. Each person deals with it in his or her own special way.



What are some things that make you think about the hurricane or remind you of what happened?



Questions

Here are some questions that other children and teens have asked about the hurricane:

Do hurricanes happen a lot?

Is nature mad at us?

Will I have to go to a new school?

How long will I be feeling this way?

Is it my fault?

When can I go home?

Will it happen again?

Why do hurricanes happen?

What should I do the next time there's a storm?

What can I do to help other people who are sad?

What questions do you have? Maybe there is something you are confused about or do not understand.

Here is the place for you to think about what you have learned and what may be next for you.
Fill in any of the sentences below.

What Now?

What I know now is

I am thankful that

My family has learned

What I appreciate most is

The goals I have for myself are

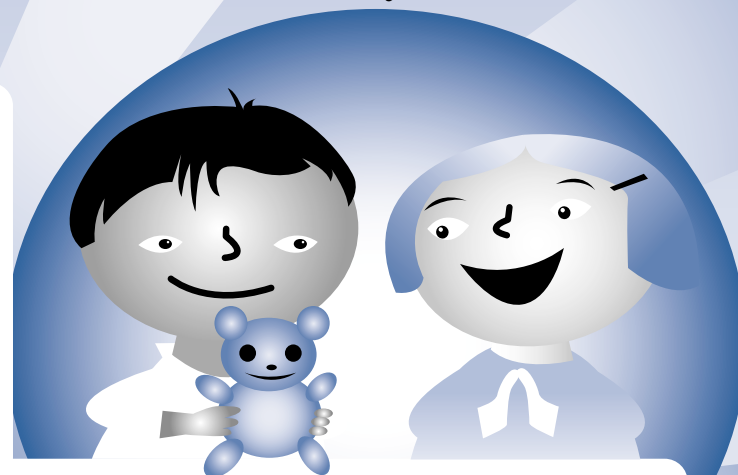
I wish

My hope for the future is

My wish about school is

Even though the hurricane has hurt a lot of families, neighborhoods, schools, and cities, there may be some things that YOU can do to help others or to make where you live a better place.

Do you have ideas of what can help?



Are there people that you want to thank for helping out already?

I want to thank _____



How I Want My Hurricane Story to End

Can you believe all the damage the hurricane has done? It can be so hard at times to understand and live through a hurricane like that. Yet, you will probably learn a lot about yourself and your family and how to deal with a hurricane disaster. After a while, you may begin to feel stronger and safer, and proud of things that you did to help yourself, your family, and your community.

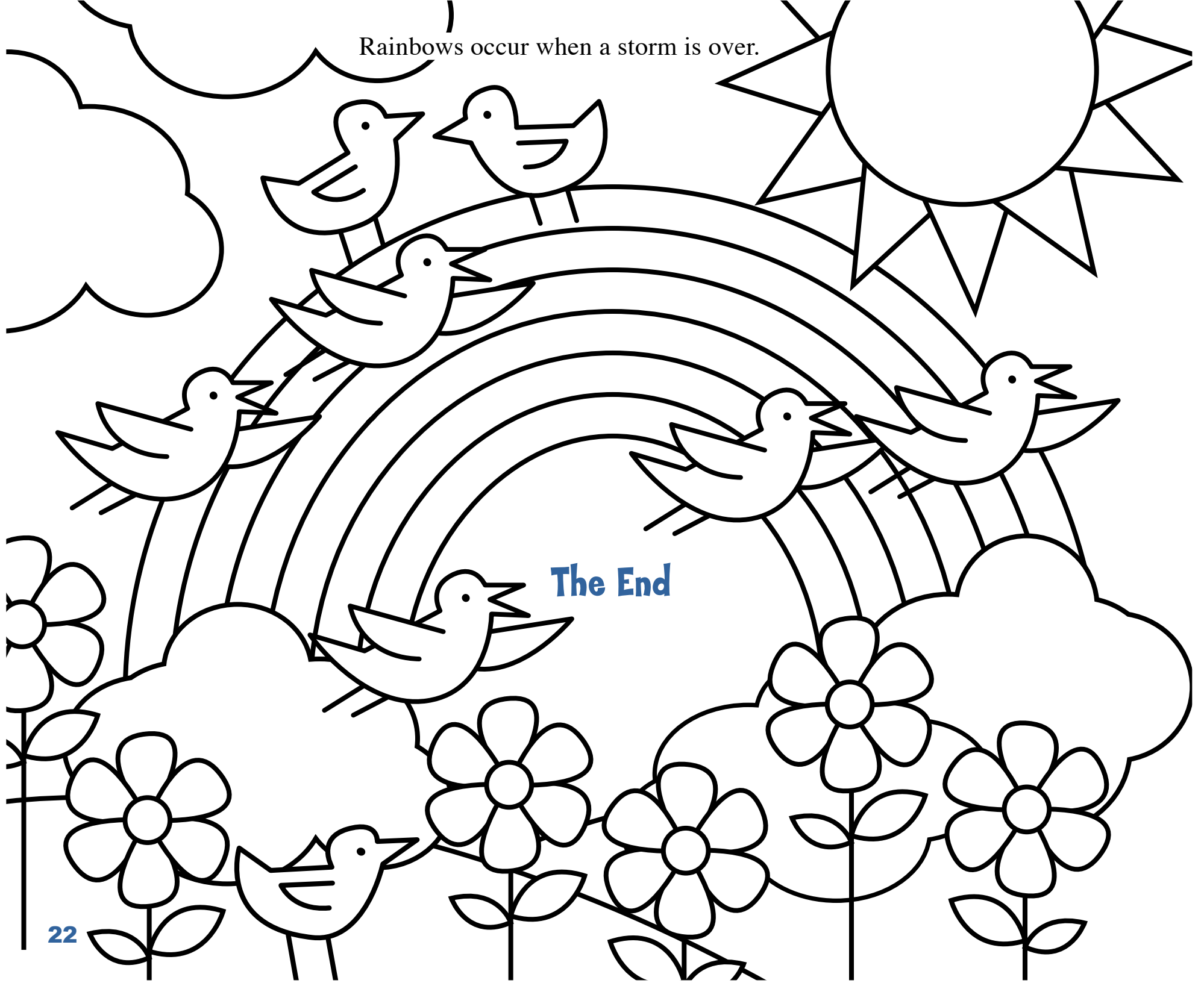
Write or draw a picture of yourself now, and then imagine how you would like to be in the future. By then, you may have grown, learned a lot, and changed in many ways.

Now

In The Future



Rainbows occur when a storm is over.



The End

You may choose to share this book with an important adult in your life. If you do, this next section provides grownups with helpful information.

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Adapted from *What Happened to My World? Helping Children Cope with Natural Disaster and Catastrophe*, by Jim Greenman, Sr. Vice President, Bright Horizons Family Solutions, developed for Comfort For Kids, a joint project of Bright Horizons Family Solutions, JP Morgan Chase, and Mercy Corps, 2005.

1. Taking Care of Yourself

To take care of children, it is very important to take care of yourself. Here are some suggestions:

- Talk about your feelings with adults you trust
- Create a daily routine and try to be consistent
- Do your best with the basics: eat right and try to get enough sleep
- Be aware of your body: exercise (even small amounts can help a lot), and take care of the areas of your body that hold stress or seem tight or sore.
- Cry whenever you need to
- Take slow, deep breaths throughout the day
- Seek alone time and quietness
- Take breaks from the news and headlines
- Take breaks from those who bring you down
- Be patient with yourself and with those around you who are not at their best under stress
- Ask for help if you feel that life is too stressful to handle
- Renew yourself with friends, family, faith, music, books, and nature
- Find time to do things that are fun, creative, or interesting to you

2. Common Reactions to Trauma

Shock: How could this be happening? I didn't realize it would be this bad.

Confusion: What does it all mean?

Fear or worry: What will happen next? When will it end?

Grief for someone I loved, or someone else like me, or for those I care about

Anger at the unfairness of it all, at the power of the hurricane

Guilt: Why them and not me?

Helplessness: I can't make my world, my community, and my home like it was

Sadness: So many lives lost, people injured, communities destroyed, and jobs lost

Isolation: I'm not sure if anyone really understands my feelings

Hopelessness: What do I have to look forward to now?

3. Common Preschool-Age Reactions to Stress

The following reactions can all be normal preschool behaviors. The key is to look for changes that have occurred since the disaster in a child's behavior:

- Bed-wetting
- Fear of the dark, monsters or animals
- Clinging to parents and caregivers
- Nightmares
- Toileting accidents – loss of bladder or bowel control, constipation
- Speech difficulties (e.g., a loss for words, stammering)
- Loss or increase of appetite
- Fear of being left alone; fear of strangers
- Testing behavior

4. What Do Children Under Age 5 Need?

- Regular routines
- Quiet moments in the day
- Limited exposure to the news and adult conversations about the crisis
- Plenty of time with calm, loving, reassuring adults
- A lot of verbal reassuring that you and they will be okay
- Plenty of physical assuring with hugs, embraces, & snuggling
- A need to know where those they love are at any given time
- Opportunities for you to listen and talk gently with them
- Opportunities to write, draw, color, or use clay to express themselves
- Opportunities for play that reflects the current events
- Special time and reassurance at bedtime, including letting the child sleep with you occasionally

5. Common Elementary School-Age Reaction to Stress

- Nail biting or thumb sucking
- Cranky or irritable
- Whining
- Clinging
- Loud or aggressive behavior at home or school
- Competition with younger siblings for parents' attention
- Night terrors, nightmares and fear of the dark
- Avoiding school
- Loss of interest and poor concentration in school
- Wanting to be alone
- Acting young
- Headaches, stomachaches, or other body complaints
- Depression
- Fears and worries

6. What Do Elementary School-Age Children Need?

- Regular routines
- Quiet moments in the day
- Opportunities for time with calm, loving reassuring adults
- Adults who will find out what is on their minds and answer their questions honestly with the details that matter to them
- Verbal reassuring that you and they will be okay
- Physical reassuring with hugs, embraces, & snuggling
- A need to know where the people they love are at any given time
- Guided exposure to the news and adult conversations about the hurricane
- Opportunities to talk and play with friends
- Opportunities to play with adults
- Opportunities to write, draw, color, or use clay to express themselves
- Opportunities for play or conversation that reflects the current events
- School or home to adjust expectations during the crisis period
- Reassurance at bedtime including letting the child sleep with you occasionally
- Opportunities to help others and to participate in community efforts
- Planning for ways to be safer in the future

7. Helping Children with Sadness

- Let children know it's ok for them to feel sad and that everybody feels sad at different times in their lives.
- Encourage children to write, draw, or talk about their sad feelings alone or with someone else.
- Say back to children what they might be feeling in that moment. Here are some examples of what you might say:

“It's ok to cry”

“You seem sad right now.”

“It's important to listen to your sadness.”

“Go ahead and let the sad feelings out.”

“You are not alone. I get sad, too.”

- Ask children, “What can you do right now to let your sad feelings out?”
- Children may need help finding healthy ways to express and care for their sadness. You may want to provide them with a few choices such as getting a hug, crying, going for a walk, etc.

It's ok for children to see you sad every now and then. You are providing them with an example of how to express feelings. However, children need to know that the adults in their life are able to take good care of them. You could try saying, “I am feeling sad right now. People cry when they are sad. I'm going to take care of my feelings, and in a while, I will feel better.”

8. Helping Children with Anger

- Remind children that it is ok to be angry, but it is NOT ok to be mean.
- To help children express their anger, you could ask, “What are some ways to let the mad out without hurting yourself or someone else?”
- It's important to listen carefully to children's thoughts and feelings about their anger.
- Say back to children what they might be feeling in that moment. Here are some ideas:
 - “You are really angry right now.”
 - “It's good that you are showing me how you feel.”
 - “It's all right. Let your anger out.”
 - “There are a lot of things to feel angry about...”
- Children may need healthy ways to express and take care of their anger. You may want to provide them with a few choices for working through their anger, such as doing sports, playing an angry song or doing an angry dance, jumping up and down, running, walking away, hitting a bed with their fist, or crumpling up paper.
- Remember, some children feel that they have done something wrong when they see friends and family members angry. Whenever it is appropriate, make it clear with children that what you are angry about has nothing to do with them.

- If you are feeling angry with a child, try telling them what he or she is doing that is making you upset. Focus on the child's behavior. Here's an example of what you might say:

“I felt angry when you threw that toy at your brother”
instead of saying “I am so mad at you right now.”

- Encourage children to take a break or walk away from a conflict if their anger seems too intense or out of control. They can come back and work it out at a later time, after they have calmed down and appear ready to try again. This is a good skill for adults to practice, too!

9. Helping Children with Fears and Worries

- In the aftermath of the hurricane, children may begin to fear things that remind them of the disaster, including fears of darkness, wind, falling trees, bad weather, being alone, and getting hurt. They need a calm, reassuring, and steady voice to help them with their fears.
- Children may ask a lot of questions or express more concerns than usual. Be available to listen and respond to their questions at their level of understanding.
- Create an environment where it is safe for children to talk, write out, or draw about their fears and worries if they want to.

- Provide assurance to children from time to time that they will be ok, and you will be ok. They may need to be assured with both words and hugs.

- Find ways to keep some routines consistent for children to help them know what to expect

- Help children find ways to comfort and soothe themselves when they feel scared or worried

- Say back to children what they might be feeling in that moment. For example:

“I'll do everything I can to keep you safe.”

“It's ok to be scared about that.”

“Let's find some ways together to help you
feel more safe.”

“That feels very scary to you right now. Maybe later
it won't feel so scary.”

“Everybody gets scared, and I am here to help you.”

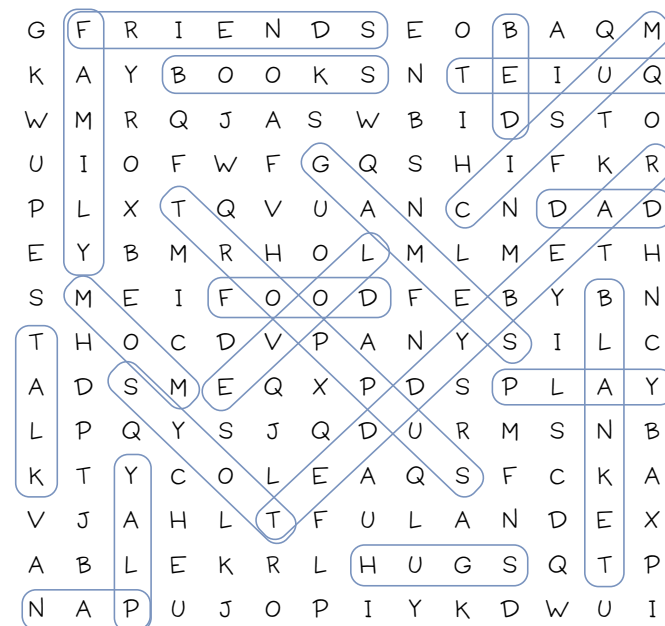
- You may need to provide children with ideas for comforting or soothing themselves when they are scared or worried. Some examples include: reading stories, snuggling together, eating comfort foods, gentle music, creating a safe spot in their room, back rubs, and drawing or coloring.

10. Helping Children with Sleep Problems

- Children need plenty of rest to best cope with the aftermath of the hurricane. It is helpful for them to go to bed and wake up at the same time each day. They may also need a nap or time to rest during the day if they seem tired or cranky.
- Make bedtime special. For the first few months, children may need to be reassured and comforted at night. Bedtime stories or times of sharing may be helpful activities to prepare them for sleep. Have the child bring a few favorite things into the place where he/she sleeps. Occasionally, parents might want to let the child sleep with them for reassurance.
- If a child has a nightmare, encourage the child to talk about, write, or draw the dream the next day if he/she wants to. You may suggest, "Now that you are awake, you have the power to change the dream to make it a little better." You may provide the child with choices about how to change difficult parts of the dream into something that helps the child to feel stronger, safer, or more in control. For example, a child who dreams of a monster in the water may want to build or draw a big trap to put the monster in forever.

- Some children wake up in the middle of the night crying or screaming and you are not sure why (called night terrors). You may want to embrace the child and remind him/her that the bad dream they are having is not really happening to them right now. It may be helpful to distract them from the dream with quiet music, favorite items for comfort, singing, gentle rocking, or whispering until they fall back asleep again. With dreams that are very frightening to the child, you may not want to talk about it the next day. Use your best judgment here: you may want to help them focus on something more positive instead.

Solution to word search on page 15:



11. Books and Resources

- *I'll Know What to Do: A Kid's Guide to Natural Disaster*, by Mark B. Layton, Washington: Magination Press, 1997.
- *The Magic School Bus: Inside a Hurricane*, by Joanna Cole and Bruce Degen, New York: Scholastic Press, 1996.
- *Tear Soup: A Recipe for Healing After Loss*, by Pat Schwiebert & Chuck DeKlyen, Portland, OR: Grief Watch, 1999.
- *What Happened to My World? Helping Children Cope with Natural Disaster and Catastrophe*, by Jim Greenman, Sr. Vice President, Bright Horizons Family Solutions, developed for Comfort For Kids, a joint project of Bright Horizons Family Solutions, JP Morgan Chase, and Mercy Corps, 2005.
- *My Katrina and Rita Story: A Guided Activity Workbook for Middle and High School Children*, by Gilbert Kliman, M.D., Edward Oklan, M.D., Harriet Wolfe, M.D., Jodie Kliman, Ph.D, San Francisco: The Children's Psychological Health Center, Inc, 2005. A simple, straightforward guide to encourage healthy expression, learning, and coping.
- www.brighthorizons.com – Bright Horizons Family Solutions, the world's leading provider of child care, early education, and work/life solutions, caring for more than 40,000 children in more than 370 child care and early education centers around the world.
- www.cphc-sf.org – The Children's Psychological Health Center, Inc.
- www.aplb.org – Association for Pet Loss & Bereavement
- www.childtrauma.org – Tips for teachers and schools to help children cope with tragic events.
- www.dougy.org – The Dougy Center: The National Center for Grieving Children and Families is a resource to help children and families with grief and loss. Links, books, and materials are available.

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