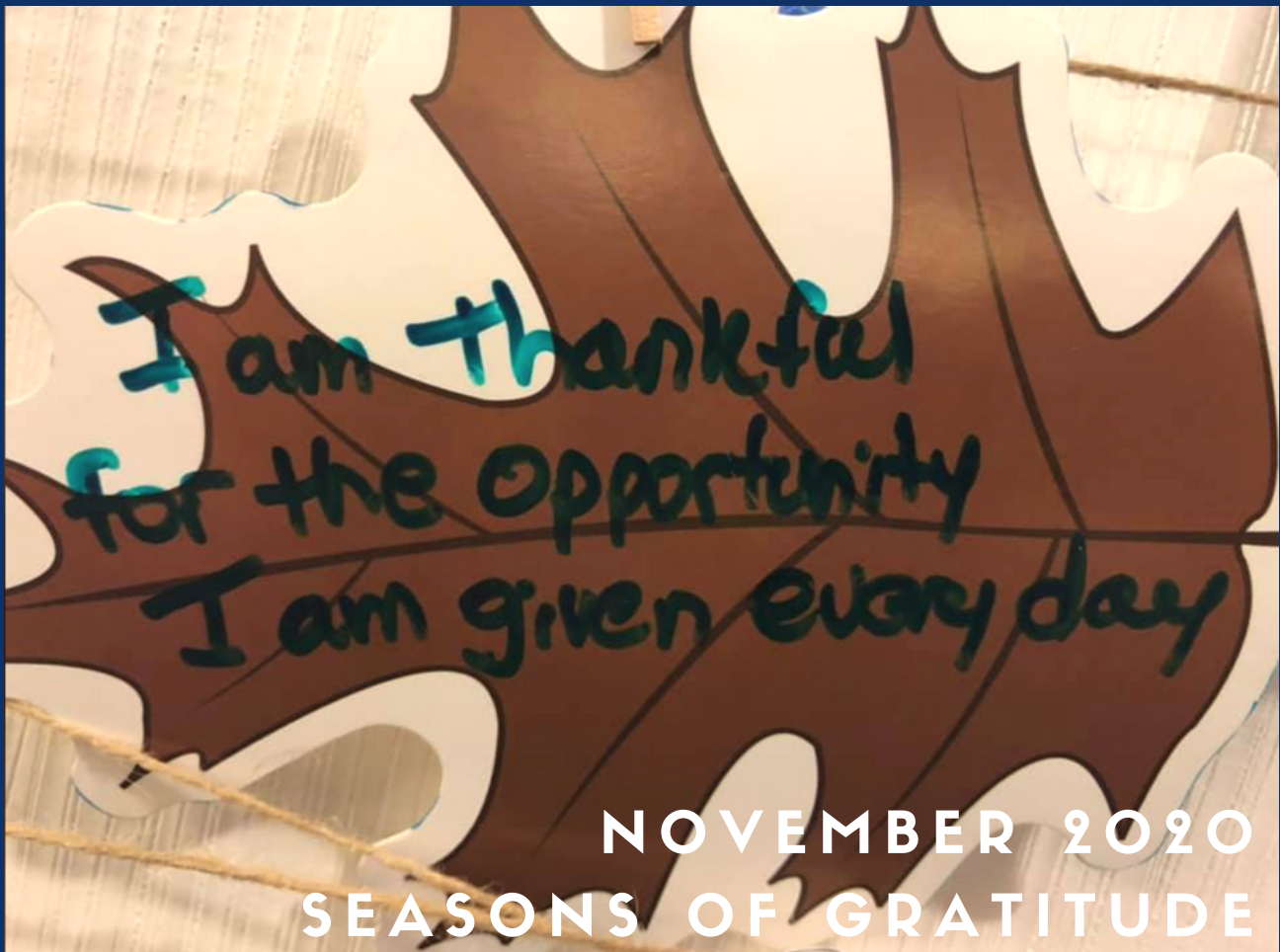


T★A★P★S[®]

TRAGEDY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR SURVIVORS

A C T I V I T Y B O O K



L O V E L I V E S O N

CONTENTS

November Acts of Kindness

	acts completed			
1 someone thankful to them	2 PAY IT FORWARD	3 Rake leaves for someone	4 Bake a neighbor pumpkin pie	5 Volunteer at a shelter
6 Tutor someone	7 Give a care package	8 Share a family recipe	9 Support Operation Christmas Child	10 Offer compliments
11 Bake cookies for someone	12 Babysit for a friend	13 THANK A VETERAN	14 Offer someone coffee	15 Visit a nursing home
16 Donate a turkey to a family in need	17 Donate warm clothing	18 Give someone gloves	19 Support a small business	20 Smile at a stranger
21 Write someone a note about their hobbies	22 Spread good news	23 Send postcards to sick children	24 Offer a hug	25 Get to know someone new
26 Print a photo of you and a friend	27 Leave positive notes	28 Donate to a charity	29 Call an old friend	30



09 GRATITUDE JARS

GRATITUDE JARS ARE A FUN AND INTERACTIVE WAY FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY TO SHOW THEIR GRATITUDE FOR THINGS THAT HAVE HAPPENED ON A DAILY BASIS.



24 FALL RECIPES

FALL RECIPES ARE A FEW RECIPES THAT WILL BRING THE TASTE OF FALL TO YOUR FAMILY. WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE FALL RECIPES?

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

06 KINDNESS CHALLENGE

The Acts of Kindness Calendar below is a perfect way to spread happiness throughout the month of November and leading up to the holiday season.

08 CARE PACKAGE

Be matched with a service member (TAPS Military Mentor) who is currently deployed.

PARENT'S CORNER

03 UNDERSTANDING AND IMPACT OF GRIEF BY DEVELOPMENTAL AGE

COPING CORNER

21 COLORING KINDNESS

Coloring has shown to be a great coping skill that can be used for all ages. Color the "Be Kind" coloring page.

YOUTH ACTIVITIES


12 I AM GRATEFUL FOR...

"I am grateful for..." is a journal topic that can be used as a discussion starter about what your family is grateful for. They can talk about it, write about it, and draw it.

13 THANKFUL TURKEY

Make one now, or fill in a feather a day for a fan full of blessings by Thanksgiving Day. Or have the supplies on hand for a Thanksgiving-morning project as the turkey's roasting or use as an icebreaker as family and friends arrive.

 YOUTHPROGRAMS@TAPS.ORG

 [HTTPS://WWW.TAPS.ORG/YOUTH/2020/FALL](https://www.taps.org/youth/2020/fall)



UPCOMING EVENTS



CARE GROUPS

For bereaved kids and pre-teens ages 4 to 12, this is an opportunity to come together with peers over Zoom and share experiences, increase resources, and build a community of support.

01 NOVEMBER

06 DECEMBER

TEEN COFFEE HOUSE

For teens ages 13 to 18, the coffee house is a safe place for young survivors to express feelings, and share experiences within a virtual environment. Eligible to those teens who have experienced the death of a parent or sibling who served in the military.

12 NOVEMBER

08 DECEMBER

FAMILY ACTIVITY NIGHT

This is a unique and exciting experience for the whole family to bond, learn how to cope, support each other, communicate together, and have fun.

08 NOVEMBER

13 DECEMBER

PARENTING CARE GROUP (ADULTS ONLY)

Provides a safe space for parents and guardians to share their challenges around parenting bereaved children while increasing their resources and support.

27 OCTOBER

17 NOVEMBER



 YOUTHPROGRAMS@TAPS.ORG

 [HTTPS://WWW.TAPS.ORG/YOUTH/2020/FALL](https://www.taps.org/youth/2020/fall)



MENTOR MATCHING REQUEST

[HTTPS://WWW.TAPS.ORG/MENTORMATCH](https://www.taps.org/mentormatch)



PARENT'S CORNER

PARENT'S CORNER

Parenting children and teenagers is a challenge in many ways, especially when you and your children and teenagers are grieving the death of someone in your life. Parents, Guardians, and Grandparents will often ask us how they can best help and support their kids in their grief. Research indicates that children who have a supportive, trusting relationship with their primary caregiver and a role model for healthy coping in their grief fare better than those who do not. This can certainly be difficult as everyone in the family is grieving in their own way. While we will not always have the perfect words to say and will struggle ourselves with grief, finding a way to have meaningful time together with your kids will have a lasting impact on them as they adapt to their loss and grow into adulthood.

The TAPS Family Activity Booklet has been developed to provide ideas for positive family togetherness and engagement. Some activities are simply fun ways to spend time together, while other activities provide an opportunity for meaningful sharing and mutual support among you and your children / teenagers. This section offers some ideas for how to use the activities in this booklet to engage with your children and teenagers on conversations about grief, memories of your person who died, and ways to cope. Grief is not a problem you can solve for your kids. Grief is an experience you are all living. In fact, our goal is not to take their grief away. Grief is their natural reaction to the death of someone in their life and how they are adapting to all the thoughts, feelings, and changes that this brings. Be patient with yourself and with your kids as you are all grieving and finding ways to adapt to all the changes brought about by your loss. Take things one step at a time.

UNDERSTANDING AND IMPACT OF GRIEF BY DEVELOPMENTAL AGE

BIRTH TO 2 YEARS

Children this age live in the present and have no concept of death. They do not have the language skills to express themselves, but they are affected by others around them and will react to the absence of people in their lives. They might seem unsettled or irritable, crying more than usual as they search for or long for the person who died. They also may have difficulty sleeping and want to be held, or reassured.



PARENT'S CORNER

3 TO 5 YEARS

Children this age have a limited understanding of death. They understand that a person is missing, but struggle with understanding that death is permanent. They sometimes think of death in terms of cartoon characters who can spring back to life at any time. Because of their lack of understanding of the permanence of death, children this age might search for the person who died or ask when the person is coming home. They may have intense periods of crying followed by periods of acting like nothing happened. They may also revert to earlier behaviors such as using baby talk, bedwetting, or wanting to sleep with their parent.

6 TO 8 YEARS

Children of this age are beginning to understand the concept of death. For many, though, death is still seen as reversible. They often feel responsible for the person's death, believing that the person died because of something they said or did. For example, they might believe their person died because they were disobedient or were mad at them. They might be overly concerned with the body and what happened to the body. Some children this age will ask a lot of questions. Others will hardly communicate at all and might go on as if nothing has happened. Many will also worry about who else might die or that they might die. They might be clingy to the adults in their lives, needing extra attention and reassurance.

9 TO 11 YEARS

Children this age have a more developed concept of death and the finality of death. They understand that death is universal and can happen to anyone. But they still have many child-like beliefs around death. Like younger children, they are concerned with the body and what happened to the body. They will ask a lot of questions seeking details about the death. They are beginning to become more concerned about the feelings of others and worry who else might die or that they might die. Reactions may vary based on their developing personalities. Some children this age may be more reserved, even stoic about their loss, while others may be more expressive and emotional.

12 TO 14 YEARS

Pre-teens have a full understanding that death is universal and final. They can reflect on more abstract concepts of death and often wonder what happens to people when they die. Pre-adolescents will often avoid talking about the person who died or not want others to know that someone in their life died. They do not want to be perceived as 'different' by their peers. Outwardly, they may act as though nothing happened or even seem indifferent. They might use jokes or humor to hide feelings of sadness.



PARENT'S CORNER

15 TO 18 YEARS

Teenagers have a more 'adult' concept of death. Like pre-teens, teenagers have a more abstract understanding of death. Many teenagers see themselves as invincible and death is a direct contradiction to this belief. Reactions among teenagers may vary. Some are more likely to show shock, sadness, or anger, whereas others may grieve more privately. Some might pull away from family and turn to peers for support. Others might want to take on more adult responsibilities around the home, pulling away from peers.

IDEAS TO ENGAGE WITH AND NURTURE YOUR CHILDREN AND TEENAGERS

No one knows your children better than you. The knowledge you have of your kids and your instincts to know how to care for them are already within you. Your relationship with your children and teens is unique and has developed throughout their lifetime with you. The tips below shared below are generalizations that have been helpful to many parents supporting their children and teenagers through grief. Some may apply to you and your family, while others may not. When reading through the tips and information below, consider you and your children's needs as you determine how to best support and nurture them through their grief.

- Acknowledge and validate your children's thoughts and feelings about their loss.
- Create opportunities to spend time with them doing things they enjoy.
- Share stories and special memories with them about the person who died.
- Be open to and answer their questions to the best of your ability.
- Maintain existing routines and create new ones.

Children fare better when they have a positive relationship with the adults in their lives and they feel that adults understand them. Healthy growth is bolstered when children can go to their parent with their thoughts, feelings, or questions. Open, accepting, nonjudgmental interactions will strengthen your relationship with your children. You can connect with your kids by making time for them throughout each week where your kids can have your undivided attention. Though this might be challenging because of your schedule and the intensity of your grief, it is valuable time for your kids and will have a positive impact on your relationship with them in the long run. Avoid asking too many questions, rather join your children when they are playing, share stories with them, or read books together. Setting aside time will deepen the bond you share with them and will help them in their grief.

Join us each month for our Parenting Care Group, where we will exchange stories and share ideas about how to help our children and teenagers to cope with their grief.



KINDNESS CHALLENGE

FAMILY ACTIVITY (ALL AGES)

MATERIALS

- KINDNESS CHALLENGE CALENDER
- MAY NEED ADDITIONAL ITEMS DEPENDING ON ACTIVITY

DIRECTIONS

The Acts of Kindness Calendar below is a perfect way to spread happiness throughout the month of November and leading up to the holiday season. You do not have to follow the exact calendar and these are only suggestions and ideas for you and your family to follow.

November Acts of Kindness

__ acts completed

1 Tell someone you're thankful for them	2 PAY it FORWARD	3 Rake leaves for someone	4 Bake a neighbor pumpkin pie	5 Volunteer at a shelter
6 Help tutor someone	7 Give a care package	8 Share a family recipe	9 Support Operation Christmas Child	10 Offer a compliment
11 Bake cookies for someone	12 Babysit for a friend	13 THANK A VETERAN	14 Offer someone coffee	15 Visit a NURSING HOME
16 Give a turkey to a family in need	17 Donate warm clothing	18 Give someone gloves	19 Support a small business	20 Smile at a stranger
21 Help someone with their groceries	22 Spread good news	23 Send postcards to sick children	24 Offer a hug	25 Get to know someone new
26 Pay for someone's dinner	27 Print a photo of you and a friend	28 Leave positive notes	29 Donate to a charity	30 Call an old friend



VIRTUAL VOLUNTEERISM

YOUTH ACTIVITY (AGES 4-12)

MATERIALS

- **OPERATION GRATITUDE**
- [HTTPS://WWW.OPERATIONGRATITUDE.COM/EXPRESS-YOUR-THANKS-VIRTUAL/](https://www.operationgratitude.com/express-your-thanks-virtual/)

DIRECTIONS

1. Click on the following link:
<https://www.operationgratitude.com/express-your-thanks-virtual/>
2. Research ways that your family can get involved with Virtual Volunteerism.
3. Operation Gratitude provides various your family can get involved from your home.





CARE PACKAGES

FAMILY ACTIVITY (ALL AGES)

MATERIALS

- **ADOPT A SERVICE MEMBER / MILITARY MENTOR**
- **SHIPPING BOX**
- **TAPE**
- **VARIOUS ITEMS (NON-PERISHABLE FOOD)**

DIRECTIONS

1. *Request to be matched or paired with a service member who is currently deployed. You can request that at mentors@taps.org.*
2. *Create and decorate a box to pack with non-perishable treats and items.*
3. *Send the care package to the service member.*
4. *Items can include:*
 - i. *non-perishable food items (chips, hard candy, etc)*
 - ii. *hand sanitizer*
 - iii. *baby wipes*
 - iv. *homemade cards*
 - v. *deck of cards*
 - vi. *book(s)*





GRATITUDE JARS

FAMILY ACTIVITY (ALL AGES)

MATERIALS

- MASON JARS (ANY TYPE OF JARS WILL WORK)
- POST-IT NOTES
- PEN / PENCILS
- OPTIONAL
 - RIBBON, GLUE, PAINT, TISSUE PAPER, NOTECARDS, ETC.

DIRECTIONS

1. Using the selection of materials, decorate the jar how you would like it to be.
2. If you used paint, glue, or wet materials give the jar some time to dry.
3. Cut up strips of blank writing paper and set them beside the jar to record the beautiful, joyful, and good things that happened throughout the day. This could include, "receiving a gift from a friend," or "saw a rainbow today."
4. Place the gratitude sentiments in the jar and read them all at the end of each day or week. Or save them to read for your Thanksgiving feast.





KINDNESS ROCKS

YOUTH & TEEN ACTIVITY (AGES 4 - 18)

MATERIALS

- ROCKS (VARIOUS SHAPES AND SIZES)
- SHARPIES
- PAINT
- PAINT BRUSH(ES)

DIRECTIONS

1. Watch the following video on "The Kindness Rocks Project".
<https://youtu.be/jKMdLU46c3w>
2. Go on a nature walk with your family. Along the way, find rocks that you can use to create your own kindness rocks.
3. Clean the rocks, if needed. Once completed, you can start to decorate the rocks you found.
4. Paint and write kind words of encouragement or support on the rocks.
5. Once you have finished decorating the rocks, you can take them around your neighborhood and place them in places where people can find them.





GRATITUDE WALK

FAMILY ACTIVITY (ALL AGES)

MATERIALS

- NATURE TRAILS
- NEIGHBORHOOD
- PARK

DIRECTIONS

1. On Saturday, November 21st, find some time to take a walk with family and friends.
2. During the walk discuss the things you are thankful for in your life. These can be individually, as a family, or both.
3. You can use this time to place your kindness rocks.
4. Send pictures of things you find on your walk that you are thankful for to: youthprograms@taps.org





THANKFUL TURKEY

FAMILY ACTIVITY (ALL AGES)

MATERIALS

- CONSTRUCTION PAPER (VARIOUS COLORS)
- PEN / PENCIL
- YARN
- SCISSORS
- GLUE

DIRECTIONS

1. Cut a turkey's head, body, wings, and feet from poster board.
2. Decorate them with cardstock, yarn, and markers.
3. Cut 15 feathers from cardstock. Write something you're thankful for on each feather.
4. Glue the feathers on the turkey.
5. Save some feathers and have your Thanksgiving guests write what they're thankful for.





PORTRAITS OF KINDNESS

FAMILY ACTIVITY (ALL AGES)

MATERIALS

- CAMERA
- ACTS OF KINDNESS
- PEOPLE WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR

DIRECTIONS

1. *Kindness Challenge is to take the opportunity to take a picture of someone who you are thankful for. This can be your teacher, a fireman, your grandparent, a friend, the mailman, etc...*
2. *Send your photos to youthprograms@taps.org*





THANK A VETERAN

FAMILY ACTIVITY (ALL AGES)

MATERIALS

- NOTEBOOK PAPER OR STATIONARY
- ENVELOPE
- PEN / PENCIL

DIRECTIONS

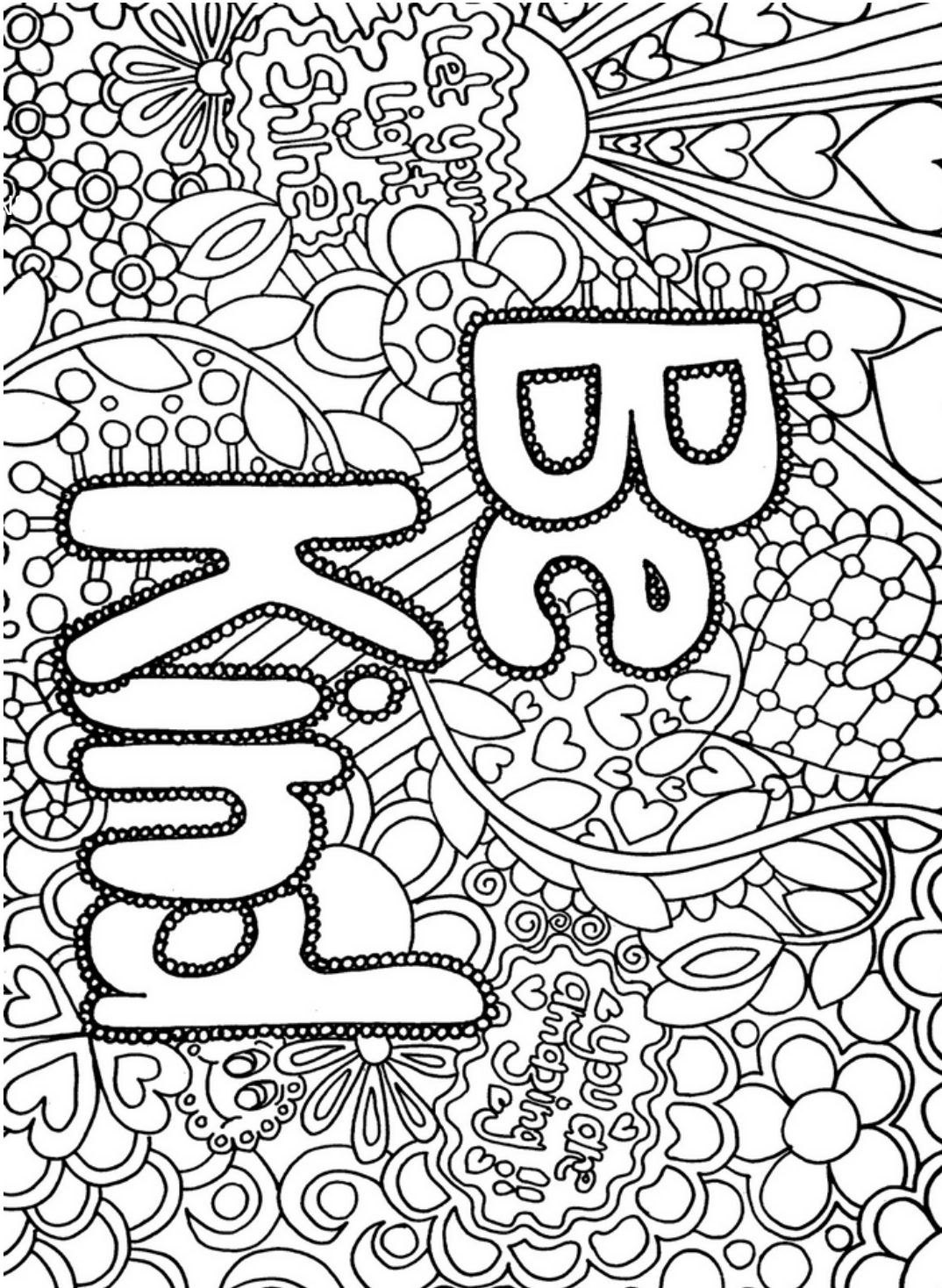
1. Veterans Day is on November 11th and it is a day to honor and thank every person who has served or is currently serving in the United States Armed Forces.
2. Spend some time writing "Thank You" cards or letters to veterans in your local community.
3. Find a local VFW, American Legion, or veterans home to deliver the letters to.





COLORING KINDNESS

FAMILY ACTIVITY (ALL AGES)





THANK YOU LETTER

FAMILY ACTIVITY (ALL AGES)

MATERIALS

- NOTEBOOK PAPER OR STATIONARY
- PEN / PENCIL

DIRECTIONS

1. Show someone how much you appreciate them and are thankful for everything they do.
2. Write a "THANK YOU" letter to a someone in your family.





CAMPFIRE & S'MORES

FAMILY ACTIVITY (ALL AGES)

MATERIALS

- SAFE AREA
- FIREPIT
- STICKS AND BRANCHES

DIRECTIONS

1. As the seasons change and the temperature becomes cooler there is not a better time for a campfire and s'mores.
2. Find a safe space or fire pit area to have a family campfire.
3. Use this time to make s'mores and enjoy having time with each other.





KINDNESS POEM

FAMILY ACTIVITY (ALL AGES)

MATERIALS

- PEN /PENCILS

Kindness is something that everyone can share – and it makes a difference! Write a word or line of poetry that starts with each letter in the word KINDNESS. It can be about helping others, making a difference, or being a good classmate.

K _____

I _____

N _____

D _____

N _____

E _____

S _____

S _____



GRATITUDE MANDALA

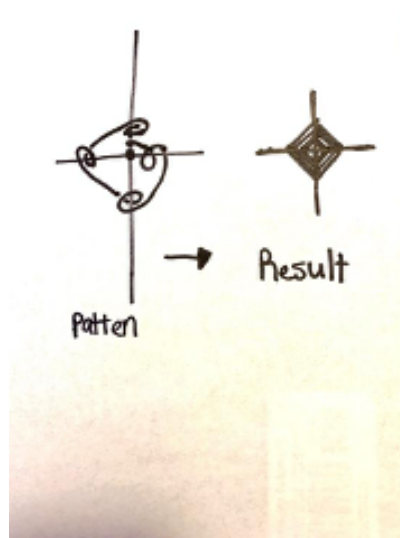
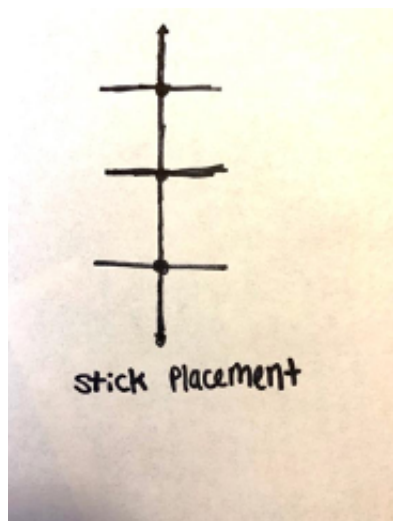
YOUTH & TEEN ACTIVITY (AGES 10 - 18)

MATERIALS

- ONE LONG STICK ABOUT A FOOT LONG
- THREE SMALLER STICKS, TO LAY ACROSS THE LONGER STICK (THE STICKS NEED TO BE EQUAL IN SIZE)
- DIFFERENT COLORS OF YARN, COLORS TO REPRESENT NEGATIVE AND COLORS TO REPRESENT POSITIVE
- TWINE (OPTIONAL)

DIRECTIONS

1. Lay the long stick down vertically in front of you. Start by placing one stick towards the top of your long stick.
2. Take your twine and diagonally loop the twine around the two sticks to secure them. After you have secured your first stick, take your colored string and begin by securing your colored string on the intersection of your stick.
3. You will now weave the string through each of the four sticks to create a mandala (color or colors of your choice). Repeat this step for the other two stick intersections.
4. Your result should be three mandalas on the long stick that you can secure the twine to, to make a hanging decoration and reminder of the things that we are grateful for and how they help counteract our negative feelings.
5. You can adapt the activity as a discussion without the complication of patterns or colors, just make sure three negative feelings are addressed in the beginning, mixed feelings in the middle and three things that make them happy or grateful at the end of the activity.
6. Music can be played in between discussions.





FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT

FAMILY ACTIVITY (ALL AGES)

MATERIALS

- DISNEY MOVIE "INSIDE OUT"
- MOVIE SNACKS / TREATS

DIRECTIONS

Movie Guide:

"Inside Out" brings various emotions to life and talks about the memories we have within us.

Ideas:

- Recognize the emotions you are feeling.
- Talk about your emotions and feelings with your support group: family, friends, teachers.
- Don't be afraid to talk out loud about the emotions and feelings you are feeling!





A CHARLIE BROWN THANKSGIVING

FAMILY ACTIVITY (ALL AGES)

MATERIALS

- A CHARLIE BROWN THANKSGIVING
- MOVIE SNACKS / TREATS

DIRECTIONS

1. A *Charlie Brown Thanksgiving* is a traditional Thanksgiving cartoon that is shown yearly on television.
2. Search your local listings for the date and time it will be airing on your local TV stations or you can view it at:
<https://www.amazon.com/Charlie-Brown-Thanksgiving-Jimmy-Ahrens/dp/B001K2Q6F0>





READING NIGHT

FAMILY ACTIVITY (ALL AGES)

MATERIALS

- BOOKS / AUDIO READING

Gracias, Thanks

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=leGhdUmWUUQ>

Thankful

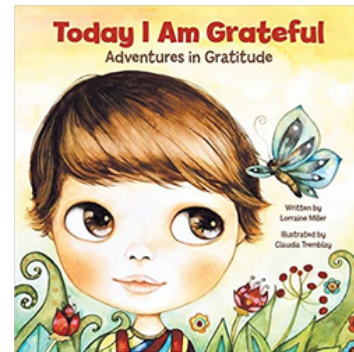
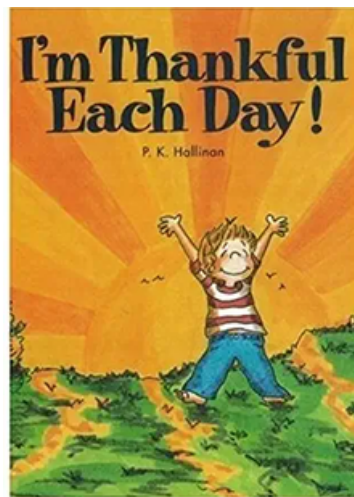
Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TIqPZPRaVBs>

I am Thankful Each Day

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JlodsXEvo4U>

Today I Am Thankful For

Link: <https://www.amazon.com/Today-Am-Grateful-Adventures-Gratitude/dp/1452595208>





THANKFUL FOR STEM

FAMILY ACTIVITY (ALL AGES)

PUMPKIN VOLCANO

- ONE SMALL PUMPKIN
- BAKING SODA
- VINEGAR
- FOOD COLORING {OPTIONAL}
- DISH SOAPWATER



Source: <https://littlebinsforlittlehands.com/pumpkin-cano-sensory-science-activity/>

DANCING CORN

- TALL JAR OR GLASS {MASON JARS WORK WELL}
- 1/8-1/4 CUP OF POPPING CORN
- 2 TBSP OF BAKING SODA
- 1 CUP OF VINEGAR (USE AS NEEDED)
- 2 CUPS OF WATER

Source: <https://littlebinsforlittlehands.com/dancing-corn-thanksgiving-science-activity/>



SALT CRYSTAL LEAVES

- SALT
- POT
- CONSTRUCTION PAPER
- SCISSORS
- PLATE OR COOKIE TRAY



Source: <https://littlebinsforlittlehands.com/salt-crystal-leaves-science-experiment-kids-fall-theme/>



CHICKEN POT PIE

FAMILY ACTIVITY (ALL AGES)

CHICKEN POT PIE

YIELD: 6 SERVINGS **PREP TIME:** 25 MINUTES **COOK:** 30-40 MINUTES **TOTAL TIME:** 65 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS:

Crust

- 1 box Pillsbury refrigerated pie crusts, softened as directed on the box

Filling

- 1/3 cup butter or margarine
- 1/3 cup chopped onion
- 1/3 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 3/4 cups chicken broth (from 32-oz carton)
- 1/2 cup milk
- 2 1/2 cups shredded cooked chicken or turkey
- 2 cups frozen mixed vegetables, thawed



INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Heat oven to 425°F.
2. Prepare pie crusts as directed on box for Two-Crust Pie using 9-inch glass pie pan.
3. In 2-quart saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Add onion; cook 2 minutes, stirring frequently, until tender.
4. Stir in flour, salt and pepper until well blended.
5. Gradually stir in broth and milk, cooking and stirring until bubbly and thickened.
6. Stir in chicken and mixed vegetables. Remove from heat.
7. Spoon chicken mixture into crust-lined pan. Top with second crust; seal edge and flute. Cut slits in several places in top crust.
8. Bake 30 to 40 minutes or until crust is golden brown. During last 15 to 20 minutes of baking, cover crust edge with strips of foil to prevent excessive browning.
9. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.



CANDY APPLES

FAMILY ACTIVITY (ALL AGES)

CANDY APPLES

YIELD: 6 SERVINGS **PREP TIME:** 5 MINUTES **COOK:** 30 MINUTES **TOTAL TIME:** 30 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 c. granulated sugar
- 3/4 cups water
- 1/2 cups light corn syrup
- 16 drops red food coloring
- 6 medium Granny Smith apples

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Grease a rimmed baking sheet with cooking spray.
2. Line with parchment and grease parchment with cooking spray.
3. Wash the apples really well, removing the waxy outer layer.
4. Insert a wooden stick into the top of each apple, pushing about halfway through. Set aside.
5. In a medium heavy-bottomed pot over medium-high heat, combine sugar, 3/4 cup water, corn syrup, and food coloring and bring to a boil.
6. Insert candy thermometer and continue to boil until temperature reaches between 300° and 310°, about 15 to 20 minutes.
7. Immediately remove from heat. Working quickly and carefully—coating will be extremely hot—coat apples in candy mixture and transfer to prepared baking sheet.
8. Allow apples to cool completely before serving.



Source: <https://www.delish.com/cooking/recipe-ideas/a28544141/easy-candy-apples-recipe/>