

The Facilitator's Guide

There is
hope!





THE FACILITATOR'S GUIDE "THERE IS HOPE"

This training set consists of

The Facilitator's Guide

and

There Is Hope

An interactive trauma recovery handbook for children

These training tools will help parents, teachers, children counsellors and other caregivers support and help the children who have gone through traumatic experiences and suffered losses.

This handbook provides opportunities for children to talk about their trauma-related feelings as they work through the assignments. For children, how they feel about a traumatic event is very important. They often experience troubling emotions that may be new to them. Another feature of their trauma is the losses they have experienced. Children need help identifying their losses and understanding what these mean to them, both now and later. To bring closure to their trauma, children need to grieve their losses in a way that is meaningful to them. It is important to let children know that you really want to understand what they are feeling or what they need. Sometimes children are upset but they cannot tell you what will be helpful. Giving them the time and encouragement to share their feelings with you may enable them to sort out their feelings. Children will need longlasting support. The more losses the child or adolescent suffers, the more difficult it will be to recover. This is especially true if they have lost a parent who was their major source of support. Try to develop multiple supports for children who have suffered significant losses.





THE FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

A facilitator's task is to guide the children through the assignments in their handbook. Children need help in identifying and grieving their losses. They also need help in realizing what these losses will mean to them both now and long-term. The notes in this guide will help you accomplish this task.

The *Facilitator's* Guide also expands on the children's concept of trauma, fear, sadness and such. Following a trauma, children have changes in their behavior. Usually these reactions will occur immediately following the trauma. Sometimes however, a child will seem to be doing fine at the time of the trauma and then have a delayed response weeks or months later.

Be supportive and compassionate in talking with children to help them feel safe. Children, who have been displaced from their homes, have been separated from family members, or who have lost loved ones are particularly vulnerable. Help children share in maintaining their feelings of safety by asking them about their specific needs for comfort and selfcare.

NOTE: The facilitator needs to be sure to manage his or her own feelings regarding the trauma. Take time to understand your own feelings and prepare yourself emotionally before you attempt to reassure or work with children.



PEER OR INDIVIDUAL GROUPING

Some prefer to have children complete these assignments in a peer group setting; others prefer to work one-on-one with a single child. Make sure to respect everyone's feelings and do not downplay any of them.

You also will need to consider whether you will have all boys, only girls, or both in the group. The configuration of the group will depend on local culture and the trauma issues involved.





ASSIGNMENTS

The assignments (in children's handbook) are designed to give children opportunities to explore and express their feelings about the events they have experienced causing trauma. They will do this through supportive conversations, art work, writing assignments and play activities. Once the children have identified their losses and expressed their feelings over them, the facilitator can help the children come to closure on their grief issues.

The notes opposite each child's assignment page will help you understand key concepts to talk about for that page. Study these pages before meeting with the children. You may have additional ideas to talk about, too.

Help children and families feel connected to peers and adults who can provide support and decrease isolation. Be aware of local resources to help children and families obtain additional help if it is needed.

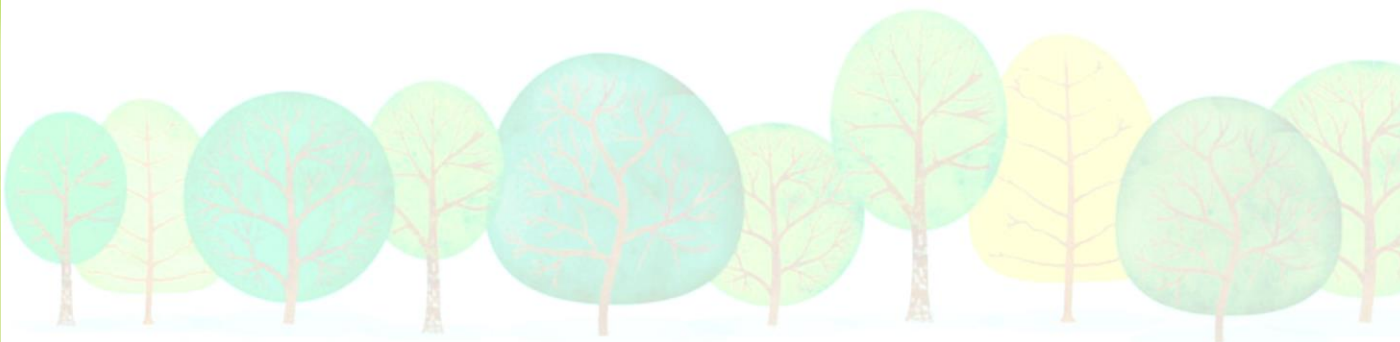


THIS IS ME!

PURPOSE: For children to learn that no matter what has happened to them, they are special to God, their heavenly Father.

Talk with the children about how special they are. Talk about what it means that they have been created in God's image (His likeness): they can think, express their feelings, be creative, love and so much more. After completing their picture on page 8, bring out that their uniqueness can be shown by looking at each others' fingerprints. Everyone's fingerprints are different!

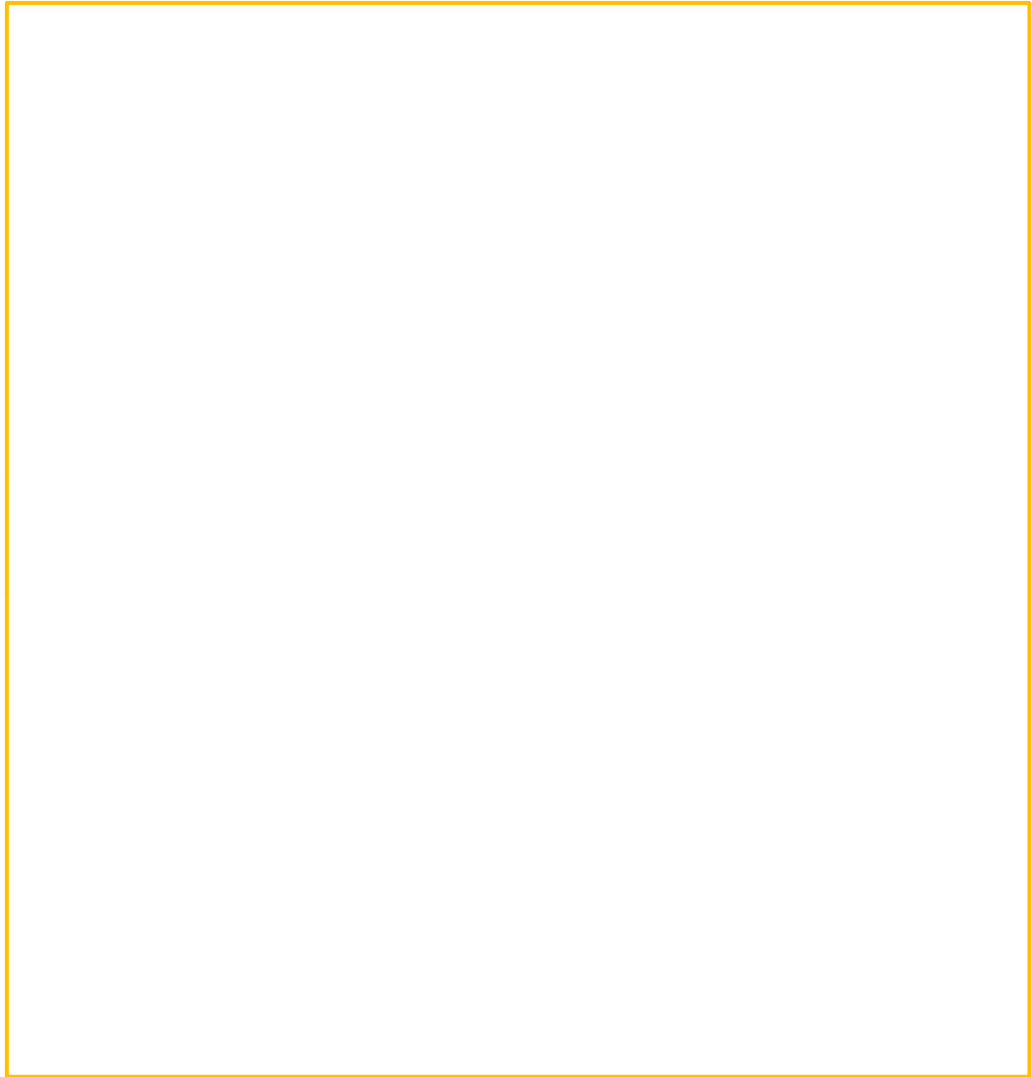
You are unique—there is only one you!





THERE IS HOPE FOR ME

This is Me!



Do not be afraid, ... I will save you. I have called you by name
... you are mine. (Isaiah 43:10)






ALL ABOUT ME

PURPOSE: To give the children an opportunity to explore their identity—who they are—and to recognize that their identity hasn't changed because of their experiences.

One of the most fundamental needs we all have is for a sense of identity. Who we are matters very much to all of us, including the children. Talk with the children about who they are: a girl, a boy, a brother, a friend, one who loves Jesus, etc. After the children have filled in the page, "All About Me," have them talk about what hasn't changed about them since their trauma. For example, their name, birthday, color of their hair, likes and dislikes. Have them give several examples. Remind the children that they are the same person and that God's love for them is the same. They may have experienced new feelings yet who they are as a person hasn't changed.





ALL ABOUT ME

My age is: _____

My birthday is: _____

My favorite color is: _____

My favorite food is: _____

My favorite book is: _____

My best friend is: _____

My favorite sport is: _____

My favorite animal is: _____

My favorite song is: _____

This is where I live: _____





WHAT HAPPENED?

PURPOSE: For children to begin exploring their feelings through talking about their experiences.

NOTE: As the facilitator, you must not be afraid to talk openly and truthfully about the traumatic events. The children will see through any false information and wonder why you do not trust them with the truth. Not openly talking about what has happened does not help children work through the healing process or help them develop effective coping strategies for life's future traumas and losses. However, the child should take the lead in what to talk about.

This will help you know the level of his or her understanding and feelings. Keep in mind that the children need to be given enough information to comfort them but not so many details that the trauma increases.

Have the children talk about what they saw, heard or experienced during and after the trauma. Talking about their experiences is the first step in a child's healing.



WHAT HAPPENED TO MY COUNTRY?





GOD WILL HELP MY COUNTRY/COMMUNITY!

PURPOSE: To give children a sense of safety in knowing that God will not only provide for their personal needs, but He will also provide their country/community's needs.

For healthy childhood development, children need a safe environment to explore their world. In spite of the destruction and confusion evident all around them, they need to find comfort knowing God loves their country/community and will help overcome its problems.

Have the children read the ways God loves and helps their country/community. Ask the children if they are aware of God's help in their community and have them tell how. (Maybe in their new community a school has started or there is a church to go to). What are some things that still need to be fixed in your community?

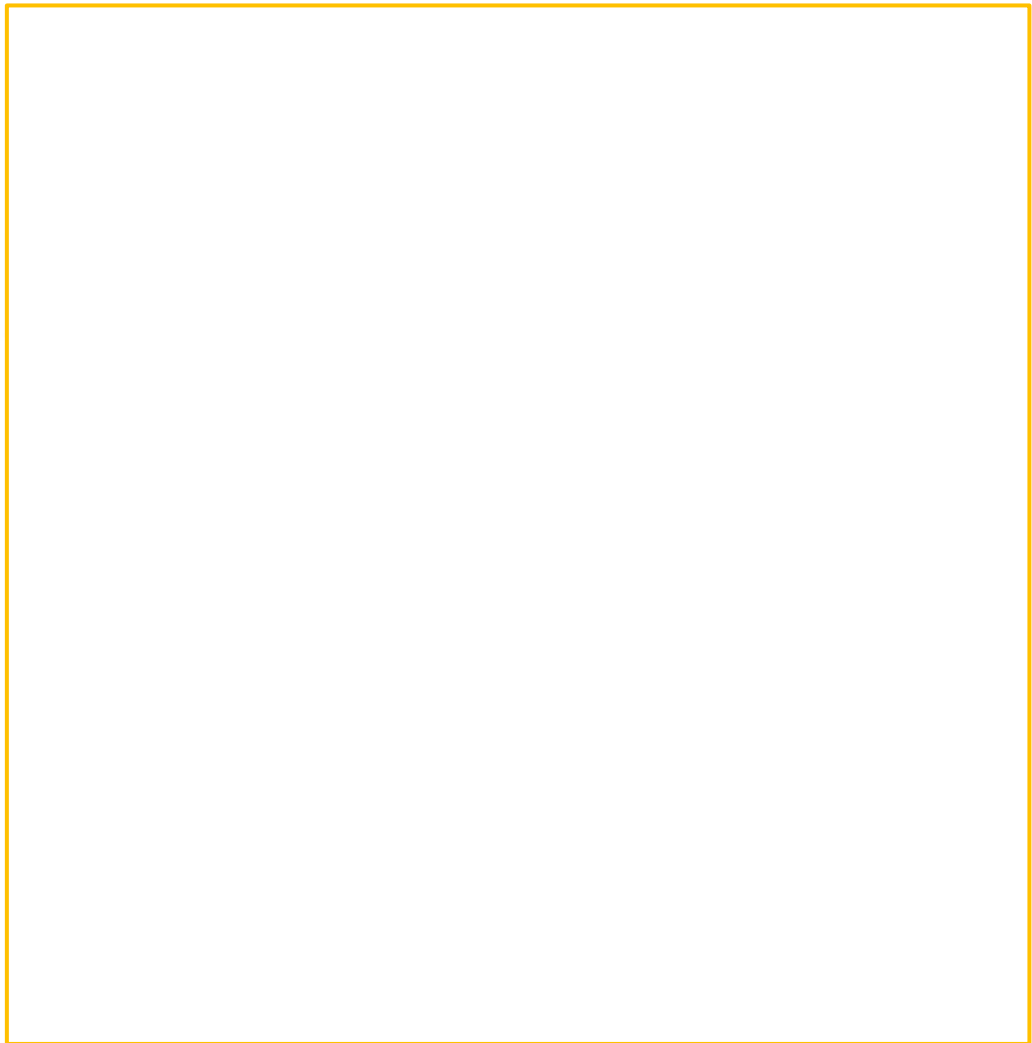
After drawing their pictures, pray together thanking God that just as He helped them, He can help to make their country a good country again.





GOD WILL HELP MY COUNTRY!

- God loves my country—God made my country.
- God loves the people from of my country—He made us to be a strong people.
- God will help my country and help me to overcome the problems the war and confict and the displacement.



(Draw a picture of where you were before the trauma.)





BEFORE THE TRAUMA

PURPOSE: For children to begin exploring their feelings before and after the trauma.

Using the various faces, have the children share their thoughts and feelings about the trauma. Then have a few children volunteer to show (physically) what their faces looked like during the suffering and what they want their faces to look like now. Have the other children guess what emotion each face is expressing.

Assure the children that it is alright to be afraid, angry or sad when a frightening thing happens to us. But also emphasize that God is always with them and He can help when they feel sad or afraid.



BEFORE THE TRAUMA STARTED

Color the face of how you felt.



happy



sad



angry



afraid





AFTER THE SUFFERING STARTED

Color the face of how you felt.



happy



sad



angry



afraid





BEFORE THE TRAUMA STARTED

(pictures depicting their feelings)

PURPOSE: For children to learn that God understands our feelings and can help us have good feelings.

NOTE: Be sensitive to cultural differences among children who have experienced traumatic events or losses.

For some children, expression of emotion may not be acceptable or comfortable.

Give children time to draw their pictures. Have those who would like to show their pictures do so. Encourage the children to talk about their feelings before and after the trauma started. Listen to their stories without judging. Allow the children to cry, be sad, or be angry. Do not force expression of the traumatic event, but let children know that it is normal for everyone to feel upset, angry, or afraid when something bad happens.

When all have shared, point out that people have different feelings when bad things happen. Sometimes they are happy, sad, angry, fearful or anxious. Whatever you felt was OK. But now God wants to help change our sad or angry feelings to good feelings.





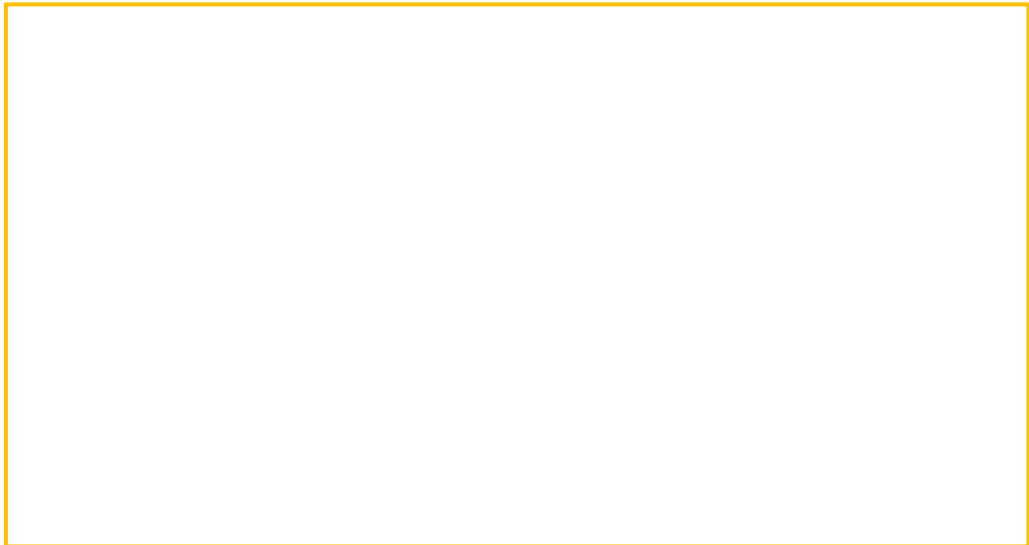
BEFORE THE TRAUMA STARTED

(Draw a picture of how you felt.)



AFTER THE SUFFERING STARTED

(Draw a picture of how you felt.)



Whatever you felt was OK!





THINGS I LOST

PURPOSE: To help children identify and release the losses they have suffered. Have children write or draw their losses on the balloons. They can write more than one loss on each balloon if needed.

Have the children talk about the losses on their balloons. Ask them how it feels to be reminded of the things they have lost. Remind them that Jesus cares about how they feel. Talk about Jesus' love and the ways He is restoring their losses (Will they have a new home? A new caregiver? Has someone given them food, clean water to drink or clothing)? Even though bad things have happened to us, God still shows us that He loves us.

If possible, you also could use real balloons for this exercise. Children could draw on slips of paper the losses they experienced. These slips could then be inserted into the balloons before they are inflated. Once inflated, they could release the balloons into the air. Either way, with real balloons or using those on the pictures, help them know that they can trust Jesus to care for them. Pray with the children asking God to comfort them in their losses and to continue His care for them. Ask if any children want to thank Jesus for loving and caring for them.



THINGS I LOST

Draw in the balloons things you lost because of the trauma. (Did you lose an animal? A favorite toy? School books? Your house?)






MY FRIENDS OR FAMILY WHO DIED

PURPOSE: To help children talk about death and to understand death as a significant loss in their lives.

Talking to children about death must be appropriate for their developmental level, respectful of their cultural norms and sensitive to the child's capacity to understand the situation. Children will be aware of the reactions of significant adults as they interpret and react to information about death and tragedy. For younger children, adult reactions will play an especially important role in shaping their perceptions of the situation.

Allow the children to guide you, the facilitator, as to their need for information or clarification of the information given. Loss and death are both part of the cycle of life that children must understand. Have the children write on the balloons their friends or family members who died during the time of their trauma. Have the children talk about why these people were so special in their lives. What fun things did you do with your friend or family member? Also encourage children to ask questions about loss and death. Don't be concerned that you may not know all the answers. Treat each question with respect and a willingness to help the child find his or her own answers. Remember, you cannot assume that every child in a certain age group understands death in the same way or with the same feelings. All children are different and their view of the world is unique and shaped by different experiences.



MY FRIENDS OR FAMILY WHO DIED

In balloons, write the names of friends or family who died. You can say something about them or you can draw a Picture.





GOD TAKES CARE OF ME

PURPOSE: To let the children know that although they have experienced a lot of sadness because of their losses, God's love and care for them can make them happy again.

Have the children talk about all the happy times they have had during the past week, emphasizing ways God took care of them. Have them talk about the people in their lives that God used to care for them. Did a friend do something to show they cared? Did someone cook food for you? Read a book to you? Go for a walk with you? Remind the children that God has many ways to care for them. Have them draw a special way God has cared for them. Have them take turns showing their pictures to one another, telling the story behind the picture.





GOD TAKES CARE OF ME

Even though losses can make us sad, knowing God cares for us makes us happy! (Draw one way God is taking care of you.)





THANK YOU GOD

PURPOSE: Thanking God for His care is a reminder to the children of the many ways God cares for them.

After the children have written their prayers, have them read the prayers out loud to the group. Or you may want to have the children exchange prayers and read someone else's. After each prayer read ask, "Who else has experienced God's help in this way?" Then help them choose a praise (thank you) song to sing to Jesus for the wonderful ways He has helped them. Remind them that in times when they feel sad, they can look for ways God cares for them.

**Knowing Jesus loves and cares for them makes
them feel happy.**





WRITE A PRAYER THANKING GOD FOR HIS CARE.

Dear God,





GOOD THINGS I CAN DO

PURPOSE: To help children think about practical things they can do as acts of self-care.

Children can feel helpless in traumatic situations. The next two assignments will help them feel empowered to change their feelings of sadness by doing positive things.

Using the suggested ideas, have the children talk about the good things they can choose to do to help them feel better when they are feeling sad. Explain that “having a good cry” sometimes helps us feel better because we have expressed our sadness and are now ready to choose other things. Have them think about additional things they can do (write a friend or relative a letter, read a book, care for an animal etc.). Help the children understand that they are not helpless; there are helpful, alternative choices they can make.

Have the children circle the two choices they think would help them the most. Tell them they will draw the things they circled on the next page.





GOOD THINGS I CAN DO

When we feel sad there are some good things we can do to help us feel better.

Circle the two you like best

DRAW A PICTURE

TAKE A WALK

ASK FOR HELP

TALK TO AN ADULT I TRUST

HAVE A BIG CRY

PLAY WITH A FRIEND

PRAY

SING A SONG

Write your ideas:



THINGS THAT HELP ME FEEL BETTER

PURPOSE: To reinforce the fact that children are not helpless; they can do things to change their feelings of sadness.

Have the children draw the things they circled on the previous page showing what would help them most to feel better. After the children have drawn their pictures, have them take turns showing their pictures and telling why doing that would help them feel better.

NOTE: Listen carefully to their stories so you make helpful comments.



THINGS THAT HELP ME FEEL BETTER

Draw pictures showing the 2 things that
would most help you feel better.





IT HELPS TO TELL MY STORY

PURPOSE: To develop a good relationship with the children through listening to their stories.

Children need someone who will really listen to them as they share their stories. We help children heal by giving time to listen and encouraging them to express their impressions and feelings about the trauma they have experienced. When children know that someone is listening seriously to them, they become more trusting and accepting of themselves. They relate to themselves in ways that help reveal their inner strength.

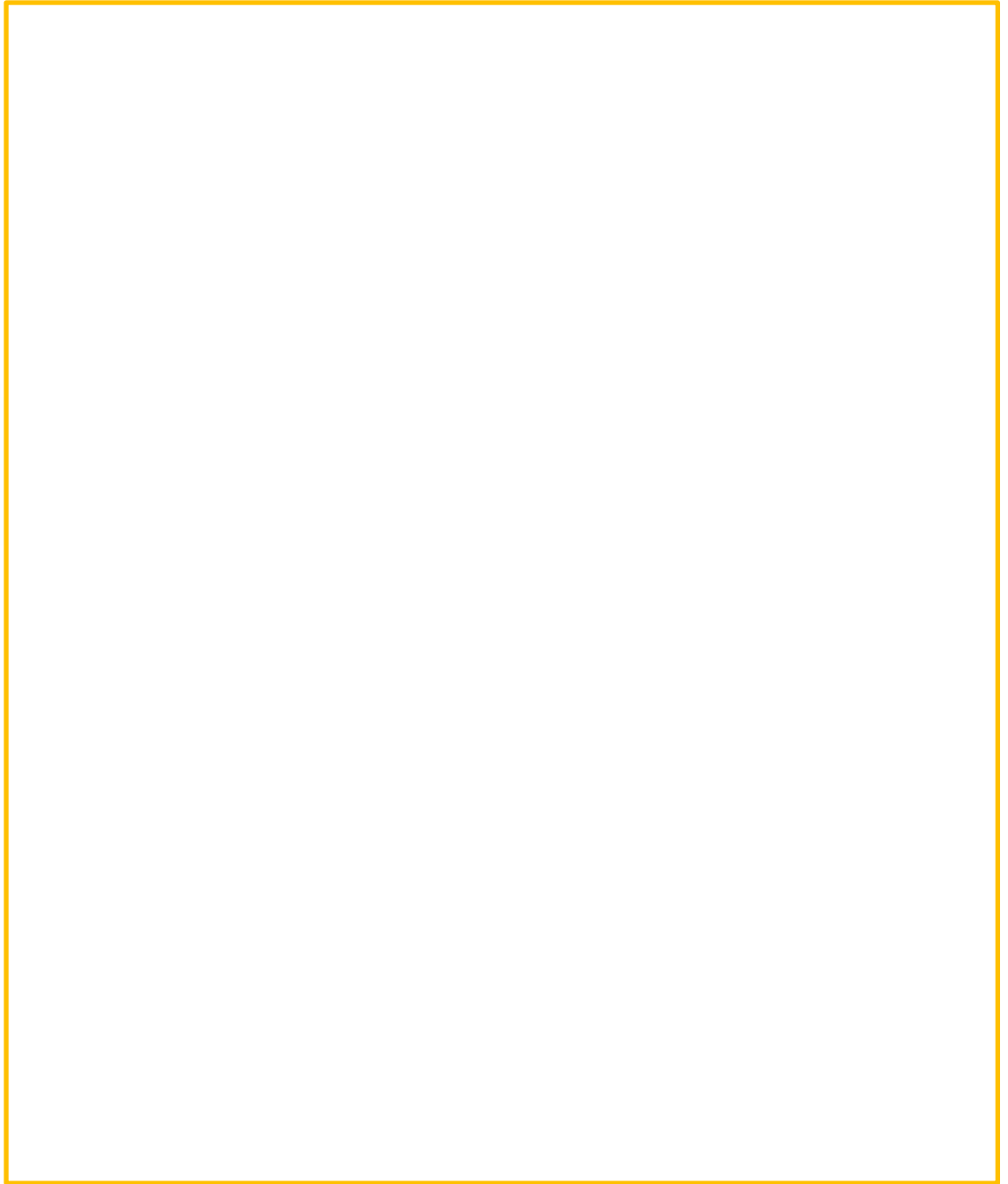
Have the children talk about who they would most like to tell their stories to. Ask them why they chose this person. Let them know it is OK if they want to keep it a secret. You also could talk about where they would like to talk to that person: outside, at home, while taking a walk? Have them choose a place that is special to them. Then have the children draw a picture of them telling the person chosen their story, in their favorite place.





IT HELPS TO TELL MY STORY

Think about who you would most like to tell what happened to you. Draw a picture of this person listening to your story.



JESUS HELPS ME!

PURPOSE: To give the children comfort in knowing that Jesus is always near to them and will never leave them. Read the Scripture verse (“I will never leave you or forsake you.” (Hebrews 13:5), together. What a wonderful promise God has given to us! Talk about why this promise is so special. (He is always near when I need help; I can talk to Him at any time, etc.)

Encourage the children to be creative in making a border around the page, then writing their song or poem. Have the children share their poems or songs with the group. Choose one or two to put a simple tune to, so the children can sing the songs when they feel lonely or afraid. If possible, it would be helpful to make a small booklet of all their writings for each child.





JESUS HELPS ME!

Jesus says: "I will never leave you
or forsake you." (Hebrews 13:5)

Draw a pretty border around this page, and then write a song
or poem that tells how Jesus can help you not feel lonely or
afraid.

A large yellow rectangular area with horizontal white lines, intended for drawing a border and writing a song or poem.



JESUS HAS A SPECIAL PLAN FOR MY LIFE!

PURPOSE: To give hope to children through knowing that God loves them so much that He has made good plans for them.

Start off by having the children act what they would like to be when they grow up: a fireman—pretending he has a hose and is putting out a fire, or an airplane pilot zooming around the room. As a child demonstrates his or her choice, the other children can guess what they are portraying. Then have the children draw the pictures, showing what they would like to do now and what they would like to do when they grow up.

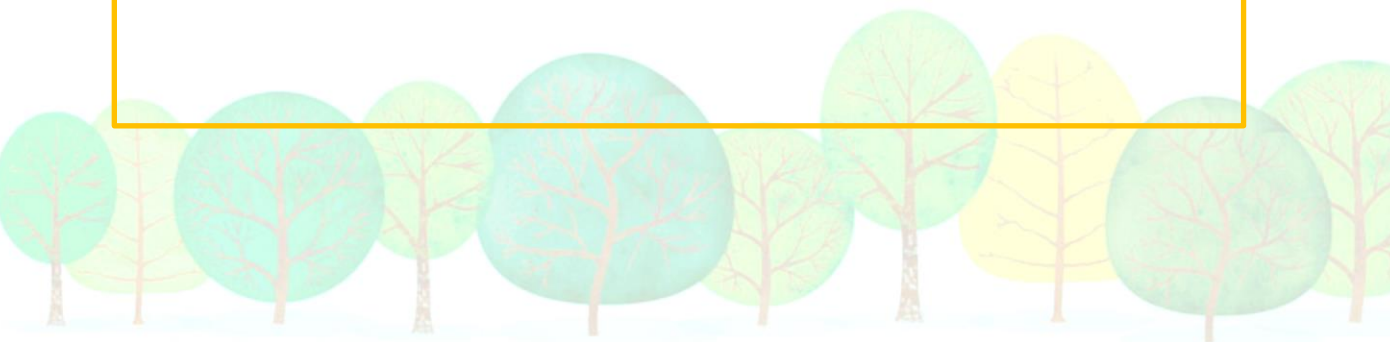
Talk about the children's pictures and remind them that God will help them fulfill His plans for them.





JESUS HAS A SPECIAL PLAN FOR MY LIFE!

Draw a picture of what you want to do now and a picture of what you want to do when you grow up.



GOD'S WONDERFUL PROMISE TO ME!

PURPOSE: To assure the children that God's plans are good plans; they can trust God's plans for their lives.

Help the children memorize Jeremiah 29:11. After they have colored the circle and made a pretty border around it, pray together thanking God for loving them and making good plans for their lives. Encourage the children to keep their book somewhere where they can look at it often and be reminded of God's special plans for their lives.

Wrap up the work on this book by talking about how their traumatic experiences have made them strong. For example, they know Jesus is always with them, have had answers to their prayers and know that they can trust Jesus to care for them. Plan a way you can have a special celebration time for the children's completion of this book. You could have a fun time including songs, games and refreshments.





GOD'S WONDERFUL PROMISE TO ME!

Draw a pretty border around the Scripture.

Then memorize this verse.

For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord.
Plans to prosper you and not to harm you,
plans to give you a hope and a future.

(Jeremiah 29:11)

The difficult things you have been through have made you strong. You have experienced God's love for you in special ways. **You have hope!**





This book was given to me by friends who want me to know that I am very special and that God loves me and has wonderful plans for me.



