

# "Gone to Work"



A program for 3-6 year olds to give support and understanding when dealing with the challenges of parental work separation

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# "Gone to Work"

*adapted and compiled by Myrna Moss*

Many children have been asked, "Where's Daddy?" And the answer, time and time again, has been, "Gone to work". Most children cope very well, yet others may find it difficult, especially if the separation is a long one.

This program will give three to six year old children an understanding of the many different places Daddies and Mommies go for work. It will help them to deal with the emotions they feel when separated from Dad/Mom or the caregiver they love. They will be provided with physical activities and tangible things they can do to ease the stress of separation and strengthen the connection to the parent who is away.

"*Gone to Work*" would be enjoyable for all children but could especially benefit children who are dealing with the separation of a parent who is working away on a long term, continual basis. Overall, the program hopes to strengthen family connections and promote the emotional wellbeing of the child.

We want to thank the Petawawa Deployment Support Centre and the Petawawa Military Family Resource Centre for the resources they have made available for this program.



Notes;

The sessions can vary in length but have been planned for one and a half hours each, over an eight week period. This can be shortened if necessary.

If registration for the program is required, have parents fill out an information sheet as to what type of work the parent does and the period of time they work away (if applicable). The Program Facilitator can use this knowledge to prepare for activities and better relate to the child.

The story for Session 2, 3 and 8 is the ongoing story; *Joey's Mom is Going Away*. We used pages 1, 2, 4-13, 15-21, and 26-34 of the story. Books are suggested for the other sessions but any story relating to the objective for the session could be used.

Our mascot was Draco the Dragon, but the stories can easily be adapted to accommodate a different character.

If doing a booklet, keep the pages from each week to compile and distribute at last session. On the CD are various handouts. These can be given to the parents to coincide with the session for that week. Use at your discretion.

For Session 6 parents will need to bring a small picture of each family member and for Session 8, they will need a copy of a 5x7inch family picture for the puzzle. This could also be emailed and copied at your office. To be sure you get these items you could ask for them at the beginning of the program.

For this program we have referred to the "away" parent as Dad and the "stay at home" parent as Mom. We do realize this may not always be the case but for the majority of families engaged in this lifestyle, this is the norm.

Have fun!

## Session 1- Lots of Work to Do!

### Checklist

- Work related toys, dress-up clothes, books, etc.
- Pictures of different occupations or tools to tape to the floor (for circle time). This can be done for every session.
- Story book of choice
- Talking stick (decorate a small stick) or mascot(For this program we had Draco the Dragon)
- Big bag to hold items for game
- Items for game: paint brush, hammer, wrench, stethoscope, hair comb, etc. You could also use hats.
- Cover page of Activity Book (Construction paper or cardstock)  
"My Family"
- Next two pages of Activity Book; "Where Dad Works", "My Dad at Work"
- Glue, scissors, crayons
- Box for each child (large Premium Cracker Box/10 pack tetra Juice Box or any box the size of a mailbox)
- Paper fasteners
- Velcro stick-on fasteners
- Cardstock or construction paper to cover box
- Foam sheets (for back and front of mailbox)
- Miscellaneous items to decorate mailbox (stickers, etc.)
- Snack

Session 1  
**Lots of Work to Do!**

**\*Focus**

To increase the child's awareness of the many different kinds of work that Daddies and Mommies do, and that some may have to be away for a longer period.

**Welcome**

**Play Time** Work related toys, books, and dress-up clothes could be made available.

**Circle Time** Have pictures of different occupations or pictures that relate to work (ex. hammer for a carpenter) taped to the floor in a circle. Use pictures that relate to the working parent of these children if this information is available ahead of time. Children are asked if they know what Mom or Dad does, and are invited to find the picture that relates to their parent.

- Song - Lots of Work to Do (see appendix)
- Story - *The Daddy Book (Whose Hat is This , Daddies At Work)*
- Discussion - (Introduce yourself and the talking stick/mascot) Ask them to share their name, where their Dad or Mom work and what they do? Talk about the many different kinds of work Mommies and Daddies do and that sometimes they work close by and sometimes far away.
- Game - **Who am I?** Place hats or tools in a big bag. The children take turns pulling them out. The children have to guess who might use them or wear them. (Painter, carpenter, baker, doctor, dentist, mechanic, soldier, policeman, fireman, hair stylist, etc.)

**Activity Book** - Cover page (construction paper or cardstock) and the next two pages for the book. Have children mark an X on the map where their parent works (parents can assist) and then draw a picture of their parent/s at work. Keep pages to compile and distribute at last session.

**Craft** - Mailbox for Dad or Mom (see appendix). Parents will need to help with this craft.

**Snack**

## Session 2 - Going to Work

### Checklist

- Crayons, scissors, glue
- Camera - Take a picture of each child (shoulders up) to place on the top of the "Feelings Wheel" (craft for next session) or parents could bring in a current wallet size photo.
- First 11 pages of booklet-*Joey's Mom is Going Away*
- Talking stick or mascot
- CD player
- Positive Living Skills CD
- Activity page - pg. 6 of *Joey's Mom is Going Away*
- Flat Me* - photo copy on cardstock or construction paper, one for each child
- Flat Me* letter copies
- Pringles can for *Secret Letter Tube* (one for each child)
- Miscellaneous items to decorate the *Secret Letter Tube*
- Snack

Session 2  
**Going to Work**  
*Preparing for Separation*

**\*Focus**

When a parent works away for longer periods, children can feel the impact even before the parent leaves. This session will provide the child with an opportunity to express how they feel when a parent leaves for work, especially if it's for an extended period. It will also help them understand the many different things a parent has to do if they are going away.

**Welcome**

**Playtime** Take a picture of each child (shoulders up) for next week.

**Circle Time**

- Song - Lots of Work to Do
- Story - *Joey's Mom is Going Away* (up to page 11)
- Discussion - Some Daddies or Mommies have to go far away to work. Have you had someone you love go away for awhile? How did you feel? What will you miss the most? (use talking stick/mascot) Does it take awhile to get ready for a trip?
- Game - **What to Take on a Trip** The children would take turns saying what they would take if they were to go on a trip. (use the talking stick or mascot) Ask them to say: "If I were going on a trip I would take ....."
- Activity - *Cloud Push/Go Tight, Go Loose*

**Activity Book** - Pg. 6 of *Joey's Mom is Going Away*

**Craft** - "Flat Me" and Secret Letter Tube (see appendix)

**Snack**



## Session 3 - Feelings

### Checklist

- Crayons, scissors, glue
- CD player
- Positive Living Skills CD
- Joey's Mom is Going Away - pages 12-21*
- Talking stick or mascot
- Tree branch in a small container of rocks
- Cut out construction paper shapes to hang on the tree. You can hang them with string or pipe cleaners.
- Cardstock or construction paper
- Feelings Wheel page, copy on construction paper or cardstock for each child
- Paper fastener (small)
- Arrows - make from cardstock
- Access to laminator
- "I Miss You" page and "trace your hand" page (these can be copied double-sided to make a card)
- an envelope for each child for their card
- Copy of Birch bark cookie recipe
- Puppet and Feelings Wheel
- Puppet script - "The Feelings Wheel"
- Snack - Birch bark cookies

## Session 3

### Feelings

#### \*Focus

To explore the feelings children have when a parent is away and to help them understand that these feelings are normal. It will introduce them to the concept of worry and provide them with a safe, comfortable environment to discuss their feelings and have them validated.

#### Welcome

#### Playtime

#### Circle Time

- Activity - Spaghetti Toes, Jelly Belly
- Story - *Joey's Mom is Going Away* - pages 12-21
- Discussion - Go around the circle using the talking stick or mascot and give each child the opportunity to share with the others how they feel when their parent is away.

Who knows what the word **worry** means? Sometimes when we're worried it helps us feel better if we talk about it. Are there times when you feel worried? (Facilitator may share a time when she was worried) Have a "worry tree" and if time permits, write their worries on a card. Have them hang their worries on the tree. (Umbalikiki - see appendix)

- Song - If You're Happy and You Know It

**Game** - (similar to Simon Says): use mascot to lead the game, having the children act out a variety of different feelings. For example - "(Mascot's name) ...says show me an angry face", "... says show me a sad face", and so on.

**Puppet** - "Feelings Wheel" (see appendix)

**Activity Book** - pg. 17 of *Joey's Mom is Going Away*

**Craft Activity** - Feelings Wheel (see appendix)

"I Miss You" Card; Parents can help them trace their hand. Remind them they can put the card in Dad's mailbox.

**Snack**-Birch bark cookies (Have a copy of the recipe for them to take home)

## Session 4 - Feelings Cont'd

### Checklist

- Puppet (have the puppet tell the story)
- Draco's Story/ Draco's First Fire Starting Competition*
- Crayons
- CD player
- Positive Living Skills CD
- Talking stick or mascot
- Completed 'Feelings Wheels'
- Feelings Faces Remote Control (make one)
- Activity Page-My Remote Control
- Number 6 plastic containers (cut out pieces ahead of time)
- Sharpies (permanent markers)
- Scissors
- Foil
- Oven
- Smiley face cookies and frosting

Session 4  
Feelings continued...

**\*Focus**

To reinforce that feelings are normal, to provide opportunity for validation, and to introduce coping skills.

**Welcome**

**Playtime**

**Circle Time**

- Activity - *Jelly Belly* (or their favourite)
- Song - If You're Happy and You Know It (You can use the feelings wheel for this)
- Draco's Story - *Draco's First Fire Starting Competition*
- Discussion - Happy Times (talking stick or mascot) Last week we talked about being worried. Sometimes if we're feeling sad or worried, it helps to talk about it and then to think of happy times. Can you tell me something you did this week that made you feel happy or something you're thankful for?
- Game - Change the Channel / Tell children, when we're sad and think of something happy it's like changing the "channel." (*Place different "feelings" faces on a remote control and give each child opportunity to change each other's "channel"*)

**Activity Book** - Changing Channels page

**Craft** - Shrink Art Key Chain for Dad (see appendix) Children can draw a "happy time" or something they like to do with the away parent on their piece of plastic.

**Snack** - Smiley face cookies (have children put happy faces on their cookies) Give the children their "Feelings Wheel" to take home.

## Session 5 - Look at Me! (Changes)

### Checklist

- Book - *Big Sarah's Little Boots* by Paulette Bourgeois (or any book about growing)
- Song - "I am Growing"
- Talking Stick or mascot
- Puppet (Simon)
- Puppet Script - "Simon's Birthday"
- Assembled Milestones craft (see appendix)
- Page 8 from *Joey's Mom is Going Away*
- Page 29 from *Joey's Mom is Going Away* (This page is placed in the take home Activity book)
- Measuring tapes
- Weigh scales
- Crayons
- Scissors
- Markers
- Large pieces of newsprint, enough for each child to lay on and have their bodies traced (optional)
- Small amount of play dough for each child (enough for them to make several "stones")
- Baggies (for children to bring home their play dough "milestones" and flags)
- Straws
- Tape
- Snack

Session 5  
**Look at Me!**  
(Changes)

**\*Focus**

Families often experience change; changes in routine, feelings, physical appearance, etc. These seem more significant when a parent is away for an extended period of time. In this session the child will understand, as they grow they change (milestones) and because they're always changing, sometimes the away parent cannot be there to celebrate with them.

**Welcome**

**Playtime**

**Circle Time**

- Song - "I am Growing" (see appendix)
- Story - "Big Sarah's Little Boots"
- Discussion - What happened to Sarah in our story? Did her boots shrink? That's right, she grew! How big were you when you were born? Can you think of something you've learned to do since you were a baby? These things you learn to do are called milestones. Let's say that together...some milestones are big and some are small. (Have a small rock with an example of a small milestone...'brushing teeth', etc. and a larger one for a greater milestone such as walking.) Pass talking stick or mascot and ask, "Is there anything that you've **just** learned to do lately?"

**Game** - Using the milestones craft, have the children take turns choosing a flag and guessing the possible age they would have achieved that milestone. Insert each flag in a "milestone". (Play dough)

**Puppet Script** - "Simon's Birthday"

**Activity** - Ask parents to help measure and weigh the children. Record it in on page 8 of "*Joey's Mom is Going Away*". Collect the page for the take home Activity book.

**Craft** - Milestone Flags (see appendix)

(optional) Place newsprint on the floor and have parents trace their child's body. The children will draw their facial features and colour as they wish.

**Snack**

## Session 6 - Staying Connected

### Checklist

- Book - *The Invisible String*
- CD player
- Positive Living Skills CD*
- Talking stick or mascot
- Action Story - "Draco's Letter"
- Scissors
- Glue stick
- Crayons
- Foam hearts
- String
- Construction paper
- Small pictures of each of their family members (The child can draw a picture of each family member if pictures are not available)
- Snack

Session 6  
**Staying Connected**  
*(Communication)*

**\*Focus**

To strengthen the connection with the away parent and to provide an awareness of the many different methods of communication.

**Welcome**

**Playtime**

**Circle Time**

- Song - Skinamarinkydinkydo
- *Cloud Push/Go Tight, Go Loose/ Kid Cuddle*
- Story - *The Invisible String*
- Discussion: Last session we talked about the many different kinds of feelings we can have, especially when someone goes away. Sometimes it helps us feel better when we can *communicate* with them. Does anyone know what that word means? If someone you love is gone away, how could you talk to them or see them? (Pass mascot or talking stick and let children share with the others how they connect with the away parent.)

**Action Story** - "Draco's Letter" (see appendix)

**Activity Book** - Draw a picture of each family member and join them up with a line. (Representing the "invisible string")

**Craft** - Heart Mobile or Wall Hanging (see appendix)

**Snack**



## Session 7 - I Can Help

### Checklist

- CD player
- Positive Living Skills CD
- Talking stick or mascot
- Coupons page
- Cardstock or construction paper
- Crayons
- Glue
- Scissors
- Flower for Mom (optional)
- Snack (something easy for children to serve)

## Session 7

### I Can Help

#### \*Focus

To explore the many ways they can help at home and to show appreciation to the stay at home parent for taking care of them.

#### Welcome

#### Playtime

#### Circle Time

- Song - (ask the children to name things that Mom does at home, and while they sing, do the action) This is the Way We... *sweep the floor, etc.* , When We All Pull Together
- *Cloud Push/Kid Cuddle*
- Story - *Why Should I Help, Helping* (any book about helping)
- Discussion - (use talking stick or mascot) Does Mom have lots of things to do during the day? What does she do? Who likes to help? Tell us one thing you can do at home to help?

**Game** - Mother May I (see appendix)

**Activity Book** - (coupons) As a way of thanking the parent who stays at home for taking such good care of them, the children will complete two coupons to give to them. The coupons should name something specific like doing the dishes. (Not just being good for Mom) There is also a coupon for the parent who works away. Remind them they can put it in Dad's Mailbox if he is not presently home.

**Craft** - "Handful of Love" card for the stay at home parent. (see appendix)

**Snack** - Children are given the opportunity to serve the parent or caregiver. They could also be presented with the craft they have made and the coupon, as a token of their appreciation. (You could also buy a flower for them to give) 😊

## Session 8 - Coming Home!

### Checklist

(The materials are listed for both puzzle crafts)

- Joey's Mom is Going Away* - pages 26-34
- Activity book
- Talking stick or mascot
- Activity book pages
- 9** Foam blocks (approx. 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. x 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  in.) for each child. If you want to use a 5x7 picture you can use **12** blocks.
- Wide tape
- Family picture - 13 cm. x 13 cm. (if using 9 blocks)
- Utility knife
- 1 Foam sheet (approx. 5x7")
- Family picture (5x7")
- Glue
- Scissors
- Cake "I Love My Family"

## Session 8

### Coming Home!

#### **\*Focus**

To celebrate their family and the times they are together.

#### **Welcome**

#### **Playtime**

#### **Circle Time**

- Song - When We All Pull Together/ The Family in the Dell
- Kid Cuddle (sitting on floor)
- Story - *Joey's Mom is Going Away* Pg. 26-34
- Discussion - (talking stick/mascot) If Dad or Mom has been gone, how do you feel when they come home? What's your favourite thing to do as a family?

#### **Puppet - Simon's Dad is Coming Home**

**Activity Book** - pages 29, 30, 32, 35 and 36 of *Joey's Mom is Going Away*. They will take their Activity Book home today so children can finish the last pages at home if there isn't enough time.

**Craft** - Family Puzzle (see appendix)

**Snack** - Celebrate the close of the program with a cake,  
"I Love My Family"

## APPENDIX

### Songs

**Lots of Work to Do** (*tune - Mary Had a Little Lamb*)

Chorus

Daddies work everywhere, everywhere, everywhere.

Mommies work everywhere, there's lots of work to do.

1. Some can drive a great big truck, hammer nails, stir a stew. (do actions)

Some can cut your hair real fine and catch a fish or two.

Chorus

2. Some can paint a wall deep blue, fly a plane, fix your tooth.

Some can make potatoes grow and drive a tractor too.

Chorus

3. They still have time to read a book, look for frogs, sing silly songs

Tuck me in to bed at night and give me hugs real tight.

### **If You're Happy and You Know It**

If you're *happy* and you know it *clap your hands*.

If you're *happy* and you know it *clap your hands*.

If you're *happy* and you know it and you really want to show it,

If you're *happy* and you know it *clap your hands*.

Replace italics with mad-stomp feet, grumpy-cross arms, sad-cry boohoo, excited-jump up high, scared-cover your eyes, proud-smile... or anything you can think of. 😊

### **Family In The Dell**

The family in the dell

The family in the dell

Heigh-ho the derry-oh

The family in the dell

Additional verses: the father claps his hands; the mother stomps her feet;

the brother nods his head; the sister taps her toes ; the grandpa wiggles his hips;

the grandma twirls around

## **I Gotta Shake My Sillies Out** *by Raffi*

I've gotta shake, shake, shake my sillies out,  
Shake, shake, shake my sillies out,  
Shake, shake, shake my sillies out,  
And wiggle my (worries) waggles away! *Substitute worries for waggles.*

I've gotta clap, clap, clap my crazies out,  
Clap, clap, clap my crazies out,  
Clap, clap, clap my crazies out,  
And wiggle my worries away!

I've gotta jump, jump, jump my jiggles out,  
Jump, jump, jump my jiggles out,  
Jump, jump, jump my jiggles out,  
And wiggle my worries away!

I've gotta stretch, stretch, stretch my sleepies out,  
Stretch, stretch, stretch my sleepies out,  
Stretch, stretch, stretch my sleepies out,  
And wiggle my worries away!

I've gotta shake, shake, shake my sillies out,  
Shake, shake, shake my sillies out,  
Shake, shake, shake my sillies out,  
And wiggle my worries away,  
And wiggle my worries away!

**I am Growing** (tune- Are You Sleeping?)

I am growing, I am growing, (*kneel to the floor and slowly come up*)

Look at me, look at me,

I can jump up high now, (*jump*)

Almost touch the sky now, (*jump*)

Jump with me, jump with me. (*jump*)

I am growing, I am growing,

Look at me, look at me,

I can hop on one foot, I can hop on one foot, (*hop*)

Hop with me, hop with me.

I am growing, I am growing,

Look at me, look at me,

I can spin around now, (*spin*)

Spin and touch the ground now, (*spin and touch the floor*)

Spin with me, spin with me.

**When We All Pull Together** (tune - Have You Ever Seen a Lassie)

(*Children get in pairs, join hands and gently pull back and forth*)

When we all pull together, together, together

When we all pull together, (*clap*) how happy we'll be.

For your work is my work, and my work is your work, (*children point to each other*)

(*Join hands again*) When we all pull together, how happy we'll be. (*clap*)

## **Skinnamarink**

Skinnamarink e-dink e-dink

Skinnamarink e-doo

I love you.

Skinnamarink e-dink e-dink

Skinnamarink e-doo

I love you.

I love you in the morning

and in the afternoon.

I love you in the evening

underneath the moon.

Skinnamarink e-dink e-dink

Skinnamarink e-doo

I love you.

I love you in the morning

and in the afternoon.

I love you in the evening

underneath the moon.

Oh, Skinnamarink e-dink e-dink

Skinnamarink e-doo

I love you.

I do.



## Game - Mother May I

This game is a simple childhood action game that might be good for reinforcing the use of manners. One person is chosen as the "mother" (or "Father"). She or he stands facing away from a line of kids and selects a child at random, or in order. The mother/father calls out a direction, step type, and number of steps. For example, the mother/father can say: "Scott, you may take seven (or any other number) baby/normal/giant steps forward/backward." The child then responds with "Mother may I?" (Or "Father" may I?"). The mother/father states "Yes" or "No", depending on her whim, and the child obeys and takes the steps. If the child forgets to ask "Mother may I?" then he/she goes back to the beginning of the line. The first one to touch the Mother/Father wins and becomes the new Mother/Father.

There are other kinds of steps possible for this game - be creative and come up with your own. For example, there are:

- Bunny hops: hopping like a bunny.
- Frog hops: going down on all fours and hopping up like a frog.
- Scissors steps: jump while crossing your feet, then jump while uncrossing them was one step.
- Skip steps: steps as though one is skipping.
- Banana step: the child lies down with his or her feet at current spot, noting where the top of his or her head is, and standing up there for the new spot.

## Craft Activities

### Session 1 - Mailbox with Movable Flag

#### Crafts Materials Needed -

An empty Premium cracker box or a 10 pk. - tetra juice box (or any box the size of a mailbox), scissors, cardstock, foam sheets, construction paper, glue, paper fastener, Velcro stick-on fastener.



Cut **top** flaps off the opened end of the box. Using glue, cover the box with construction paper.

If making the rounded mailbox, glue a piece of cardstock (cut to fit) to the top of both sides of the mailbox. (Construction paper may not be firm enough)

Lay the mailbox (on end) on a foam sheet, trace the outline and cut to fit. Repeat for the front, remembering to cut the front, a little longer (for the square box) or leave a tab on the rounded part, to attach a fastener. Glue one to the back and the remaining piece to the flaps on the front, for the door of the mailbox.

Make the arm of the flag by gluing foam to cardstock or thin cardboard. Make the flag from construction paper and glue to the arm. Attach with a paper fastener.

For a latch, use a Velcro stick-on fastener.

### Session 2 - Secret Letter Tube

Have the children cover and decorate an empty Pringles can. They can put a picture, letter or treat for Dad in it and he can take the tube with him when he goes away. For this session the children will make a "flat me" to put in the tube.

### Session 3 - Feelings Wheel

Provide each child with a feelings wheel (copied on cardstock). Have children colour or decorate it, cut them out, and glue their picture to the top of the wheel. Collect and laminate, wheel and **arrow** and assemble before next session.

### Session 4 - Shrink Art Key Chain

In order to do this project, you'll have to find some **number 6 plastic containers**. Look on the bottom of the container for the recycle sign; it will have the number 6 inside of it. Grocery stores often use number 6 plastic boxes at their salad bars, or for their baked goods. I suggest asking for a few free ones. Try to choose containers that do not have stickers on them. The glue is very hard to remove and if not removed, the finished pieces may be sticky from the residual glue.

You'll also need coloured Sharpies (permanent markers), scissors, and foil.



### Instructions:

1. Cut the plastic containers to create rectangles that are about 3 x 4 inches. (Or whatever shape you want) The plastic will shrink to about 30%-40% its original size, so keep that in mind when you cut.
2. The child can draw whatever they want with permanent markers. (maybe a happy time with the away parent)
3. Punch a hole in each piece with a hole puncher so you can attach a key ring later.
4. **Arrange the plastic pictures on a sheet of foil** and put in a preheated, **350 degree oven** (177 Celsius). Be sure to put the foil directly on the oven rack, with the rack at the bottom of the oven.  
The shrinking is very quick, total time for a large, 5"to 6" piece would be about 3 1/2 minutes. If it's 3 to 4" or smaller, it will be done in about two minutes.  
First the pieces move and curl up. Then they get smaller and smaller and eventually flatten out again. Children are amazed at this so if you have an oven with a window that would be great.
5. **When you remove them they are still soft for a very short period (10-15 seconds)** if you want to bend them or shape them somehow. But be careful, they are

hot. They quickly cool and become hard. You'll notice that they are thicker too, about the thickness of a coin. If there are any rough edges you can sand them.

### **Session 5 - Milestone Flags**

Have each child colour their flags on the activity page and cut them out. Some have been suggested but if the parent would like to help the child come up with more, they can. Tape their flags to the top of the straws. Each child will have a small amount of play dough to make their "stones" (milestones). They can put each flag in a "stone". Flags and stones can be placed in a baggie to take home.

### **Session 6 - Heart Mobile or Wall Hanging**

Glue pictures of each family member to foam hearts. This can be done on both sides if they want to bring in two sets of pictures. Punch holes in top and bottom and attach to pieces of string. Make a loop at the top so the child can hang it in their room at home or they could give it to the away parent.



### **Session 7 - "Handful of Love" Card**

Fold a piece of skin coloured construction paper in half. Place your hand on the folded paper with edge of your palm (near the pinkie) lining up with the fold. Trace around your hand except for edge on the fold. Remove your hand and cut out. Open up. Cut hearts out of construction paper. Paste on palm. Write message "A Handful of Love" on the card and sign.

## Session 8 - Family Puzzle (2 options)

**Foam Block Puzzle** - Ask parents to email a family picture or bring one in that is 5x7. You will need 9 foam blocks (approximately 4.5 cm square) for puzzle. Tape blocks across the back. Turn them over and put glue (good glue stick) on the top of blocks. Place picture on glue and let dry. Facilitator will take them in and cut them. Once it's dry turn them over, remove tape and cut with a utility knife. Give puzzles to children next session.

**Foam Sheet Puzzle**- This craft can also be done on a foam sheet. Children can then cut their own puzzle by drawing simple shapes on the back and cutting them out with scissors. If the children are young, straight line shapes would be the easiest.



## Positive Living Skills

**Cloud Push** (to stretch out tight muscles) - Have the children practice stretching up and pushing clouds away. "Stand tall. Place your hands on your hips. Bring one arm way up over your head and stretch it straight up. Try and reach a cloud and push it away. Push, push, push! Now let your arm fall slowly to your side. Bring the other arm up and push the cloud. Push, push, push! Now let your arm fall slowly to your side. Lift both arms up. Clasp hands together; turn the palms up and push and bounce the cloud. Slowly, slowly, let your arms float gently back to your sides." (*Taken from Kids Have Stress Too!*)

**Spaghetti Toes** (all ages) - A relaxation exercise that uses the concept of cooked and uncooked spaghetti to teach the difference between tension and relaxation. Children learn to relax different parts of their bodies. Exercise is on the Positive Living Skills CD.

**Kid Cuddle** - "Standing or sitting, stretch arms out wide, wide, wide. Slowly bring arms forward, cross in front. Each hand holds on to the opposite shoulder. Squeeze, rock, and cuddle the kid in your arms." (*Taken from Kids Have Stress Too!*)

**Go Tight - Go Loose:** "Stand at attention, hands along sides, fingers pointing down. Make a fist with each hand, squeeze each hand tight. Squeeze...Squeeze...Squeeze...Relax. Now, while you squeeze your fists again, tighten your arms to squeeze your body, Squeeze...Squeeze...Squeeze...Relax. Now, this time, also squeeze your legs together while making a fist and squeezing your arms together, Squeeze...Squeeze...Squeeze...Relax. Repeat. Shake out your hands, arms and legs. Enjoy the sense of relaxation." (*Taken from Kids Have Stress Too!*)

**Jelly Belly** (all ages) - A relaxation exercise that teaches children to relax by controlling their own breathing. This is a simple form of diaphragm or abdominal breathing. On Positive Living Skills CD. After completing the exercise, ask the children when they think they could use deep breathing to help them.

**Changing Channels** Using a remote control play a game with the children changing their channels. For example, "You are now on the happy channel, I am changing you

to the scared channel", and so on. Allow the children to take the remote control and be the leader. Ask the children what channel they like to be on the most.

**Umbalikiki** (all ages) - Umbalikiki is an exercise that teaches children to put aside their worries or negative feelings by "treeing them" or "parking them". (See Positive Living Skills CD)

## Draco's First Fire Starting Competition

I remember the first time my Dad had to go away for his job. He went far away and was gone for 3 months. I was so sad that he was gone, and I missed him very much. We didn't have a computer, and he wasn't able to call on the telephone very often. He was going to miss my very first 'Fire Starting Competition' at school. I cried all day and all night. I could not stop feeling sad. I was so afraid that I wouldn't be able to stop crying and that if I was able to start a fire my tears would put it out.

My friends were always trying to cheer me up. They would tell me, "Try to be happy" or "Don't be sad". They told me to "Think about something else". I tried really hard to but it just didn't work. I decided to talk to my Mom and tell her how I felt. I asked her what I could do to feel happy again. My Mom said, "I know just how you feel. I'm very sad too. I miss your Dad when he's not here." I asked my Mom, "What can I do to stop feeling sad?"

Mom told me that it is normal to feel sad and to be upset when Dad goes away. She told me I could talk to her about my feelings anytime I wanted to. She said that talking about things can help you feel better, especially when it's with a family member or friend who loves you and really understands. I felt better talking to my Mom. I also felt better knowing that it was okay to be sad and that many dragons feel that way when one of their parents go away. Mom told me to think of all the happy things in my life, and to remember that Dad would want me to be happy. He would want me to go to my 'Fire Starting Competition' and do the best job I can. My Mom said she would take pictures to show Dad when he got home.

Can you think of other things that would help me to feel happier when I am feeling sad, scared, or lonely?



## Draco's Letter

*This is an "action story". Have the children join the story by doing the actions when they hear these words; **letter** - pretend to write a letter, **phone** - talk on the phone, **happy** - big grin, **sad** - sad face. It would be a good idea to practise these before the story begins.*

Draco had a sad face. His Mom asked, "Why are you sad Draco?" "Dad's been gone a long time and I just want to talk to him. Can I phone him Mom? That would make me happy."

"I know it would Draco, but it's not the right time to phone." Draco felt sad again. Mom said, "I have an idea, why don't we write him a letter? Later, we can call him on the phone."

Draco looked happy. "I know! You write the letter, and I'll draw him a picture of me playing hockey!" So Mom and Draco made a letter for Dad. They put the letter in an envelope and put a stamp on it. They took the letter and went to mail it. Draco didn't feel sad anymore.

Later, the phone rang. It was Dad and he wanted to talk to Draco on the phone. Draco told him all about the letter. He was so happy to talk to Dad on the phone.

## **Puppet Script - The Feelings Wheel**

**Facilitator:** Hi there Simon? What are you looking at?

**Simon:** Oh...this is my Feelings Wheel

**Facilitator:** A Feelings Wheel?? What is that for?

**Simon:** Well... (Calling facilitator by name) people have a lot of feelings inside of them like sad, happy, angry, worried and excited. When I went to daycare last week we made this Feelings Wheel so we could put it on our bedroom door.

**Facilitator:** How do you use it?

**Simon:** When I'm feeling sad, I point the arrow to the sad face and then everyone in my family knows I'm feeling sad.

**Facilitator:** Well...your arrow is pointing to the confused face right now. Does that mean you're feeling confused?

**Simon:** Yeah...cause I don't know what I'm feeling right now. When I think of my Dad so far away, I feel angry that he's gone, I feel proud that he works hard for his family and then, when he's gone, we go to MacDonald's a lot and that makes me happy, but I feel guilty 'cause he's not here to share in the fun. At night when I go bed, I feel sad because I miss him so much.

**Facilitator:** Wow!! How can you have all those feelings at the same time? Your feelings sure are mixed up.

**Simon:** I remember the lady at the daycare telling us it's okay to have lots of feelings especially when someone we love is gone away. She said it was important to let someone know how we feel and that's why we made this Feelings Wheel.

**Facilitator:** Ohhh... Well you know what I do when I'm feeling sad or lonely?

**Simon:** No...What do you do?

**Facilitator:** I start telling jokes. Yup...my jokes make everyone laugh. So whenever you're feeling sad, just come see me and I will tell you a joke!

**Simon:** Oh I would definitely come and see you if I needed to be cheered up.

**Facilitator:** Hey listen to this one. Where do snowmen keep their money?

**Simon:** I don't know.

**Facilitator:** In a snow bank of course!

**Simon:** Oh I feel better already. I think you should change my wheel to happy. Gotta go...

*The puppet play can be done with 2 puppets or a facilitator and a puppet.*

## **Puppet Script - Simon's Birthday**

**Facilitator** - Hi Simon, how are you? Oh... I see you have your "feelings wheel" with you again.

**Simon** - Yup. (*Simon has his head down*)

**Facilitator** - How are you feeling today? (*looking at the wheel*) I see it's on the sad face. I'm sorry that you're feeling sad Simon. Would you like to talk about it? Sometimes it helps to talk about it.

**Simon** - Well you know I told you my Dad goes away to work...

**Facilitator** - Yes I remember.

**Simon** - He works way up close to the North Pole in a place called Eureka...He left last week and he's gonna be gone for 4 months or maybe longer.

**Facilitator** - Yes, that's a long time Simon.

**Simon** - That's not all... He's gonna miss my birthday party. I'm gonna be four years old and he won't be home and I have to play my first hockey game while he's away and he's gonna miss that too!

**Facilitator** - Oh Simon that must make your Dad sad too, hey?

**Simon** - Yeah, I guess so.

**Facilitator** - Why don't you get your Mom to video tape your birthday party **and** your hockey game?

**Simon** - Oh yeah! (*cheering up*) We already talked about that and he said he would call me on my birthday and when he gets home we're gonna watch the video together!

**Facilitator** - That sounds like fun Simon.

**Simon** - (*speaking slowly and more serious*) I have a question for you... I'm growing really fast these days, do you suppose I'll change so much while Dad is gone, he won't know me?

**Facilitator** - Well, do you think you'll ever, not know your Dad?

**Simon** - (*thinking*) Hmm...He did grow a beard once but I still knew him.

**Facilitator** - Yes Simon, and I think he'll **always** know **you**... Hey want to hear one of my jokes?

**Simon** - Sure!

**Facilitator** - What weighs 5000 lbs. and wears glass slippers?

**Simon** - What?

**Facilitator** - Cinderelephant!!

**Simon** - (*laughing*) That's a good one. I gotta go tell that one to Mom. See ya later....

*You may use your own jokes if you like. ☺*