

Art Activity: Storytelling “That Day”

Time: 10 - 15 min

Suggested Age: 8 +

Materials:

- Paper
- Markers
- Colored pencils

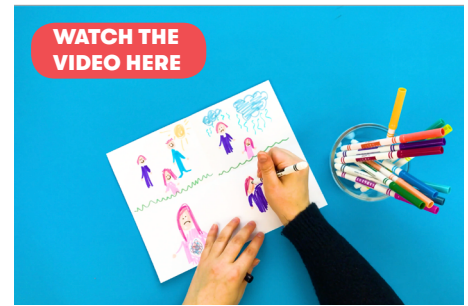
Prep: Gather markers and paper in front of you

Therapeutic Goals:

- Release of helplessness
- Document important moments
- Acknowledge loss
- Encourage storytelling

SEL Skill Development:

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Management
- Social Awareness



How to explain activity to a kid:

Sometimes things change slowly, over time. Sometimes everything changes, all at once. Some people want to forget a day that changed everything. Other people think about it in small bits and pieces, because putting it all together may feel too hard. Others can't stop thinking about it. We all have different ways of responding to big changes in our lives.

It can be helpful to tell the story of a day that made things different. Days are like stories; they have beginnings, middles, and ends. We have lots of feelings throughout a single day, especially when something has changed in a big way. When we get our thoughts and feelings on paper, or share them with others, we can feel less confused and alone.

Create:

1. Divide the paper up into 4 boxes like a comic strip
2. Think of a day that was hard or one where where a big change was felt
3. Use the boxes to write the story of that day. Think of the beginning, middle, and end
4. Or, use the boxes to draw feelings felt on the day that was hard. If kids are having a hard time getting started, think about questions like this: *What was the weather like that day? What colors do you remember seeing? Were you alone or with other people?*

Adaptation:

Instead of writing a story, kids can tell it. Talk with someone who is trusted about the day that things changed.

Guiding questions to encourage sharing and reflection:

- How does your body feel now that you've had a chance to let it out?
- Are there people in your life who tell this story differently than you? How is it different?
- How have your feelings changed since that day? How have they stayed the same?
- How do you continue to comfort yourself and others?

Adaptations of guiding questions for mental health practitioners:

- Do you have questions about the day that changed your life? Who could you ask? What can you do if that person doesn't want to talk about it?
- What happened that day might not have been the only loss you've had. Are there other losses you're dealing with?
- How did you hear about the event/accident/death? Was there a different way you wish you had heard about it?
- Would you like to tell me about the person you miss?

Continued support:

In a blank notebook, guide kids to use 10 minutes to write down as many memories as they can think of about the person they miss. Suggest inviting others to join, if helpful, to add stories to the pages whenever they want to.

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