

HELP FOR KIDS!

**Understanding Your Feelings About Having
A Parent in Prison or Jail**

For Kids Ages Six and Older

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with consultation from **Michele Kopfmann**

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Dedication

To the children of the women at the Minnesota Correctional Facility, Shakopee, Minnesota,

This book is also dedicated to D. Jacqueline Fleming, a retired superintendent of the Minnesota Correctional Facility in Shakopee, for her recognition of the importance of maintaining and strengthening family ties while incarcerated.

Acknowledgments

We acknowledge the friends and colleagues who have generously given advice, inspiration and encouragement.

D. Jacqueline Fleming, Connie Roehrich, Mary Scully-Whitaker, Shelby Richardson, Jo Ellen Buzinec, Judy Bolitho, Peggy Beck, Violet, Chris, Lisa, Gail, Beth, Sandy Keiser, Mary Paananen, Nat Houtz, Laurie Perchaluk, Jean Illsley Clarke, Christine Ternand, M.D., Patty Gardner, Kay Joppru, Diane Forbes, Lisa Schmoker, Joy A, Faires and Rodney Verdine,

Thanks to the women at the Minnesota Correctional Facility in Shakopee for sharing their own experiences and their knowledge of the impact of incarceration on families. And a special thank you to Violet, who pushed us to finish this book as quickly as possible for her own children to use,

A special thanks to our families: Andrew, Tiffany, Paul, Ann, Charlie and Thomas Gesme, and Dennis, Peter and Sarah Kopfmann.

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today's date

Dear _____,
write your name here

This workbook is designed to help you. It is your very own! You can answer the questions by writing words, drawing pictures or talking to someone. A few of you readers will go straight through this book and do every page, or you can choose which page to do at any time. You may want to do some pages many times.

The first part of this workbook is designed to help YOU:

- Learn that your feelings are important.
- Think about your feelings.
- Decide what to do about your feelings.

The second part of this workbook has some activities that you can do to help you deal with your feelings and to have fun.

Remember that there are no right or wrong ways of feeling.

When you keep scared, angry, sad, ashamed or mixed-up feelings inside your body, those feelings can cause an illness such as a stomachache or a headache or bad dreams. They may even lead to fighting and hurting other people. It is important to learn how to let your feelings out so that this does not happen.

You can keep this book as a diary to show how your feelings change. Add as many pages as you need to.

REMEMBER — YOU ARE SPECIAL.

YOUR FEELINGS ARE IMPORTANT.

ALL OF YOUR FEELINGS ARE OKAY.

THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR WRONG FEELINGS.

THERE ARE MANY HELPFUL WAYS TO DEAL WITH YOUR FEELINGS.

YOU CAN THINK AND FEEL AT THE SAME TIME.

You are unique, and the thoughts and feelings that you express in this book will be unique to you.

**YOU CAN'T CHANGE THE FACT THAT
YOUR PARENT IS IN PRISON.
YOU CAN LEARN TO COPE WITH THIS
SITUATION AND YOUR LIFE.
YOU ARE RESOURCEFUL.**

Dear Adults,

We have designed this workbook to help children deal with their feelings about having a parent in prison or jail. (It can also be used for any family member or loved one. Just change the word parent to sister, brother, etc. . .) Because you are an adult and have a greater understanding of what is happening, children will need to rely on you for information and support; but remember that it is okay to say, "I don't know."

This workbook talks about some of the issues that kids have to deal with when they are separated from a parent by incarceration. Many kids are angry; some are also sad, depressed, scared and ashamed. The purpose of this workbook is to help them identify their feelings and give them information on how to deal with those feelings. It's important for you to understand that your child, or the child that you are caring for, may be experiencing a variety of feelings.

When a parent goes to prison or jail, it is hard on the whole family. For children, questions pile up during the whole process. Three immediate questions that need to be answered when facing this crisis are: Will I be okay? Will my parent be okay? and How will this affect my daily life?

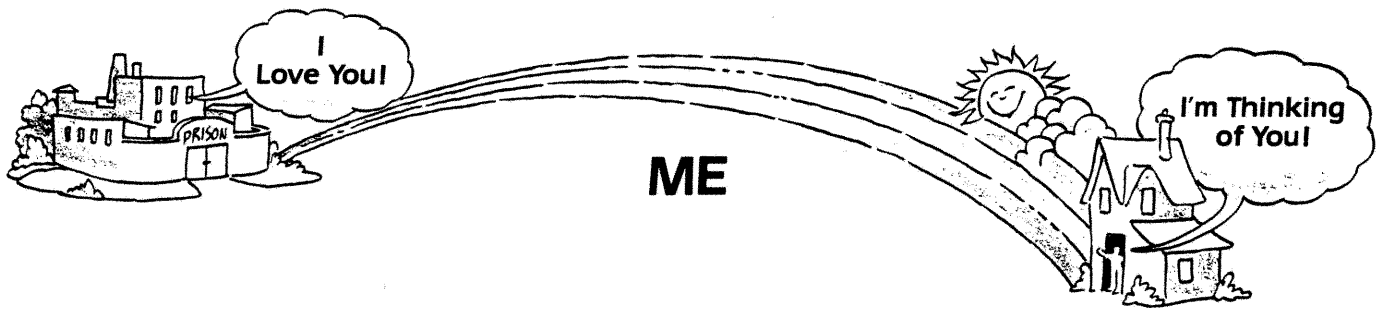
Answer children's questions if you can. Listen to children and reassure them; let them know that you are there to help them face this difficult time and that you care about how they feel. Let your children know that all of their feelings are okay. The pages in this workbook can help you to have honest and open discussions on feelings. Talking about your feelings and their feelings is a good way to express one's self and to relieve tension and anxiety.

Be aware of the effects that T.V. has on children's views of prison and what goes on there. Children watch T.V. differently than adults do. Adults watch T.V. for entertainment, but children watch T.V. to gather information about the world. T.V. provides children with a lot of false information about crime, prisons and violence. Thus, as an adult it is your job to help children figure out what is real and what is pretend. Watch T.V. with them and discuss these things.

Many agencies offer help for kids with problems or kids who are worried about what's going on in their lives. Possible resources may be your child's school or your place of worship. You can ask the staff at the prison or jail for other resources in the community that help families with incarcerated members.

Remember, children overhear adults talking and become confused when they do not understand the whole story. We do not protect children by not talking to them and pretending that nothing is happening. Help your child, or the child that you are caring for, deal with and understand what is happening to him or her. Also, choose which pages in this workbook may be inappropriate for your child because of his or her age — suggest that they skip those.

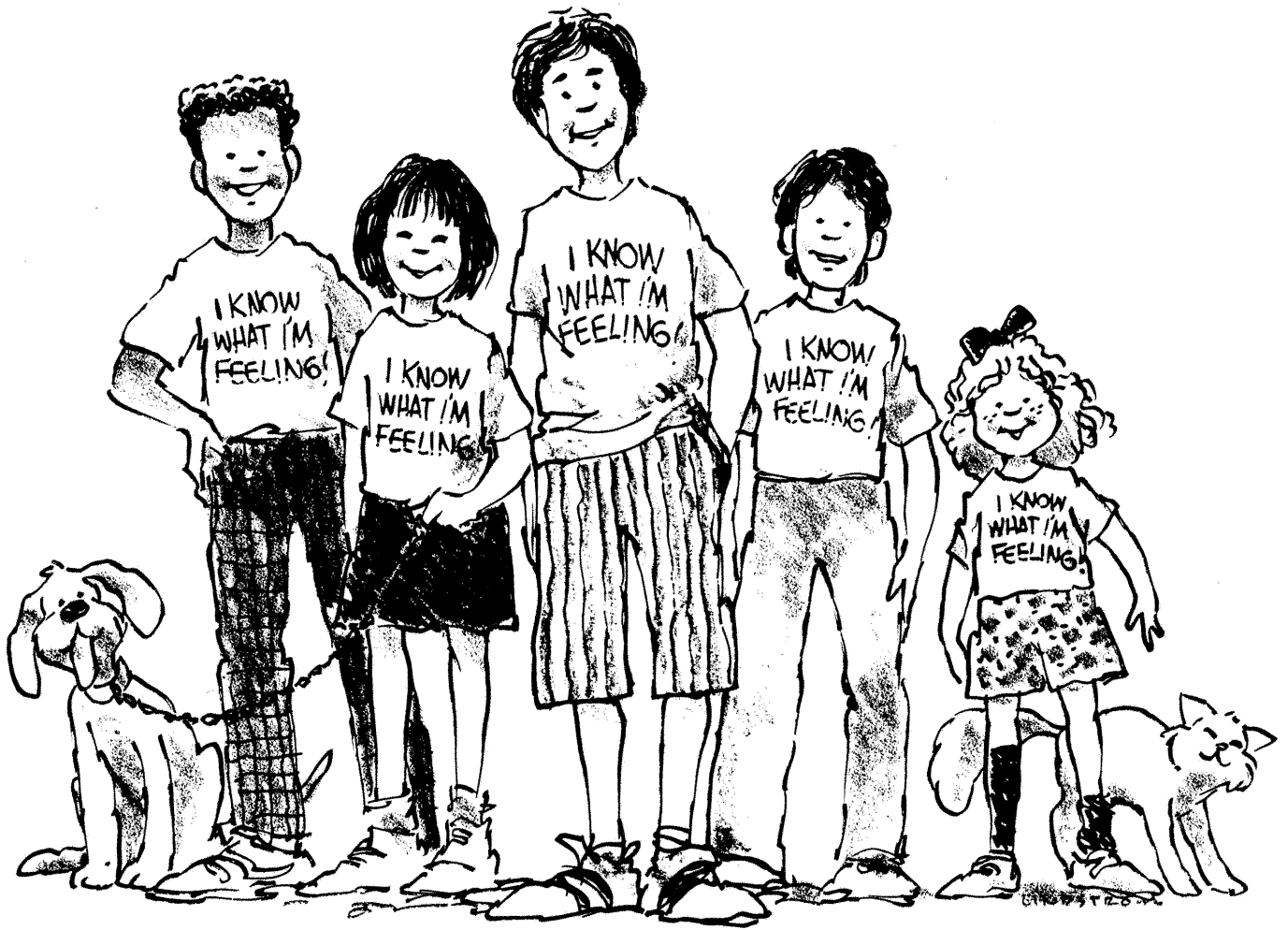
This workbook may be written for the kids, but you as the parent, or the adult caring for these kids, play an important part in helping them recognize and deal with their feelings.



My name _____

Age _____

Where I live _____



Some things I like about myself _____

Some things I'm good at doing _____



MY FAMILY

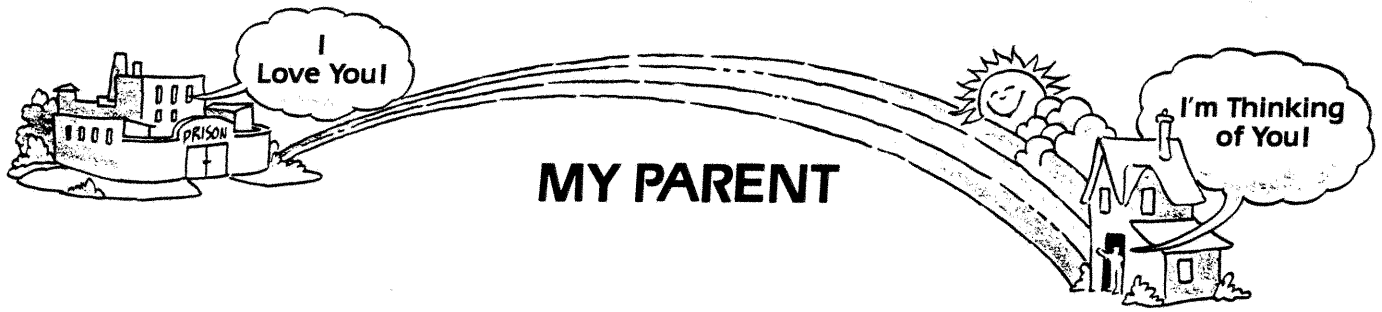
Every family is special and unique. No two families are alike. Your family is different now because a parent is in prison or jail. Family members do not always live in the same household. Families come in different sizes and ages, and they live in all kinds of places. Families are made up of different people. Some families have mothers, fathers, stepparents, grandparents, sisters, brothers, stepsisters, stepbrothers, a blood brother, a foster parent, an adopted brother, an aunt or many other kinds of people. A family can be you and the people who live with you and take care of you.

Draw your family.
(If you want more space, use a separate piece of paper.)

Write things that your family likes to do together.
(If you want more space, use a separate piece of paper.)

Write something nice about each family member.
(If you want more space, use a separate piece of paper.)

YOU BELONG IN THIS FAMILY

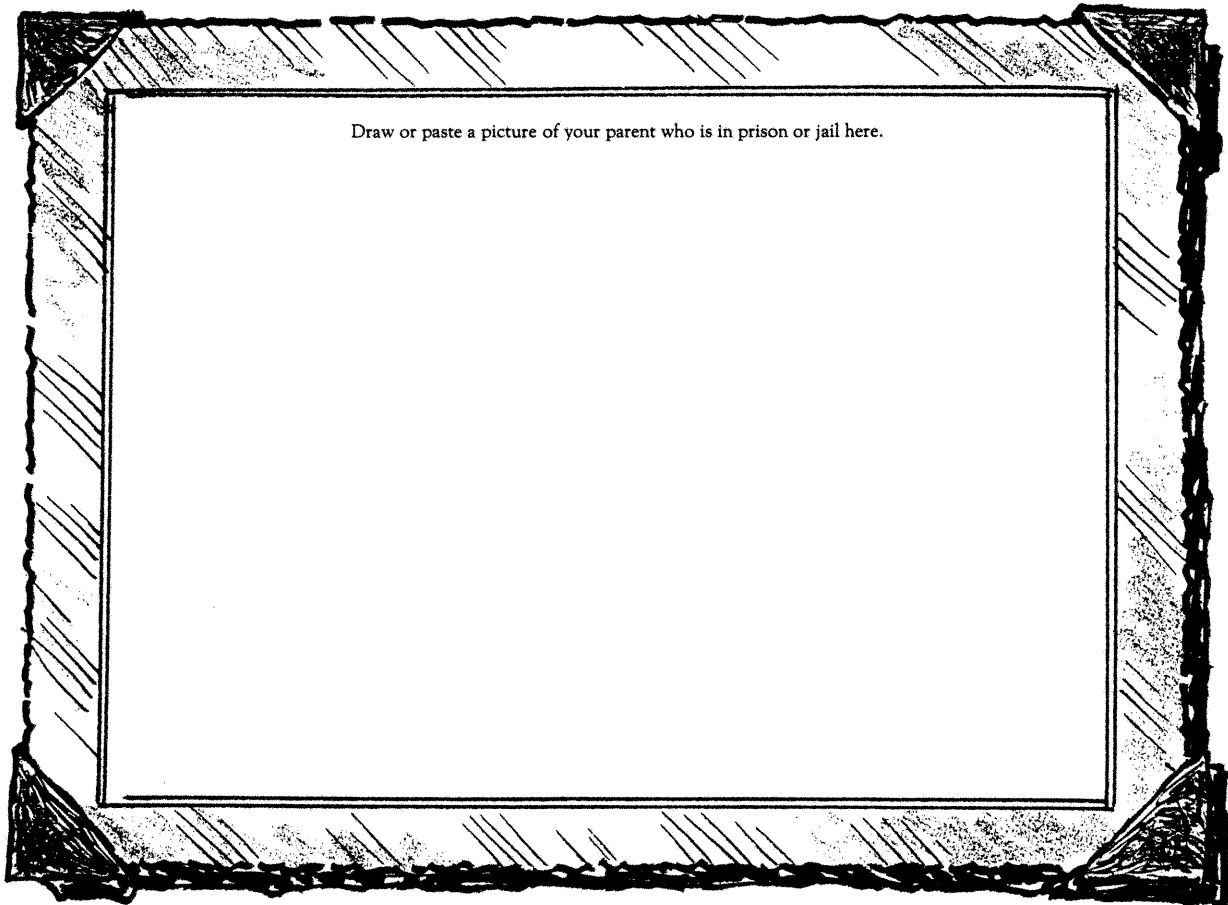


MY PARENT

Someone in my family is not living with me today because he or she is in prison or jail.

Who is that person? _____

Where is that person? _____



All families have problems. They may be different than having a parent in prison or jail, yet each family has them. Sometimes we feel like our family is the only one with problems. Your family can learn to handle problems in a healthy way, make changes and become closer to each other even when someone is away. Remember, sometimes good people do bad things. Also, it is important to remember that your parent did something wrong — NOT YOU. Just because your parent made a mistake and must go to prison or jail does not mean that he or she is a bad person. Do not blame yourself for your parent's actions. You are a lovable person. Most importantly, your parent still loves you.



LIFE TODAY

Write, draw or tell what is different in your life since your parent went to prison.

Is there an adult I can talk to about this? Who? _____

Do I have a friend I can talk to about this? Who? _____

What is different in your home? _____

What is different in your school? _____

What is different in your place of worship? _____

What is different in your group of friends? _____



WHERE I LIVE NOW

Who is taking care of me now? _____

What do I call these people? _____

Where do I live now? _____

Where are the rest of my family members (brothers, sisters)? _____

How long will I be here? _____

Who will keep me safe? _____

How do I feel about all of this? _____

Circle the faces or words that show how you feel or draw your own face in the middle.



- | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| 


 | <p>MIXED-UP
SICK
MAD
SAD
GLAD
SCARED
HURT
LUCKY
JOYFUL
NEEDED
JEALOUS
SURPRISED
SPECIAL
STUPID
BRAVE
HELPLESS
SMART
GUILTY
DEPRESSED
CONFIDENT</p> | <p>REJECTED
FREE
DISGUSTED
UNWANTED
TRUSTED
ALONE
HAPPY
DIRTY
WORRIED
FRIGHTENED
LET DOWN
ALIVE
ANGRY
EXCITED
CAPABLE
LOVABLE
ASHAMED
EMBARRASSED
CAREFREE
HORRIFIED
STRESSED</p> | 


 |
|--|--|---|--|





Your New Home

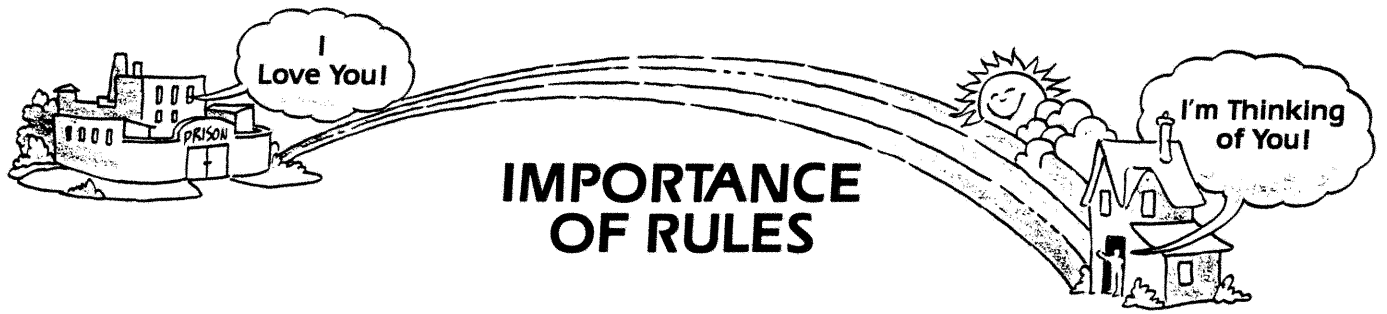
Webster's Dictionary defines "house" as a structure for humans to live in, and it defines "home" as the lasting place of affections. The actual walls of your house do not make it a home; it is the people inside and their feelings for one another that make a house a home.

It is okay for you to give and accept love from the people that you live with now, and it is okay for you to give and accept love from your parent who is in prison.

Your New Family Can Start Making Your House a Home By:

- **Laughter.** Laugh with your family and friends — laughing is not only fun, but it's good for you, too.
- **Affection.** Tell your other family members how you feel about them. (Ex. "I enjoy spending time with you.")
- **Mutual Respect.** Treat the members of your family with the respect and love that you would like them to treat you with.
- **Be Helpful.** Think of ways that you can help other family members.
- **Music.** Play or sing your favorite songs.
- **Bake.** Bake cookies or brownies. Sit down and eat them together.
- **Play games together.** (See People Permission Feel-O on page 43.)
- **Talking.** Share your feelings with each other.





IMPORTANCE OF RULES

We all need guidelines as to what we can and cannot do. We need clear and consistent rules in our lives. It is up to you whether you want to follow the rules or want to accept the consequences. However, if you decide to break the rules, be prepared to deal with the consequences (Ex. being grounded).

What rules do you already have in your life? Write down the most important ones.

Why do you think that these rules are important? _____

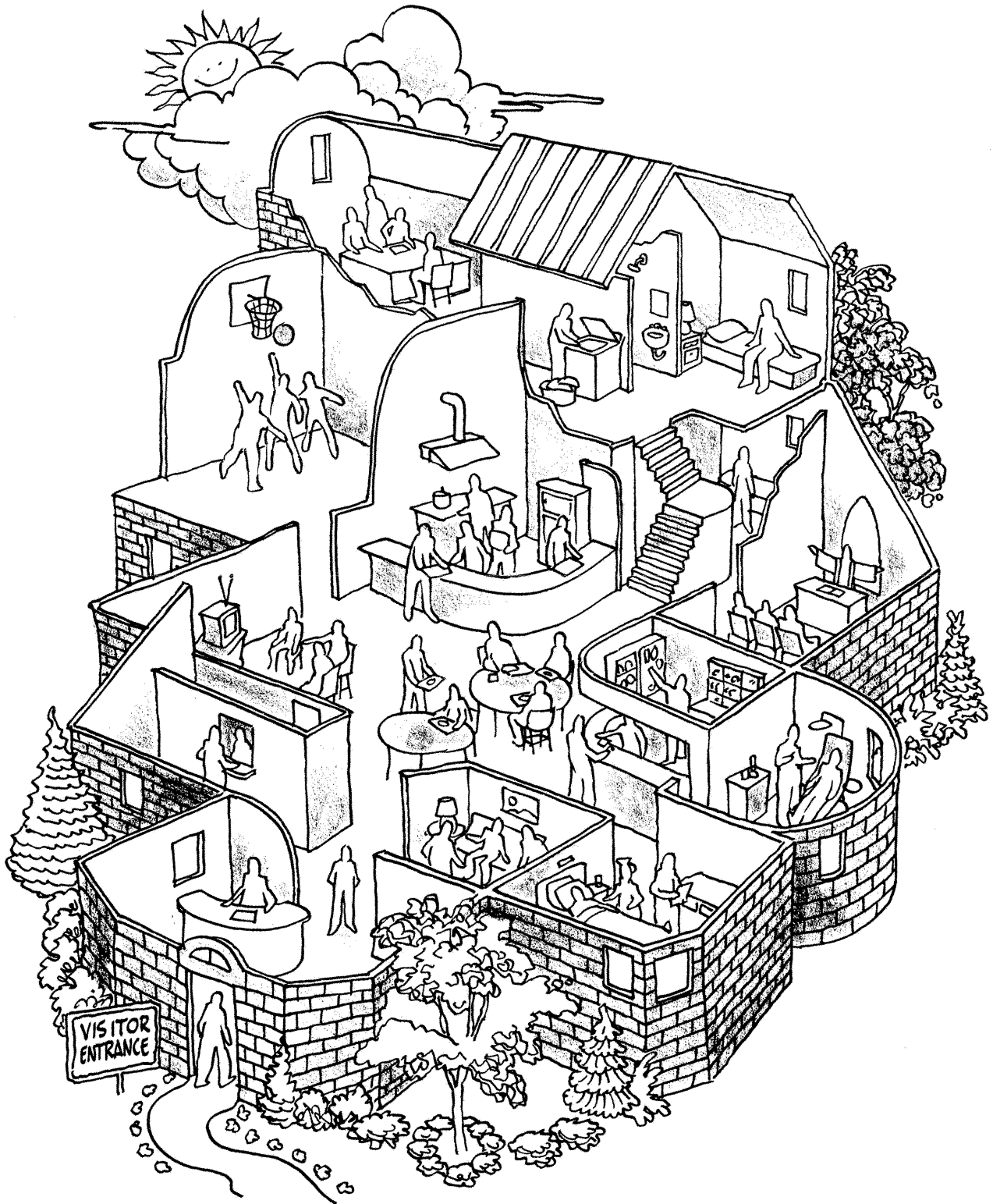
What do you think should happen when rules are broken? _____

What happens to you when you break a rule at home? _____

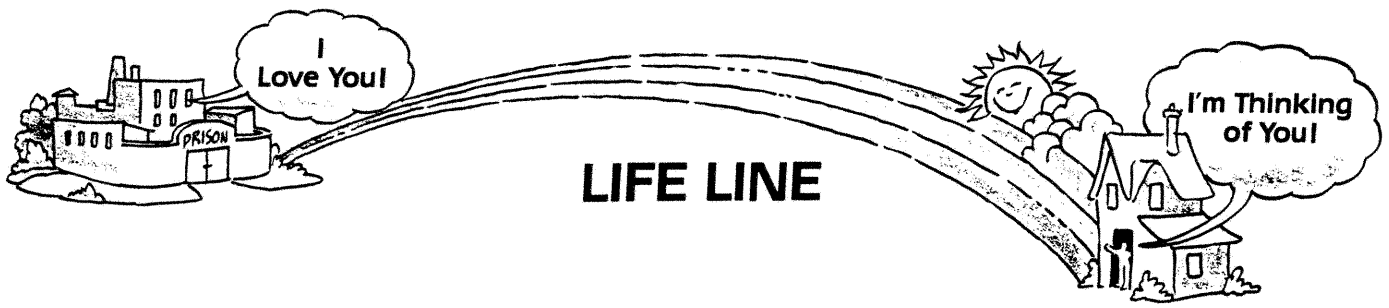
What happens to you when you break a rule at school or on the playground? _____

What's in a prison or jail?

Write to your parent or ask your parent to describe his or her surroundings in prison. Find the places your parent goes and the people your parent sees while in prison — circle them or color them in.



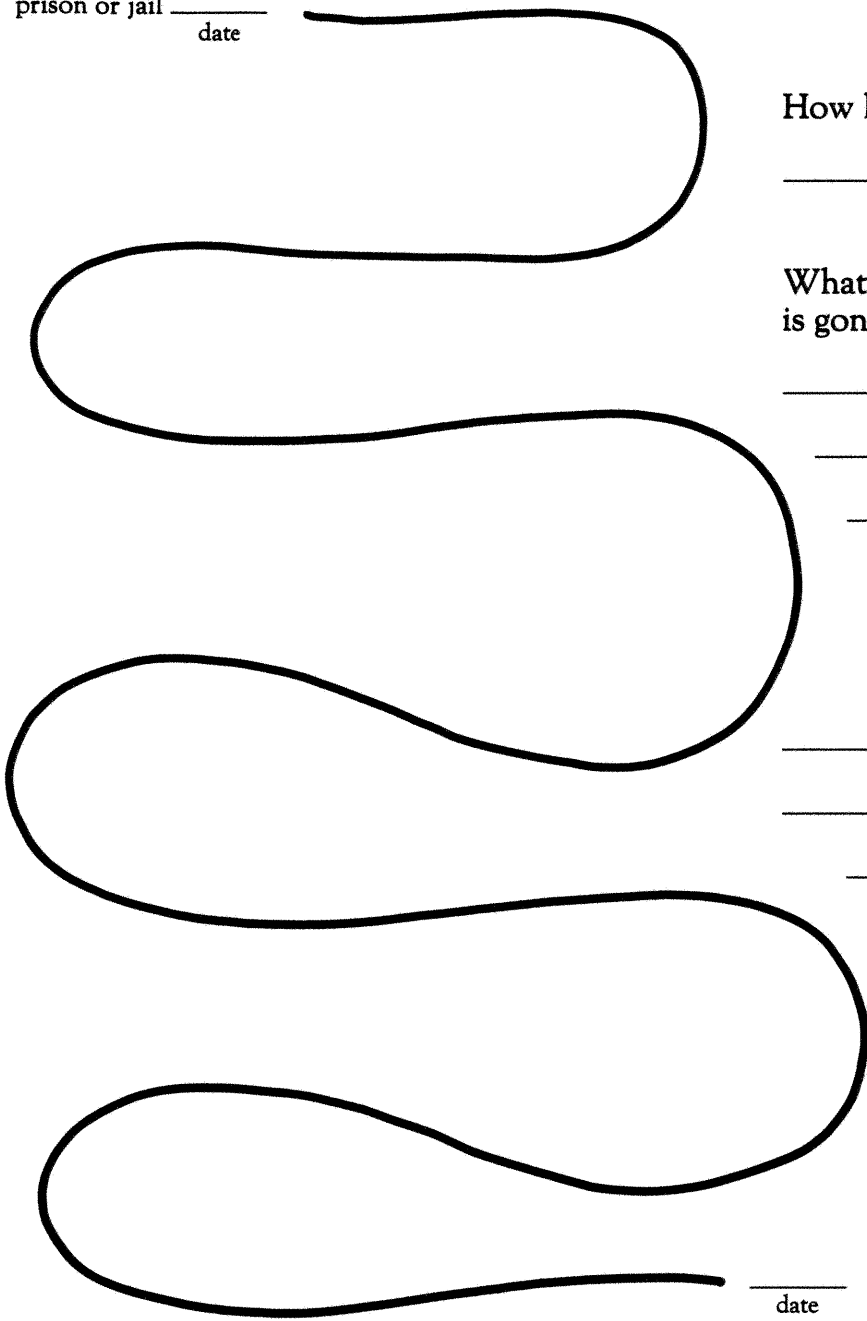
YOUR PARENT IS SAFE AND TAKEN CARE OF, TOO.



How long will my parent be in prison or jail?

Draw the important events in your life that your parent has missed while being in prison or jail on this "life line." Add birthdays by drawing a cake, add Christmas by drawing a tree, etc.

day parent goes to
prison or jail _____
date



How long will you be separated? ____

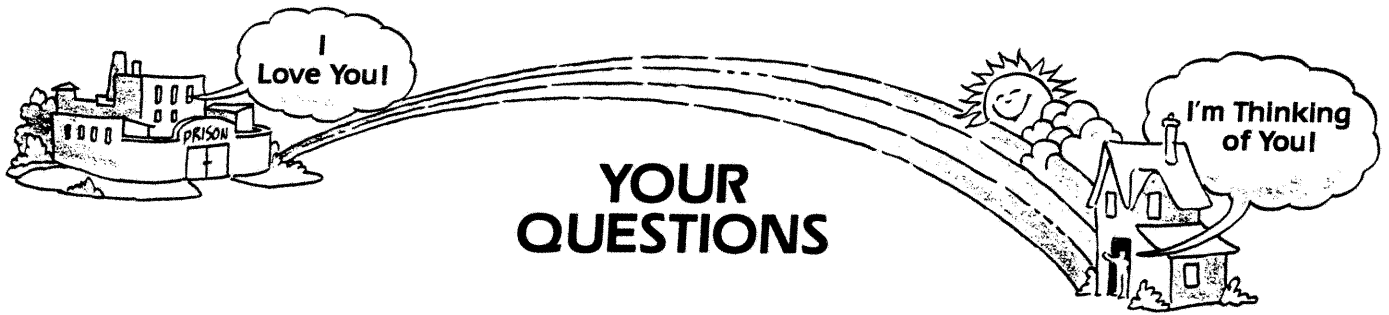
What will happen while your parent is gone? _____

What can you do about this? _____

How do you feel?

_____ date
day parent comes home





YOUR QUESTIONS

You are not alone. Below are listed some questions other kids have asked. Put a star (*) next to the questions you want answers to or write down your own questions. Circle the faces that show how you feel about each question. Ask for help. Find three adults who can answer these questions for you. Use a different color for each question if you want.



Where will my parent eat? _____

What will my parent wear? _____

Where will my parent sleep? _____



Will my parent be safe? _____

What does "behind bars" mean? _____



Can I talk to my parent on the phone? _____

What happens if I get sick? _____

Who will take care of me? _____







**IT IS OKAY TO HAVE THESE QUESTIONS.
ASK AN ADULT TO HELP YOU
FIND THE ANSWERS.**





TALKING WITH OTHERS

You need to talk to someone. It is okay to talk to someone about your parent being in prison or jail.

If you are afraid to tell people that your parent is in prison or jail, is it because:
 Maybe people won't talk to you, or they'll make fun of you?
 Maybe people won't trust you?
 Maybe your friends' parents won't let their kids play with you?

This is what some other kids have said about having a parent in prison or jail.....

Name: Connie
Age: 7

Thought: I don't know if my Mom still loves me when she is in prison.
Feeling: Sad, Scared, Lonely
Result: When my Mom writes or I visit her, she tells me over and over she loves me and that her love for me won't change.

Name: Yolanda
Age: 12

Thought: I am afraid to tell people my Father is in prison.
Feeling: Ashamed, Embarrassed
Result: My Dad has been gone almost two years, and I have learned who I can trust. I only talk to those people about my Father.

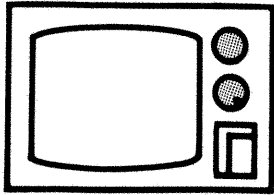
Name: Michael
Age: 14

Thought: I worry that my Mom is not safe when she is in prison.
Feeling: Scared, Worried
Result: When I visited her at the prison, I could see for myself what the prison was like and that she was okay.

ALL OF YOUR FEELINGS ARE OK



Write, draw or tell what you've learned about prisons on T.V. Describe how the inmates were treated. Describe what the inmates were doing. Describe what the inmates were wearing. Describe what the guards were like.

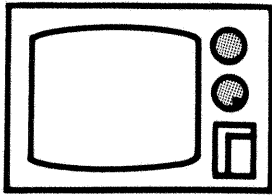


**YOU CAN LEARN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN REAL AND PRETEND.
FIND OUT IF WHAT YOU'VE SEEN ON T.V. IS REALLY WHAT LIFE
IS LIKE FOR YOUR PARENT IN PRISON. TALK TO AN ADULT.**



WATCHING TELEVISION

Write, draw or tell what you've learned about prisons on T.V. Describe how the inmates were treated. Describe what the inmates were doing. Describe what the inmates were wearing. Describe what the guards were like.



**YOU CAN LEARN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN REAL AND PRETEND.
FIND OUT IF WHAT YOU'VE SEEN ON T.V. IS REALLY WHAT LIFE
IS LIKE FOR YOUR PARENT IN PRISON. TALK TO AN ADULT.**



FEELING YOUR FEELINGS

When you are worried about your parents, even if you are not thinking about it, your body will let you know. Sometimes we don't feel our feelings. We may store them in our bodies, and our muscles get tight. Instead of feeling afraid, worried, scared, ashamed or mixed-up, we may feel things like stomachaches or headaches. A feeling is your body's way of letting you know that something is wrong and you need to take care of yourself.

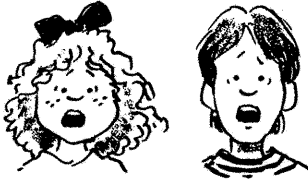
Feelings are normal and natural. They are all okay to have. Later we will talk about what to do with them. First, show where you feel your feelings in your body by coloring those areas on the kids below.





TODAY I FEEL

If you feel scared,
what do you feel scared about?



If you feel angry,
what do you feel angry about?



If you feel sad,
what do you feel sad about?



If you feel happy,
what do you feel happy about?



If you feel ashamed,
what do you feel ashamed about?



If you feel mixed-up,
what do you feel mixed-up about?



It's okay to feel what you're feeling! You may be feeling all of these feelings and not know why. Sometimes talking about your feelings and asking questions about your parent being in prison can help.

If you don't know how you are feeling — that's okay — this book can help you.

YOUR FEELINGS ARE IMPORTANT

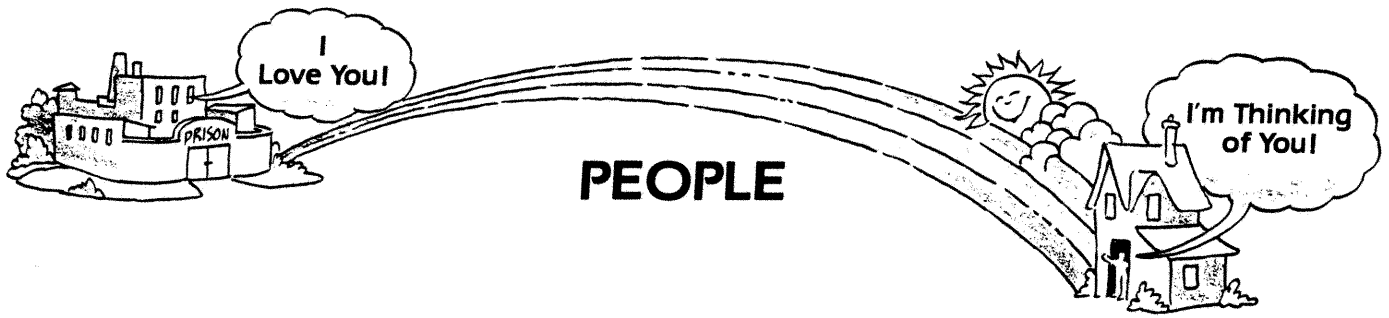


MIXED-UP FEELINGS

Sometimes we have more than one feeling. For example: Jenny feels sad because she loves her mom or dad and can't be with her or him, but she feels ashamed because she's afraid to tell her friends that her mom or dad is in prison. Sometimes it is hard to know how you are feeling. Draw a face on one child that represents how you are feeling, and then draw a face on the other child that shows another feeling that you have.



Remember —
It is okay to feel more than one way.



PEOPLE

How do you feel about the people in your life today? Are you mad at them, worried about them or afraid that your relationship with them will change?

Use these next few pages to express how you are feeling about these people. Write, draw or talk to someone about these feelings. Add any other people that you want to the list.

Mother/Stepmother/Foster Mother

Father/Stepfather/Foster Father

Brothers/Sisters

Relatives/Grandmother/Grandfather

Police/Guards

Friends

Day Care Provider/Babysitter

Teachers

Principal/Counselors/Bus Driver

Specialized Teachers & Coaches
(For example, piano, soccer, etc.)

Doctors/Nurses/Dentist



What I Can Do With My Feelings

When I feel



SAD I can tell someone I feel sad. I can cry. I can ask for comfort and help. I can get support.

When I feel



HAPPY I can tell someone I feel happy. I can celebrate by myself or with others.

When I feel



ANGRY I can tell someone I feel angry. I can learn safe ways to express my anger. I can ask for help to solve problems. I can ask questions, gather information and get help.

When I feel



SCARED I can tell someone I feel scared. I can find safety and comfort. I can ask for information.

When I feel



ASHAMED I can tell someone how I feel and what is bothering me. I can ask for help. I can tell someone why I feel ashamed and learn to realize that it is my behavior that is unacceptable — not me. I am okay. I must accept that it is not my fault that my parent is in prison or jail.

When I feel



MIXED-UP I can tell someone I feel mixed-up. I can use the Feeling Faces Board in the back of this book to show all of the ways I am feeling. I can ask for help.

YOUR FEELINGS ARE IMPORTANT



Sometimes we can hide our feelings, and other times (no matter how hard we try) people can tell how we are feeling. It is healthy to show our feelings.

1. If you are feeling SAD, see page 25 for some things that you can do.
2. If you are feeling HAPPY, see page 27 for some ways to celebrate.
3. If you are feeling ANGRY, see page 28 for some things that you can do with your anger.
4. If you are feeling SCARED, see page 30 for some ideas to help you.
5. If you are feeling ASHAMED or EMBARRASSED, see page 31 for what you can do.
6. If you are feeling MIXED-UP or CONFUSED, see page 20 for some ideas to help you.

You can repeat these pages many times.
Your feelings will change from time to time.



SAD ME

When I feel SAD I can tell someone I feel sad. I can cry. I can ask for comfort and help. I can get support.



The pain from loss and change is sometimes called grief. Grief comes and goes like waves.

If you feel sad right now, answer the following questions.

1. I feel sad now because _____

2. What do you usually do when you feel sad? _____

3. Below is a list of things that you can do when you feel sad. Check the things that you can do NOW.

- Admit it to yourself. Say, "I'm sad."
- Cry.
- Talk to someone you trust.
- Take a walk.
- Exercise.
- Take a deep breath.
- Be alone.
- Call a friend.
- Ask for a hug.
- Give a hug.
- Talk to your pet.
- Talk to your teddy bear.
- Listen to music.
- Write about it.
- Draw your sadness.



Some of the words below have a similar meaning to sadness. Circle a word and tell a time you may have felt this way.

heartbroken
crying
glum
depressed

weep
downcast
grieving

Add more words

Facial expressions communicate feelings without using words. Look in a mirror. Make the expressions shown on this page that show sadness.

Example: frown, pout, crying

How does your body feel when you do this? Think of a time your body felt this way before. Take a survey. Find out what other people feel sad about.

What can you do when others feel sad?

- Spend time together doing something you both enjoy.
- Talk to them about why they feel sad. Listen to them.
- Leave them alone until they feel better.
- Do something nice for them (Ex. make a card, write a note).
- Ask them what you can do to help them feel less sad.

If someone ever yelled at you or called you a baby for crying or feeling sad, that person was wrong. It is okay to cry. It's important to let the tears out. You can find someone safe to share your feelings with.



HAPPY ME

When I feel HAPPY I can tell someone I feel happy. I can celebrate by myself or with others.



Write or draw a picture about some of the happy times that you can remember having with your parent who is now in prison or jail. Copy this page and send it to your parent or put it up somewhere so that you can see it and remember the happy times.

I am happy when I:





Who did you see today that was happy?

How did you know that person was happy?

What can you do right now to help you find happy feelings?

- Practice smiling and looking happy in a mirror. A smile will help you feel better.
- Ask family members what they feel happy about.
- Before you go to bed at night, think about things that make you happy. Let happy thoughts stay in your mind. Say, "I will make tomorrow a good day."
- Find as many words as you can that mean happy. List them. Examples: laughter, joy.



When I feel ANGRY I can tell someone I feel angry. I can learn safe ways to express my anger. I can ask questions, gather information and get help.



Here are some things that you can do when you feel angry:

Think about how you are feeling right now. Draw your anger. Show the drawing to someone you trust and share your anger with them. Explain what the drawing means.

It is okay to feel angry. Everyone does sometimes. It is not okay to hurt yourself or other people when you are angry.

We hurt ourselves and other people if we:

1. Kick, hit and bite.
2. Say mean words and hurtful things.
3. Yell at them.
4. Ignore them, or do not speak to them.
5. Hide our feelings — they can turn into headaches, stomachaches or make us tired.
6. Take our anger out on other people.

Instead You can:

1. Tell someone how you feel.
2. Stomp your feet.
3. Throw a ball.
4. Hit a pillow.
5. Work off your anger by getting some exercise, playing a sport or doing something you like.
6. Write down or draw about your feelings.
7. Throw dirty laundry.
8. Tear up newspaper.
9. Ask for a hug.



When someone is angry at you:

What do you do? _____

How do you feel? _____

What do you do when you are angry? _____

Draw a picture of something that you feel angry about.

If you are abused or hit, go to friends, relatives or police. Ask for help from a teacher, school counselor, minister, doctor, neighbor or another adult that you feel safe with.

Sometimes people can get so angry that they become violent. **CHILDREN DO NOT DESERVE TO BE HURT. ADULTS DO NOT DESERVE TO BE HURT.** If you are ever hurt by someone, find someone else to help you. Write down the names and numbers of people who can help you.

People who can help me:

Police **911** _____

Neighbor _____

Friend _____



When I feel SCARED I can tell someone. I can find safety and comfort. I can ask for information.



Feeling scared often occurs when a family member goes away. Here are some things you can do when you feel scared:

1. **Recognize** what you are scared of. Today I am scared because: _____

2. **Share** what you are scared of with someone you trust. Write down the names of three people that you can tell what you are scared of.

3. **Take Action.** Do something about what you are scared of. Ask questions. Find out as much information as you can about what is scaring you.

Draw a picture about what you are scared of.

Have you ever told someone you are scared? What did that person do?

If someone ever yelled at you, or called you a baby for being scared, that person was wrong. You can find someone safe who cares about you to share your feelings with.

Talk about your feelings with others.

Ask for what you need to help you feel better. For example, I need: a hug, to know ways to be safe or to play.



ASHAMED ME

When I feel **EMBARRASSED** or **ASHAMED** I can tell someone how I feel and what is bothering me. I can ask for help. I can tell someone why I feel ashamed and learn to realize that it is my behavior that is unacceptable — **NOT ME**. I am okay. I must accept that it is not my fault that my parent is in prison or jail.



Things to do:

1. Tell someone — talk about why you feel embarrassed or ashamed.
2. Admit the feeling. Say, "I feel embarrassed."
3. Apologize. Say, "I'm sorry." Remember that no one is perfect; we all make mistakes.

Shame is a feeling you feel all by yourself, yet you may feel as if everyone else knows what you did. You feel exposed, and you want to run and hide. You feel like you are not good — something is wrong with you inside, and everyone knows and can see it!

Sometimes people feel ashamed for things that other people have done. If you feel ashamed, talk with an adult you trust. Find out if you are the person who did wrong or if someone else is the person who did wrong. You don't have to shame yourself for things others have done.

Write, draw or tell about a time you felt ashamed.

Tell what happened and what you did.

Think about who you can trust (an adult) to tell how you feel. Tell that person about your feelings. For example, when I feel ashamed:

- My face turns red.
- My hands sweat.
- I slump my shoulders.
- I hang my head.
- I don't want to talk about it.

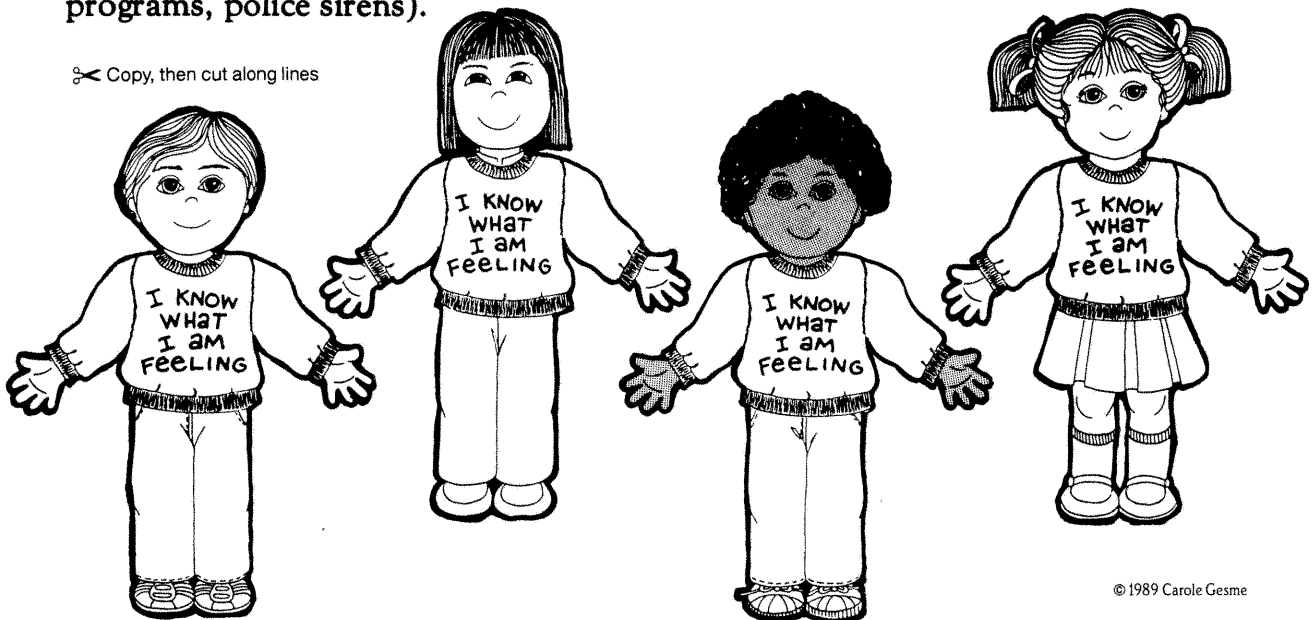


FEELINGS

More Things To Do With My Feelings

1. The People Permission Messages found on page 42 can help you deal with your feelings. Read them and ask others to read them to you.
2. Draw or paint a picture of how you feel.
3. Fingerpaint; use your hands to show how you feel.
4. Draw a picture of your anger.
5. Do something physical. Run, walk, jump up and down, bounce a ball, etc. . .
6. Understand and discuss sounds that bring on feelings (For example: television programs, police sirens).
7. Are there certain smells that bring about certain feelings? Describe what the smells make you think of and feel. Close your eyes and tell what that particular smell reminds you of.
8. Play music. Move to the music, or listen with your eyes closed. How do you feel when you move to the music? Find happy, joyous music. Find angry, sad and scary music, too.
9. Use worry dolls before you go to sleep.

✂ Copy, then cut along lines



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According to legend, before Guatemalan children go to bed they tell their worries to tiny dolls. Each doll gets only one worry. The child puts the dolls under a pillow, in a small box or basket by their bed. The dolls keep the worries, and the child can sleep soundly.

You may want to try this yourself. If you do, you can copy and cut out the paper people on this page and use them as your worry dolls, or you can draw your own. Use as many dolls as you need.



TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

Learning to Cope

Sometimes we feel unhappy about how things are in our families.

We can change some things, but some things we can't change. It is important to decide what can be changed and what can't be changed.

We can work to change what we can, but we must let go of the things we can't. Make a list of what you can and can't change.

What I Can Change

What I Can't Change

Children can't choose what happens to them, but they can choose how to act.

If someone makes fun of you because a family member is in prison or jail, you can choose to fight or walk away and not fight. Find someone else to be with. You deserve to be around people who love and support you. Find them.

If kids tease you, ignore them. You can walk away. Here are some ways that you can ignore them:

1. Pretend that you can't hear them.
2. Pretend that they said something nice to you.
3. Say, "Thank you," or "You did a great job on your art project."
4. Change the subject.

Ask for what you need. You might not get it, but that's okay. Not everyone you ask may be able to help you. That's okay, too. Keep trying. You'll find someone who can.



1. Say something positive about yourself out loud each day.
2. Feel all of your feelings.
3. Share your feelings when you need to.
4. Ask for help when you need it.
5. Remember that you are not to blame for your parent's behavior. You can't change what they did.
6. You *can* choose how to act (or react).
7. Have fun everyday by doing something you enjoy.
8. Say No — when appropriate.
Say Yes — when appropriate.
9. If you feel angry at the parent that is in prison, see pages 28 and 29.
10. Exercise with your family or friends. Walking, running, biking and swimming reduce stress levels.
11. Eat and sleep properly.
12. Play with friends.
13. Tell your friends and family members something you like about them.
14. Sing "You Can Feel All Your Feelings" on page 44.

**YOU CAN BUILD YOUR LIFE
THE WAY YOU WANT IT TO BE.**



There are people that you can talk to about your parent who is in prison or jail. Here is a list of people that you can talk to about how you feel. They may be able to answer some of your questions.

1. A staff member at the prison or jail
2. Your other parent (if available)
3. Your parent in prison or jail
4. A minister or rabbi
5. A school counselor
6. An adult in your family now

**YOUR FEELINGS ARE IMPORTANT.
YOU NEED TO TALK ABOUT THEM.
FIND SOMEONE THAT YOU CAN TRUST
TO TALK TO.**



MY WISH FOR THE FUTURE

Draw your wish for the future.



ACTIVITIES

The second part of this workbook contains activities that you can do to help you deal with your feelings and to have fun.

The activities will help you:

1. Share your feelings about having a parent in prison or jail.
2. Know about words that will help you to understand what the adults are talking about.
3. Get a better understanding of what is happening in your life and your parent's life.

To do this you will use:

1. The words on the Word pages 39, 40 and 41.
2. The Feeling Faces Board on the inside of the back cover.
3. The People Permission Messages found on page 42.

Help With Words

Since your parent went to prison or jail you have probably heard lots of new words. The activity "Help With Words" will help you learn more about what these words mean.

There are several ways that you can use the word pages.

1. You can use the word lists as they are or add more of your own words.
2. You can copy the words and put them on flashcards.
3. You can copy the words, cut them out, fold them and put them in a pile or in a holder.

See the next page to begin the activity "Help With Words."



HELP WITH WORDS

Words — Thoughts and Feelings and Actions

Thoughts

1. Have each family member choose one word by putting his or her initial by it, by choosing one flashcard or by picking a folded word from the pile.
2. Read your word out loud.
3. Share your thoughts about the word.
4. Tell what you know about this word.
 - Where have you heard this word?
 - What do you think about this word?
 - What do you already know about this word?
 - What do others know about this word?
 - Tell a story about this word.
 - Ask an adult about this word.

Feelings

If we learn to talk about and show our feelings honestly and directly we will all feel better.

1. Read your word out loud again.
2. Find a face, or faces, on your Feeling Faces Board that shows how you feel when you hear the word or talk about it.
3. Share these feelings with others.
4. Say the feeling words that fit the faces. Ex: I feel helpless about having a parent in prison.
Remember: There are no right or wrong answers. No two people feel the same way about the same thing.

Actions

1. Read the People Permission Messages on page 42.
2. Choose one message, or several, that help you to feel better right now. Have someone read the message to you.
3. Turn to page 44 and read the words (lyrics) of the song. Then tell the one feeling you were thinking about when you read the words (lyrics).

Word Page 1

Arrest

Inmate

Siren

Crime

Police car

Jail

Parole board

Halfway house

Workhouse

Work release

Years

Furlough

Months

Canteen

Guilty

Life sentence

Innocent

Death row

Handcuffs

Incarceration

Responsibility

Correctional counselor

Word Page 2

Homicide

Caretaker

Assault

Foster home

Robbery

Social worker

Armed

Guard

Theft

Guns

Burglary

Fence/Wall

Kidnap

Warden/Superintendent

Forgery

Segregation

Arson

Non-contact

Abuse

Visiting room

Sex offender

Visits

Word Page 3

Rules

Police

Uniform

Release date

Staff

Probation

Radio

Parole

Prison

Plea bargain

Cell

Lawyer/Attorney

Bars

Witness

Punishment

Victim

Court

Unlawful

Judge

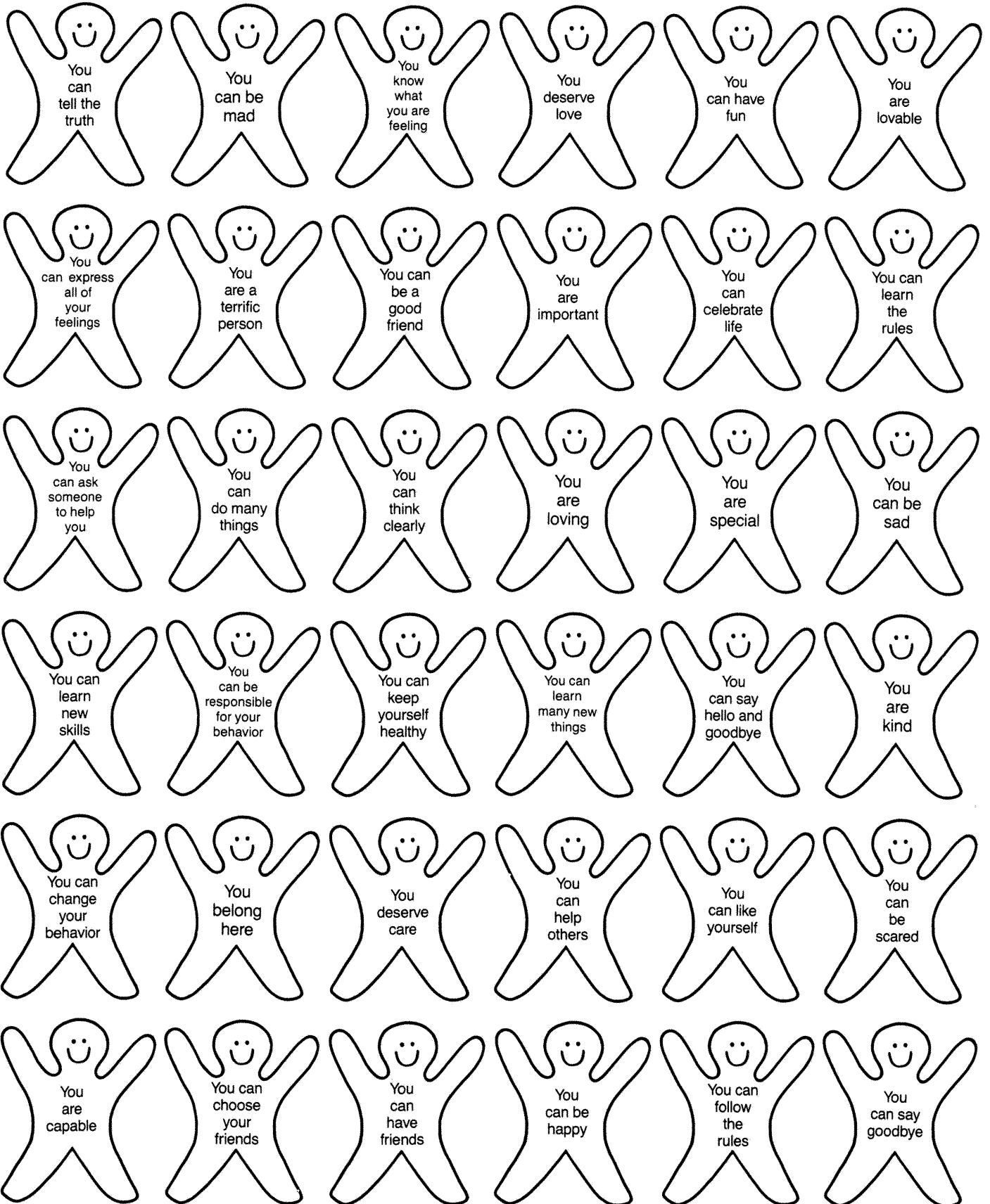
The yard

Trial

Lock up

PEOPLE PERMISSION MESSAGES

✂ Copy, then cut along lines



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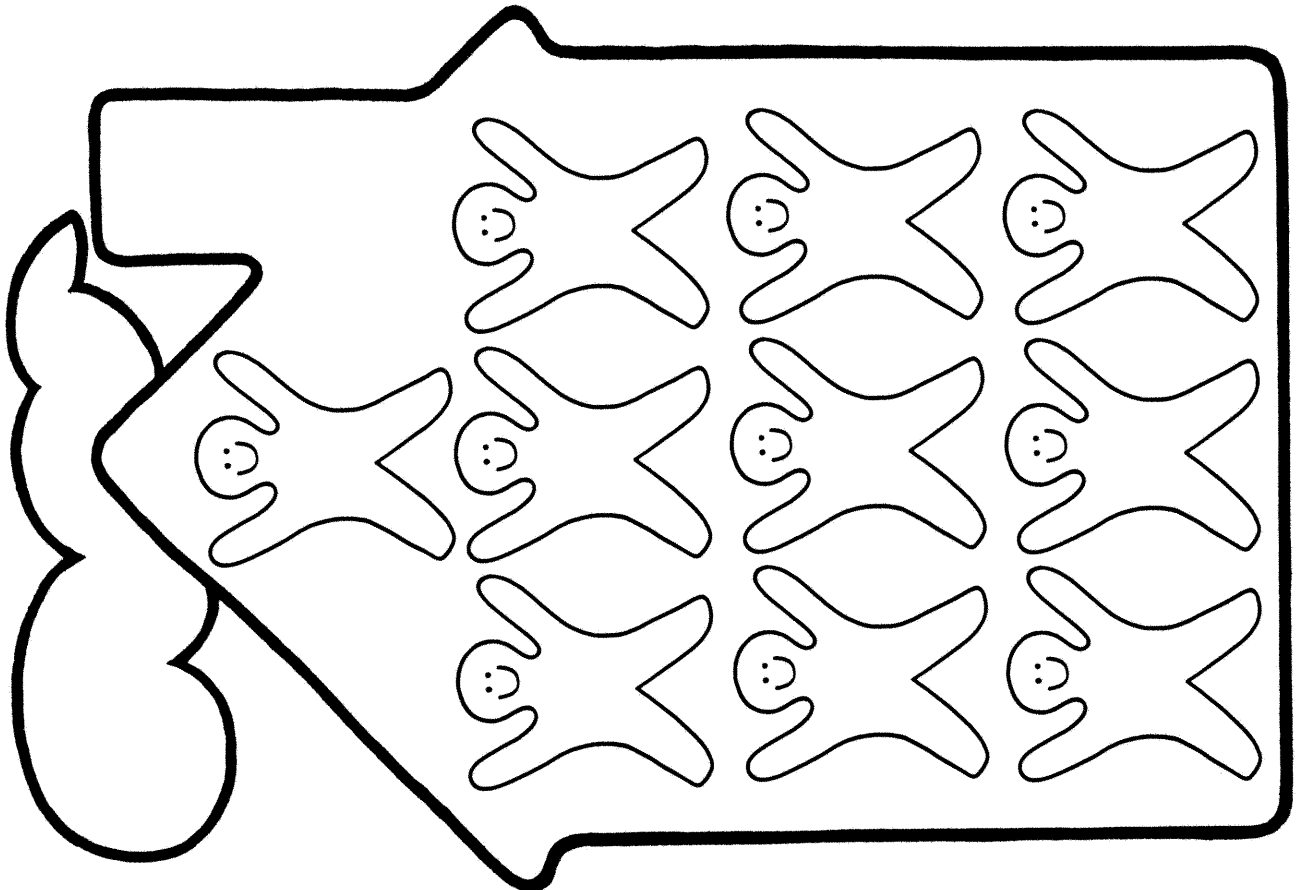


PEOPLE PERMISSION FEEL-O

1. Draw individual Feel-O houses or copy the one below for each person. If you do not have a set of People Permission Messages for each person playing, make copies of page 42 and cut out the messages.
2. Each person fills a Feel-O house by placing the People Permission Messages that he or she wants to hear in the blank house.
3. As the leader reads the People Permission Messages out loud in random order, each person removes the ones that he has placed when they are read. The first person to have an empty house shouts, "Feel-O!"

✂ Copy, then cut along dashed lines

FEEL-O HOUSE



Permission granted to copy for use with game.

YOU CAN FEEL ALL YOUR FEELINGS

Words and Music by
Darrell Faires, Sr.

The musical score is written on four staves in 4/4 time. The melody is in the treble clef. Chords are indicated by letters above the notes. The lyrics are written below the notes.

C F C Dm G7 C
You can feel all your feel - ings, they are O. K. You can

F C D7 G7
feel all your feel - ings, all night and all day. The

F C G7 C
feel - ings you feel are ver - y, ver - y real. You can

F C G7 C
feel all your feel - ings. They are yours and they are real!

From "SING YES! Developmental Affirmation Songs" by Darrell Faires
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7225 Berkridge, Hazelwood, MO 63042, (314) 521-6051
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See the "RESOURCES" page of this book for more "feeling songs" by Mr. Faires.



STAYING IN TOUCH

You can love your parents from a distance. The following are ideas you can use to keep in touch with your mom or dad. Suggest that your mom or dad do some of these activities also.

Memories Box

Keep a memories box. When you remember happy times you spent together with your parent, write it down and put it in the box. At night take one slip out and read it — enjoy the memory.

Write a letter to your parent sharing the memory.

Special Events

Keep a list of special events you celebrate while your parent is gone. (For example: birthdays, holidays, sports events, school programs, etc...) Describe how, where and why you celebrate each event.

Special Event	How Celebrated	Where Celebrated	Who Was There
---------------	----------------	------------------	---------------

_____	_____	_____	_____
-------	-------	-------	-------

Draw a picture or write about what you saw on the way to school today. Send it to your parent.

Trace around your feet with a pencil. Have your parent do the same. Compare sizes. Color your feet — draw funny socks on them.

Trace around your hands with a pencil. Have your parent do the same. Compare sizes. Draw gloves on your hands, too.

Send a Picture Letter

Substitute a word with a simple drawing.

Dear  ,

I am  today.

Watch Me Grow — I've Grown

Items: Tape measure
Pen

Measure your height on a wall. Each month send or tell your parent how tall you are. Send how much you weigh, also.

or

Take a photo at the same spot on your birthday every year to show your parent how much you have grown.

Write a letter or draw a picture. Cut it up like a puzzle and send it to your parent to piece together.

Create a family newspaper. Have everyone write what is going on in their lives. Then ask your parent to do the same.

Send your parent a cartoon or a funny story that you see in the newspaper.

On your parent's birthday make a card for him or her. Send it to him or her.

Ask your parent to look for signs of spring, winter, summer or fall. Make a list yourself of the signs you see. Who can list the most?

Draw a picture of your parent. List what you love about him or her.

Count down to when your parent gets released. You can make a paper chain of days, weeks or months you will remain separated. Break a piece of the chain each day.

Ask your parent what his or her favorite color is. Write down what you see that day or week that is your parent's favorite color.

Write a question each week for your parent to answer.

Write your parent a letter describing how you look today (Ex. what you are wearing). Tell your parent what you did today. Have your parent write you back and tell you the same.

Send a bouquet of flowers to your parent. You can draw a bouquet or cut flower pictures from magazines to create a bouquet.

Choose a T.V. show both you and your parent enjoy. Make sure it is on at a time you can both watch. Write or talk about it.

Begin drawing a picture but don't finish it. Let your parent finish the picture and have him or her send it back to you.

On holidays write down your favorite traditions. Make lists of people, places and food associated with each tradition. How will it stay the same? How will it change?

Start a family "favorite list." Have each member of your family write down their favorite things. Fill it in and send it to all of the members of your family.

Favorite:	Category	Example
	T.V. Shows	Wonder Years
	Foods	Pizza
	Movies	
	Songs	
	Places	
	Books	

Add your own categories.

Send your parent a picture of how you feel. Use different color crayons for each feeling you have. You will have a "color picture" of your feelings. Send it to your parent.

Start a story and send it to your parent. Have him or her add on to your part of the story. Continue mailing it back and forth until it is finished.

Draw a picture of your hand. Send it to your parent. Have your parent draw his or her hand holding yours. Tell them to use a different color.

Send affirmations. Choose one people permission message each week. Write down ways you have used the message this week. Have your parent do the same thing. Compare your lists.
