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## Session Seven: Hope and Healing

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### Session Seven Supply List

#### Basic Supplies:

Bottle of water (one for each child)  
Puppets  
Masking tape  
Talking object  
Markers or crayons

**Equipment:** None

#### Other:

Small bag, hat or dish to hold the pieces of paper  
Variety of materials to make an obstacle course for children to navigate (chairs, table, parachute, masking tape, broom handle, jump rope, etc.) or pictures of a maze for virtual programming  
Beads of different shapes and colors  
Letter beads that include the letters C O P E and H O P E (optional)  
Accessories to create a necklace, bracelet or keychain, or large chenille stems (pipe cleaners)

#### Materials that need to be made:

Small pieces of paper with “feelings” written on them (enough for each child to have one): sad, mad, scared, happy, bored, nervous, and excited, 11” x 14” sheets of paper or poster board with the stages of grief written on them (denial, anger, bargaining, depression/sad, and acceptance).

Activity	Time
7.1 Hello Time: How Do I Feel?	15 Minutes
7.2 Mindful Movement	5 Minutes
7.3 Circle Time/Puppets: Coping with Loss	20 Minutes
7.4 Large Motor Activity: Obstacle Course or Maze	20 Minutes
7.5 Art Time: Hope on a Rope	15 Minutes
7.6 Story Time: <i>“I Can Cope and I Can Hope”</i> Visualization	10 Minutes
7.7 Program Family Time: Traditions	30 Minutes

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**Activity 7:1**      **Hello Time: How Do I Feel?**  
**Time:**            **15 minutes**  
**Construct:**      **Self-Awareness, Empathy**  
**Materials:**      **Small pieces of paper with “feelings” written on them (enough for each child to have one): sad, mad, scared, happy, bored, nervous, and excited; a small bag, hat or dish to hold the pieces of paper**  
                         **Optional: pictures of faces**

**Goal:** To give children practice in combining facial expressions, gestures, and postures to communicate feelings and recognize feelings in others.

**Objectives:**

1. To increase children’s awareness of facial expressions of self and others.
2. To help children learn to communicate through gestures and recognize body language.

**Procedures:**

1. Ask children to sit in a circle. Welcome the group to session seven and reinforce the rules/guidelines and expectations that have been established for program sessions.
2. Explain that we will be playing a game called “**charades.**” Directions:
  - a. Each child will choose a piece of paper from the bag.
  - b. Without using words, the child will try to “act out” the feeling that is written on the slip of paper.
  - c. The other children will try to guess what the feeling is.
  - d. Children should raise their hand if they would like a turn to guess what the feeling is.
  - e. The child who guesses the feeling can choose to go next or pick the next player to pull a slip from the bag, if they have already had a turn. The play will continue until each child has had a turn.

**Notes and Suggestions:**

1. You can add to the learning and the fun by having all the children make a face that shows the identified feeling after each turn.
2. You may choose to have pictures of feeling faces to support children with disabilities in their efforts to identify feelings.
3. Virtual Adaptation. Children will participate with cameras on for virtual programming. Practice muting and unmuting and remind them of the digital rules/guidelines and expectations. The feelings papers will be picked by the facilitator and shown via camera to the child whose turn it is.

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**Activity 7:2**      **Mindful Movement**  
**Population:**    **Children**  
**Time:**            **5 Minutes**  
**Construct:**      **Developmental Expectations, Power and Independence**  
**Materials:**      **Bottle of water (one for each child)**

**Goal:** To facilitate optimal achievement of mental potential.

**Objectives:**

1. To allow children to engage in movement activities that naturally develop coordination of eyes, ears, hands and the whole body.
2. To allow children to reduce stress, enhance ability to focus and fully participate in the Circle Time activity following Mindful Movement.

**Procedures:**

Have the children stand in a circle. Tell them that you are going to guide them through the steps of an activity that will help them focus their brains and body. It will make them smarter and calmer. Every time we are together, we will start the program like this before we sit down for circle/puppet time. We will:

- Drink water.
- Activate our Brain-buttons.
- Move our bodies with a crisscross.
- Be still like a statue.

1. Have the children take a **drink of water** and notice how it feels. Is it cool or warm? Notice how it feels filling up your body with the healthiest thing you can drink.
2. Tell children just like recharging technology before using it, we are going to recharge our brain **by activating our brain-buttons**. Have children take their right hand and place their thumb and forefinger on the bottom of their clavicle bone. Help them locate the divots on each side of the sternum below the clavicle. (They are often tender.) Explain that by rubbing or gently pushing the brain button, they will be sending oxygen to their brain and will be ready to focus on new information at Circle Time. Have the children place their left hand over their navel while they are gently rubbing their brain buttons.
3. Now we are going to do some **crisscross** movement. While standing, have the children lift their left knee and touch it with their right hand. Next, have them lift their right knee and touch it with their left hand. Have the children continue to repeat the back-and-forth motion.
4. **Practice stillness**. Have the children either stand and cross their feet at the ankles, or sit down and cross their legs in a seated position (crisscross apple sauce) and place the tip of their tongue on the roof of their mouth, at the same time they are touching the fingers of the right hand to the fingers of the left hand.
5. Transition to circle/puppet time.

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### FYI:

These strategies are intended to support regulation, attention and participation.

The science behind mindful movement.

- Well-established pediatric research links hydration with attention, working memory and executive function. It is important for children to stay hydrated for optimal brain functioning.
- Brain buttons, although not an anatomical term, are located above the carotid arteries, which supply fresh oxygenated blood to the brain. Pulsating the brain buttons helps children to increase body awareness and engagement. Although the brain is only about 2% of the body's weight, the brain uses 20% of the body's oxygen.
- Somatic awareness is supported by putting one hand on the navel to bring attention to the body's gravitational center. This information is supported indirectly through research on proprioceptive input and grounding techniques.
- The crisscross movement supports bilateral coordination and promotes coordination between both hemispheres of the brain as it facilitates reason rather than reaction, by organizing cortical engagement. Done slowly, it activates the vestibular system for balance.
- Practicing stillness while touching fingertips and crossing legs is based on findings that symmetrical body positioning provides consistent sensory input and encourages parasympathetic regulation.
- The tip of the tongue on the roof of the mouth influences breathing patterns and vagal tone, supporting calm and focused attention.

### Notes & Suggestions:

1. Children who are unable to stand for the activity can sit. Children who have difficulty with balance or coordination can keep their feet on the floor when they touch their knees. Children who have limited control over their arms and legs (e.g., CP, MS, muscular dystrophy) may need help making connections. For children who are severely delayed or have constrictions, you may want to move your fingers in a figure 8 formation and have them follow with their eyes during the crisscross portion of the activity. The figure 8 movement supports bilateral motor planning and cortical organization.

Remember do for a child what they cannot do, help when they need help, and allow independence when they are able to do the activity without assistance. Ask permission when helping a child even if they cannot verbally acknowledge your request.

2. Children will participate with cameras on for virtual programming.

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**Activity 7.3**      **Circle Time/Puppets: Coping with Loss**  
**Time:**            **20 minutes**  
**Construct:**      **Self-Awareness, Power and Independence**  
**Materials:**      **Puppets, 11 X 14-inch sheets of paper or poster board with the stages of grief written on them (denial, anger, bargaining, depression (sad), acceptance), masking tape.**

**Goal:**    To explore children's reactions to loss and to provide techniques for positive coping.

**Objectives:**

1. To allow children to explore loss issues.
2. To provide a model for positive coping.

**Procedures:**

1. Assemble children in a circle. Reiterate that all children will have a turn to talk, if they choose to. When they want a turn to talk, they should raise their hand. The facilitator or another child will hand them the talking object. The person holding the talking object will have a turn to talk, and the other children and adults will be listening.
2. Remind children that in Session 3 we talked about changes. The puppets were confused about being sick and thinking that they had caused it. Ask the children, "Does anyone remember positive self-talk?" Have them repeat the statement, "**I didn't cause it, but I can cope and I can hope.**"
3. Have the children repeat the statement, "***I can cope and I can hope.***"  
    ... in a soft voice.  
    ... in a loud voice.  
    ... in a silly voice.  
    ... in a proud voice.  
  
The point is to reinforce the statement, "I can cope and I can hope."
4. Ask the children, "*Does anyone remember what "cope" means?*" Reinforce correct perceptions. To cope is to deal with something in a positive way.
5. Have puppet #1 begin to talk about when his pet goldfish died. Puppet: "*I wish I knew about coping and hoping when my goldfish died. I was so sad I cried and cried.*"
6. Ask the children, "*Is it okay to cry when a pet or something you love dies?*" Validate that it is okay! Whatever feelings you have when you lose something should be expressed.
7. Puppet #1, "*You are mixing me up. I thought if I 'coped' it means, everything is fine and I can ignore all the 'bad' stuff and just hope to feel good all the time.*"
8. Tell the children, "*It looks like puppet is going to need help understanding.*"

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9. Bring out the signs that say, **DENIAL, ANGER, BARGAINING, DEPRESSION/SADNESS, AND ACCEPTANCE**. Explain that when someone experiences a loss they have all of these different feelings. Some people say they should go in order. Some people say they get all jumbled together. But most people agree that when they have a loss (like a death or an illness, or divorce, or move) all of these feelings come around and need to be coped with.
10. Tape the signs labeled denial, anger, bargaining, depression/sad and acceptance in different areas of the room. They should be visible from the circle area.
11. Explain the stages of grief:

<b>DENIAL</b>	Pretending that something is not true. Sometimes even having your mind play tricks on you – and you really think it is not true.
<b>ANGER</b>	Feeling like it is unfair and that everything bad happens to you -- maybe even being mad at others.
<b>BARGAINING</b>	Trying to make a deal – <i>“I will do something in return for having things back the way they used to be.”</i> Sometimes being mad at yourself or wishing you did something different.
<b>DEPRESSION/SAD</b>	Feeling very sad, having no energy.
<b>ACCEPTANCE</b>	Feeling like it is going to be okay. Things are different than they used to be, but that is okay. We will never forget the person or thing we lost, but we will be okay.”
12. Have the children stand up in place and think about which card best describes what they are going through right now in their real life (reiterate stages if necessary). Have them go and stand under the card that best describes them. While they are standing there ask them if anyone wants to say any more about why they picked that card. Allow children to take turns speaking **ONLY** if they want to. Make a silent note to yourself, if a child chooses not to talk.
13. Ask children to sit down. Have Puppet #1 say, *“Thank you all so much! I really get it now! It is okay for me to have all these feelings about my goldfish. I know I can cope by getting through the feelings and hoping that the ‘stages will come and go.’ I also know that I can have acceptance and be okay when I am ready.”*
14. Thank the children for talking about their feelings and helping puppet with his.

### Notes and Suggestions:

Virtual Adaptation. Children will participate with cameras on. Facilitator will hold up the signs with stages of grief, one at a time. Children can raise their hand, or click on a reaction icon, if they feel like that stage is true for them right now. Children can pick more than one feeling. Make sure the signs are visible.

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**Activity 7.4**      **Large Motor Activity: Obstacle Course**  
**Time:**            **20 minutes**  
**Construct:**      **Power and Independence, Self-Awareness, Behavior Management**  
**Materials:**      **Variety of materials to make an obstacle course for children to navigate: chairs, table, parachute, masking tape, broom handle, jump rope etc.**

**Goal:** To symbolically demonstrate that children navigate grief/loss issues in their own unique way and time and the importance of working through the process rather than trying to “get over it, ignore it, or minimize it.”

### Objectives:

1. To work together to create an obstacle course.
2. To navigate the obstacle course by going over, around, and through obstacles.

### Procedures:

1. Tell children that they are going to create an obstacle course and then navigate it.
2. Explain that the obstacle course represents “grief.” Explain that, “*Grief is a feeling that all people experience when they lose something or someone that is important to them. Lots of times people think you only have grief when someone or something you love dies. The truth is that people feel grief when things that are important to them change. You could feel grief if you have to move from one place to another or if your parents break up, or if you or a brother or sister gets sick and things don’t seem normal.*

*Most often when people feel grief, they just wish things could be the way they used to be. Most often things will never be the same again and the person who is feeling grief will have to work through the feelings before they can accept the way things are now.”*

3. Have the children work together making the obstacle course and then take turns navigating it. The children can be encouraged to navigate the course at their own rate. Let children know it is not a competition. If they would like to keep track of time and then try a second time to beat their own score, that is okay. They **will not** be comparing scores with each other. Encourage children to cheer and support each child as they complete the course.
4. Praise each child for a job well done and assure them in real life they will get through grief in their own way and time.

### Notes and Suggestions:

1. If children in the program have physical challenges the course should be adapted for their participation and/or the child who has physical challenges can demonstrate the concept by working their way through a maze on a piece of paper. Another option is to have the child with physical challenges be the “director” for another child who is physically able and willing to be blind folded. The child with physical challenges will give verbal directions for the typically developing child to navigate. They will work through the course together.
2. Virtual Adaptation. Create a maze on paper for children to navigate and trace from start to finish. Start is Loss. Finish is Acceptance. This paper will need to be sent with supplies to the participants prior to the session.

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**Activity 7.5**      **Art Time: Hope on a Rope**  
**Time:**            **15 Minutes**  
**Construct:**      **Power and Independence, Empathy, Self-Awareness**  
**Materials:**      **Beads of different shapes and colors, letter beads that include the letters cope and hope if available, elastic or string for beads, accessories to create a necklace, bracelet, keychain, or chenille stems.**

**Goal:**    To create an object that symbolically represents positive coping.

**Objectives:**

1. To demonstrate through the stringing of beads – the power of remaining hopeful.
2. To symbolize the accomplishment of milestones.
3. To create a transition object for children or legacy piece for families.

**Procedures:**

1. Have children sit at a table and place beads, string and accessories in the middle of the table.
2. Let the children explore the materials and then explain *We will be creating Hope on a Rope*. Have each child choose several beads that attract their attention (You may need to set a limit – say “up to 10”).
3. Ask each child to think of something they are “hopeful” for. Have them go around the circle and each say one thing they are hopeful for.

If children have trouble thinking of things say, *“Some children have told me things they hope for are: finish chemotherapy, go to school, get better, hold still during treatment, family member would be all better, wouldn’t have to go to the hospital, will get to play with their friends, will win an important sport game or get a good grade. etc.”*

4. Tell the children that they will now be making “hope-on-a-rope” necklaces, bracelets or key chains. Each bead would represent something they hope for. As they are stringing the beads they can say their hopes out loud or to themselves. Each bead stands for one hope.
5. After the children have finished their project, ask them to hold them in their hands. Tell them that these projects will now represent “hope” for them.

Some people have “worry beads.” They hold onto the beads and rub them when they are worrying about something. “Hope on a Rope” is just the opposite. Instead of thinking of things to worry about, you can think of things to be hopeful for and hold the beads when you need a reminder that you are “capable of coping” with whatever comes along.

6. Ask children if they remember the word “**Cope**.”

*“What does it mean?”* (It means to deal with something even if it isn’t what you wanted.)

*“Do hopes always come true?”* (Not always).

*“Can you cope with it when they don’t?”* (Yes).

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7. Ask children what “techniques” they can use when they need to cope. Give suggestions: deep breaths, visualization, talking to a friend, holding your “hope on a rope” project.
8. Encourage children to share their “Hope on a Rope” project with their parents during **Program Family Time**.

### **Notes and Suggestions:**

Supplies for this activity will need to be sent to the participants prior to the session.

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**Activity 7.6**      **Story Time: “I Can Cope and I Can Hope” Visualization**  
**Time:**            **10 Minutes**  
**Construct:**      **Self-Awareness, Empathy**  
**Materials:**      **“I Can Cope and I Can Hope” visualization, appropriate space for children to sit or lay down on the floor**

**Goal:**    To teach relaxation and positive self talk through guided imagery to children.

**Objectives:**

1. To create connection between thoughts and physical well-being.
2. To allow children to use their imaginations to relax and increase feelings of competency.

**Procedures:**

1. Tell children they are going to learn a technique to help them relax and feel confident. They will be hearing your voice read a guided visualization. A visualization is a story that they can picture in their minds that is pleasant and powerful. When the mind is thinking about pleasant things, the body starts to relax. When you give yourself positive messages you begin to feel capable.
2. Have the children sit or lay down on the floor in a comfortable position.
3. Begin the visualization by asking children to close their eyes and listen to your voice. Ask children to take a deep breath in through their nose and blow it out through their mouth. Repeat the breathing activity for several times and remind children to blow the stress right out of their body when they exhale.
4. Read the following in a slow and rhythmic manner. Use expressive tones and fluctuate the volume of your voice as appropriate. Allow enough time between each statement for the children to create the picture in their imagination.

*Imagine that you are walking down a path. The path has many twists and turns. Where is your path? It might be in a forest or through a field of daisies. Maybe your path is on the beach or next to a river. Wherever you choose your path to be, it will be filled with twists and turns. Sometimes it is hard to tell where the path is leading. You trust your feelings and continue down the path knowing you are safe.*

*As you walk you begin to hum to yourself. You are thinking “I can cope and I can hope.” You begin to whisper the words to yourself as you walk along your chosen path. “I can cope and I can hope.”*

*You continue walking and feel a smile come across your face. You find yourself jogging along the path and singing, “I can cope and I can hope.”*

*You continue along the path. Now you are running. You shout at the top of your lungs, “I CAN COPE AND I CAN HOPE!” You are feeling on top of the world. You have a sense of power and feel capable of taking on any situation.*

*You shout again, “I CAN COPE AND I CAN HOPE!”*

*You see a door at the end of the path. You slowdown from running... to jogging... to walking.*

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*You move toward the door. You open the door feeling full of confidence and pride. There is a room on the other side of the door. The room is full of people who love and care about you. They are all there to help you celebrate how special you are and to share your hopes and dreams. You walk up to each person, one by one, and you tell them.*

*"I can cope and I can hope. I know that I am going to be okay." One by one each loving person hugs or kisses you or pats you on the back. They say, "I will be there to help you along the path."*

*You know that you are loved. You know that others are there to help you navigate the twists and turns along the path.*

*After you have spoken to each person you head toward the door. You say thank you to everyone.*

*You open the door. You know you must leave the room and return back down the path to where you began. The loving energy of everyone in the room surrounds you and becomes a part of you.*

*You slowly walk back down the path with a sense of purpose. You feel strong, confident and powerful.*

*You arrive back at the beginning, enveloped by the loving energy. The energy stays with you as you come back to this room.*

*You are here now and feeling energized and capable. You know that you are loved and able to cope with any situation.*

5. Ask children to slowly become aware of their surroundings and to open their eyes.
6. If time allows children can discuss their perceptions of the "visualization" process.
7. Join parents for **Program Family Time**. Facilitators should develop bathroom, hand washing and transition routines that will signify to children that it is time to join parents. Begin preparations approximately five minutes prior to Program Family Time.

### **Notes & Suggestions:**

Some children will be uncomfortable lying down or closing their eyes. Allow them to sit, and/or leave their eyes open. They must be quiet so the other children can hear the story. If a child is disruptive or cannot settle down, have one facilitator take the child out of the room (perhaps for a walk down the hall) so the other children can focus on the activity, or mute the child's microphone for virtual programming.

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**Activity 7:7**      **Program Family Time: Traditions**  
**Population:**    **Adults and Children**  
**Time:**            **30 minutes**  
**Construct:**      **Self-Awareness**  
**Materials:**      **Food, drink, paper products, paper and markers, Family Murals, *Nurturing Game***

**Goal:**    To build positive parent/child relationships and to help families establish nurturing routines and memories.

**Objectives:**

1. To provide families with an opportunity to make a list of traditions that creates meaning in their lives.
2. To provide families with an opportunity to learn a new game and review the concepts learned in the program by playing the ***Nurturing Game***.

**Procedures:**

Facilitators will serve parents and children snacks and beverages and collect trash when they are finished.

1. **Program Family Time**
  - a. Ask families to sit together and create a list of current or potential family “traditions.”
  - b. Play the ***Nurturing Game*** and encourage families to begin a new tradition.
2. **Home Family Activity:** Pick an activity from the list your family generated in **Program Family Time** and engage in it together. Remember to laugh and have fun!
3. End the Session with the **Good-bye Song**.

**Notes and Suggestions:**

1. When the program is done virtually, encourage families to enjoy a snack at home after each session.
2. Virtual adaptation. Use the Program Family Time to create a list of potential family traditions and encourage them to play a game or practice a tradition during Home Family Time this week.
3. You do not have to use the Good-bye song that was suggested in session one. However, you should use the same song every session, so children begin to recognize the song as a transition to the session end.