Copyright © 2019 by Hoover Behavioral Health, Inc.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the corresponding author, Sharon A. Hoover, Ph.D.

Corresponding Author:

Sharon A. Hoover, Ph.D.

For permission requests, write to the corresponding author, subject line: STRONG Permissions, at the address below.

strong4schools@gmail.com

For more information, visit www.strongforschools.com
Acknowledgements

STRONG (Strengthening Transition Resilience of Newcomer Groups) was co-developed and reviewed by members of the newcomer community and several experts in the fields of education and mental health, with specific expertise in school mental health, adversity and trauma, refugee mental health, and resilience.

Authors and development team members are listed below, in alphabetical order.

Authors
Corresponding author - Sharon A. Hoover, PhD, strong4schools@gmail.com
Jeff Bostic, MD, EdD
Shawn Orenstein, MPH
Natasha Robinson-Link, MA

Development Team
Colleen Cicchetti, PhD
Claire Coyne, PhD
Catherine DeCarlo Santiago, PhD
Mina Fazel, DM, MRCPsych
Andréanne Fleck-Salto, BSW, RSW
Rebecca Ford-Paz, PhD
Lisa Jaycox, PhD
Audra Langley, PhD
Patricia Marra-Stapleton, MSc, CPsych
Maureen Mackay, MSW, RSW
Tali Raviv, PhD
Claudio Rivera, PhD
Kathy Short, PhD, CPsych
Hadia Zarzour, MA

Table of Contents

Foreword
Session 1: My Inside Strengths and Outside Supports
Session 2: Understanding Stress
Session 3: Common Stress Reactions and Identifying Feelings
Session 4: Measuring and Managing Feelings
Session 5: Using Helpful Thoughts
Session 6: Steps to Success
Session 7: Problem Solving
Session 8: My Journey Part I
Session 9: My Journey Part II
Session 10: Graduation
Individual Session
Individual Meeting with Parents/Caregivers
Parent/Caregiver Session
Teacher Session
References
Background

In recent years, “newcomer” (immigrant and refugee) youth are entering new communities across the world in record numbers (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], 2018). Many children come with parts of their families or even unaccompanied along their journey. During their many transitions, newcomer youth may have faced significant adversity, including stressful and traumatic experiences. Newcomer youth often struggle as they try to adapt to their new environments as stressors may persist sometimes long after their journey. (Durà-Vilà, Klasen, Makatini, Rahini, & Hodes, 2013; Fazel, Doll, & Stein, 2009; Lustig et al., 2004; Miller & Rasmussen, 2017).

Adversities before and during their migration include lack of basic needs (e.g., food), separation from and loss of family members and friends, violence exposure, and lengthy stays in detention centers (Lustig et al., 2004; Sirin & Rogers-Sirin, 2015; Sullivan & Simonson, 2016). After resettling, newcomer children and youth face additional stressors including the loss of their home, family, friends, and material possessions; acculturation; and unwelcoming communities and schools (Bronstein & Montgomery, 2011; Kirmayer et al., 2011; Lustig et al., 2004; Patel, Clarke, Eltareb, Maccioimeie & Wickham, 2016). At the same time, newcomers usually arrive with unique strengths and protective factors, and can flourish and contribute to their new communities (Murray, Cohen, Ellis, & Mannarino, 2008; Sullivan & Simonson, 2016).

Schools are a natural and important setting to welcome and support newcomer youth. Along with other family and youth organizations, schools have a responsibility to welcome any student who joins the community and are uniquely positioned to do so. Schools have a team of adults trained to support the whole student, including their social, emotional and academic needs. These adults and students’ youth peers can be equipped to leverage the strengths of newcomer students and to understand and support some of their unique needs.

“Schools could provide an ideal setting to implement interventions to address the mental health needs of refugee children... In disrupted environments, schools are often one of the earlier institutions to be introduced and, throughout the world, most children can attend school... Schools can facilitate early identification and provide interventions to maximize cognitive, emotional and social development.”

What is STRONG?

Supporting Transition Resilience in Newcomer Groups (STRONG) is an evidence-informed, school-based intervention for newcomer youth (K-12th grades) to support their transition to a new school and community. STRONG is intended for students experiencing psychological distress or difficulties functioning at home, school or in their community, often related to the adversities and trauma experienced during the transitions of migration and settlement. STRONG is delivered by school mental health clinicians and is comprised of 10 group sessions, one individual student session, and teacher and parent education sessions. Elementary (K-5th grade) and Secondary (6th-12th grade) versions are available.

STRONG Theory and Components

STRONG aims to build resilience of students experiencing transition and equip them with skills to cope with the psychological impact of stress and trauma. Delivered in schools, STRONG is one piece of a comprehensive systems of supports for good settlement.

Few studies have explored and evaluated the development and implementation of evidence-based practices to enhance the mental health of young newcomers (Eruyar, Huemer, & Vostanis, 2018). Of research that exists, interventions with cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) principles have had the largest effect sizes (Ehnholt, Smith, & Yule, 2005; Enholt & Yule, 2006; Kataoka et al., 2003; Murray et al., 2008; Tyrer & Fazel, 2014).

Research suggests the content of interventions should incorporate processing of the migration experience and any traumas or adversities, CBT principles, meditation and relaxation exercises, and creative methods (Beehler, Birman, & Campbell, 2012; Birman et al., 2008; Murray, et al., 2008; Ruf et al., 2010).

Core components of STRONG include:
- Resilience Building Skills
- Understanding and Normalizing Distress
- Cognitive Behavioral Intervention Skills
  - Relaxation
  - Cognitive Coping
  - Exposure
  - Goal Setting
  - Problem Solving
  - Journey Narrative
- Peer, Parent, and Educator Support

Language

In STRONG, we use the term newcomer to describe a student who has entered a school as a new member of the community, usually after arrival from another country. There is not a generally accepted time period that defines “newcomer status,” though in many communities they define a newcomer as one who has arrived within the past five years. STRONG eligibility does not depend on a specific time period since arrival. Newcomers are often immigrants, and some are refugees.

Immigrant - an individual who leaves one’s country to settle in another.

Refugee - an individual who flees one’s country due to restriction or danger to their lives and is unable or unwilling to return because of a well-founded fear of being persecuted because of their race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.

Asylum seeker – someone who seeks international protection from dangers in their home country, but whose claim for refugee status has not been determined legally.

Resettlement – the transfer of refugees from the country in which they have sought refuge to another State that has agreed to admit them.
STRONG Development

STRONG was co-developed and reviewed by members of the newcomer community and several experts in the fields of education and mental health, with specific expertise in school mental health, adversity and trauma, refugee mental health, and resilience.

STRONG development was initiated by School Mental Health Ontario (SMH-ON), formerly School Mental Health ASSIST (SMH ASSIST), a provincial implementation support team, funded by the Ontario Ministry of Education, and housed within the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB). SMH ON provides leadership, resources, and implementation coaching to all school boards in Ontario, in English and French. The team works closely with the Ministry of Education and has a role within the wider system of care, linking with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services.

A core pillar within SMH-ON Strategic Directions involves offering unique and differentiated supports for students within a focus on Equity and Specific Populations. Immigrant, Refugee, Ethnocultural, and Racialized (IRER) mental health practices are a key part of this pillar. In 2016-2017, SMH ON engaged in regular “newcomer mental health rounds” with Ontario school boards to determine priority areas for resource development. At that time, the need for a tier two/three intervention to serve students from refugee backgrounds experiencing the impacts of trauma was identified. For this purpose, SMH-ON partnered with the local newcomer community and international leaders in school mental health, refugee mental health, trauma, and resilience to develop a school-based intervention. The intervention, *Supporting Transition Resilience of Newcomer Groups (STRONG)*, was piloted in two school boards in Ontario between March-June 2018, and then again between February-June 2019. Evaluation of STRONG, conducted by Dr. Claire Crooks, Director of the Centre for School Mental Health at Western University, and her team demonstrated acceptability, feasibility and positive impact of STRONG. Evaluation findings informed intervention refinement, including further developmental attunement of intervention components, resulting in the current STRONG intervention.

STRONG content and structure was informed by the experiences of the development team with other school-based interventions, most prominently Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS, www.cbitsprogram.org, originally developed by Lisa Jaycox, 2003, second edition released in 2019 authored by Jaycox, Langley and Hoover) and Bounce Back (www.bouncebackprogram.org, developed by Audra Langley and Lisa Jaycox, 2015). CBITS is a 10-session, group-based cognitive behavioral intervention designed to treat post-traumatic stress in schools. It has been widely implemented across several nations with a strong evidence for its positive impact on psychosocial and academic functioning. CBITS revolutionized the way childhood trauma is identified and treated. For example, following the devastation of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in New Orleans in 2005, researchers established that over 90% of children completed CBITS when offered in schools compared to approximately 15% of children completing evidence-based trauma treatment offered in traditional community mental health settings (Jaycox et al., 2010). CBITS provided groundbreaking support that students can effectively be treated for mental health problems, including trauma, in schools. Bounce Back, an adaptation of CBITS for younger students (Kindergarten to 5th grade), provided support that young children could be successfully treated for post-traumatic stress in school settings.
Implementation Considerations
Successful implementation of any school-based mental health intervention relies on several factors beyond program content, including individual, family, school and community influences. Domitrovich and colleagues (2008) offer an ecological model of school mental health implementation that encourages careful consideration of each sphere of influence. The rise of implementation science has also underscored the importance of implementation consideration for achieving successful program outcomes (Durlak & DuPre, 2008).

Two decades of CBITS implementation provide foundational knowledge about implementation considerations for group-based, school mental health interventions, including guidance on effective engagement of schools, families and communities and thoughtful selection and support of group facilitators and students. This guidance, along with iterative input and development with newcomer communities in several partnering countries, inform the implementation discussion below and are woven throughout the intervention manual.

School Engagement
Linking refugee children and youth to supports that address both immediate psychosocial needs and pre-migration trauma are an essential component of positive adjustment. However, there are several barriers to accessing care, such as stigma, language differences, lack of transportation, and limited contact with the mental health care system (Marshall, Butler, Racho, Cumming, & Taknit, 2016). Interventions should be embedded into existing infrastructures to increase access to and decrease stigma associated with mental health care (Brymer, Steinberg, Sornborger, Layne, & Pynoos 2008). Schools serve as an ideal setting for the implementation of interventions, given they often are the first service system available to refugees and are accessible to refugees and their families (Fazel, Garcia, & Stein, 2016; Kia-Keating & Ellis, 2007; Sullivan & Simonson, 2016; Tyrer & Fazel, 2014). Further, schools offer an environment for the early identification of distress and concerning behavior (Fazel, Garcia, & Stein, 2016; Kia-Keating & Ellis, 2007; Sullivan, & Simonson, 2016; Tyrer & Fazel, 2014).

Schools may organize supports for newcomer students within a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS). Supports range from universal supports that promote welcoming and well-being of all newcomer students to more intensive supports that provide coping skills and mental health interventions based on student needs. STRONG may be considered a Tier 2 or Tier 3 intervention, as it provides students with coping skills to support resilience when transitioning to a new school, but also introduces mental health skills for students exhibiting distress or difficulties related to the newcomer experience and transition.
Before introducing STRONG in a district or schools, it is recommended that strategies are in place to first welcome and support the well-being of all newcomer students. The priority should be to promote good settlement which will, in turn, promote good mental health. Strategies to create welcoming school environments may include:

- training for educators and student peers on newcomer experiences;
- creating a school reception team to assist with orientation;
- dedicating time with newcomer parents and students to learn hopes, strengths and needs;
- posting signs in common languages; and
- adopting a learning stance that avoids assumptions about a student’s prior experiences.¹

Educators may also use strategies to create welcoming classrooms including:

- greeting students individually by name daily and with a smile;
- ensuring classroom environment reflects the linguistic and cultural diversity of students;
- building relaxation breaks into the day, particularly during transitions;
- sharing information with the class to help students understand and welcome newcomers;
- pairing each newcomer with a peer helper to help with orientation and routines.

School staff are vitally important to the success of STRONG in any school. School staff are usually aware of children and families coming into their schools and may recognize that newcomer students vary in their readiness for learning. To best support newcomer students, school staff will benefit from understanding cultural differences and considerations, characteristics of the migration process, and the impact of transition to a new school and community. Training and ongoing support for school staff on supporting newcomer students will help them create welcoming school and classroom environments and identify if students need additional support, including referral to STRONG.

STRONG leaders will benefit from working with school staff to understand their experience of newcomers in the school, including strengths, challenges, needs. It may be useful to conduct a listening session with school administrators and/or staff to hear their perspectives, to provide information about STRONG, and to respond to any questions or concerns.

School staff may need information on how to:

- refer students to STRONG;
- handle privacy of students in STRONG, including how to be discrete when sending students to the STRONG group;
- address class assignments or work that may be missed when students attend STRONG;
- support students who appear distressed while participating in STRONG; and
- promote use of STRONG skills in the classroom and school.

School staff should have an identified STRONG leader in their school with whom they may discuss concerns and share student progress.

¹ Information on creating welcoming school environments and classrooms is included, with permission, from SMH-ASSIST Info-Sheet for Welcoming Syrian Newcomer Students & Families to School (2016).
Community Engagement
Newcomer students and their families may need to navigate multiple systems of supports, including legal (e.g., procurement of documentation), occupational (e.g., job training for parents), educational (e.g., transition to a new school), social (e.g., navigation of peer relationships), and individual (e.g., address psychosocial needs) supports. Accordingly, practitioners advocate for the integration of case management, management of resettlement stressors, and mental health support within existing systems (Birman et al., 2008; Brymer et al., 2008; Ellis et al., 2013; Murray et al., 2008). Coordinated efforts with community leaders, business owners, service providers and school staff to understand the circumstances and cultural differences of newcomers can help create a consistent, welcoming environment. Newcomers may not be familiar with local businesses or services available, so putting such information together in a familiar language can help newcomers navigate this new setting more easily.

During STRONG implementation, students and families may identify additional mental health concerns that may not be feasibly addressed in schools. For example, parents may identify mental health concerns for their younger children or themselves that could benefit from the support of a community mental health provider. Prior to STRONG implementation, it is important to identify community mental health providers that offer culturally responsive services to newcomer families, and to establish a seamless referral pathway for when supports are needed.

Family Engagement
Engaging families is a very important component of STRONG. Newcomer groups may have had difficult experiences within their home country, and/or during their journey to get to this school. They may be fearful, distrustful, and suspicious based on these experiences. They may be cautious or not fully forthcoming, so patience and predictability can help families develop trusting collaborative relationships with the school. Anti-immigration policies may contribute to family reluctance to engage with schools as well as other authority figures (e.g., police; Rubio-Hernandez & Ayón, 2016). Families with members who are not documented citizens of a new country may also be less likely to engage with schools and other community agencies, and the having one undocumented family member increases the risk for children to experience anxiety, depression and withdrawal (Garcia, 2018). Regardless of citizenship status, all children have a right to a free public education and the supports required for educational success.

Engaging caregivers by building on their strengths and dispelling myths of mental health is another important design and implementation consideration (Murray et al., 2008; Refugee Trauma Task Force, 2005; Weine et al., 2003; Weine et al., 2008). It may be helpful to carefully review with families why their children were selected for STRONG participation and to describe the skills that are taught during the program, as well as their role in reinforcing those skills.

Family members consent to their child’s participation in STRONG sessions after parents meet with a clinician to understand the child’s strengths and needs. Parents receive weekly letters about their child’s progress and are also included in an additional session to review the core components of STRONG with other parents of students in the program. Communicating positive messages with parents (e.g., via phone calls or notes) about their child’s progress and performance in school may be a positive step toward establishing trust and promoting a sense of welcoming.
STRONG Leader Selection and Preparation
STRONG leaders are chosen based on their clinical preparation and their familiarity with the newcomer group. All STRONG groups should be facilitated by a mental health clinician familiar with resilience and cognitive behavioral skills. It would be helpful for the mental health clinician to have training on newcomer experiences, including how to address adversity and trauma. It may be helpful to pair the mental health clinician with a cultural broker or liaison, someone part of or very familiar with the culture of the newcomer group(s) and able to interpret when needed. Cultural brokers are individuals who bridge groups or persons of different cultural backgrounds. Schools or communities may have individuals who already serve in the role of cultural brokers for the newcomer communities being served in STRONG. It would be helpful to include those individuals in STRONG training, if possible. Visit www.strongforschools.com for information about in-person training. In addition to training and ongoing implementation support, STRONG leaders will benefit from guidance and support to reduce the impact of secondary traumatic stress and burnout that may arise from working with newcomer students.

Student Selection
Students are selected based on their newcomer status and if they require support to successfully participate in this new school and community. Some newcomer students may exhibit no signs of distress and no need for additional support. These students may not need STRONG. Other students may struggle engage with peers or staff and/or may experience distress related to their newcomer journey. These students may benefit from STRONG skills to participate effectively at school. Students may be self-referred to STRONG or recommended by families or school staff who may have observed the student struggling at home or in school. A STRONG Eligibility Checklist is provided below for guidance on student selection.

Implementation of STRONG
STRONG can be provided at any point during the school year. Groups of 4-8 students of similar age can be created and led by a mental health clinician (and a cultural liaison may participate when needed to assist with cultural awareness or language translation). Groups usually include a balance of gender or cultural backgrounds, although sometimes an all-boys or all-girls group may be appropriate (e.g., if the students have experienced similar traumatic events or if culturally acceptable).

Scheduling during a 10- to 12-week block within the academic year, at the same time each week during the school day improves regular participation. It is important for the groups to meet in a private place where they, and the group leader(s), will not be interrupted. Both student and family reminders (including notes, emails, phone calls) of STRONG sessions increases student/family participation and attendance. STRONG leaders may promote positive behavior and minimize misbehavior by (a) using warm-up activities to engage students, (b) rewarding students for positive participation, and (c) clarifying group expectations.

Evaluating STRONG Impact
It is recommended that STRONG leaders evaluate the impact of STRONG to determine whether the intervention positively impacts outcomes of interest. Prior evaluations of STRONG have included pre- and post-assessments of student resilience, STRONG skills (e.g., goal setting, cognitive coping), post-traumatic stress symptoms, psychosocial functioning, and school climate and connectedness. Visit www.strongforschools.com for more information about evaluation measures.
**STRONG Student Eligibility Checklist**

STRONG is intended for newcomer students who are experiencing difficulties functioning or coping and/or who may benefit from additional skill development.

**Newcomer Status** - STRONG is recommended for students who have migrated to a new country. There is no designated time period that defines “newcomer status” and therefore STRONG eligibility does not depend on a specific time period since arrival.

- When did the student arrive in this country?  
- When did the student enroll in this school?

### Current Functioning

- Is the student exhibiting difficulties in any of the following areas:
  - Academics
    - Attendance
    - Grades
    - Classwork completion
    - Homework completion
  - Peer relationships
    - Hard time making and/or sustaining friendships
    - Participation in activities
  - Family relationships
  - Relationship with other adults (teachers, community members)

- Is the student exhibiting behavior issues at school, home and/or community?
  - Disruptive behavior
  - Absenteeism/Avoidance
  - Lack of participation

- Does the student appear:
  - Sad
  - Anxious
  - Isolated/Withdrawn
  - Fearful, distrustful, apprehensive
  - Inattentive
  - Hyperactive
  - Impulsive
  - Angry/hostile/destructive

### Skill Development

Student could benefit from skill development in the following areas:

- Identifying personal strengths
- Identifying and accessing social supports
- Relaxation, coping with stress
- Cognitive coping (using helpful thoughts)
- Coping with anger/frustration
- Decreasing avoidance (what is student avoiding? ____________________________)

- Social skills
- School connectedness
- Other

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is the student complaining of physical problems?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>o Stomach aches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Head aches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Other physical symptoms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---
Session 1: My Inside Strengths and Outside Supports

Outline
A. Introduction
B. Warm-Up Activity: Join the Circle
C. Group Expectations and Confidentiality
D. Inside Strengths
E. Outside Supports
F. Relaxation Exercise: Deep Breathing
G. Assign Practice: Relaxation

Objectives
1. Students will understand confidentiality and program expectations.
2. Students will be able to identify inside strengths and outside supports.
3. Students will learn and practice a deep breathing relaxation exercise.

Materials
- STRONG Group Schedule
- My Inside Strengths
- My Outside Supports
- Relaxation Exercise (for older students)
- Relaxation Practice (for older students)
- Session 1 Parent Letter
A. Introduction

**Introduction and Newcomer Group Expectations:** Welcome students to the newcomer counseling group. Introduce yourself as the leader (or guide) of the group and how students should address you (e.g. Ms., Mrs., Mr., Dr. ______). After introducing yourself, introduce the interpreter as well (if there is an interpreter) and the interpreter’s role.

*Hi everyone! My name is ________ and I am the STRONG Leader of the group! Please call me ______. I look forward to working with you over the next couple of months of the program.*

*[If there is an interpreter] *In the room, we also have __________, who is the interpreter. You can call him/her ________. Throughout the program, they will help translate the material that we cover. They will also follow the same expectations of privacy and confidentiality that we will talk about later today.*

Explain that students were invited (or recommended) to the group because they are newcomers to the host country, and that they have reported experiencing some stress or difficulties coping. Address that newcomers have a unique set of strengths and challenges with their transition to a new country, and the goal of the group is to build on students’ strengths and work through the struggles collectively.

*You may notice that this group is a little different than the other classes you are taking in school. You all were invited to the group because you are newcomers. Each of you comes to here with a unique set of strengths and challenges. I know that coming here from another place may cause difficulties and stress. The goal of this group is to build on some of your strengths to help you work through any stress you may be experiencing in your transition.*

If sessions happen during school hours, explain that teachers are supportive of students being in the group, they can miss class time, and will not be penalized for missing class. Explain that teachers will not know the specific student information discussed in the sessions. Explain that parents are supportive of students being in the group. Pass out student schedules and review any upcoming changes to the schedule. Emphasize the importance of attendance and being on time.

*[If sessions happen during school hours] *I know some of you may be concerned that you are missing class time. Your teachers are supportive of students taking part in this program. Even though your teachers may know that you are here, they will not hear about the specific information you share in this room. Your parents have also given permission for you to be in this group.*

*The information you share with me in the group will remain private. The only exceptions to this are if you share thoughts or plans that may put you or others at risk of harm. If something like that comes up, we will talk with you about it privately and how it will be shared with others.*

*[Pass out STRONG Group Schedule.] *Even though this is not a class, we expect that you attend the sessions and come on time. [If there are any changes to the schedule in the next couple of weeks, review those changes.] Does anyone have any questions?*
Name Introduction\(^1,2\)

**Name Game:** Introduce yourself again and have students introduce themselves to the group.

> Before we go any further, I would like to get to know your names. I would like you to describe an activity you enjoy and add that to your name as you introduce yourself.

Give students an example. For example, if your name was Molly, you could say something like this:

> For example, I am Molly and I enjoy painting pictures of nature. Or, I am Molly and I enjoy being a soccer goalie.

B. Warm-Up Activity\(^3\): Join the Circle

Guide students through the Join the Circle warm-up activity.

> This next game will help us get to know each other beyond our names.

Begin by asking the students to form a circle facing each other. Explain to the participants that you will read a statement and ask them to step forward into the circle if the statement applies to them. Tell the students that if the statement does not apply to them, they should remain standing where they are. Some example statements could be, “I like to play sports,” “My favorite meal is lunch,” “My favorite class is math.”

> Let’s begin by forming a circle facing one another. I am going to read some sentences. If they apply to you, step into the middle of the circle. I will tell you when to step back into the outer circle. If the statement does not apply to you, stay standing in your spot outside of the circle.

C. Group Expectations and Confidentiality\(^5\)

**Expectations:** Explain to the students that it is important to establish expectations that everyone can agree to follow. These expectations should help to create a safe environment.

Using a board or piece of paper that everyone can see, work with the students to write a list of expectations.\(^6\) First, ask students if they have any suggestions.

---

1 **TIP:** When students are introducing themselves, make sure to try to pronounce their name correctly. If you need clarification on the pronunciation, ask the student to repeat their name or ask them after the session.
2 **TIP:** If a student cannot identify something they like to do, encourage them to think of something by saying “What would others say you are good at or is good about you?”
3 **TIP:** You may choose to incorporate culture-based warm-up activities as well, including sharing of food and customs to integrate familiar activities and norms, and to foster cultural pride and identity.
4 **TIP:** Once they step forward, ask them what sport they like to play, or what is their favorite lunch meal, etc. To minimize someone not stepping in the circle, after sports, proceed to alternative activities (like music or art, like to watch movies or TV shows, etc.). After asking about lunch, ask about dinner and breakfast.
5 **TIP:** For younger students or those with limited English proficiency, it could be helpful to provide a visual symbol picture or to act out each rule that is listed.
6 **TIP:** Newcomers often have a mistrust or discomfort with authority figures. Whenever possible, it is important to emphasize that, while you are in charge, you are also a co-learner.
Before we begin, I would like for us to talk about some expectations we will follow to make us feel safe and welcome. Here are some examples: listen while others are speaking, use kind words, keep your hands and feet to yourself. I want to think of this list of expectations together. Does anyone have any other suggestions?

The final list should be available and visible during each session.

**Privacy:** Explain to students that the personal information the students share in the group will only be discussed within the group, and tell students that you will not share their stories with other school staff members. Give sample scenarios in which students apply the expectations of privacy.

*Has anyone ever heard of the word ‘privacy?’* [Allow students to share.]

Great, thank you all for sharing your thoughts! Privacy means that whatever we discuss in this room will only be discussed within the group. This is so that everyone feels safe and comfortable sharing their stories. This applies to me and the interpreter as well.

Let me give you an example. If someone in this group says during the session that they have been having bad dreams at night, we want to keep that information private. That means you should not share that information with other friends at school or in your neighborhood because it is their private information.

And if you share your own private information, you will know that everyone else in the room will not share it with others. You can talk to anyone you trust about your private information or thoughts, but you cannot share other people’s private information. Does anyone have any questions about that?

There are a couple of exceptions to privacy. [Review your specific professional guidelines for confidentiality, such as comments about harm to self or others.]

Let’s discuss an example. At school, you are talking to one of your classmates who asks you about the group you are in. He asks you what one of the other group members shared in the session the other day. Can you tell him the story? [No] No, and why not?

Other examples include:

You run into the mother of your friend from group at the market. She asks you what her son shared in the group. What can you tell the mother? [Give an example of an appropriate response. E.g., I cannot share what happens with other students in the group, but your son can talk with you about his own thoughts and feelings.]

Your parent asks you what **you** shared in group today. Can you tell your parent about what **you** shared and what **you** are working on in group? [Yes] For example, you may share with your parent the relaxation exercise you learned or about the stress you are experiencing in school.

*Can you tell your parent about what the other group members shared?* [No] You would not share with your parents who is in the group or what they talked about.

Facilitate a short discussion about why it is important to keep certain things private.
D. Inside Strengths
This exercise is meant to demonstrate that students have a set of inside strengths that they can build upon throughout the program. Students will reflect on their inside strengths.

Introduce the My Inside Strengths exercise:

*Today, I want you all to think about and share parts of yourself that you really like. We can call these things that you really like about yourself your ‘strengths.’ Your strengths can also be things that you are really good at.*

Before distributing the worksheet, provide an example of a completed worksheet:

*Before we begin, I want to give you an example of how someone could fill out the worksheet. There are several sentence starters surrounding the person like: ‘Something about me that I am most proud of is…’ ‘One thing I am good at is…’ ‘As a student I am…’ ‘As a friend I am…’ For example, this student filled out ‘Something about me that I am most proud of is being curious,’ and ‘One thing I am good at is being a good friend,’ and ‘As a student I am hardworking.’ I also have crayons and markers for you to use to decorate the person to look like yourself.*

Provide each prompt and allow students to write/draw a response on their sheet or share verbally with the group.

*I am going to read each sentence starter and you can finish it by writing or drawing on your sheet or share it out loud with the group:

Something I am proud of is…
One thing I am good at is…
As a student, I am…
As a friend, I am…
Around others I am…*

**Alternative Activity:**
You may want to have students cut and paste words on the worksheet or do a movement activity that involves them choosing one of two strengths at a time that is most like them.

*I am going to say two different strengths and you can decide which is most like you. Move to the side of the room with the strength that is most like you. Let’s begin! The first two strengths are ‘Artistic’ and ‘Sporty.’ If you are more artistic, go to this side of the room. If you are more sporty, go to that side of the room.*

Continue with the following strength word pairs:

Calm – Enthusiastic
Easy-going – Brave
Good listener – Confident
Fun – Hard-working
Funny – Polite
Curious – Problem-solver
Careful - Giving
E. Outside Supports
The goal of the My Outside Supports exercise is for students to identify ways they can use their outside supports to adjust to the challenges of living in a new place. Show students a sample completed worksheet, and ask students to identify outside supports, including: an adult in school, an adult in the community, a family member, a friend, a safe space, and a community. If students have not identified outside supports, you may want to ask them what type of outside supports they had in their home country and what their plan is to identify similar supports here.

*We just reviewed our inside strengths that help us. Now we are going to name people, places, or things that support us.* [Pass out example of completed worksheet My Outside Supports.] This student completed the worksheet with examples of places she feels safe, family members and friends she trusts and feels safe with, and adults in her school and community she can go to for help. If you don’t yet have outside supports here, you can put down outside supports from your home country and we can talk about your plan to find them.

Provide each prompt and allow students to write/draw a response on their sheet or share verbally with the group.
- One adult in my community that I feel safe with and trust is …
- One adult in my school that I feel safe with and trust is …
- One person in my family that I feel safe with and trust is …
- One friend that I feel safe with and trust is …
- One place that I go to in my community to feel safe is …
- One place that I go to in school to feel safe is …

After students complete the My Outside Supports activity, ask students what they learned and what they took away from the activity.

*Great job! Can someone tell me what they learned from this activity?* [Allow students to respond.] *Who might you go to in your school, family, or community if you are happy and excited about something? How might these supportive people be helpful if you’re feeling hurt or upset? If you are feeling upset, is there a place you can go to feel calm?*

**Building on strengths:** Emphasize that students already have inside strengths and outside supports, and that students will build on those strengths to deal with the challenges of adjusting to a new place.

*I hope this exercise shows you that you already have many inside strengths and outside supports. We hope to help you learn new inside strengths and outside supports.*

F. Relaxation Exercise: Deep Breathing
In this section, introduce the idea of relaxation exercises. Explain to the group that each week, students will learn a relaxation technique. Explain to students that for the first 5 sessions, you will lead the relaxation exercise, and for the last 5 sessions, students will practice leading the relaxation exercises.
Today, I’m going to teach you a new way to relax and feel calm. Sometimes our bodies feel out of control, like when we are very nervous or worried. Our heart may beat really fast, we may breathe really quickly, we may sweat, or it may be hard to think. When these things happen, we may feel STUCK—we may not know what to do. Today, I am going to teach you a new way to calm your body when you’re feeling worried or stuck.

It can also be helpful to practice these exercises even when you already feel calm. For the first five weeks, I will teach you different ways to relax, and you will practice at home. Then, for the last five weeks, you will get to lead the relaxation practice in the group. Does anyone have any questions?

Lead students in a deep breathing exercise.

We are ready to begin our first relaxation exercise, called ‘deep breathing.’ Sit down in a chair or sit on the floor. If you would like, you can lie down on the floor.

Take a deep breath in slowly through your nose… and a deep breath out slowly through your mouth. [Demonstrate.] Deep breath in, deep breath out. Deep breath in… deep breath out.

As you breathe in and out, let your body feel like it is sinking into the chair or floor. Breathe in, 1, 2, 3, and breathe out, 1, 2, 3. Breathe in, 1, 2, 3, and breathe out, 1, 2, 3.

Now we are going to take even BIGGER breaths. Put one hand on your stomach, and feel it go out as you breathe in. I want you to feel those breaths in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Imagine when you are breathing in, you are getting ready to blow up a balloon, and when you are breathing out, you are slowly blowing out all the air into the balloon. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. You are blowing up that balloon, in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3.

Some types of breathing are named after animals. Let’s try bear breathing. Imagine you are a big bear. Breathe in, fill your lungs with air like you are big bear, and then breathe out, like a big bear. Breathe in 1, 2, 3, breathe out 1, 2, 3. Feel your hands on your chest and stomach rise up and down. Breathe in 1, 2, 3, breathe out 1, 2, 3.

G. Assign Practice: Relaxation
Instruct students that each week, you will ask students to practice one of the activities. Explain the importance of practice.

For All Students: Thank you all for your hard work today! Each week, I will give you an activity to practice at home. This practice at home is important, because the more that you practice the exercises, the easier they will become. You may practice deep breathing (like a bear) with your friends or family members. I would like you to do the relaxation activity 3 days this week.

For Older Students: Explain that students will have the worksheet as a prompt to remind them about the activity.

Here is the worksheet [Show the Relaxation Practice worksheet.] For each practice, make a star or check mark on the day you did it, and circle a face to show how it went.
This group will meet on ________________.

This group include 10 group sessions:
Session 1: My Inside Strengths and Outside Supports
Session 2: Understanding Stress
Session 3: Common Stress Reactions and Identifying Feelings
Session 4: Measuring and Managing Feelings
Session 5: Using Helpful Thoughts
Session 6: Steps to Success
Session 7: Problem Solving
Session 8: My Journey Part I
Session 9: My Journey Part II
Session 10: Graduation

In addition, I will find a time to meet with you to talk about your journey.
My Inside Strengths (Example)

Complete the phrases using the words at the bottom of the page as a guide to get you started.

- Something I am proud of is... **being artistic.**
- One thing I am good at is... **being a good friend**
- As a student, I am... **hardworking**
- As a friend I am... **a good listener.**
- Around others I am... **cheerful.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Patient</th>
<th>Good listener</th>
<th>Funny</th>
<th>Dependable</th>
<th>Hardworking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kind</td>
<td>Honest</td>
<td>Good Friend</td>
<td>Calm</td>
<td>Thoughtful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sporty</td>
<td>Artistic</td>
<td>Fun</td>
<td>Helpful</td>
<td>Caring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving</td>
<td>Brave</td>
<td>Confident</td>
<td>Cheerful</td>
<td>Polite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem-Solver</td>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>Smart</td>
<td>Curious</td>
<td>Enthusiastic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
My Inside Strengths

Complete the phrases using the words at the bottom of the page as a guide to get you started.

-Something I am proud of is…
-One thing I am good at is…
-As a student, I am…
-As a friend I am…
-Around others I am…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Patient</th>
<th>Good listener</th>
<th>Funny</th>
<th>Dependable</th>
<th>Hardworking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kind</td>
<td>Honest</td>
<td>Good Friend</td>
<td>Calm</td>
<td>Thoughtful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sporty</td>
<td>Artistic</td>
<td>Fun</td>
<td>Helpful</td>
<td>Caring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving</td>
<td>Brave</td>
<td>Confident</td>
<td>Cheerful</td>
<td>Polite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem-Solver</td>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>Smart</td>
<td>Curious</td>
<td>Enthusiastic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
My Outside Supports (Example)

Use the prompts to list your outside supports inside the circle. If you can’t think of outside supports here, fill in outside supports from your home country.

Prompts:
- One adult in my community that I feel safe with and trust is …
- One adult in my school that I feel safe with and trust is …
- One person in my family that I feel safe with and trust is …
- One friend that I feel safe with and trust is …
- One place that I go to in my community to feel safe is …
- One place that I go to in school to feel safe is …

One adult in my community that I feel safe with and trust is *my soccer coach.*

One adult in my school that I feel safe with and trust is *my math teacher.*

One person in my family that I feel safe with and trust is *my mom.*

One friend that I feel safe with and trust is *my friend Adnan.*

One place that I go to in my community to feel safe is *the park.*

One place that I go to in school to feel safe is *the counselor’s office.*
My Outside Supports

Use the prompts to list your outside supports inside the circle. If you can’t think of outside supports here, fill in outside supports from your home country.

Prompts:
- One adult in my community that I feel safe with and trust is …
- One adult in my school that I feel safe with and trust is …
- One person in my family that I feel safe with and trust is …
- One friend that I feel safe with and trust is …
- One place that I go to in my community to feel safe is …
- One place that I go to in school to feel safe is …
Deep Breathing

Using the words inside the balloon, practice deep breathing.

Take a deep breath in… and a deep breath out. Deep breath in, deep breath out. Deep breath in… deep breath out.

Now take even BIGGER breaths. Put one hand on your stomach and one hand on your chest. Imagine you are getting ready to blow up a balloon. Breathe in and count 1,2,3 slowly. Now imagine you are blowing ALL the air out of a balloon. Count slowly... 1, 2, 3. Repeat.
## Relaxation Practice (Example)

Practice deep breathing 3 times in the next week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day of week – Put a star (*) or checkmark (√) on the days you practice</th>
<th>How did it go?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Smiley" /> <img src="image" alt="Neutral" /> <img src="image" alt="Smiley" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday  √</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Smiley" /> <img src="image" alt="Neutral" /> <img src="image" alt="Smiley" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Smiley" /> <img src="image" alt="Neutral" /> <img src="image" alt="Smiley" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday  √</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Smiley" /> <img src="image" alt="Neutral" /> <img src="image" alt="Smiley" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Smiley" /> <img src="image" alt="Neutral" /> <img src="image" alt="Smiley" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday  √</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Smiley" /> <img src="image" alt="Neutral" /> <img src="image" alt="Smiley" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Smiley" /> <img src="image" alt="Neutral" /> <img src="image" alt="Smiley" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Practice deep breathing 3 times in the next week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day of week – Put a star (*) or checkmark (√) on the days you practice</th>
<th>How did it go?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>![Emojis]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>![Emojis]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>![Emojis]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>![Emojis]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>![Emojis]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>![Emojis]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>![Emojis]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Session 1: Parent Letter

Dear Parent or Guardian,

My name is ___________ and I am the leader of the STRONG program at your child’s school. I look forward to getting to know you and your child! This group is designed to help your child learn new skills and adjust to their new home. As a group, the students will learn how to use a variety of useful coping skills to handle stressful situations.

During our first session, we explained the purpose of the group and played name games. We also shared the group schedule. Your child will be meeting with the STRONG program ________________. Your child’s teachers know about the STRONG program and schedule.

Today, students learned about and identified personal strengths and people that can support them through completing activities called, My Inside Strengths and My Outside Supports.

Each week, we will introduce a new relaxation exercise. These relaxation exercises can help children and adults calm down when they are feeling nervous or worried. We encourage your child to practice the relaxation exercise three times a week. We would love for you to do the relaxation exercise with your child! This week, we introduced a deep breathing relaxation exercise. The instructions to the deep breathing exercise are on the back of this letter.

I will be sending a letter home with your child each week. If there is anything that you would like me to know about your child or if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. My phone number is ____________ and my email address is _____________.

Sincerely,

________________
Deep Breathing

Using the words inside the balloon, practice deep breathing.

Take a deep breath in... and a deep breath out. Deep breath in, deep breath out. Deep breath in... deep breath out.

Now take even BIGGER breaths. Put one hand on your stomach and one hand on your chest. Imagine you are getting ready to blow up a balloon. Breathe in and count 1, 2, 3 slowly. Now imagine you are blowing ALL the air out of a balloon. Count slowly... 1, 2, 3. Repeat.
### Session 1

**Student Engagement and Functioning Rating**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Engagement Rating (1-5)</th>
<th>Affect Rating* (1-5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Engagement Rating:**

1. Refused to participate in the discussions or activities.
2. Did not contribute to discussions but went through the motions of activities. Student was co-operative, but it was difficult to determine their level of understanding and insight due to minimal participation.
3. Minimal contributions to discussions and activities.
4. Some contributions to discussions and participation in activities that showed an understanding of the topic.
5. Several contributions to discussions and participation in activities that showed an understanding of the topic. Student also showed personal insight, meaning they related the topic to their own life in some way.

**Affect Rating*:**

1. Negative affect and demonstrating signs of distress
2. Appears flat or sad but not overtly distressed
3. Neutral affect
4. Some positive affect
5. Positive affect and demonstrating signs of optimism / hopefulness

* Affect is how a person’s mood appears to you during the session.
Session 2: Understanding Stress

Outline
A. Warm-Up Activity: Meet and Greet
B. Group Expectation Review
C. Practice Review: Relaxation
D. Common Reactions to Stress
E. Introduction to the Thoughts-Feelings-Actions (T-F-A) Triangle
F. Relaxation Exercise: Muscle Relaxation
G. Assign Practice: Relaxation

Objectives
1. Students will be able to describe the body’s response to stress and identify at least three body responses to stress.
2. Students will understand distress is common during transitions.
3. Students will be able to identify how thoughts, feelings, and actions are connected.
4. Students will learn and practice a muscle relaxation exercise.

Materials
- Meet and Greet Notecards
- My Body Map
- Thoughts-Feelings-Actions (T-F-A) Triangle
- Muscle Relaxation Images
- Relaxation Exercises (for older students)
- Relaxation Practice (for older students)
- Session 2 Parent Letter
A. Warm-Up Activity: Meet and Greet
As an introduction to the session, guide students through the Meet and Greet exercise described below.

Give each student an index card with a question written on it. Examples might be, “What is your favorite sport?,” “What kind of music do you like?,” “What is your favorite animal?” When each student has received a card, instruct the students to ask the question of at least two students. Ask each student to share one thing they learned about someone in the group.

Hello everyone! Welcome to our second session. I am happy to see everyone again! Let’s start with a warm up activity. I am going to give each of you a card with a question on it. Go around and have at least two people answer your question and then I will ask you to share one thing you learned about someone in the group.

B. Group Expectations Review
Review the group expectations they came up with last week. Be sure they are posted in the meeting room, so they can be referenced, as needed. Ask students if any expectations need to be added or changed.

Before we begin our session today, I want to quickly review the expectations we discussed last week. [Refer students to read the posted list of expectations or read them out loud if they are not posted.] How did we do last week following these expectations? [Allow students to respond.] Are there any expectations that we need to add? Any that need to be changed?

C. Practice Review: Relaxation
Review the deep breathing activity from the last session and practice again.

Let’s review the deep breathing we did last session.

For anyone who practiced during the week, how did it go?

Now let’s practice doing deep breathing again.

Sit down in a chair or sit on the floor. If you would like, you can lie down on the floor.

Take a deep breath in slowly through your nose… and a deep breath out slowly through your mouth. [Demonstrate.] Deep breath in, deep breath out. Deep breath in… deep breath out.

As you breathe in and out, let your body feel like it is sinking into the chair or floor. Breathe In, 1, 2, 3, and Breathe Out, 1, 2, 3. Breathe In, 1, 2, 3, and Breathe Out, 1, 2, 3. Breathe In, 1, 2, 3, and Breathe Out, 1, 2, 3.

Now we are going to take even BIGGER breaths. Put one hand on your stomach, and feel it go out as you breathe in. I want you to feel those breaths in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Imagine when you are breathing in, you are getting ready to blow up a balloon, and when you are breathing out, you are slowly blowing out all the air into the balloon. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. You are blowing up that balloon, In, 1, 2, 3, and Out, 1, 2, 3.
Some types of breathing are named after animals. Let’s try bear breathing. Imagine you are a big bear. Breathe in, fill your lungs with air like you are big bear, and then breathe out, like a big bear. Breathe in 1, 2, 3, Breathe out, 1, 2, 3. Feel your hands on your chest and stomach rise up and down. Breathe in 1, 2, 3, Breathe out, 1, 2, 3.

How do you feel now? I encourage you to keep using deep breathing between sessions.

D. Common Reactions to Stress
Explain to students that one of the main goals of the program is to build on strengths and discover new ones. Explain that this can be hard to do when we go through major transitions.

As we learned last week, one of the main goals of the program is to build on the many strengths and supports that you already have. We also are going to work together to discover new strengths and skills. It can be hard to remember our strengths when things are changing and when we are upset.

Ask students how they define stress and distress:

Today, I want to talk about some ways we react when we’re upset or stressed. Stress is something that you feel when you are worried or uncomfortable about something.

Questions for discussion:
What do people look like when they are upset or stressed?
What kinds of things do people say when they are upset or stressed?
How do people act when they are upset or stressed?

[Allow students to respond.] Thank you all for sharing your experiences! We ALL have experiences where we feel nervous, stressed, or upset. Everybody experiences some stress, and in fact, it can be helpful for our bodies to feel some stress. For example, if you worry about a test it may make you want to study and be prepared. But sometimes you experience so much stress that it can make it hard to deal with, like if you get too stressed before a test you may not be able to study. Transitioning to a new country and new school may be exciting but can also be stressful for many students. You may feel angry, frustrated, scared, or afraid. Your body can also react in different ways.

Explain to students that in addition to feeling stress in our minds, we can also feel stress in the body.

Now that we have talked about stress more generally, I want to talk about how we can feel stress in our bodies.

Draw a body on the board. Point to each part of the body and ask students to name ways stress may look in that part of the body. Be sure to include how stress can cause headaches, stomachaches or nausea, rapid heart rate, tense muscles, increased sweating, rapid breathing, and sleep problems.

I have drawn a body on the board. There are MANY ways that stress can affect our bodies. Let’s start from the very top of our body at the head. How might stress affect our head? [Allow students to respond.] Ok good, so we might get a headache. How about around our nose and mouth? [Allow students to respond.]
Right, so stress might cause us to breathe more rapidly. Now let’s move down to our hearts. Does our heart beat differently when we are stressed? [Allow students to respond.] Right! Sometimes when we’re stressed our heart can start beating very quickly. Ok now our stomachs. Do you think stress can affect our stomachs? [Allow students to respond.] Right! So sometimes when we’re stressed we might get a stomachache, or we might have to go the bathroom more often. Stress also can affect our muscles and make them feel very tense. We also might sweat more when we’re feeling stressed. And finally, when we’re stressed it can be hard for us to fall asleep!

Ask students if they can identify ways in which they have experienced stress in their bodies.

Now that we have named the ways bodies can experience stress, I want you to think about how stress shows up in your body. [Pass out My Body Map.] Draw where stress shows up in your body. For example, if you tense your shoulders, you could draw knots in that area on the body.

Praise students for identifying the physical symptoms of stress. Continue the discussion by talking about feelings of stress in various scenarios. Explain that one of the goals of the program is to learn how to cope with stress.

You all did a wonderful job describing how stress affects your body. Some of these body feelings happen when we think something is ‘dangerous’ or unsafe. Sometimes, these body feelings help us be ready when things really are dangerous or unsafe. For example, if we see a dangerous animal and our heart beats fast it can help us run away faster. Sometimes, though, we have these body feelings when things are not dangerous or unsafe, especially when we have been through scary things in the past. For example, if something reminds you of something scary you went through, you may experience stress in your body and feel in danger even if you are not. Sometimes our bodies react faster than our brains.

Remind students that, although stress can be difficult to work through, the sessions are meant to help students learn new skills to deal with stress and build on existing strengths. Remind students about the exercises that they completed last week.

Although stress can be overwhelming, the thing to remember is that there are things that we can do to keep it under control. That’s one of the main things we will be focusing on in our sessions--learning skills to better handle stress. As we went through last week, you already have inside strengths and outside supports. These things help us manage stress! We are going to talk more about ways we can think and act to lower stress. Does anyone have any questions?

E. Introduction to Thoughts-Feelings-Actions (T-F-A) Triangle

Introduce the Thoughts-Feelings-Actions (T-F-A) Triangle.

Today, I want us to talk about how we think, feel, and act in different situations. Let me begin by drawing some things on the board for you.

Draw a triangle on the board. Write the words ‘thoughts’ on the top of the triangle, ‘feeling’ on the left corner of the triangle, and ‘actions’ on the right corner. Draw a thought bubble (to represent thoughts), draw a happy and sad face (to represent feelings), and draw a stick figure running (to represent actions).
You can see here the triangle has three corners that represent three different things: our thoughts, our feelings, and our actions. [Point to each corner as they are said aloud.] I want to start by explaining what these things mean.

Let’s try the example of playing soccer. It is the championship soccer game and your team is winning by three points. Let’s start with our thoughts. Thoughts are things that we think, or say to ourselves, but may not say out loud. What are you thinking in this soccer example? [e.g., We are going to win the game. My family will be proud of me; Write responses on the board next to ‘thoughts’ on the triangle.] Good work. Now let’s move onto feelings. Feelings are reactions we have to events or thoughts. Some common feelings are happy, sad, scared and angry. What are you feeling in the soccer example? [e.g., excited, happy. Write responses on the board next to ‘feelings’ on the triangle.] Finally, what are your actions? Actions are what you do. What are you doing in the soccer example? [e.g., smiling, cheering for teammates. Write responses on the board next to ‘actions’ on the triangle.]

Now let’s say the other team scores four goals and is ahead of your team by one point. Now, what are you thinking? [e.g., We are going to lose; I am not good at soccer; Write responses on the board next to ‘thoughts’ on the triangle.] Good work. What are you feeling? [e.g., frustrated, sad. Write responses on the board next to ‘feelings’ on the triangle.] What are you doing? [e.g., scowling, yelling at teammates. Write responses on the board next to ‘actions’ on the triangle.]

Let’s use the Thoughts-Feelings-Actions (T-F-A) Triangle and apply it to a newcomer experience. Let’s say Fatima is an 5th grade student who comes to a new school where she knows nobody and does not speak English. What might she be thinking? [e.g., I don’t want to be here, I want to be home.] How is she feeling? [e.g., nervous, scared] What is she doing? [e.g., looking down, not talking] Now let’s say that Fatima is joined at school by a good friend she knew from her home country. What might she be thinking? [e.g., I am glad my friend is with me. She can explain things to me.] How is she feeling? [e.g., happy, relieved] What is she doing? [e.g., walking with friend, smiling].

So, as you can see, depending on the situation, our thoughts, feelings, and actions look different, but they are all related. This is just an introduction to this triangle. We will be using it a lot during the next several sessions. Next week we are going to talk about what happens to our thoughts, feelings, and actions when we are stressed.

F. Relaxation Exercise: Muscle Relaxation

Before guiding students through the exercise, show the students the muscle relaxation images.

To end our session for today, we will be doing a muscle relaxation exercise. Before we begin, I want to show you images that will help you think about each part of the exercise. [Pass around the Muscle Relaxation Exercise Images.] Just like deep breathing, this can be helpful when you have uncomfortable thoughts and feelings.

---

Hands & Arms: To begin, pretend you are squeezing a whole lemon in your left hand. Squeeze it hard. Try to squeeze all the juice out. Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Now drop the lemon and relax. See how much better your hand and arm feel when they are relaxed. Repeat with the other hand.

Arms & Shoulders: Pretend you are a furry, comfortable cat sleeping on the couch. You want to stretch. Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them up high over your head. Way back. Feel the pull in your shoulders. Stretch higher. Now just let your arms drop back to your side. Okay, stretch again. Repeat.

Face and Nose: Here comes a pesky old fly. He has landed on your nose. Try to get him off without using your hands. That’s right, wrinkle up your nose. Make as many wrinkles in your nose as you can. Scunch your nose up real hard. Good. You’ve chased him away. Now you can relax your nose. Oops here he comes back again. Repeat.

Stomach: Hey! Here comes a baby elephant. But he’s not watching where he’s going. He doesn’t see you lying there in the grass, and he’s about to step on your stomach. Don’t move. You don’t have time to get out of the way. Just get ready for him. Make your stomach very hard. Tighten up your stomach muscles real tight. Hold it. It looks like he is going the other way. You can relax now. Let your stomach go soft. Let it be as relaxed as you can. That feels so much better. he’s coming this way again. Get ready. Repeat.
Shoulder & Neck: Now pretend you are a turtle. You’re sitting out on a rock by a nice, peaceful pond, just relaxing in the warm sun. It feels nice and warm and safe here. Oh-oh! You sense danger. Pull your head into your house. Try to pull your shoulders up to your ears and push your head down into your shoulders. Hold in tight. It isn’t easy to be a turtle in a shell. The danger is past now. You can come out into the warm sunshine and once again and feel the warm sunshine. Watch out now. More danger. Hurry pull your head back into your house and hold it tight. Repeat.


Legs and Feet: Now pretend that you are standing barefoot in a big, fat, mud puddle. Squish your toes down deep in the mud. Try to get your feet down to the bottom of the mud puddle. Push down, spread your toes apart, and feel the mud squish up between your toes. Now step out of the mud puddle. Relax your feet. Let your toes go loose and feel how nice that is. It feels good to be relaxed.

G. Assign Practice: Relaxation

For All Students: This week, you may practice deep breathing (like a bear) and muscle relaxation with your friends or family members. I would like you to do a relaxation activity 3 days this week.

For Older Students: Explain that students will have the worksheet as a prompt to remind them about the activity.

Here is the worksheet [Show the Relaxation Practice worksheet.] For each practice, make a star or check mark on the day you did it, and circle a face to show how it went.
### Meet and Greet Cards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is your favorite sport?</th>
<th>What kind of music do you like?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is your favorite animal?</td>
<td>What is your favorite game to play?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your favorite class in school?</td>
<td>Where is a place you would like to visit?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your favorite kind of food?</td>
<td>What is your favorite time of year?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your favorite holiday?</td>
<td>What is your favorite movie or book?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
My Body Map

Mark on the body below where you feel stress. For example, if you get a headache when you feel stressed, make a mark on the head. If you clench your fists, mark the hands. If you tense your shoulders, mark the shoulders.
Thoughts Feelings Actions (T-F-A) Triangle
Deep Breathing

Practice deep breathing.

Muscle Relaxation

**Hands & Arms:** Pretend you are squeezing a whole lemon in your left hand. Squeeze it hard. Try to squeeze all the juice out. Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Now drop the lemon and relax.

**Arms & Shoulders:** Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them up high over your head like you are furry, comfortable cat.

**Face and Nose:** A pesky old fly has landed on your nose, try to get him off without using your hands. Now relax your nose.

**Stomach:** Make your stomach very hard like a baby elephant is walking on it! Now let your stomach go soft.

*Take a deep breath in... and a deep breath out. Put one hand on your stomach and one hand on your chest. Imagine you are getting ready to blow up a balloon. Breathe in and count 1, 2, 3 slowly. Now imagine you are blowing ALL the air out of a balloon.*
**Relaxation Practice**

Practice deep breathing or muscle relaxation 3 times in the next week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day of week – Put a star (*) or checkmark (✓) on the days you practice</th>
<th>How did it go?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>![Emoticons]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>![Emoticons]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>![Emoticons]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>![Emoticons]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>![Emoticons]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>![Emoticons]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>![Emoticons]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Session 2: Parent Letter

Dear Parent or Guardian,

It has been a pleasure working with and getting to know your child!

We started the session today with another exercise to help students get to know one another. We also reviewed our group expectations and our deep breathing exercise from last week. We then defined stress and identified normal reactions to stress.

We introduced the concept of stress, which we defined as something that you feel when you are worried or uncomfortable about something. Then, we talked about different ways that children may feel stress in their bodies. Stress can cause headaches, stomachaches, nausea, rapid heart rate, tension, increased sweating, rapid breathing, and sleep problems.

Today, we also talked about how thoughts, feelings, and actions are connected. We shared with students that thoughts are things that we think but do not say out loud, feelings are reactions we have to events, and actions are things we do. We shared that depending on the situation, our thoughts, feelings, and actions may look different. In the STRONG program, we will talk about ways students can change their thoughts and actions in order to feel better and manage stress.

Students learned a new relaxation exercise this week called muscle relaxation. The relaxation exercise is on the back of this letter. We encourage your child to practice the relaxation exercise three times a week. We would love for you to do the relaxation exercise with your child!

As I wrote in my last letter, please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have about the program or your child. You can reach me by telephone at ______________ or by email at __________.

Sincerely,

________________
Deep Breathing

Practice deep breathing.

Take a deep breath in… and a deep breath out.
Put one hand on your stomach and one hand on your chest. Imagine you are getting ready to blow up a balloon. Breathe in and count 1, 2, 3 slowly. Now imagine you are blowing ALL the air out of a balloon.

Muscle Relaxation

Hands & Arms: Pretend you are squeezing a whole lemon in your left hand. Squeeze it hard. Try to squeeze all the juice out. Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Now drop the lemon and relax.

Arms & Shoulders: Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them up high over your head like you are furry, comfortable cat.

Face and Nose: A pesky old fly has landed on your nose, try to get him off without using your hands. Now relax your nose.

Stomach: Make your stomach very hard like a baby elephant is walking on it! Now let your stomach go soft.
### Session 2

#### Student Engagement and Functioning Rating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Engagement Rating (1-5)</th>
<th>Affect Rating (1-5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Engagement Rating:**

1. Refused to participate in the discussions or activities.
2. Did not contribute to discussions but went through the motions of activities.
3. Minimal contributions to discussions and activities.
4. Some contributions to discussions and participation in activities that showed an understanding of the topic.
5. Several contributions to discussions and participation in activities that showed an understanding of the topic. Student also showed personal insight, meaning they related the topic to their own life in some way.

**Affect Rating:**

1. Negative affect and demonstrating signs of distress
2. Appears flat or sad but not overtly distressed
3. Neutral affect
4. Some positive affect
5. Positive affect and demonstrating signs of optimism / hopefulness
Session 3: Common Stress Reactions and Understanding Feelings

Outline
A. Warm-Up Activity: Make a Line
B. Practice Review: Relaxation
C. Thoughts-Feelings-Actions (T-F-A) Triangle
D. Common Reactions to Stress and Trauma
E. Identifying Feelings
F. Relaxation Exercise: Body Scan
G. Assign Practice: Relaxation

Objectives
1. Students will be able to identify how stressful situations affect thoughts, feelings, and actions.
2. Students will be able to identify at least three common reactions to stress and trauma.
3. Students will be able to identify their own feelings.
4. Students will learn and practice a body scan relaxation exercise.

Materials
- Feelings Notecards
- Relaxation Exercises (for older students)
- Relaxation Practice (for older students)
- Session 3 Parent Letter
A. Warm-Up Activity: Make a Line
Begin the session with the warm-up activity Make a Line.

Ask the students to form a line. Once they are in a line, ask the students to create a new line based on the following options:
- Height, from shortest to tallest
- Alphabetical order of their first names (from A to Z)
- Alphabetical order of their last names (from A to Z)
- Birthday, from January to December
- Other options similar to these!

How did that activity go? Did you learn something new about anyone in the group?

B. Practice Review: Relaxation
Review the deep breathing and muscle relaxation activity and practice from last session.

Let’s review the deep breathing and muscle relaxation we did last session.

For anyone who practiced during the week, how did it go?

Now let’s practice doing some deep breathing and muscle relaxation.

Take a deep breath in... and a deep breath out. Deep breath in, deep breath out. Deep breath in...deep breath out.

Now take even BIGGER breaths. Put one hand on your stomach and one hand on your chest. Imagine you are getting ready to blow up a balloon. Breathe in and count 1-2-3 slowly. Now imagine you are blowing ALL the air out of a balloon. Count slowly... 1-2-3.

Now we are going to relax our hands and arms.
Pretend you are squeezing a whole lemon in your left hand. Squeeze it hard. Try to squeeze all the juice out. Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Now drop the lemon and relax. See how much better your hand and arm feel when they are relaxed. Repeat with the other hand.

Now we are going to relax our legs and feet.
Pretend that you are standing barefoot in a big, fat, mud puddle. Squish your toes down deep in the mud. Try to get your feet down to the bottom of the mud puddle. Push down, spread your toes apart, and feel the mud squish up between your toes. Now step out of the mud puddle. Relax your feet. Let your toes go loose and feel how nice that is. It feels good to be relaxed.

How do you feel now? I encourage you to keep using deep breathing and muscle relaxation between sessions.
C. Thoughts-Feelings-Actions (T-F-A) Triangle
Draw a triangle and label with thoughts, feeling, and actions. Remind students about the triangle from last week and the different points on the triangle, and then use the examples from students’ practice to apply the triangle to their stressful situations.

Draw Thoughts-Feelings-Actions (T-F-A) Triangle on the board.

*Do you remember the Thoughts-Feelings-Actions (T-F-A) Triangle that we introduced last week? [Allow students to respond.] Let’s discuss how your thoughts, feelings, and actions are connected when we experience a stressful situation. Let’s try the example of raising your hand and getting the wrong answer in class. Let’s start again with our thoughts. What would you be thinking if you raised your hand in class and got the wrong answer? [e.g., I’m not smart, I shouldn’t raise my hand in class; Write responses on the board next to ‘thoughts’ on the triangle.] Good work. Now let’s move onto feelings. What might you feel if you raised your hand and got the wrong answer? [e.g., embarrassed, sad. Write responses on the board next to ‘feelings’ on the triangle.] Finally, what might you do after you raised your hand and got the wrong answer in class? [e.g., stop answering questions, put head on desk. Write responses on the board next to ‘feelings’ on the triangle.]

After completing the example triangle, explain to students how the thoughts, feelings, and actions are connected:

[Modify the following example to fit with students’ responses:] Let’s look at our example of raising your hand in class and getting the wrong answer. You said that raising your hand and getting the wrong answer may make you THINK that I’m not smart, makes you FEEL embarrassed, and makes you not answer any more questions. How are these all connected? [Allow students to respond.] Good! In this situation, our feelings are connected to our thoughts. We THINK that we are not smart and then we FEEL embarrassed. Because we think we are not smart and feel embarrassed, we do not answer any more questions. What are some other thoughts that are more helpful that we could have? Think about your inside strengths. [Gather responses from students.] Right, some other thoughts that we could have are ‘everyone gets answers wrong’ or ‘I’m smart and get most answers right.’ If we have these thoughts, we may feel happier and we may have different actions, like we may try raising our hand again.

D. Common Reactions to Stress and Trauma

Now we are going to read a book about a raccoon named Sherman who went through something really scary and stressful so that we can learn about some of the reactions he had.⁸

Introduce the picture book, “A Terrible Thing Happened” by Margaret Holmes.

Read the picture book aloud to the students showing them pictures as you read.

---

⁸ Activity adapted from the Bounce Back program (www.bouncebackprogram.org) with permission by Dr. Audra Langley.
Did you know that all human beings react to going through something really stressful, difficult or scary? Just like Sherman Smith the raccoon, it is very normal for us all to have some pretty common feelings and problems when we have been through something like this. It is part of being human (and a raccoon in Sherman’s case) and normal. We are going to talk about some things that a lot of people start to feel after a stressful thing has happened and even though everyone doesn’t have all of these reactions, most people have at least a few and sometimes a lot of them. Sherman described some of the feelings and problems that came up for him after he saw something terrible. Can you remember some of those things?

Pause to allow the students to respond or review the following yourself as they came up in the book:

1) tried not to think about what he saw
2) did not feel as hungry
3) had stomachaches and headaches
4) felt sad
5) felt scared or nervous
6) had trouble sleeping
7) had bad dreams
8) felt angry all the time and got in trouble

As student mentions each symptom, if the group seems comfortable, you may inquire about how many of them have had similar responses.

For each symptom, try to:
• Normalize the symptom—explain that this is a common reaction
• Provide hope for how the group can help address it

Make the connection between these symptoms and what the children have experienced. For example: It really makes sense that some of you have been feeling _____ given that you experienced something that was so stressful/scary.

Review how newcomers have sometimes gone through scary or stressful events during their journey.

E. Identifying Feelings

In this exercise, students will practice identifying feelings in others and in themselves. Begin by handing out the My Feeling cards to each student. Each card has an emotion or feeling written on it, as well as an associated image. Act out each emotion for about five seconds and then ask the students to raise the card for which emotion they think you demonstrated. The emotions or feelings to act out could include: happy, sad, angry, tired, silly, scared, and worried.

Now that we have discussed how we might feel in certain situations, I want us to practice identifying feelings in others. I am going to give each of you 10 index cards. On each card there is a word and drawing of different emotions or feelings. [Distribute My Feelings cards.] I am going to act out each of the emotions or feelings and when I say ‘How am I feeling? You will raise the card that matches with what I have acted out. Does anyone have any questions?
[Act out first feeling such as ‘sad’ for five seconds.]

Ask the students: How am I feeling? [Allow students to raise cards and check their responses. Repeat the exercise until all the feeling cards have been acted out.]

Follow this exercise with a discussion about each one of the feelings. Ask the group to describe the facial expression and body position (e.g., furrowed brow, frowning face and arms crossed for anger) for each feeling.

Let’s talk about how we can tell from someone’s face and body that they feel a certain way. How can you tell when someone is happy? Sad? Angry?...

F. Relaxation Exercise: Body Scan

Lead students through a body scan relaxation exercise.

Today’s relaxation exercise will be a body scan. I would like you to start off by taking three deep breaths. Deep breath in 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out 1, 2, 3.

I want you to start paying attention to different parts of your body. I want you to notice different parts of your body without changing anything. Okay, I want you to pay attention to your fingers. Think about how your fingertips and try to notice how they feel right now. Just watch and observe how your fingers feel. Think about each finger.

Focus on your whole arms: do they feel heavy? Light? Think about each arm and focus on how it feels.

Now let’s move up to your neck. Just concentrate on how your neck feels right now. Think about the front of your neck and the back of your neck. Does it feel tight or loose? How does your neck feel right now? Just think about your neck.

Move up to your head, think about your chin, your lips. Observes your cheeks, now your nose… your eyes… your forehead… your ears.

Okay let’s move down to your stomach and back. Just notice and observe how they are feeling. Just think about how your belly feels. Now think about how your back feels. Don’t do anything, just think and observe.

Now think about your whole legs. Do they feel tight or loose? Heavy or light? Okay keep going and think about your feet. Notice how your feet feel. Now move onto your toes. Think about each individual toe.

Now I want you think about your whole body. Scan your whole body from head to toe. Notice how your whole body feels. Notice any changes that might have happened.

Okay let’s end with three deep breaths. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. In, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3.
G. Assign Practice: Relaxation

For All Students: This week, you may practice deep breathing (like a bear), muscle relaxation and body scan with your friends or family members. I would like you to do a relaxation activity 3 days this week.

For Older Students: Explain that students will have the worksheet as a *prompt* to remind them about the activity.

*Here is the worksheet [Show the Relaxation Practice worksheet.]* For each practice, make a star or check mark on the day you did it, and circle a face to show how it went.
Feelings Notecards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIRED</th>
<th>SCARED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Tired Face" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Scared Face" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UPSET</th>
<th>SAD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Upset Face" /></td>
<td><img src="image4" alt="Sad Face" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SURPRISED</th>
<th>HAPPY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image5" alt="Surprised Face" /></td>
<td><img src="image6" alt="Happy Face" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SILLY
BORED
ANGRY
EXCITED
Deep Breathing

Practice deep breathing.

Muscle Relaxation

**Hands & Arms:** Pretend you are squeezing a whole lemon in your left hand. Squeeze it hard. Try to squeeze all the juice out. Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Now drop the lemon and relax.

**Arms & Shoulders:** Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them up high over your head like you are furry, comfortable cat.

**Face and Nose:** A pesky old fly has landed on your nose, try to get him off without using your hands. Now relax your nose.

**Stomach:** Make your stomach very hard like a baby elephant is walking on it! Now let your stomach go soft.
Body Scan

To begin, start off by taking three deep breaths. Deep breath in 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out 1, 2, 3.

Start paying attention to different parts of your body. Notice different parts of your body without changing anything. Pay attention to your fingers. Think about your fingertips and notice how they feel right now. Just observe how your fingers feel. Think about each finger.

Focus on your whole arms, and then your neck, and your head... Think about your stomach and back, just notice and observe how they're feeling. Notice your legs. Do they feel heavy? Light? Think about each part is feeling right now and focus on it.

Think about your whole body. Scan your whole body from head to toe. Notice how your whole body feels. Notice any changes that might have happened. End with three deep breaths. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out 1, 2, 3. In, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3.
Practice deep breathing, muscle relaxation or body scan 3 times in the next week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day of week – Put a star (*) or checkmark (✓) on the days you practice</th>
<th>How did it go?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How did it go?

- 😞 😞 😊
- 😞 😞 😊
- 😞 😞 😊
- 😞 😞 😊
- 😞 😞 😊
- 😞 😞 😊
- 😞 😞 😊
Session 3: Parent Letter

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Today we had another productive group session! The students have been working hard and they are learning a lot.

We started by doing a fun exercise to get to know each other better. We reviewed how thoughts, feelings, and actions are connected. We moved on to explain traumatic events and common reactions to traumatic events. Some reactions to traumatic events include: having a lack of appetite, stomachache, headache, or feeling sad. To help students learn this, we read a book called “A Terrible Thing Happened.” As we discussed during our session together, these reactions are normal.

We also introduced the facial expressions and the body language of different feelings through a game. I acted out different feelings, and asked students to guess the feeling I was acting out. We then discussed the different facial expressions and body position for each feeling. We ended the session with a body scan relaxation exercise. The instructions for this exercise are on the back of this letter. We encourage you to do this body scan relaxation exercise with your child!

As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you maybe have about the program or your child. You can reach me by telephone at _______________ or by email at __________.

Sincerely,

______________
Deep Breathing

Practice deep breathing.

Take a deep breath in… and a deep breath out.
Put one hand on your stomach and one hand on your chest. Imagine you are getting ready to blow up a balloon. Breathe in and count 1, 2, 3 slowly. Now imagine you are blowing ALL the air out of a balloon.

Muscle Relaxation

**Hands & Arms:** Pretend you are squeezing a whole lemon in your left hand. Squeeze it hard. Try to squeeze all the juice out. Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Now drop the lemon and relax.

**Arms & Shoulders:** Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them up high over your head like you are furry, comfortable cat.

**Face and Nose:** A pesky old fly has landed on your nose, try to get him off without using your hands. Now relax your nose.

**Stomach:** Make your stomach very hard like a baby elephant is walking on it! Now let your stomach go soft.
To begin, start off by taking three deep breaths. Deep breath in 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out 1, 2, 3.

Start paying attention to different parts of your body. Notice different parts of your body without changing anything. Pay attention to your fingers. Think about your fingertips and notice how they feel right now. Just observe how your fingers feel. Think about each finger.

Focus on your whole arms, and then your neck, and your head... Think about your stomach and back, just notice and observe how they're feeling. Notice your legs. Do they feel heavy? Light? Think about each part is feeling right now and focus on it.

Think about your whole body. Scan your whole body from head to toe. Notice how your whole body feels. Notice any changes that might have happened. End with three deep breaths. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. In, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3.
SESSION 3
STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND FUNCTIONING RATING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Engagement Rating (1-5)</th>
<th>Affect Rating (1-5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Engagement Rating:

1  Refused to participate in the discussions or activities.
2  Did not contribute to discussions but went through the motions of activities. Student was co-operative, but it was difficult to determine their level of understanding and insight due to minimal participation.
3  Minimal contributions to discussions and activities.
4  Some contributions to discussions and participation in activities that showed an understanding of the topic.
5  Several contributions to discussions and participation in activities that showed an understanding of the topic. Student also showed personal insight, meaning they related the topic to their own life in some way.

Affect Rating:

1  Negative affect and demonstrating signs of distress
2  Appears flat or sad but not overtly distressed
3  Neutral affect
4  Some positive affect
5  Positive affect and demonstrating signs of optimism / hopefulness
Session 4: Measuring and Managing Feelings

Outline
A. Warm-Up Activity: Guess How I am Feeling!
B. Practice Review: Relaxation
C. Measuring Feelings
D. Managing Feelings
E. Relaxation Exercise: My Calm Place
F. Assign Practice: Relaxation and Feeling Thermometer

Objectives
1. Students will be able to rate the intensity of their feelings on a Feelings Thermometer.
2. Students will identify ways to stay calm and reduce stress.
3. Students will learn and practice a My Calm Place relaxation exercise.

Materials
- ‘Guess How I am Feeling’ Cards
- Managing My Feelings
- My Calm Place Images
- Relaxation Exercises (for older students)
- Relaxation Practice (for older students)
- Session 4 Parent Letter
A. Warm-Up Activity: Guess How I am Feeling!
Begin the session by asking students to each act out one feeling and having group members guess the feeling. Pass out the ‘Guess How I am Feeling!’ cards and then ask them to act out the feeling on the card.

Today’s warm-up activity is called Guess How I am Feeling! I am going to pass out one feeling card to each of you. Please act it out with no words and then the group will guess what you are feeling.

B. Practice Review: Relaxation

Review the deep breathing, muscle relaxation and body scan activity and practice from last session.

Let’s review the deep breathing, muscle relaxation and body scan we did last session.

For anyone who practiced during the week, how did it go?

Now let’s practice doing some deep breathing and a body scan.

Start by taking three deep breaths. Deep breath in 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out 1, 2, 3.

Now pay attention to your fingers. Think about your fingertips and try to notice how they feel right now. Just watch and observe how your fingers feel. Think about each finger.

Focus on your whole arms: do they feel heavy? Light? Think about each arm and focus on how it feels.

Now let’s move up to your neck. Think about the front of your neck and the back of your neck. Does it feel tight or loose? How does your neck feel right now? Just think about your neck.

Move up to your head, think about your chin, your lips. Observes your cheeks, now your nose… your eyes… your forehead… your ears.

Move down to your stomach and back. Just think about how your belly feels. Now think about how your back feels. Don’t do anything, just think and observe.

Now think about your whole legs. Do they feel tight or loose? Heavy or light? Now notice how your feet feel. Now move onto your toes. Think about each individual toe.

Think about your whole body. Scan your whole body from head to toe.

Let’s end with three deep breaths. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out 1, 2, 3. In, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3.
C. Measuring Feelings
Explain that the goal of this part is to practice measuring how strong their feelings are on a scale from no stress (calm) to very stressed.

[Draw a Feelings Thermometer on the board or show the thermometer from Managing My Feelings worksheet].

_I want to explain something called the Feelings Thermometer. We will use the Feelings Thermometer to measure how calm or stressed we feel. What happens to your temperature when you are sick and have a fever? [Allow students to respond.] That’s right! You might have a high temperature, so you would be all the way up here [Point to the 8 or 9.] What happens to your temperature on a day when you feel healthy? [Allow students to respond.] That’s right! It goes down. Let’s say it is at a 0 or a 1, at the bottom. How might you feel if you don’t feel sick, but just a little sick, like with a headache or sniffy nose? That’s right. You might feel like a 3 or 4._

_We are going to use a thermometer to measure our level of stress. What is something that would make you really stressed – like an 8 or a 9? When you are an 8 or a 9, how do you look?_

_What about a medium level of stress – like a 5 or 6? When you are a 5 or a 6, how do you look?_

_When do you feel little to no stress, or calm – like a 0 or 1? When you are a 0 or a 1, how do you look? And what words would you use to describe how you feel inside?_

You may want to explain that each student may look and feel different at different levels of stress, e.g., some students may be quiet when they are very stressed and some may get loud. Also, a situation (e.g., having a dog chase you) that is “an 8 or a 9” to one student may be “a 5 or a 6” to someone else.

D. Managing Feelings
Explain that the goal of this activity is to identify thoughts and actions that students can use when they feel their stress level rising on the Feelings Thermometer. Each student will choose thoughts and actions to use at different points on their own thermometer.

_Now that we have a way to measure our feelings, let’s practice how we can manage our feelings of stress with thoughts and actions._

_Just like when we are sick with a fever, there are things we can do when our Feelings Thermometer goes up. What are some things you do when you are sick with a fever to make your fever come down? [e.g., take medicine, use cool washcloth] Right! The same is true for our feelings. We do not want our Feelings Thermometer to get too high, because it makes us feel badly and unable to do the things we want and need to do._

Pass out the Managing My Feelings worksheet and explain the exercise.

_TIP: For young students, you may want to have them decorate a Feelings Thermometer to keep them active and engaged._
Let’s practice using the Feelings Thermometer with different situations.

Let’s think of some things we can think or say to feel better when we are stressed. For example, when you are worried about something you might say, ‘It is going to be okay.’ What are some other things you can tell yourself that help if you are stressed? [List out several thoughts on the board based on student responses.]

If students are having difficulty generating ideas, you may want to list thoughts like:

- I have been through things like this before
- I can talk to my friends for help
- It’s not that bad
- I can handle this
- My family will help me
- This is scary, but I can do it

Great! Now, let’s think of some things you can DO that help when you are feeling stress. For example, you can practice some of the relaxation exercises you have learned like deep breathing or muscle relaxation, or you can listen to calming music. What are some other things you can do that help if you are feeling stress?

[List out several thoughts based on student responses.]

If students are having difficulty generating ideas, you may want to list actions like:

- Talk to a friend
- Do something I enjoy
- Play a game or sport
- Talk to an adult
- Read
- Watch a funny movie/video

Everyone manages their stress in different ways, and some thoughts and actions are more helpful than others for each of us. So, now I want you to work with a partner to come up with what YOU would think and what YOU would do to make your Feelings Thermometer go down. [Hand out Managing my Feelings worksheet and encourage students to talk, write and/or draw.] You can use these thoughts and actions when you begin to feel stress.  

E. Relaxation Exercise: My Calm Place

Before lead students through a My Calm Place relaxation exercise, pass around images to help students think of a calm place.

---

10 TIP: For young students, you may want to write this list on the board instead of asking them to generate the list.

11 TIP: Instead of all students completing Managing My Feelings worksheets, you may choose to complete a group Managing My Feelings activity by creating a large thermometer with thoughts and actions posted next to it for display on the wall.
We have been doing one in each session and now I will introduce you to a new kind of relaxation exercise called My Calm Place. I am going to pass around some images [Pass out My Calm Place images]. These are just some examples of calm places. As we go through the exercise, you should imagine a place that is calming to you!

Get yourself in a comfortable position, whether that’s sitting up or laying down. You can close your eyes, if you’d like. Take several deep breaths in. Breathe in 1-2-3 and breathe out 1-2-3. Continue breathing in through our nose and out through your mouth. Count 1-2-3. [Allow students to do this for several seconds.]

Now think of a place that makes you feel happy and at peace. This could be anywhere. It can be a place that you know very well, or it can be an imaginary place. It could be a calm room, or outside in nature by water or in a field, or anywhere else that you feel happy and at peace. Get a clear picture of that place in your mind. Keep breathing slowly and deeply, 1-2-3 in and 1-2-3 out.

Now that you have a clear picture in your mind, begin adding details. What do you see there? What do you hear? How does this calm, happy place smell? How does your body feel in this place?

You feel calm and safe here. Remain still while you feel calm and relaxed. Continue taking deep breaths in and out and enjoy being in this place. Continue breathing 1-2-3. 1-2-3. [Allow students to remain in the place for about a minute.]

Begin to let your body come back into this room. As you slowly leave your calm place, know that you can always think of this place any time you need to relax, feel calm and comfortable. In a moment, I will count to three to bring you all back to this room. Don’t forget to slowly inhale and exhale.

One… slowly inhale in and exhale out. Two… inhale in and exhale out. Three… inhale in and exhale out.

Now I want you all to think about where you are on your Feelings Thermometer. How much did our feeling thermometer numbers change?

---

TIP: Some students may report that their feeling thermometer went up during the relaxation exercise. Explain that this experience is not unusual, and it can take practice before it works, but that if it continues to increase stress and tension, you will work with the student to identify another calming activity.
F. Assign Practice: Relaxation and Feeling Thermometer

For All Students: This week, you may practice deep breathing (like a bear), muscle relaxation, body scan or My Calm Place. I would like you to do a relaxation activity 3 days this week. Also, try to use your thoughts and actions if your Feelings Thermometer is rising and let us know how it goes next week.

We are going to start next week’s session by doing a Show and Tell about where you are from. So, bring a photograph or picture or something to show from the place you are from.

For Older Students: Explain that students will have the worksheet as a prompt to remind them about the activity.

Here is the worksheet [Show the Relaxation Practice worksheet.] For each practice, make a star or check mark on the day you did it, and circle a face to show how it went.
### ‘Guess How I am Feeling!’ Cards

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TIRED</td>
<td>SCARED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPSET</td>
<td>SAD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SURPRISED</td>
<td>HAPPY</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THOUGHTS
WHAT CAN I TELL MYSELF TO FEEL BETTER?

ACTIONS
WHAT CAN I DO TO FEEL BETTER?
Deep Breathing

Practice deep breathing.

Take a deep breath in... and a deep breath out.
Put one hand on your stomach and one hand on your chest. Imagine you are getting ready to blow up a balloon. Breathe in and count 1, 2, 3 slowly. Now imagine you are blowing ALL the air out of a balloon.

Muscle Relaxation

**Hands & Arms**: Pretend you are squeezing a whole lemon in your left hand. Squeeze it hard. Try to squeeze all the juice out. Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Now drop the lemon and relax.

**Arms & Shoulders**: Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them up high over your head like you are furry, comfortable cat.

**Face and Nose**: A pesky old fly has landed on your nose, try to get him off without using your hands. Now relax your nose.

**Stomach**: Make your stomach very hard like a baby elephant is walking on it! Now let your stomach go soft.
Body Scan

To begin, start off by taking three deep breaths. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out 1, 2, 3.

Start paying attention to different parts of your body. Notice different parts of your body without changing anything. Pay attention to your fingers. Think about your fingertips and notice how they feel right now. Just observe how your fingers feel. Think about each finger.

Focus on your whole arms, and then your neck, and your head… Think about your stomach and back, just notice and observe how they’re feeling. Notice your legs. Do they feel heavy? Light? Think about each part is feeling right now and focus on it.

Think about your whole body. Scan your whole body from head to toe. Notice how your whole body feels. Notice any changes that might have happened. End with three deep breaths. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out 1, 2, 3.

My Calm Place

Get yourself in a comfortable position, whether that’s sitting up or laying down. Close your eyes if you’d like. Take several deep breaths in. Breathe in, 1, 2, 3 and breathe out 1, 2, 3. Continue breathing in through our nose and out through your mouth. Count 1-2-3. Now think of a place that makes you feel happy and at peace. This could be anywhere. It can be a place that you know very well, or it can be an imaginary place. It could be a calm room, or outside in nature by water or in a field, or anywhere else that you feel happy and at peace. Get a clear picture of that place in your mind. Keep breathing slowly and deeply, 1, 2, 3 in and 1, 2, 3 out.

Now that you have a clear picture in your mind, begin adding details. What do you see there? What do you hear? How does this calm, happy place smell? How does your body feel in this place? You feel calm and safe here. Remain still while you feel calm and relaxed. Continue taking deep breaths in and out and enjoy being in this place…. Continue breathing 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3.
Relaxation Practice

Practice deep breathing, muscle relaxation, body scan, or My Calm Place 3 times in the next week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day of week – Put a star (*) or checkmark (✓) on the days you practice</th>
<th>How did it go?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>🙁😊😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>🙁😊😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>🙁😊😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>🙁😊😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>🙁😊😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>🙁😊😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>🙁😊😊</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Session 4: Parent Letter

Dear Parent or Guardian,

You should be very proud of your child! They are working really hard and learning a lot in our sessions.

We started today’s session by playing the “Guess How I am Feeling Game!” that we did last week. Then, we reviewed the deep breathing, muscle relaxation, and body scan relaxation exercises. We moved on to explain and practice something called a “Feelings Thermometer.” We use a picture of a thermometer to help the students understand the intensity (from low to high) of different feelings they may have. We used the thermometer to help visualize different levels of stress or feeling upset.

We also talked about different strategies your child can use when they are feeling upset, worried, or stressed. When feeling stressed, you can encourage your child to thoughts like, “I can handle this” or “My family will help me.” You can also encourage your child to do different actions, such as talk to a friend or do an activity that they enjoy.

We then introduced a new relaxation exercise, which involved imagining a calm place. The instructions to this exercise are on the back of this letter. We encourage you to practice this relaxation exercise with your child!

As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you maybe have about the program or your child. You can reach me by telephone at _______________ or by email at __________.

Sincerely,

__________________
Deep Breathing

Practice deep breathing.

Muscle Relaxation

**Hands & Arms:** Pretend you are squeezing a whole lemon in your left hand. Squeeze it hard. Try to squeeze all the juice out. Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Now drop the lemon and relax.

**Arms & Shoulders:** Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them up high over your head like you are furry, comfortable cat.

**Face and Nose:** A pesky old fly has landed on your nose, try to get him off without using your hands. Now relax your nose.

**Stomach:** Make your stomach very hard like a baby elephant is walking on it! Now let your stomach go soft.
Body Scan

To begin, start off by taking three deep breaths. Deep breath in 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out 1, 2, 3.

Start paying attention to different parts of your body. Notice different parts of your body without changing anything. Pay attention to your fingers. Think about your fingertips and notice how they feel right now. Just observe how your fingers feel. Think about each finger.

Focus on your whole arms, and then your neck, and your head… Think about your stomach and back, just notice and observe how they’re feeling. Notice your legs. Do they feel heavy? Light? Think about each part is feeling right now and focus on it.

Think about your whole body. Scan your whole body from head to toe. Notice how your whole body feels. Notice any changes that might have happened. End with three deep breaths. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. In, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3.

My Calm Place

Get yourself in a comfortable position, whether that’s sitting up or laying down. Close your eyes if you’d like. Take several deep breaths in. Breathe in 1, 2, 3 and breathe out 1, 2, 3. Continue breathing in through our nose and out through your mouth. Count 1-2-3. Now think of a place that makes you feel happy and at peace. This could be anywhere. It can be a place that you know very well, or it can be an imaginary place. It could be a calm room, or outside in nature by water or in a field, or anywhere else that you feel happy and at peace. Get a clear picture of that place in your mind. Keep breathing slowly and deeply, 1, 2, 3 in and 1, 2, 3 out.

Now that you have a clear picture in your mind, begin adding details. What do you see there? What do you hear? How does this calm, happy place smell? How does your body feel in this place? You feel calm and safe here. Remain still while you feel calm and relaxed. Continue taking deep breaths in and out and enjoy being in this place… Continue breathing 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3.
### SESSION 4
**STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND FUNCTIONING RATING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Engagement Rating (1-5)</th>
<th>Affect Rating (1-5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Engagement Rating:**

1. Refused to participate in the discussions or activities.
2. Did not contribute to discussions but went through the motions of activities. Student was co-operative, but it was difficult to determine their level of understanding and insight due to minimal participation.
3. Minimal contributions to discussions and activities.
4. Some contributions to discussions and participation in activities that showed an understanding of the topic.
5. Several contributions to discussions and participation in activities that showed an understanding of the topic. Student also showed personal insight, meaning they related the topic to their own life in some way

**Affect Rating:**

1. Negative affect and demonstrating signs of distress
2. Appears flat or sad but not overtly distressed
3. Neutral affect
4. Some positive affect
5. Positive affect and demonstrating signs of optimism / hopefulness
Session 5: Using Helpful Thoughts

Outline
A. Warm-Up Activity: Show and Tell – Where I Am From
B. Practice Review: Relaxation and Feeling Thermometer
C. Introduction to Thoughts
D. Investigative Questioning
E. Helpful Thinking
F. Relaxation Exercise: Drawing
G. Assign Practice: Relaxation and Helpful Thinking

Objectives
1. Students will distinguish unhelpful from helpful, realistic thoughts.
2. Students will describe three questions to investigate unhelpful thoughts.
3. Students will be able to identify three helpful thoughts, including positive self-statements and coping statements.
4. Students will learn and practice drawing a peaceful place.

Materials
- Images for Introduction to Thoughts
- SuperThinker Card
- Helpful Thinking Practice (for older students)
- Relaxation Exercises (for older students)
- Relaxation Practice (for older students)
- Session 5 Parent Letter
A. Warm-Up Activity: Show and Tell - Where I Am From

Begin the session using the warm-up activity, Show and Tell – Where I Am From. Ask each student to share the thing they brought in from where they are from and to tell the group something about it in two to three sentences. For students who did not bring something in, have them describe a place or thing from where they are from.

"We are going to warm up by doing a Show and Tell about where each of you is from. If you brought in a photograph or something, please describe it. If you did not bring something in, just describe a place or a thing from where you are from that is special to you. Please keep your descriptions to about two or three sentences so that everyone has a turn."

B. Practice Review: Relaxation and Feeling Thermometer

Review the relaxation activities (deep breathing, muscle relaxation, body scan, My Calm Place) activities and practice from last session.

"Let’s review the Feelings Thermometer that we talked about last time. [Show the Feelings Thermometer.] Did anyone’s Feelings Thermometer go up high this week, like above a 6 or 7? Remember, when your Feelings Thermometer is high, you feel upset or stressed. If your Feelings Thermometer was high, what did you do to make it come down and to feel better? [Discuss situations with students that made them upset or stressed, and what thoughts and actions they used to feel better.]

Thanks for sharing! Remember one of the things we can do to help our Feelings Thermometer come down is to relax our bodies.

Let’s review the relaxation activities we have done together. We have done deep breathing, muscle relaxation, body scan, and My Calm Place.

For anyone who practiced during the week, how did it go?

Now let’s practice doing some deep breathing and My Calm Place.

Get yourself in a comfortable position, whether that’s sitting up or laying down. You can close your eyes, if you’d like. Take several deep breaths in. Breathe in 1, 2, 3 and breathe out 1, 2, 3. Continue breathing in through our nose and out through your mouth. Count 1-2-3. [Allow students to do this for several seconds.]

Now think of your Calm Place, a place that makes you feel happy and at peace. Get a clear picture of that place in your mind. Keep breathing slowly and deeply, 1, 2, 3 in and 1, 2, 3 out.

What do you see there? What do you hear? How does this calm, happy place smell? How does your body feel in this place?

You feel calm and safe here. Remain still while you feel calm and relaxed. Continue taking deep breaths in and out and enjoy being in this place…. Continue breathing 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3. [Allow students to remain in the place for about a minute.]

13 TIP: Have a map or globe available to allow students to show where they are from during this warm-up activity.
Begin to let your body come back into this room. As you slowly leave your calm place, know that you can always think of this place any time you need to relax, feel calm and comfortable. In a moment, I will count to three to bring you all back to this room. Don’t forget to slowly inhale and exhale.

One… slowly inhale in and exhale out. Two… inhale in and exhale out. Three… inhale in and exhale out

C. Introduction to Thoughts
This session will focus on the “thoughts” corner of the triangle. Begin with a quick reminder of the triangle. Students will learn what thoughts are and will practice identifying thoughts.

Does everyone remember the triangle from last week? [Allow students to respond.] Great, so just as a reminder, the triangle looks like this. [Draw the Thoughts-Feelings-Actions (T-F-A) Triangle in a place where the students can see it. Make sure to have visuals to represent each point of the triangle e.g. a thought bubble for ‘thoughts.’] Today we are going to talk about the ‘thoughts’ point of the triangle. [Point to the thoughts point on the triangle.] Did you know that we almost always have these thought bubbles because we are almost always thinking, even when we’re sleeping!

Have students practice identifying thoughts by looking at images of people doing an activity and discussing what they might be thinking about.

To make sure we understand what thought are, let’s look at some pictures and work together to guess what the person in the picture might be thinking.

Example #1: [Show picture.] What do you think this person might be thinking? [If a student identifies a feeling instead, make sure to correct them, but note that thoughts and feeling are connected. If the group does not suggest thoughts, some prompts may help, such as ’Would she be thinking she’s good at basketball and going to score?’ Or ’Oh no, what if I miss the basket?’ Or ’We’ll lose the game and all my teammates will hate me, no one will sit with me at lunch.’]
[Show example #2]: Great! And how about this person who got a good grade? What might they be thinking?
Show a picture of two different people taking a test but having different thoughts. One person in the image is thinking something realistic and the second person should be thinking something irrational or “catastrophizing.”

*What is different about these two pictures? [Allow students to respond.] Great! Here we have one person who is thinking the exam is very scary. [Point to that picture.] How can you tell he thinks the test is scary? One clue could be his face. Where do you think he might be on his Feelings Thermometer?*

*The other person is taking the same test and is thinking that the exam is not scary. This person looks confident and might be thinking, ‘This exam is hard, but I am doing the best I can.’ Where do you think he might be on his Feelings Thermometer?*

Give an example of how two different types of thoughts (one helpful and one unhelpful) can lead to different actions and feelings. Show two different students doing homework with thought bubbles above each. One student is distracted while doing homework and one student is happy to be doing homework. For one image, ask students to think of an “unhelpful” thought that the person in the picture could be thinking.

*Now I want to show you two more pictures. Let’s look at the first picture. What unhelpful thought might he be having while doing his homework? [Allow students to respond.] Ok good. They might be thinking: ‘I don’t like doing homework. I would rather be playing soccer right now.’ Ok great, now if they are thinking that thought, how are they feeling? What are they doing? [Allow students to respond.] Great so they might be feeling frustrated and they are probably not doing their homework.*
Now let’s look at a similar image. The person is still doing homework, but now let’s consider a ‘helpful’ thought that they might be thinking. What are helpful thoughts? [Allow students to respond.] Good, so they might be thinking, ‘I am going to get this homework done and then I can play.’ How are they feeling? What are they doing? [Point to previous example.] They might be feeling good about finishing their homework and they might be working hard to finish so that they can go out to play. This example shows that there are different ways to think about the same situations. The way that we THINK about the situation affects how we FEEL and ACT [point to the T-F-A triangle].
D. Investigative Questioning

Explain to students that they can be a “thought detective” and ask oneself a series of questions to come up with more helpful thoughts. Asking oneself a series of questions can help distinguish helpful versus unhelpful thoughts or a realistic versus unrealistic thought.

Sometimes, particularly when we feel upset, it’s hard to know that we have unhelpful or unrealistic thoughts. One way to look at your thoughts is by being a thought detective. Does everyone know what a detective is? [Allow students to respond; you may have to show or describe what a detective is (someone who looks for the facts or truth after something happens).]

Great! Let’s use an example. Let’s say you are upset because you recently joined the soccer team, and all the other students on the team are sitting together at lunch without you. You are thinking ‘everyone hates me!’ You can act as a detective to figure out if your thought, ‘everyone hates me,’ is really true.

One question that you could ask yourself is: ‘What might my friends say about this situation?’ [Allow students to respond.] That’s right! Your friend might say: ‘It’s not true that everyone hates you! I like you, and I think you’re funny.’

A 2nd question you can ask yourself is: ‘What are other ways of seeing this situation?’ [Allow students to discuss.]

For older children (ages 10+):

A 3rd question you can ask yourself is: ‘What information supports my feelings?’ In other words, what are the facts that tell me this is true? [Allow students to discuss.] What words do they use that support my feelings? What actions do they do that support my conclusions? What nonverbal behaviors do they do that makes me feel this way?

A 4th question you can ask yourself is: ‘What information supports alternative thoughts, including the opposite of my thought?’ Is there information that supports they like me a little bit, or that they really like me? ‘Hmmm…they’re wearing the same type clothes I wear, they save a seat for me, they ask me to sit next to them, they talk to me, etc.?’

A 5th question you can ask yourself is: ‘How can I test my thought?’ For example, ‘I don’t think the other players like me because they don’t talk to me. What if I say something to them after listening to what they are saying and see how they react? Do they nod, agree, smile, say more about it, ask me more, or do they act like I didn’t even say anything, laugh at me, or say that’s a bad idea?’

A 6th question to ask, after using some of these above questions, is: ‘What seems to be the best explanation from the information I’ve collected?’ ‘Is there other information I need to better know?’ ‘Should I ask one of the group if I should join in, should I talk to another new member of the soccer team, or the coach or trainer to find out how the team works and acts with new players?’

14 TIP: If you sense that students have a negative police/crime association, shift to “investigator” such as a scientist.
E. Helpful Thinking
Introduce the concept of helpful thinking to challenge unhelpful thoughts. Develop a list of helpful thoughts.

Sometimes when we have unhelpful thoughts, we can come up with helpful thoughts to feel better. Let’s come up with a list of helpful thoughts. [As students come up with thoughts in each category – Detective Thoughts, Positive Thoughts, Calming Thoughts - write them down.]

We can try to come up with a more correct thought by being a detective like: ‘Not everyone hates me because I can name two friends who like me.’ These are Detective Thoughts.

We can say nice, kind things to ourselves like: ‘I can do it!’ or ‘I am a nice person.’ These are Positive Thoughts. Can anyone else think of other positive things you can say to yourself? [Allow students to respond.]

We can also remind ourselves of ways to make our Feelings Thermometer go down like ‘I am starting to feel tense, so I can practice deep breathing.’ These are Calming Thoughts. Can anyone else think of things you can say to help your Feelings Thermometer come down? [Allow students to respond.]

Using the list of helpful thoughts that the group made together, students will choose a few of the helpful thoughts and write them on a SuperThinker card. Distribute SuperThinker cards and instruct students to decorate the SuperThinker side of the card. Explain that the SuperThinker uses helpful thoughts instead of unhelpful thoughts. On the other side of the card, instruct students to write helpful thoughts that will be most useful to them.

I am going to hand each of you a SuperThinker card. [Hold up note card to show to the group.] On one side of the card, you will see a SuperThinker. Your super power is using helpful thoughts instead of unhelpful thoughts. To make sure you can use your superpowers, you are going to write at least three helpful thoughts on the other side of the card. You can choose your helpful thoughts based on the list we just wrote together [point to the list] or you can think of new ones. Your SuperThinker card is for you to carry with you and use when you are having unhelpful thoughts. Decorate your SuperThinker however you would like to! Does anyone have any questions? [Distribute SuperThinker cards and support students as they come up with thoughts for their cards.]

Explain to students that they should carry this card with them throughout the day and refer to them when they are in a difficult situation.

I want you to carry your SuperThinker card with you. When you are in a situation that is difficult or scary, you can look at your card to remind yourself that you can change your unhelpful thoughts to helpful thoughts!

F. Relaxation Exercise: Drawing
Lead students through a relaxation exercise of drawing.
Today, we will use art to relax our bodies. We will take a few minutes to draw or write something that is calming. You may choose what you wish to draw. You may wish to draw your Calm Place from last week’s activity, or you could simply draw shapes or use colors in a way that you find relaxing.\[^{15}\]

G. Assign Practice: Relaxation and Helpful Thinking

**For All Students:** This week, you may practice any of the relaxation activities we have learned - deep breathing, muscle relaxation, body scan, My Calm Place, or drawing. I would like you to do a relaxation activity 3 days this week. Also, try to use your SuperThinker Cards this week if you are having unhelpful thoughts and let us know how it goes next week.

**For Older Students:** Explain that students will have the worksheet as a prompt to remind them about the activity.

Here are the worksheets [Show the Relaxation Practice and Helpful Thinking Practice worksheets.] For each Relaxation practice, make a star or check mark on the day you did it, and circle a face to show how it went.

---

\[^{15}\] **TIP:** Allow students to choose from a variety of writing and drawing instruments (e.g., crayons, colored pencils, pens, paints) and a variety of papers (e.g., plain white and colored paper, paper with designs to color).
Session 5: Introduction to Thoughts Images
## Helpful Thinking Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Unhelpful Thought</th>
<th>Helpful / SuperThinker Thought</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Write or draw a stressful situation that you had over the week.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I shared my answer to the math problem in class, and the teacher told me that my answer was wrong.</td>
<td>“Everyone in class thinks I am stupid”</td>
<td>“It’s ok that I got this question wrong, I’ve gotten other math questions right before!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Everyone makes mistakes with math problems! Plus, this was a tough question!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Now I know my mistake and I can get this problem right the next time.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During recess, I sat alone for the first five minutes.</td>
<td>“No one likes me!”</td>
<td>“It’s ok that I am sitting alone at first, sometimes I can be a little shy!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“I have no friends!”</td>
<td>“I am going to ask a classmate if I can play with them!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your situation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Deep Breathing

Practice deep breathing.

Muscle Relaxation

**Hands & Arms:** Pretend you are squeezing a whole lemon in your left hand. Squeeze it hard. Try to squeeze all the juice out. Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Now drop the lemon and relax.

**Arms & Shoulders:** Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them up high over your head like you are furry, comfortable cat.

**Face and Nose:** A pesky old fly has landed on your nose, try to get him off without using your hands. Now relax your nose.

**Stomach:** Make your stomach very hard like a baby elephant is walking on it! Now let your stomach go soft.

Take a deep breath in... and a deep breath out.
Put one hand on your stomach and one hand on your chest. Imagine you are getting ready to blow up a balloon.
Breathe in and count 1, 2, 3 slowly.
Now imagine you are blowing ALL the air out of a balloon.
Body Scan

To begin, start off by taking three deep breaths. Deep breath in 1, 2, 3, and out 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in 1, 2, 3, and out 1, 2, 3.

Start paying attention to different parts of your body. Notice different parts of your body without changing anything. Pay attention to your fingers. Think about your fingertips and notice how they feel right now. Just observe how your fingers feel. Think about each finger.

Focus on your whole arms, and then your neck, and your head… Think about your stomach and back, just notice and observe how they're feeling. Notice your legs. Do they feel heavy? Light? Think about each part is feeling right now and focus on it.

Think about your whole body. Scan your whole body from head to toe. Notice how your whole body feels. Notice any changes that might have happened. End with three deep breaths. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. In, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3.

My Calm Place

Get yourself in a comfortable position, whether that’s sitting up or laying down. Close your eyes if you’d like. Take several deep breaths in. Breathe in 1, 2, 3 and breathe out 1, 2, 3. Continue breathing in through our nose and out through your mouth. Count 1-2-3. Now think of a place that makes you feel happy and at peace. This could be anywhere. It can be a place that you know very well, or it can be an imaginary place. It could be a calm room, or outside in nature by water or in a field, or anywhere else that you feel happy and at peace. Get a clear picture of that place in your mind. Keep breathing slowly and deeply, 1, 2, 3 in and 1, 2, 3 out. Now that you have a clear picture in your mind, begin adding details. What do you see there? What do you hear? How does this calm, happy place smell? How does your body feel in this place? You feel calm and safe here. Remain still while you feel calm and relaxed. Continue taking deep breaths in and out and enjoy being in this place…. Continue breathing 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3.

Drawing

Use art to relax your body. Take a few minutes to draw or write something that is calming. Choose what you wish to draw. You may wish to draw your Calm Place or draw shapes or use colors in a way that you find relaxing.
Relaxation Practice

Practice deep breathing, muscle relaxation, body scan, My Calm Place, or drawing 3 times in the next week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day of week – Put a star (*) or checkmark (✓) on the days you practice</th>
<th>How did it go?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Emoji" /> <img src="image2.png" alt="Emoji" /> <img src="image3.png" alt="Emoji" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Emoji" /> <img src="image2.png" alt="Emoji" /> <img src="image3.png" alt="Emoji" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Emoji" /> <img src="image2.png" alt="Emoji" /> <img src="image3.png" alt="Emoji" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Emoji" /> <img src="image2.png" alt="Emoji" /> <img src="image3.png" alt="Emoji" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Emoji" /> <img src="image2.png" alt="Emoji" /> <img src="image3.png" alt="Emoji" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Emoji" /> <img src="image2.png" alt="Emoji" /> <img src="image3.png" alt="Emoji" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Emoji" /> <img src="image2.png" alt="Emoji" /> <img src="image3.png" alt="Emoji" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Session 5: Parent Letter

Dear Parent or Guardian,

The group continues to work hard, support one another, and learn new skills! We are now halfway through the program.

We started today’s session by asking students to share where they are from. Then, we reviewed the Feelings Thermometer and relaxation exercises from last session. We then moved onto discussing how thoughts are connected to different actions. Students learned the difference between “unhelpful” and “helpful” thoughts and how they can lead to different actions and outcomes. The students also learned questions they can ask themselves to think about more helpful thoughts when they begin to feel stressed.

To remind themselves to use helpful thoughts, students made SuperThinker Cards. In this case, their “superpower” is thinking helpful thoughts instead of unhelpful thoughts.

We ended today’s session with drawing as a tool for relaxation, which you will find on the back of this letter. Attached to this letter, you will find all of the relaxation exercises we have completed with your child. We encourage you to do relaxation exercises with your child at home!

As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you maybe have about the program or your child. You can reach me by telephone at _______________ or by email at ___________.

Sincerely,

____________
Deep Breathing

Practice deep breathing.

Take a deep breath in... and a deep breath out. Put one hand on your stomach and one hand on your chest. Imagine you are getting ready to blow up a balloon. Breathe in and count 1, 2, 3 slowly. Now imagine you are blowing ALL the air out of a balloon.

Muscle Relaxation

Hands & Arms: Pretend you are squeezing a whole lemon in your left hand. Squeeze it hard. Try to squeeze all the juice out. Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Now drop the lemon and relax.

Arms & Shoulders: Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them up high over your head like you are furry, comfortable cat.

Face and Nose: A pesky old fly has landed on your nose, try to get him off without using your hands. Now relax your nose.

Stomach: Make your stomach very hard like a baby elephant is walking on it! Now let your stomach go soft.
Body Scan

To begin, start off by taking three deep breaths. Deep breath in 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out 1, 2, 3.

Start paying attention to different parts of your body. Notice different parts of your body without changing anything. Pay attention to your fingers. Think about your fingertips and notice how they feel right now. Just observe how your fingers feel. Think about each finger.

Focus on your whole arms, and then your neck, and your head… Think about your stomach and back, just notice and observe how they're feeling. Notice your legs. Do they feel heavy? Light? Think about each part is feeling right now and focus on it.

Think about your whole body. Scan your whole body from head to toe. Notice how your whole body feels. Notice any changes that might have happened. End with three deep breaths. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. In, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3.

My Calm Place

Get yourself in a comfortable position, whether that’s sitting up or laying down. Close your eyes if you’d like. Take several deep breaths in. Breathe in 1, 2, 3 and breathe out 1, 2, 3. Continue breathing in through our nose and out through your mouth. Count 1-2-3. Now think of a place that makes you feel happy and at peace. This could be anywhere. It can be a place that you know very well, or it can be an imaginary place. It could be a calm room, or outside in nature by water or in a field, or anywhere else that you feel happy and at peace. Get a clear picture of that place in your mind. Keep breathing slowly and deeply, 1, 2, 3 in and 1, 2, 3 out. Now that you have a clear picture in your mind, begin adding details. What do you see there? What do you hear? How does this calm, happy place smell? How does your body feel in this place? You feel calm and safe here. Remain still while you feel calm and relaxed. Continue taking deep breaths in and out and enjoy being in this place…. Continue breathing 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3.

Drawing

Use art to relax your body. Take a few minutes to draw or write something that is calming. Choose what you wish to draw. You may wish to draw your Calm Place or draw shapes or use colors in a way that you find relaxing.
### Session 5: Student Engagement and Functioning Rating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Engagement Rating (1-5)</th>
<th>Affect Rating (1-5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Engagement Rating:

1. Refused to participate in the discussions or activities.
2. Did not contribute to discussions but went through the motions of activities. Student was cooperative, but it was difficult to determine their level of understanding and insight due to minimal participation.
3. Minimal contributions to discussions and activities.
4. Some contributions to discussions and participation in activities that showed an understanding of the topic.
5. Several contributions to discussions and participation in activities that showed an understanding of the topic. Student also showed personal insight, meaning they related the topic to their own life in some way.

#### Affect Rating:

1. Negative affect and demonstrating signs of distress
2. Appears flat or sad but not overtly distressed
3. Neutral affect
4. Some positive affect
5. Positive affect and demonstrating signs of optimism/hopefulness
Session 6: Steps to Success

Outline
A. Warm-Up Activity: If You Could Be an Animal…
B. Practice Review: Relaxation and Helpful Thinking
C. Steps to Success
D. Avoidance
E. My Goals
F. Relaxation Exercise: Student Lead
G. Assign Practice: Relaxation and Steps to Success

Objectives
1. Students will learn to develop specific goals.
2. Students will practice breaking down goals into manageable steps.
3. Students will understand the concept of avoidance and how to address it using goals and steps to achieve those goals.

Materials
• Step to Success (blank version)
• Steps to Success (‘Pet a Dog!’ example)
• My Goals
• Relaxation Exercises (for older students)
• Relaxation Practice (for older students)
• Session 6 Parent Letter
A. Warm-Up Activity: If You Could be an Animal…

Begin the session with a warm-up activity. Ask all students to answer the question: If you could be an animal which would you be and why? (Can replace “animal” with “famous person,” like a leader, sports figure, historical figure, or celebrity, as an alternative activity).

Let’s start with a warm up activity. Today, I’d like each of you to consider, if you could an animal [alternative: famous person], which [who] would you be and why?

Point out common and unique themes, if they arise.

B. Practice Review: Relaxation and Helpful Thinking

Ask a student to select a relaxation activity and practice it. Afterwards, review the Helpful Thinking activity and practice from last week.

Would anyone like to pick a relaxation exercise today? Remember, you can pick from deep breathing, muscle relaxation, body scan, My Calm Place or drawing. You may pick the activity and then we can all do it together. [Lead students in the selected relaxation activity.]

Now let’s practice using our helpful thoughts. If you walk into a new class and everyone is staring at you, you could think, ‘I look strange, so everyone is looking at me.’ Now let’s be SuperThinkers! What could a more helpful thought be? [Allow students to share.]
Thank you for sharing!

C. Steps to Success

The goal of this part of the session is for students to come up with a specific goal and manageable steps to work toward the goal.

Today we are going to practice setting goals and working toward achieving them. First, let’s talk about what I mean by ‘goal.’ Can anyone describe what the word ‘goal’ means? Or give a specific example of a goal? [Allow students to share. Goal may be defined as something you want and are willing to work toward. Some example goals may be learning math, making a new friend, or making it onto a sports team.]

Sometimes breaking goals down into smaller steps makes it easier to reach the goal. That’s what we’re going to practice today.

So, you first ask yourself the question, ‘What do I want to happen?’ Let’s take an example. Your goal is that you want to make a friend. If you ask yourself, ‘What do I want to happen,’ what would your answer be? [Allow students to respond. They should say, I want to make a friend or something similar.] You could also say, ‘I want to each lunch with someone each day in the cafeteria.’

16 TIP: Group leaders may want to help students make goals more specific. For example, instead of the general goal of ‘I want to make a friend,’ a more specific goal would be ‘I want to eat lunch with someone each day in the cafeteria.’
After we set a goal, we need to then lay out the steps to achieving the goal. We are going to use something called ‘Steps to Success.’ Usually, a goal has several steps you need to take to reach the goal. It can be helpful to break a goal down into these steps.

Let’s take the example we just used, eating lunch with someone each day in the cafeteria. Can anyone think of a step to reach that goal? [Write down student responses on the board. If students have difficulty identifying steps, you can provide examples like: think of students who eat lunch at the same time as you, think of students who sit near you in class or who you play with at recess, practice the words you would use to ask someone to sit with you.]

Great! Now we need to order them on the steps in terms of what we will do first, second, and so on. [Show the blank Steps to Success sheet. Point to the top of the steps, then write on the board, “Goal: Eat lunch with someone each day in the cafeteria.”]

Sometimes it makes sense to start with the smallest or easiest step first. Sometimes there is a step that you have to do before doing other steps. Looking at the steps we came up with, which do you think we should put first? [Point to the first step on the blank steps sheet. Allow students to respond, and then pick one to write on the board. Discuss with students that there is not only one correct order or set of steps to complete, and that it may depend on the person how they want to order goals. For example, some students might find it easier to think of students to sit with first and some might find it easier to practice the words to ask someone.]

Second? Third? [Complete the set of steps, pointing to each step and then writing them on the board. Ask students if they think these steps will lead to reaching the goal.]

Sometimes when you take steps, you may need to ask someone for help or do things to help you feel calm like relaxation or using helpful thoughts.

D. Avoidance
The goal of this part of the session is for students to understand the concept of avoidance and increase their confidence in doing things they used to avoid. Explain to students the concept of avoidance. Share with students that the longer we avoid doing something, the scarier that activity can be. Demonstrate using Steps to Success to address avoidance.
Sometimes after we have been through stressful or scary situations, we might avoid people, places, or things, including those that remind us of the stressful or scary situation. This makes sense, because it is our brain’s way of protecting ourselves from having something scary or stressful happen again. However, we may end up avoiding things that are not actually scary or dangerous and may miss out on things we may enjoy.

For example, if someone was bitten by a dog after trying to pet it, what might they start avoiding? [Allow students to respond. They might avoid all dogs, or dogs that look like the one that bit, or even all animals.] Right! The problem is, they might avoid dogs or situations that are actually safe, and it might get in the way of them doing what they want or need to do, like going to a friend’s house who has a safe dog.

We can use the ‘Steps to Success’ to work toward the goal of doing things we have been avoiding. It is important that we only choose goals that are SAFE.

Let’s take the example of avoiding dogs. What might the goal be if we want to stop avoiding dogs? [Allow students to respond. The goal should be something like ‘Pet a dog.’]

Demonstrate how to use the stairs using the example of petting a dog.17

I am going to show you how we would complete ‘Steps to Success’ using the example of petting a dog. [Show students the ‘Pet a Dog!’ example of Steps to Success sheet.]

First, we have our goal at the top of the stairs. [Point to Goal: PET A DOG!] You can see it says, ‘PET A DOG!’

Now let’s look at the bottom of the stairs to think of our first step. Our first step for someone afraid of petting a dog is to look at pictures of a friendly dog. [Point to first step on the stairs.] Then the next step would be to look at dogs in a park [Point to ‘observe dogs in a park’ on the next step.] After that, the next step would be to stand in the same room with a dog on a leash. [Point to ‘Stand in the same room with a dog on a leash’ on the next step.] Then after that, the next step would be to allow a friendly dog to sniff your hand. [Point to ‘allow a friendly dog sniff your hand’ on the next step.] See how these smaller, less scary steps can lead us to the thing that feels very scary?

17 TIP: Following the “Pet a Dog” example, you may want to demonstrate an example more relevant to newcomers, like avoiding speaking in class because they are nervous others will laugh at their English.
E. My Goals
Have students come up with at least one goal and at least one thing they avoid, if possible. Explain that we will come up with steps to reach the goal next week.

*Now let’s come up with at least one goal you each have and anything you might be avoiding.*

*Ask yourself:*
*What do I want to happen? This week? This month? This year?*
*Are there things I have been avoiding or been scared to do that I need to work toward?*

*Next week, we will pick one of these for each of you to come up with some steps to reaching the goal!*

F. Relaxation Exercise: Student Lead
Explain to students that they will practice leading a relaxation exercise. Review the options with the students: deep breathing, muscle relaxation, body scan, My Calm Place, or drawing.

*Today, I would like one of you to lead the group in a relaxation exercise. You can pick from one of the five relaxation exercises that we learned as a group. You can do a deep breathing, muscle relaxation, body scan, My Calm Place or drawing. Who wants to lead this activity today?*

G. Assign Practice: Relaxation and Steps to Success

**For All Students:** This week, you may practice any of the relaxation activities we have learned - deep breathing, muscle relaxation, body scan, My Calm Place, or drawing. I would like you to do a relaxation activity 3 days this week. Also, try to think of the goal you will choose so that we can come up with steps next time.

**For Older Students:** Explain that students will have the worksheet as a prompt to remind them about the activity.

*Here are the worksheets [Show the Relaxation Practice worksheet.] For each relaxation practice, make a star or check mark on the day you did it, and circle a face to show how it went.*
Steps to Success (‘Pet a Dog!’)

First Step: Look at pictures of a friendly dog.

Second Step: Observe dogs in a park.

Third Step: Stand in the same room with a dog on a leash.

Fourth Step: Allow a friendly dog to sniff your hand.

Goal: PET A DOG!
My Goals

What do I want to happen?

Approaching Things I have been Avoiding
What have I been avoiding that I need to work toward approaching?

What is my goal for approaching it?
Deep Breathing

Practice deep breathing.

Muscle Relaxation

**Hands & Arms:** Pretend you are squeezing a whole lemon in your left hand. Squeeze it hard. Try to squeeze all the juice out. Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Now drop the lemon and relax.

**Arms & Shoulders:** Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them up high over your head like you are furry, comfortable cat.

**Face and Nose:** A pesky old fly has landed on your nose, try to get him off without using your hands. Now relax your nose.

**Stomach:** Make your stomach very hard like a baby elephant is walking on it! Now let your stomach go soft.

Take a deep breath in... and a deep breath out.
Put one hand on your stomach and one hand on your chest. Imagine you are getting ready to blow up a balloon. Breathe in and count 1, 2, 3 slowly. Now imagine you are blowing ALL the air out of a balloon.
Body Scan

To begin, start off by taking three deep breaths. Deep breath in 1, 2, 3, and out 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in 1, 2, 3, and out 1, 2, 3.

Start paying attention to different parts of your body. Notice different parts of your body without changing anything. Pay attention to your fingers. Think about your fingertips and notice how they feel right now. Just observe how your fingers feel. Think about each finger.

Focus on your whole arms, and then your neck, and your head… Think about your stomach and back, just notice and observe how they’re feeling. Notice your legs. Do they feel heavy? Light? Think about each part is feeling right now and focus on it.

Think about your whole body. Scan your whole body from head to toe. Notice how your whole body feels. Notice any changes that might have happened. End with three deep breaths. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3.

My Calm Place

Get yourself in a comfortable position, whether that’s sitting up or laying down. Close your eyes if you’d like. Take several deep breaths in. Breathe in 1, 2, 3 and breathe out 1, 2, 3. Continue breathing in through our nose and out through your mouth. Count 1-2-3. Now think of a place that makes you feel happy and at peace. This could be anywhere. It can be a place that you know very well, or it can be an imaginary place. It could be a calm room, or outside in nature by water or in a field, or anywhere else that you feel happy and at peace. Get a clear picture of that place in your mind. Keep breathing slowly and deeply, 1, 2, 3 in and 1, 2, 3 out. Now that you have a clear picture in your mind, begin adding details. What do you see there? What do you hear? How does this calm, happy place smell? How does your body feel in this place? You feel calm and safe here. Remain still while you feel calm and relaxed. Continue taking deep breaths in and out and enjoy being in this place…. Continue breathing in, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3.

Drawing

Use art to relax your body. Take a few minutes to draw or write something that is calming. Choose what you wish to draw. You may wish to draw your Calm Place or draw shapes or use colors in a way that you find relaxing.
Relaxation Practice

Practice deep breathing, muscle relaxation, body scan, My Calm Place, or drawing 3 times in the next week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day of week – Put a star (*) or checkmark (✓) on the days you practice</th>
<th>How did it go?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>![Emojis]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>![Emojis]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>![Emojis]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>![Emojis]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>![Emojis]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>![Emojis]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>![Emojis]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Session 6: Parent Letter**

Dear Parent or Guardian,

We had another very productive group meeting today! It continues to be a pleasure working with your child.

We started today’s session with a fun get to know you exercise. Then, we reviewed the relaxation exercises (like deep breathing, muscle relaxation) in the beginning of session. We continued by reviewing the helpful vs. unhelpful thoughts. We continued the session by introducing **goal setting. Students learned that it is often helpful to break down a goal into smaller steps.** This was illustrated through an activity called Steps to Success.

We also introduced the idea of **avoidance. Often students avoid doing things they might be interested in because they are scared.** Similar to goal setting, we discussed how it is helpful to break down steps towards addressing something one has been avoiding. We ended the session by allowing one of the students to lead the class in a relaxation exercise. Again, we encourage you to practice the relaxation exercises with your child!

As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you maybe have about the program or your child. You can reach me by telephone at ______________ or by email at __________.

Sincerely,

______________
Deep Breathing

Practice deep breathing.

Take a deep breath in... and a deep breath out. Put one hand on your stomach and one hand on your chest. Imagine you are getting ready to blow up a balloon. Breathe in and count 1, 2, 3 slowly. Now imagine you are blowing ALL the air out of a balloon.

Muscle Relaxation

**Hands & Arms:** Pretend you are squeezing a whole lemon in your left hand. Squeeze it hard. Try to squeeze all the juice out. Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Now drop the lemon and relax.

**Arms & Shoulders:** Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them up high over your head like you are furry, comfortable cat.

**Face and Nose:** A pesky old fly has landed on your nose, try to get him off without using your hands. Now relax your nose.

**Stomach:** Make your stomach very hard like a baby elephant is walking on it! Now let your stomach go soft.
Body Scan

To begin, start off by taking three deep breaths. Deep breath in 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out 1, 2, 3.

Start paying attention to different parts of your body. Notice different parts of your body without changing anything. Pay attention to your fingers. Think about your fingertips and notice how they feel right now. Just observe how your fingers feel. Think about each finger.

Focus on your whole arms, and then your neck, and your head… Think about your stomach and back, just notice and observe how they’re feeling. Notice your legs. Do they feel heavy? Light? Think about each part is feeling right now and focus on it.

Think about your whole body. Scan your whole body from head to toe. Notice how your whole body feels. Notice any changes that might have happened. End with three deep breaths. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3.

My Calm Place

Get yourself in a comfortable position, whether that’s sitting up or laying down. Close your eyes if you’d like. Take several deep breaths in. Breathe in 1, 2, 3 and breathe out 1, 2, 3. Continue breathing in through our nose and out through your mouth. Count 1-2-3. Now think of a place that makes you feel happy and at peace. This could be anywhere. It can be a place that you know very well, or it can be an imaginary place. It could be a calm room, or outside in nature by water or in a field, or anywhere else that you feel happy and at peace. Get a clear picture of that place in your mind. Keep breathing slowly and deeply, 1, 2, 3 in and 1, 2, 3 out.

Now that you have a clear picture in your mind, begin adding details. What do you see there? What do you hear? How does this calm, happy place smell? How does your body feel in this place? You feel calm and safe here. Remain still while you feel calm and relaxed. Continue taking deep breaths in and out and enjoy being in this place…. Continue breathing 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3.

Drawing

Use art to relax your body. Take a few minutes to draw or write something that is calming. Choose what you wish to draw. You may wish to draw your Calm Place or draw shapes or use colors in a way that you find relaxing.
## SESSION 6
### STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND FUNCTIONING RATING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Engagement Rating (1-5)</th>
<th>Affect Rating (1-5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Engagement Rating:**

1. Refused to participate in the discussions or activities.
2. Did not contribute to discussions but went through the motions of activities. Student was co-operative, but it was difficult to determine their level of understanding and insight due to minimal participation.
3. Minimal contributions to discussions and activities.
4. Some contributions to discussions and participation in activities that showed an understanding of the topic.
5. Several contributions to discussions and participation in activities that showed an understanding of the topic. Student also showed personal insight, meaning they related the topic to their own life in some way.

**Affect Rating:**

1. Negative affect and demonstrating signs of distress
2. Appears flat or sad but not overtly distressed
3. Neutral affect
4. Some positive affect
5. Positive affect and demonstrating signs of optimism / hopefulness
Session 7: Problem Solving

Outline
A. Warm-Up Activity: Superpowers
B. Practice Review: Relaxation and Steps to Success
C. Thoughts-Feelings-Actions (T-F-A) Triangle
D. Problem Solving
E. Act it Out
F. Relaxation Exercise: Student Lead
G. Assign Practice: Relaxation and Helpful Actions

Objectives
1. Students will understand how actions are connected to feelings and thoughts.
2. Students will learn and practice problem-solving skills.

Materials
- Steps to Success Activity
- Helpful Action Ideas
- Relaxation Exercises (for older students)
- Relaxation Practice (for older students)
- Session 7 Parent Letter
A. Warm-Up Activity: Superpowers
Begin the session with a warm-up activity. Ask each student to share what superpower they would have.

Let’s start today with a warm-up activity. If you could have one superpower what would it be and why? [If they are unsure what a superpower is, give examples like flying, invisibility, and traveling into the future.]

B. Practice Review: Relaxation and Steps to Success
Ask a student to select a relaxation activity and practice it. Review and build on the Steps to Success Activity from last week. [Give students Steps to Success worksheet.]

Would anyone like to pick a relaxation exercise today? Remember, you can pick from deep breathing, muscle relaxation, body scan, My Calm Place or drawing. You may pick the activity and then we can all do it together. [Lead students in the selected relaxation activity.]

Now let’s build on the Steps to Success we started last week. Did anyone come up with a goal? [Allow students to share their goals. If students did not generate a goal, try to have them select one during this review time.]

Now we want to break the goal down into your Steps to Success. [Pass out the Steps to Success worksheet.] Take a few minutes to come up with some steps. [Encourage students to work in pairs or individually, and then to share some of the steps they came up with. You may need to work with students to help them develop some steps.]

Thank you for sharing! I would encourage you to share any steps you take toward your goal as we continue to meet together as a group!

C. Thoughts-Feelings-Actions (T-F-A) Triangle
Review the T-F-A triangle.

I would like to quickly review our triangle before we get started with today’s activities. I think you probably know it at this point, so I would love you help as I draw it on the board. What is one of the three corners of the triangle called? [Allow students to respond.] Great! One of the corners is feelings [or thoughts and actions]. What is another corner of the triangle? [Allow students to respond] Great! Another corner is thoughts! [or feelings or actions] And finally, what is the last corner of the triangle? [allow students to respond] Good work! The last corner is actions! [or feelings or thoughts] Today, we are going to focus on actions to solve problems. Keep in mind, the different corners of the triangle all work together; that is, thoughts influence feelings and feelings influence actions.
D. Problem Solving

Explain that the session will focus on actions to solve problems.

Now that we have reviewed the Thoughts-Feelings-Actions (T-F-A) Triangle, we are going to spend this session learning how to solve problems by choosing actions that may work better.

In addition to different thoughts that we may have in that situation, there are also different actions we can take. Sometimes it is hard to know what the best action is, particularly when the situation you are in makes you feel upset.

Today, we are going to learn about using helpful actions when we have a problem.

Review different actions students can take when they are upset or have a problem.

[Pass out Helpful Action Ideas worksheet.]

Here are some ideas for helpful actions you can take when your Feelings Thermometer is rising or you have a problem. Let’s go over them and then practice using them with different situations. [Read through, or have students read aloud, each of the helpful actions. Have students generate additional other helpful actions at the end.]

Let’s take an example problem and choose an action to take. Let’s say someone says something mean to you at school. You may feel upset and not know what to do at first. What is a helpful action you could try in this situation? [Allow students to respond.]

Great! There are several actions you could try.

Apply the parts of problem solving to student situations.

When faced with a problem, some actions may work better than others. We are going to work together on choosing the best actions for different problems.

To choose the best action, it is helpful to think about what good things or bad things might happen if you choose that action.

Let’s take an example. Let’s say you and a friend usually play with each other at recess, but your friend is playing with someone else today. How might you feel? [Allow students to respond.] What might you think? [Allow students to respond.]

Now, what actions might you take if this happened to you? You can use your Helpful Action Ideas worksheet. [Allow students to respond. Some examples might include ‘Ask friend why she canceled plans and chose to hang out with someone else,’ ‘Go hang out with other friends,’ ‘Tell others what she did to you,’ or ‘Ignore her.’ It is acceptable for students to suggest actions that may lead to undesirable outcomes. Encourage brainstorming all types of actions.]
Next, let’s go through each action and think of the pros and cons of that action. Pros are good things that happen, and cons are the bad things that happen after an action. [Walk through each action and identify pros and cons for each.]¹⁸

Based on the pros and cons, which action seems like the best choice?

Once you have chosen the action, you will want to try it out and see how it worked. If it doesn’t work, you can try another action from your list.

E. Act it Out
The goal of this exercise is for students to practice problem-solving skills to deal with challenges, including those experienced by newcomers.

We are now going to act out challenging situations and different actions.

- Challenging situation: A student won’t let you join in the game at recess.

Let’s say a student won’t let you join in the game at recess. Who can think of an action in this situation that would probably not work out well? [Allow students to respond. Examples may include ‘yell at the student’ or ‘push student’.]

Now let’s act out actions that might work out better.

[Divide into groups of 2-4 depending on the number of students in the group]. I am going to give you all a challenging situation, and then give each group a different action to act out. You will need to determine who will play each role – like who will be a student, or teacher, or friend – depending on the situation, and act out the action and what happens after the action. I will give you a couple of minutes to practice acting out your action.

- Challenging situation: A student won’t let you join in the game at recess.

  Group A response: Walk away and play with others.
  Group B response: Talk to a teacher about the problem.
  Group C response: Tell the student, ‘It makes me sad when you don’t let me play.’

After students act out each response, discuss how the action worked out. After all groups act out the actions, discuss which might be the best action to choose first.

Now, I want you all to consider a new challenging situation and to come up with possible actions. Then we will break into groups again and act out the actions.

- Challenging situation: A student wonders why you dress or talk differently than other students.

  What are some possible actions? Use your Helpful Actions Ideas.

¹⁸ TIP You may want to assign each action to individuals or pairs of students to generate pros and cons and then have them share. For younger students, you may want to replace “pros and cons” with “good things and bad things.”
After students act out each action, discuss how the action worked out. After all groups act out the actions, discuss which might be the best action to choose first.

Continue having students apply problem solving to real-life situations. Students may generate a list of problems that they face and then act those out, or use situations from the following list:

- You do not have clothes that you want to wear.
- Your friend started ignoring you and you are not sure why.
- You keep thinking about stressful or scary things you have been through.

F. Relaxation Exercise: Student Lead
Explain to students that they will practice leading a relaxation exercise. Review the options with the students: deep breathing, muscle relaxation, body scan, My Calm Place or drawing. 

"Today, I would like one of you to lead the group in a relaxation exercise. You can pick from one of the five relaxation exercises that we learned as a group. You can do a deep breathing, muscle relaxation, body scan, My Calm Place or drawing. Who wants to lead this activity today?"

G. Assign Practice: Relaxation and Helpful Actions

For All Students: This week, you may practice any of the relaxation activities we have learned - deep breathing, muscle relaxation, body scan, My Calm Place, or drawing. I would like you to do a relaxation activity 3 days this week. Also, try to practice the helpful actions you can take if you have a problem this week.

Also, for next week’s warm-up activity, I am going to ask you to describe or show something that is meaningful to you from your home country. You can bring something in if you want to, or you can share a picture of it, or just describe it.

For Older Students: Explain that students will have the worksheet as a prompt to remind them about the activity.

"Here are the worksheets [Show the Relaxation Practice and Helpful Actions worksheet.] For each relaxation practice, make a star or check mark on the day you did it, and circle a face to show how it went."

Steps to Success

Identify your goal and write it at the top of the steps. Add steps you can take to accomplish your goal.

Goal:

First Step:

Second Step:

Third Step:

Fourth Step:
Helpful Actions Ideas

Relax your body
- Deep breathing
- Muscle relaxation
- Imagine a peaceful place

Use helpful thoughts
- I can do it!
- It’s not worth getting upset about
- Is there another way to see this?

Support from others
- Get help from a friend
- Get help from an adult

Use helpful words
- I feel upset when you __________.
- I need a minute to calm down.

Let it go
- Walk away
- Move on to something else

Healthy or fun activity
- Go for a walk
- Listen to music

Others?
- ____________________________
- ____________________________
Deep Breathing

Practice deep breathing.

Take a deep breath in… and a deep breath out.
Put one hand on your stomach and one hand on your chest. Imagine you are getting ready to blow up a balloon. Breathe in and count 1, 2, 3 slowly. Now imagine you are blowing ALL the air out of a balloon.

Muscle Relaxation

**Hands & Arms:** Pretend you are squeezing a whole lemon in your left hand. Squeeze it hard. Try to squeeze all the juice out. Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Now drop the lemon and relax.

**Arms & Shoulders:** Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them up high over your head like you are furry, comfortable cat.

**Face and Nose:** A pesky old fly has landed on your nose, try to get him off without using your hands. Now relax your nose.

**Stomach:** Make your stomach very hard like a baby elephant is walking on it! Now let your stomach go soft.
To begin, start off by taking three deep breaths. Deep breath in 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out 1, 2, 3.

Start paying attention to different parts of your body. Notice different parts of your body without changing anything. Pay attention to your fingers. Think about your fingertips and notice how they feel right now. Just observe how your fingers feel. Think about each finger.

Focus on your whole arms, and then your neck, and your head… Think about your stomach and back, just notice and observe how they’re feeling. Notice your legs. Do they feel heavy? Light? Think about each part is feeling right now and focus on it.

Think about your whole body. Scan your whole body from head to toe. Notice how your whole body feels. Notice any changes that might have happened. End with three deep breaths. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. In, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3.

Get yourself in a comfortable position, whether that’s sitting up or laying down. Close your eyes if you’d like. Take several deep breaths in. Breathe in 1, 2, 3 and breathe out 1, 2, 3. Continue breathing in through our nose and out through your mouth. Count 1-2-3. Now think of a place that makes you feel happy and at peace. This could be anywhere. It can be a place that you know very well, or it can be an imaginary place. It could be a calm room, or outside in nature by water or in a field, or anywhere else that you feel happy and at peace. Get a clear picture of that place in your mind. Keep breathing slowly and deeply, 1, 2, 3 in and 1, 2, 3 out. Now that you have a clear picture in your mind, begin adding details. What do you see there? What do you hear? How does this calm, happy place smell? How does your body feel in this place? You feel calm and safe here. Remain still while you feel calm and relaxed. Continue taking deep breaths in and out and enjoy being in this place…. Continue breathing 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3.

Use art to relax your body. Take a few minutes to draw or write something that is calming. Choose what you wish to draw. You may wish to draw your Calm Place or draw shapes or use colors in a way that you find relaxing.
Relaxation Practice

Practice deep breathing, muscle relaxation, body scan, My Calm Place, or drawing 3 times in the next week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day of week – Put a star (*) or checkmark (√) on the days you practice</th>
<th>How did it go?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Session 7: Parent Letter

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child continues to impress me! It has been great working with them!

We started today with a fun get to know you exercise. Then, we completed a relaxation exercise and reviewed the goals students selected for their Steps to Success. Students spent some of the session thinking about what their small steps to achieve that goal will be. Then, we reviewed how thoughts, feelings, and actions are connected.

We then moved onto discussing problem solving. Students learned that choosing the right direction for problem solving will increase the chances for a good outcome. Students also learned steps to problem solving. The steps of problem-solving are: 1) thinking about different options or actions you can take, 2) thinking about the pros and cons of each action, 3) choosing an option, and 4) evaluating how the option worked.

Students practiced problem-solving by acting out skits of different ways to respond to a difficult situation. As a group, the students determined the best action to take. The students are great actors!

We ended the session by allowing one of the students to lead the class in a relaxation exercise. Again, we encourage you to practice the relaxation exercises with your child!

As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you maybe have about the program or your child. You can reach me by telephone at ______________ or by email at ____________.

Sincerely,

______________
Deep Breathing

Practice deep breathing.

Muscle Relaxation

Hands & Arms: Pretend you are squeezing a whole lemon in your left hand. Squeeze it hard. Try to squeeze all the juice out. Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Now drop the lemon and relax.

Arms & Shoulders: Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them up high over your head like you are furry, comfortable cat.

Face and Nose: A pesky old fly has landed on your nose, try to get him off without using your hands. Now relax your nose.

Stomach: Make your stomach very hard like a baby elephant is walking on it! Now let your stomach go soft.
Body Scan

To begin, start off by taking three deep breaths. Deep breath in 1, 2, 3, and out 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out 1, 2, 3.

Start paying attention to different parts of your body. Notice different parts of your body without changing anything. Pay attention to your fingers. Think about your fingertips and notice how they feel right now. Just observe how your fingers feel. Think about each finger.

Focus on your whole arms, and then your neck, and your head… Think about your stomach and back, just notice and observe how they’re feeling. Notice your legs. Do they feel heavy? Light? Think about each part is feeling right now and focus on it.

Think about your whole body. Scan your whole body from head to toe. Notice how your whole body feels. Notice any changes that might have happened. End with three deep breaths. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. In, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3.

My Calm Place

Get yourself in a comfortable position, whether that’s sitting up or laying down. Close your eyes if you’d like. Take several deep breaths in. Breathe in 1, 2, 3 and breathe out 1, 2, 3. Continue breathing in through our nose and out through your mouth. Count 1-2-3. Now think of a place that makes you feel happy and at peace. This could be anywhere. It can be a place that you know very well, or it can be an imaginary place. It could be a calm room, or outside in nature by water or in a field, or anywhere else that you feel happy and at peace. Get a clear picture of that place in your mind. Keep breathing slowly and deeply, 1, 2, 3 in and 1, 2, 3 out. Now that you have a clear picture in your mind, begin adding details. What do you see there? What do you hear? How does this calm, happy place smell? How does your body feel in this place? You feel calm and safe here. Remain still while you feel calm and relaxed. Continue taking deep breaths in and out and enjoy being in this place…. Continue breathing 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3.

Drawing

Use art to relax your body. Take a few minutes to draw or write something that is calming. Choose what you wish to draw. You may wish to draw your Calm Place or draw shapes or use colors in a way that you find relaxing.
### Session 7
**Student Engagement and Functioning Rating**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Engagement Rating (1-5)</th>
<th>Affect Rating (1-5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Engagement Rating:**

1. Refused to participate in the discussions or activities.
2. Did not contribute to discussions but went through the motions of activities. Student was co-operative, but it was difficult to determine their level of understanding and insight due to minimal participation.
3. Minimal contributions to discussions and activities.
4. Some contributions to discussions and participation in activities that showed an understanding of the topic.
5. Several contributions to discussions and participation in activities that showed an understanding of the topic. Student also showed personal insight, meaning they related the topic to their own life in some way.

**Affect Rating:**

1. Negative affect and demonstrating signs of distress
2. Appears flat or sad but not overtly distressed
3. Neutral affect
4. Some positive affect
5. Positive affect and demonstrating signs of optimism / hopefulness
Session 8: My Journey Part I

Outline
A. Warm-Up Activity: Home Country
B. Practice Review: Relaxation and Helpful Actions
C. Sharing My Journey
D. Reflection
E. Relaxation Exercise: Student Lead
F. Assign Practice: Relaxation and Sharing My Journey

Objectives
1. Students will share parts of their journey with the group.
2. Students will support other students as they share parts of their journey.

Materials
- Sharing My Journey Practice (for older students)
- Relaxation Exercises (for older students)
- Relaxation Practice (for older students)
- Session 8 Parent Letter
A. Warm-Up Activity: Home Country
Explain that today’s warm-up activity will be to share something from their home country through showing it, showing a picture, or describing it.

As I mentioned at the end of the last session, for today’s warm-up activity, I’d like you to share something meaningful from your home country. If you brought something with you, you can share it with the group. If not, you can either show us a picture or just describe it. Who would like to start? [If students are not sure what to share, you can give them example like your favorite food, your favorite holiday tradition, a fun place to play or spend time.]

B. Practice Review: Relaxation and Helpful Actions
Ask a student to select a relaxation activity and practice it.

Would anyone like to pick a relaxation exercise today? Remember, you can pick from deep breathing, muscle relaxation, body scan, My Calm Place or drawing. You may pick the activity and then we can all do it together. [Lead students through the selected relaxation activity.]

Review Helpful Actions Activity from last week.

Last week, we reviewed some helpful actions we could take when we face a problem. Who would like to share a problem that they had and how what helpful action they took?

If students did not come up with a problem, encourage them to think of a problem they faced last week or recently, and then come up with possible helpful actions as a group.

After reviewing the problem-solving practice, ask students about the Steps to Success to see if students have achieved any steps toward their goals.

Remember the Steps to Success? Has anyone achieved any of the steps toward your goal? [Allow students to share and provide praise and encouragement.]

C. Sharing My Journey
The goal of this session is for students to share parts of their journey with other students in the group. Students may vary widely in their journey experiences. The goal is to help students talk about their journey with others, to share the challenges they have experienced and the strengths and supports they have used.

Take out the My Journey worksheets that were completed during the Individual Session and distribute to students. Explain to students that in this part of the session they will be sharing their journey with other students in the group.

I am handing each of you the My Journey worksheets that we completed during our individual sessions with me. Today, I would like you to share some parts of your journey. Remember, you can share parts from before you left your home country, during your journey here, or since you have arrived. You may also share strengths and supports you have used during your journey, and things you have gained or learned.
We may not get through everyone’s journey today, and that’s okay, because we will have time to share our journeys next week as well.

As we discussed in the beginning of the group, everything we share in the group is confidential, or private. Since we will be sharing personal information about our journeys, we want everyone to remember that the information shared is private so that we can all feel safe sharing. It takes courage to share your journey with others, so we want to make sure that we are encouraging others.¹⁹

Remember that you do not have to share all of your journey. You may want to share parts that stand out to you. Does anyone have any questions?

Who would like to share parts of their journey first? [Allow a student to volunteer.] Great, thank you! [Student’s name] Please begin.

Allow students to share parts of their journey. If they are struggling with what to share, you might want to ask questions from their My Journey worksheet, including about strengths and supports.²⁰

[After the student ends the journey narrative]: Thank you for sharing parts your journey. What stood out to me was ____________, and you seemed to use [strength] along your journey. [To the group:] What parts stand out to you about ______’s journey? [Before moving on to the next student’s journey, provide praise and acknowledge the students’ strengths and use of supports.]

Thank you! Who would like share parts of their journey next? [Allow a student to volunteer.] Great, thank you! [Student’s name] Please begin.

Follow steps described above for as many students as time allows, assuring all students that they will have time to share next session if not this session.

D. Reflection
Lead students in a discussion about sharing their journey.

Thank you all for sharing your journeys today. I am proud of you all of sharing and listening to each other’s journeys!

[If you did not get through everyone]: I know everyone did not get time to share their journeys today, and that’s okay. We will have time next week to share the remaining journeys.

How do you feel after sharing and hearing others’ journeys? Where were you on your Feelings Thermometer during the activity? [Allow students to discuss.]

What did you learn from this activity?

¹⁹ TIP: If students question why someone did or didn’t do something on their journey, it may be helpful to remind them that many things that happen are beyond our control and we all try to choose the best options available in each situation or moment to get through it or survive.

²⁰ TIP: Students may be more comfortable sharing pictures of a part of their journey, so you may want to incorporate time in the individual session or this session for drawing part(s) of the journey.
What was something helpful or encouraging that someone else in the group shared?
[Allow students to discuss.]

I am proud of you all for being honest and open today. Next week, we will continue sharing journeys, but also, I will give you time to think about your future. Your journey does not end here!

E. Relaxation Exercise: Student Lead
Explain to students that they will practice leading a relaxation exercise. Review the options with the students: deep breathing, muscle relaxation, body scan, My Calm Place or drawing.¹⁵

Today, I would like one of you to lead the group in a relaxation exercise. You can pick from one of the five relaxation exercises that we learned as a group. You can do a deep breathing, muscle relaxation, body scan, My Calm Place or drawing. Who wants to lead this activity today?

F. Assign Practice: Relaxation and Sharing My Journey

For All Students:
This week, you may practice any of the relaxation activities we have learned - deep breathing, muscle relaxation, body scan, My Calm Place, or drawing. I would like you to do a relaxation activity 3 days this week. Also, continue thinking about your journey. You can think about or talk about your journey in one of four ways: you can imagine parts of your journey, you can draw it, you can write about it, or you can share it with someone you trust. You might want to do more than one of these, and it is up to you which ways you decide to think about or talk about your journey this week. Next week, we will ask how it went.

Also, for next week’s warm-up activity, I am going to ask you to share something about your favorite holiday. You can bring something in if you want to, or you can share a picture of it, or just describe it.

For Older Students: Explain that students will have the worksheet as a prompt to remind them about the activity.

Here are the worksheets [Show the Relaxation Practice and Sharing My Journey worksheet.] For each relaxation practice, make a star or check mark on the day you did it, and circle a face to show how it went.
Sharing My Journey Practice

**Drawing.** Draw parts of your journey.

**Writing.** Write about parts of your journey.

**Sharing.** Share parts of your journey with someone you trust. (You might choose to share drawings, writings, and/or words).

Who did you share with? ________________________________
Deep Breathing

Practice deep breathing.

Take a deep breath in... and a deep breath out. Put one hand on your stomach and one hand on your chest. Imagine you are getting ready to blow up a balloon. Breathe in and count 1, 2, 3 slowly. Now imagine you are blowing ALL the air out of a balloon.

Muscle Relaxation

**Hands & Arms:** Pretend you are squeezing a whole lemon in your left hand. Squeeze it hard. Try to squeeze all the juice out. Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Now drop the lemon and relax.

**Arms & Shoulders:** Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them up high over your head like you are furry, comfortable cat.

**Face and Nose:** A pesky old fly has landed on your nose, try to get him off without using your hands. Now relax your nose.

**Stomach:** Make your stomach very hard like a baby elephant is walking on it! Now let your stomach go soft.
Body Scan

To begin, start off by taking three deep breaths. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out 1, 2, 3.

Start paying attention to different parts of your body. Notice different parts of your body without changing anything. Pay attention to your fingers. Think about your fingertips and notice how they feel right now. Just observe how your fingers feel. Think about each finger.

Focus on your whole arms, and then your neck, and your head… Think about your stomach and back, just notice and observe how they’re feeling. Notice your legs. Do they feel heavy? Light? Think about each part is feeling right now and focus on it.

Think about your whole body. Scan your whole body from head to toe. Notice how your whole body feels. Notice any changes that might have happened. End with three deep breaths. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. In, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3.

My Calm Place

Get yourself in a comfortable position, whether that’s sitting up or laying down. Close your eyes if you’d like. Take several deep breaths in. Breathe in 1, 2, 3 and breathe out 1, 2, 3. Continue breathing in through our nose and out through your mouth. Count 1-2-3. Now think of a place that makes you feel happy and at peace. This could be anywhere. It can be a place that you know very well, or it can be an imaginary place. It could be a calm room, or outside in nature by water or in a field, or anywhere else that you feel happy and at peace. Get a clear picture of that place in your mind. Keep breathing slowly and deeply, 1, 2, 3 in and 1, 2, 3 out. Now that you have a clear picture in your mind, begin adding details. What do you see there? What do you hear? How does this calm, happy place smell? How does your body feel in this place? You feel calm and safe here. Remain still while you feel calm and relaxed. Continue taking deep breaths in and out and enjoy being in this place…. Continue breathing 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3.

Drawing

Use art to relax your body. Take a few minutes to draw or write something that is calming. Choose what you wish to draw. You may wish to draw your Calm Place or draw shapes or use colors in a way that you find relaxing.
Relaxation Practice

Practice deep breathing, muscle relaxation, body scan, My Calm Place, or drawing 3 times in the next week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day of week – Put a star (*) or checkmark (✓) on the days you practice</th>
<th>How did it go?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Emojis representing different emotions for each day]
Session 8: Parent Letter

Dear Parent or Guardian,

It has been wonderful continuing to get to know your child!

There are two sessions in the program dedicated for students to share their journey from their home country and today was the first one. Students have been prepared to share their journey through an individual session.

Throughout telling their story, students were encouraged to emphasize their strengths throughout their journey. They were also asked to reflect on the outside supports they used. Students were also encouraged to think about what they learned through their experience. Everyone was very encouraging of one another through this activity.

We ended the session by allowing one of the students to lead the class in a relaxation exercise. Again, we encourage you to practice the relaxation exercises with your child!

As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have about the program or your child. You can reach me by telephone at _______________ or by email at _________.

Sincerely,

______________
Deep Breathing

Practice deep breathing.

Take a deep breath in… and a deep breath out.
Put one hand on your stomach and one hand on your chest. Imagine you are getting ready to blow up a balloon. Breathe in and count 1, 2, 3 slowly. Now imagine you are blowing ALL the air out of a balloon.

Muscle Relaxation

**Hands & Arms:** Pretend you are squeezing a whole lemon in your left hand. Squeeze it hard. Try to squeeze all the juice out. Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Now drop the lemon and relax.

**Arms & Shoulders:** Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them up high over your head like you are furry, comfortable cat.

**Face and Nose:** A pesky old fly has landed on your nose, try to get him off without using your hands. Now relax your nose.

**Stomach:** Make your stomach very hard like a baby elephant is walking on it! Now let your stomach go soft.
Body Scan

To begin, start off by taking three deep breaths. Deep breath in 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out 1, 2, 3.

Start paying attention to different parts of your body. Notice different parts of your body without changing anything. Pay attention to your fingers. Think about your fingertips and notice how they feel right now. Just observe how your fingers feel. Think about each finger.

Focus on your whole arms, and then your neck, and your head… Think about your stomach and back, just notice and observe how they're feeling. Notice your legs. Do they feel heavy? Light? Think about each part is feeling right now and focus on it.

Think about your whole body. Scan your whole body from head to toe. Notice how your whole body feels. Notice any changes that might have happened. End with three deep breaths. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. In, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3.

My Calm Place

Get yourself in a comfortable position, whether that’s sitting up or laying down. Close your eyes if you’d like. Take several deep breaths in. Breathe in 1, 2, 3 and breathe out 1, 2, 3. Continue breathing in through our nose and out through your mouth. Count 1-2-3. Now think of a place that makes you feel happy and at peace. This could be anywhere. It can be a place that you know very well, or it can be an imaginary place. It could be a calm room, or outside in nature by water or in a field, or anywhere else that you feel happy and at peace. Get a clear picture of that place in your mind. Keep breathing slowly and deeply, 1, 2, 3 in and 1, 2, 3 out. Now that you have a clear picture in your mind, begin adding details. What do you see there? What do you hear? How does this calm, happy place smell? How does your body feel in this place? You feel calm and safe here. Remain still while you feel calm and relaxed. Continue taking deep breaths in and out and enjoy being in this place…. Continue breathing 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3.

Drawing

Use art to relax your body. Take a few minutes to draw or write something that is calming. Choose what you wish to draw. You may wish to draw your Calm Place or draw shapes or use colors in a way that you find relaxing.
# Session 8

## Student Engagement and Functioning Rating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Engagement Rating (1-5)</th>
<th>Affect Rating (1-5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Engagement Rating:

1. Refused to participate in the discussions or activities.
2. Did not contribute to discussions but went through the motions of activities. Student was co-operative, but it was difficult to determine their level of understanding and insight due to minimal participation.
3. Minimal contributions to discussions and activities.
4. Some contributions to discussions and participation in activities that showed an understanding of the topic.
5. Several contributions to discussions and participation in activities that showed an understanding of the topic. Student also showed personal insight, meaning they related the topic to their own life in some way.

### Affect Rating:

1. Negative affect and demonstrating signs of distress
2. Appears flat or sad but not overtly distressed
3. Neutral affect
4. Some positive affect
5. Positive affect and demonstrating signs of optimism / hopefulness
Session 9: My Journey Part II

Outline
A. Warm-Up Activity: Favorite Holiday
B. Practice Review: Relaxation and Sharing My Journey
C. Sharing My Journey
D. Reflection
E. Extending the Journey to the Future
F. Relaxation Exercise: Student Lead
G. Assign Practice: Relaxation and Sharing My Journey

Objectives
3. Students will share parts of their journey with the group.
4. Students will support other students as they share parts of their journey.
5. Students will extend their journey into the future.

Materials
- Sharing My Journey Practice (for older students)
- Relaxation Exercises (for older students)
- Relaxation Practice (for older students)
- Session 9 Parent Letter
A. Warm-Up Activity: Favorite Holiday
Explain to the students that today’s warm-up activity will be to share their favorite holiday through showing a picture or describing it.

As I mentioned at the end of the last session, for today’s warm-up activity, I’d like you to describe your favorite holiday and what you did to celebrate. If you brought something with you, you can share it with the group. If not, you can either show us a picture or just describe it. Who would like to start? [If students are not sure what to share, you can give them example like your favorite food, your favorite holiday tradition, a fun place to play or spend time.]

B. Practice Review: Relaxation and Sharing My Journey
Ask a student to select a relaxation activity and practice it.

Would anyone like to pick a relaxation exercise today? Remember, you can pick from deep breathing, muscle relaxation, body scan, My Calm Place, or drawing. You may pick the activity and then we can all do it together. [Lead students in the selected relaxation activity.]

Review last week’s practice with students and ask them to share with the group how they continued to think about or talk about their journey through drawing, writing, and/or sharing with someone they trust.

Did any of you continue to think about or talk about your journey after we last met? [Allow students to respond.]

How did it go? Did anyone’s Feelings Thermometer go up or down as they continued to think or talk about their journey?

Sometimes thinking about or talking about the difficult parts of your journey can be uncomfortable. But, just like how we talked about getting into cold water, the more you think and talk about your journey the more comfortable it will be.

C. Sharing My Journey
The goal of this session is for students to share parts of their journey with other students in the group. Students may vary widely in their journey experiences. The goal is to help students talk about their journey with others, to share the challenges they have experienced, and the strengths and supports they have used.

Take out the My Journey worksheets that were completed during the Individual Session and distribute to students. Explain to students that, in this part of the session, students who did not share their journey in the last session will be sharing their journey with other students in the group.

I am handing each of you the My Journey worksheets that we completed during our individual sessions. Today, I would like you to share some parts of your journey. Remember, you can share parts from before you left your home country, during your journey, or since you have arrived. You may also share strengths and supports you have used during your journey, and things you have gained or learned.
As we discussed in the beginning of the group, everything we share in the group is confidential, or private. Since we will be sharing personal information about our journeys, we want everyone to remember that the information shared is private so that we can all feel safe sharing. It takes courage to share your journey with others, so we want to make sure that we are encouraging others.\textsuperscript{21}

Remember that you do not have to share all of your journey. You may want to share parts that stand out to you. Does anyone have any questions?

Who would like to share parts of their journey first? [Allow a student to volunteer.] Great, thank you, [Student’s name]! Please begin.

Allow students to share parts of their journey. If they are struggling with what to share, you might want to ask questions from their My Journey worksheet, including about strengths and supports.\textsuperscript{22}

[After the student ends the journey narrative]: Thank you for sharing parts your journey. What stood out to me was ____________, and you seemed to use [strength] along your journey. [To the group]: What parts stand out to you about ______’s journey? [Before moving on to the next student’s journey, provide praise and acknowledge the students’ strengths and use of supports.]

Thank you! Who would like share parts of their journey next? [Allow a student to volunteer.] Great, thank you, [Student’s name]! Please begin.

Follow steps described above until all students have shared parts of their journey. If time allows, ask students if they would like to share additional parts of their journey and/or write or draw about parts of their journey.

D. Reflection

Lead students in a discussion about sharing their journey.

Thank you all for sharing your journeys today. I am proud of you all of sharing and listening to each other’s journeys!

How do you feel after sharing and hearing others’ journeys? Where were you on your Feelings Thermometer during the activity? [Allow students to discuss.]

What did you learn from this activity?

What was something helpful or encouraging that someone else in the group shared? [Allow students to discuss.]

\textsuperscript{21} TIP: If students question why someone did or didn’t do something on their journey, it may be helpful to remind them that many things that happen are beyond our control and we all try to choose the best options available in each situation or moment to get through it or survive.

\textsuperscript{22} TIP: Students may be more comfortable sharing pictures of a part of their journey, so you may want to incorporate time in the individual session or this session for drawing part(s) of the journey.
I am proud of you all for being honest and open today. Next week, we will continue sharing journeys, but also, I will give you time to think about your future. Your journey does not end here!

E. Extending the Journey to the Future
Instruct students to extend their journey to the future. Students should write down or draw the next steps of the journey.

Thank you all for sharing your journey. Now, I would like you all to think about the next steps in your journey. What does your life look like in a year from now? What are your hopes and dreams?

Ask students to share the next step on their journey with other students in the group.

I would like everyone to go around the room and share the next steps in your journey. Who would like to begin?

F. Relaxation Exercise: Student Lead
Explain to students that they will practice leading a relaxation exercise. Review the options with the students: deep breathing, muscle relaxation, body scan, My Calm Place, or drawing.

Today, I would like one of you to lead the group in a relaxation exercise. You can pick from one of the five relaxation exercises that we learned as a group. You can do a deep breathing, muscle relaxation, body scan, My Calm Place, or drawing. Who wants to lead this activity today?

G. Assign Practice: Relaxation and Sharing My Journey

For All Students:
This week, you may practice any of the relaxation activities we have learned - deep breathing, muscle relaxation, body scan, My Calm Place, or drawing. I would like you to do a relaxation activity 3 days this week.

Also, continue thinking about your journey. Remember that you can imagine parts of your journey, you can draw it, you can write about it, or you can share it with someone you trust. You may also wish to share your hopes and dreams for the future. Next week, we will ask how it went.

For Older Students: Explain that students will have the worksheet as a prompt to remind them about the activity.

Here are the worksheets [Show the Relaxation Practice and Sharing My Journey worksheet.] For each relaxation practice, make a star or check mark on the day you did it, and circle a face to show how it went.

23 TIP: If students share that they would like to return to their home country, normalize those thoughts and feelings and problem-solve ways to both remain connected to their home country and continue transitioning to new environments.
### Sharing My Journey Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Drawing.</strong></th>
<th>Draw parts of your journey.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Writing.</strong></th>
<th>Write about parts of your journey.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Sharing.</strong></th>
<th>Share parts of your journey with someone you trust. (You might choose to share drawings, writings, and/or words).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Who did you share with?  Adam Smith</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Who did you share with? _______________________________________________
Deep Breathing

Practice deep breathing.

Take a deep breath in… and a deep breath out.  
Put one hand on your stomach and one hand on your chest. Imagine you are getting ready to blow up a balloon. Breathe in and count 1, 2, 3 slowly. Now imagine you are blowing ALL the air out of a balloon.

Muscle Relaxation

**Hands & Arms:** Pretend you are squeezing a whole lemon in your left hand. Squeeze it hard. Try to squeeze all the juice out. Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Now drop the lemon and relax.

**Arms & Shoulders:** Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them up high over your head like you are furry, comfortable cat.

**Face and Nose:** A pesky old fly has landed on your nose, try to get him off without using your hands. Now relax your nose.

**Stomach:** Make your stomach very hard like a baby elephant is walking on it! Now let your stomach go soft.
Body Scan

To begin, start off by taking three deep breaths. Deep breath in 1, 2, 3, and out 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in 1, 2, 3, and out 1, 2, 3.

Start paying attention to different parts of your body. Notice different parts of your body without changing anything. Pay attention to your fingers. Think about your fingertips and notice how they feel right now. Just observe how your fingers feel. Think about each finger.

Focus on your whole arms, and then your neck, and your head… Think about your stomach and back, just notice and observe how they’re feeling. Notice your legs. Do they feel heavy? Light? Think about each part is feeling right now and focus on it.

Think about your whole body. Scan your whole body from head to toe. Notice how your whole body feels. Notice any changes that might have happened. End with three deep breaths. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. In, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3.

My Calm Place

Get yourself in a comfortable position, whether that’s sitting up or laying down. Close your eyes if you’d like. Take several deep breaths in. Breathe in 1, 2, 3 and breathe out 1, 2, 3. Continue breathing in through our nose and out through your mouth. Count 1-2-3. Now think of a place that makes you feel happy and at peace. This could be anywhere. It can be a place that you know very well, or it can be an imaginary place. It could be a calm room, or outside in nature by water or in a field, or anywhere else that you feel happy and at peace. Get a clear picture of that place in your mind. Keep breathing slowly and deeply, 1, 2, 3 in and 1, 2, 3 out. Now that you have a clear picture in your mind, begin adding details. What do you see there? What do you hear? How does this calm, happy place smell? How does your body feel in this place? You feel calm and safe here. Remain still while you feel calm and relaxed. Continue taking deep breaths in and out and enjoy being in this place…. Continue breathing 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3.

Drawing

Use art to relax your body. Take a few minutes to draw or write something that is calming. Choose what you wish to draw. You may wish to draw your Calm Place or draw shapes or use colors in a way that you find relaxing.
Relaxation Practice

Practice deep breathing, muscle relaxation, body scan, My Calm Place, or drawing 3 times in the next week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day of week – Put a star (*) or checkmark (✓) on the days you practice</th>
<th>How did it go?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>😞 😞 😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>😞 😞 😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>😞 😞 😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>😞 😞 😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>😞 😞 😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>😞 😞 😊</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>😞 😞 😊</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dear Parent or Guardian,

Your child has been doing very well in our program!

This week’s session was very similar to last week’s session. Students continued to practice sharing their journey. They were asked to highlight their strengths and what they learned through the experience.

In today’s session, students also had the opportunity to brainstorm how they can extend their journey into the future. This included thinking about goals that they want to accomplish both in the short and long term.

Like last week, students were asked to continue thinking about their journey. They can do this in a number of ways; they can imagine parts of their journey, they can draw parts of it, they can write about it, or they can share it with someone they trust.

As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you maybe have about the program or your child. You can reach me by telephone at _______________ or by email at __________. I look forward to seeing your child for the final session!

Sincerely,

______________
Deep Breathing

Practice deep breathing.

Muscle Relaxation

**Hands & Arms:** Pretend you are squeezing a whole lemon in your left hand. Squeeze it hard. Try to squeeze all the juice out. Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Now drop the lemon and relax.

**Arms & Shoulders:** Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them up high over your head like you are furry, comfortable cat.

**Face and Nose:** A pesky old fly has landed on your nose, try to get him off without using your hands. Now relax your nose.

**Stomach:** Make your stomach very hard like a baby elephant is walking on it! Now let your stomach go soft.
Body Scan

To begin, start by taking three deep breaths. Deep breath in 1, 2, 3, and out 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out 1, 2, 3.

Start paying attention to different parts of your body. Notice different parts of your body without changing anything. Pay attention to your fingers. Think about your fingertips and notice how they feel right now. Just observe how your fingers feel. Think about each finger.

Focus on your whole arms, and then your neck, and your head... Think about your stomach and back, just notice and observe how they're feeling. Notice your legs. Do they feel heavy? Light? Think about each part is feeling right now and focus on it.

Think about your whole body. Scan your whole body from head to toe. Notice how your whole body feels. Notice any changes that might have happened. End with three deep breaths. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. In, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3.

My Calm Place

Get yourself in a comfortable position, whether that's sitting up or laying down. Close your eyes if you'd like. Take several deep breaths in. Breathe in 1, 2, 3 and breathe out 1, 2, 3. Continue breathing in through our nose and out through your mouth. Count 1-2-3. Now think of a place that makes you feel happy and at peace. This could be anywhere. It can be a place that you know very well, or it can be an imaginary place. It could be a calm room, or outside in nature by water or in a field, or anywhere else that you feel happy and at peace. Get a clear picture of that place in your mind. Keep breathing slowly and deeply, 1, 2, 3 in and 1, 2, 3 out. Now that you have a clear picture in your mind, begin adding details. What do you see there? What do you hear? How does this calm, happy place smell? How does your body feel in this place? You feel calm and safe here. Remain still while you feel calm and relaxed. Continue taking deep breaths in and out and enjoy being in this place.... Continue breathing 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3.

Drawing

Use art to relax your body. Take a few minutes to draw or write something that is calming. Choose what you wish to draw. You may wish to draw your Calm Place or draw shapes or use colors in a way that you find relaxing.
SESSION 9
STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND FUNCTIONING RATING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Engagement Rating (1-5)</th>
<th>Affect Rating (1-5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Engagement Rating:
1. Refused to participate in the discussions or activities.
2. Did not contribute to discussions but went through the motions of activities. Student was co-operative, but it was difficult to determine their level of understanding and insight due to minimal participation.
3. Minimal contributions to discussions and activities.
4. Some contributions to discussions and participation in activities that showed an understanding of the topic.
5. Several contributions to discussions and participation in activities that showed an understanding of the topic. Student also showed personal insight, meaning they related the topic to their own life in some way.

Affect Rating:
1. Negative affect and demonstrating signs of distress
2. Appears flat or sad but not overtly distressed
3. Neutral affect
4. Some positive affect
5. Positive affect and demonstrating signs of optimism / hopefulness
Session 10: Graduation

Outline
A. Warm-Up Activity: Appreciating Strengths
B. Practice Review: Relaxation and Sharing My Journey
C. STRONG BINGO
D. (Coping) Skills for Success
E. Certificates

Objectives
1. Students will review skills learned during the STRONG intervention.
2. Students will identify their favorite coping skills from STRONG.

Materials
- Bingo cards
- Bingo chips (make by cutting colorful paper into small squares)
- Skills for Success worksheet
- Certificates
- Session 10 Parent Letter
A. Warm-up Activity: Appreciating Strengths
For this week’s warm-up activity, students will share a strength or something special about each group member.

We have been together as a group for ten weeks now! We have learned a lot about each other and we have supported each other. Let’s go around and share one strength or something special about each group member. It could be something special you learned about someone, or something about them that makes them strong, helpful, or brave. Let’s start with [name a student]. Who wants to start by sharing something special about [student’s name]?

[Continue until each student has been acknowledged by each student.]

B. Practice Review: Relaxation and Sharing My Journey
Ask a student to select a relaxation activity and practice it.

Would anyone like to pick a relaxation exercise today? Remember, you can pick from deep breathing, muscle relaxation, body scan, My Calm Place, or drawing. You may pick the activity and then we can all do it together. [Lead students through the selected relaxation activity.]

Review last week’s practice with students and ask them to share with the group how they continued to think about or talk about their journey through drawing, writing, and/or sharing with someone they trust.

Did any of you continue to think about or talk about your journey after we last met? [Allow students to respond.]

How did it go? Did anyone’s Feelings Thermometers go up or down as they continued to think or talk about their journey?

Sometimes thinking about or talking about the difficult parts of our journey can be uncomfortable. But, just like how we talked about getting into cold water, the more you think and talk about your journey the more comfortable it will be.

C. STRONG BINGO
Introduce students to the game of BINGO and make sure everyone understands how it works.

Before we have a celebration, we are going to play a quick game to help us remember everything we have learned. Has anyone ever played BINGO before? [Allow students to respond.]

[Hand out the BINGO Cards and chips.]

For those of you who have not played, I will explain! You will see on your sheet there are several boxes. I am going to say a prompt and then you will cover the box with a chip that fits best with that prompt. Before we move onto the next prompt we will discuss the answer to make sure we all understand. When someone has made a line up and down
[show with your finger] or across [show with your finger], that person has won, and the game is over! Does anyone have any questions? Great! Let’s begin.

**EMOTIONS CATEGORY** For the “emotions” category, act out the emotions and ask students to guess what emotion you are acting out.

SAD – Act out SAD  
HAPPY- Act out HAPPY  
ANGRY- Act out ANGRY  
SURPRISED- Act out SURPRISED

**RELAXATION CATEGORY** For the “relaxation” category, read the relaxation scripts, and ask students to name the relaxation exercise you are acting out.

**DEEP BREATHING:**

I want you to take a deep breath in… and a deep breath out. Deep breath in, deep breath out. Deep breath in… deep breath out. [Repeat 5 more times]

With each breath in and out, let your arms feel warm and like they are sinking into the chair or floor. Breathe In, 1, 2, 3, and Breathe Out, 1, 2, 3. Breathe In, 1, 2, 3, and Breathe Out, 1, 2, 3. [Repeat 5 more times].

**MUSCLE RELAXATION**

**Hands & Arms:** To begin, pretend you are squeezing a whole lemon in your left hand. Squeeze it hard. Try to squeeze all the juice out. Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Now drop the lemon and relax. See how much better your hand and arm feel when they are relaxed. Repeat with the other hand.

**Arms & Shoulders:** Pretend you are a furry, lazy cat. You want to stretch. Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them up high over your head. Way back. Feel the pull in your shoulders. Stretch higher. Now just let your arms drop back to your side. Okay kitten, stretch again. Repeat.

**BODY SCAN:**

I want you to start paying attention to different parts of your body. I want you to notice different parts of your body without changing anything. Okay, I want you to pay attention to your fingers. Think about your fingertips and try to notice how they feel right now. Just watch and observe how your fingers feel. Think about each finger.

Now I want you to think about your hands. Try to pay attention to just your hands. How do they feel? Move up to your wrist. Focus on just your wrist, just observe how your wrist feels. Move up to your elbows, just watch how your elbow feels. Observe and notice how your elbows feel. Okay let’s think about your whole arm. Focus on your whole arm: do they feel heavy? Light? Think about each arm and focus on how it feels.

Now let’s move up to your neck. Just concentrate on how your neck feels right now. Think about the front of your neck and the back of your neck. Does it feel tight or loose? How does your neck feel right now? Just think about your neck.

Move up your face, think about your chin, your lips. Observe your cheeks, now your nose… your eyes… your forehead… your ears.
Okay let’s move down to your chest and upper back. Just notice and observe how they are feeling. Notice and observe your chest and upper back. Now think about the sides. How do the sides of your body feel? Just think and observe. Let’s move down to the center of your body. Focus on your stomach and the core of your body. Just think about how your belly feels. Don’t do anything, just think and observe.


Now I want you think about your whole body. Scan your whole body from head to toe. Notice how your whole body feels. Observe your whole body. Allow yourself to focus on one part of the body if you would like. Observe how your muscles are feeling. Do a body scan from head to toe. Notice how you are feeling. Notice any changes that might have happened.

**DRAWING**

Today, for our relaxation exercise, I would like you to draw your peaceful place. Think about the place that makes you really happy, calm, and peaceful. Draw that place. You can also make a collage of that place if you would like.

**TOOLS**

- During this program, each of you practiced working toward a goal. What did we use to break our goals down into manageable parts?
  - Steps to Success
- One option for helping me think of a positive thought is to use my _____ card.
  - SuperThinker
- I use my feeling ______ to measure the intensity of my feelings.
  - Thermometer
- To demonstrate how thoughts, feelings, and actions are connected, we have used a ______ shape.
  - Triangle

**STRESS**

- This is a reaction to stress that you feel in your body
  - Tummy ache
- When you are feelings stressed, what are some helpful thoughts you can use?
  - e.g., I have done this before; It is going to be okay; people care about me
- When I take deep breaths, I count to ______
  - 1-2-3
- Other than relaxation and helpful thoughts, what is something you can do to feel less stressed?
  - Listen to music
D. (Coping) Skills for Success
To end the program, ask students to pick and write or draw their three favorite coping skills from a menu of options. They will leave with their Skills for Success sheet.

*Thank you all for your hard work during our sessions! I am so impressed with all the progress that you made! To end the program, I would like you to choose your favorite coping skills that you can take with you as you move forward. You will write or draw these on a Skills for Success sheet that you can take with you.*

E. Certificates
Prepare a certificate of successful STRONG completion for each student. Call out the name of each student to come up to the front of the room to receive their certificate. As you shake their hand, tell each student something about their progress that is unique to them. Encourage the rest of the group to applaud each student as they receive their certificate. Students should leave the session feeling proud of the progress they have made and confident in using the skills they have learned.
Skills for Success

Write or draw your favorite skills that you have learned in the STRONG program

Skill Menu:
- Inside Strengths
- Outside Supports
- Measuring and Managing Feelings (Feelings Thermometer)
- Relaxation skills – deep breathing, muscle relaxation, body scan, My Calm Place, drawing
- Helpful thoughts
- Steps to Success (Goals)
- Problem Solving
# BINGO Card I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EMOTIONS</th>
<th>RELAXATION</th>
<th>TOOLS</th>
<th>STRESS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SAD</td>
<td>DRAWING</td>
<td>THERMOMETER</td>
<td>TUMMYACHE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAPPY</td>
<td>MUSCLE RELAXATION</td>
<td>TRIANGLE</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANGRY</td>
<td>BODY SCAN</td>
<td>Steps to Success</td>
<td>LISTEN TO MUSIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SURPRISED</td>
<td>DEEP BREATHING</td>
<td>SUPERTHINKER</td>
<td>HELPFUL THOUGHTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMOTIONS</td>
<td>RELAXATION</td>
<td>FILL-IN-THE-BLANK</td>
<td>STRESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANGRY</td>
<td>MUSCLE RELAXATION</td>
<td>TRIANGLE</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAD</td>
<td>BODY SCAN</td>
<td>THERMOMETER</td>
<td>TUMMYACHE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SURPRISED</td>
<td>DEEP BREATHING</td>
<td>SUPERTHINKER</td>
<td>HELPFUL THOUGHTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAPPY</td>
<td>DRAWING</td>
<td>Steps to Success</td>
<td>LISTEN TO MUSIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMOTIONS</td>
<td>RELAXATION</td>
<td>FILL-IN-THE-BLANK</td>
<td>STRESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SURPRISED</td>
<td>DEEP BREATHING</td>
<td>THERMOMETER</td>
<td>HELPFUL THOUGHTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANGRY</td>
<td>BODY SCAN</td>
<td>SUPERTHINKER</td>
<td>LISTEN TO MUSIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAD</td>
<td>MUSCLE RELAXATION</td>
<td>Steps to Success</td>
<td>1-2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAPPY</td>
<td>DRAWING</td>
<td>TRIANGLE</td>
<td>TUMMY ACHE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMOTIONS</td>
<td>RELAXATION</td>
<td>FILL-IN-THE-BLANK</td>
<td>STRESS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAD</td>
<td>BODY SCAN</td>
<td>Steps to Success</td>
<td>LISTEN TO MUSIC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SURPRISED</td>
<td>DEEP BREATHING</td>
<td>TRIANGLE</td>
<td>TUMMYACHE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAPPY</td>
<td>MUSCLE RELAXATION</td>
<td>SUPERTHINKER</td>
<td>HELPFUL THOUGHTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANGRY</td>
<td>DRAWING</td>
<td>THERMOMETER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1-2-3
Congratulations!

Supporting Transition Resilience of Newcomer Groups

STRONG
Session 10: Parent Letter

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Today our group met for our last session! It has been so wonderful getting to know your child over these last 10 weeks. They have learned a lot and it was a pleasure to watch them grow!

To wrap up the program, we started by allowing each of the students to tell their peers about one of their strengths. Then, we played a game of BINGO, which helped students review all the material they have learned through our sessions together. When we finished the game, students completed a worksheet called Skills for Success, where they identified their three favorite skills they learned in the program. Students will take this home with them. Finally, students received certificates to signify successful completion of the program. You should be very proud!

Based on what I have observed over these last 10 weeks, I have provided specific feedback on your child’s progress in the space below.

If you would like to discuss this information, please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you maybe have about the program or your child. You can reach me by telephone at ______________ or by email at ____________.

Sincerely,

______________
### SESSION 10

**STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND FUNCTIONING RATING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
<th>Engagement Rating (1-5)</th>
<th>Affect Rating (1-5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Engagement Rating:**

1. Refused to participate in the discussions or activities.
2. Did not contribute to discussions but went through the motions of activities. Student was co-operative, but it was difficult to determine their level of understanding and insight due to minimal participation.
3. Minimal contributions to discussions and activities.
4. Some contributions to discussions and participation in activities that showed an understanding of the topic.
5. Several contributions to discussions and participation in activities that showed an understanding of the topic. Student also showed personal insight, meaning they related the topic to their own life in some way

**Affect Rating:**

1. Negative affect and demonstrating signs of distress
2. Appears flat or sad but not overtly distressed
3. Neutral affect
4. Some positive affect
5. Positive affect and demonstrating signs of optimism / hopefulness
Individual Session [In Between Session 4-8]

Outline
A. Sharing My Journey
B. Screen Students for Post-Traumatic Stress
C. Review Journey Narrative with Students
D. Prepare Students for The Parts They Will Share in Group
E. Relaxation Exercise: Student Choice

Objectives
1. Students will be able to identify 2 strengths they used during their journey.
2. Students will be able to share parts of their pre-migration, migration, and post-migration parts of their journey with the STRONG leader.
3. Students will be able to identify one to three parts of their journey to share with the group.

Materials
- My Journey
A. Sharing My Journey

Explain to the student that in this individual session, the student will describe their journey. Emphasize the student’s strengths and supports throughout their journey. Explain to the student that the more they practice sharing their journey, the easier it will become.

Today, I want to hear more about your journey from your home country. Each of you in the group has your own story. Some stories may be harder to share, and some stories may be easier. But each story is special and unique.

I am glad that you made it here to be with us. Your journey may include some difficult parts, which is common. Sometimes people remember the bad things and may forget when they did good things, when others helped them, or how they’ve become stronger even when dealing with difficult things.

The reason we have students share their story is because it can help them feel more comfortable thinking or talking about it and help them remember their strengths. Sometimes, we avoid thinking or talking about difficult experiences that we have had, but the more and more we try not to think about something, the more and more we might end up thinking about it!

As you tell me about your journey, I would like you to focus on the strengths that you have used. Do you remember the activity we did in the first session about your inside strengths and outside supports? As you tell me about your journey, I would like to hear about how your inside strengths and outside supports helped you along the way. I would also like to hear about what you gained or learned from the experience. I’d like to know if your journey has made you stronger in some ways.

The good news is the more we practice THINKING or TALKING about the difficult experiences we’ve had, the easier it will become. I want to demonstrate this idea with an example.

Have you ever stepped into cold water? [Allow students to respond.] How do you feel when you first step in? [Allow students to respond.] That’s right! You may feel uncomfortable. But, after a while, your body gets used to it. We often go in gradually, one step at a time, so that we can slowly get used to it. Once you are all the way in, you may even enjoy how it feels. The same thing can happen when we think about our difficult experiences we’ve had. We may feel really uncomfortable thinking and talking about our difficult experiences at first, but once we stick with it for a little while, we usually get used to it and start to feel better.

---

24 **TIP:** Some students may take longer to describe their narrative, and therefore you may need to schedule additional time (sessions) to get through the journey narrative and follow-up screening and review.

25 **TIP:** If students need further explanation for why we tend to remember bad parts of a journey more than good parts, explain our “survival brain” response. e.g., *One thing that is important about our brains is that sometimes we notice the difficult things more than the positive ones. If we saw a pretty field of flowers but didn’t notice a scary animal in the field, we might get hurt. Our brain is often more aware of bad things so that we can survive.*
And again, each story is unique; while some may not sound as hard as others, each one is important, and may help us remember what others did, both good and bad, that most sticks with you about your journey.

Explain to the student that you would like them to share their journey with you. Tell them that you might stop them throughout their journey narrative to ask them more questions. Explain that after the student shares the journey, you will ask them to reflect on their journey. Some reflections include what they miss about their home country, the strengths that they relied on throughout their journey, and what they learned/gained from the experience.

Today, I want to hear about your journey from your home country. At some points, I might ask you some more questions about what happened. After you share your journey, I want to talk with you about your thoughts about what you miss and love about your home country, some of the strengths you have used, and what you have gained from your experience.

Ask the student to begin sharing the pre-migration process of their journey. Guide them with specific questions about their experience.

I would like you to begin talking about your home country. What was occurring daily as you were there?

Questions to ask students:
- What did you like about being in your home country?
- What inside strengths did you use while you were in your home country?
- How were you brave?
- What outside supports did you use?
- Who were you living with?
- Did you experience any difficult events while you were in your home country?
- Who else experienced these difficult events with you?
- When did these experiences happen to you?
- Where did these events happen to you?
- How were you told you were moving?

Ask students to share their journey for the migration process:

Now, I would like to hear more about your experience during your journey leaving the country. Describe what happened to you as you left the country.

Questions for the to ask student:
- What inside strengths did you use while you were leaving your home country?
- How were you brave?
- What outside supports did you use?
- How did you travel?

26 **TIP:** If students have difficulty verbally sharing about their journey, you can encourage them to first draw or write about parts of their journey. They may choose to write about it in their native language.
• Who else experienced these events with you?
• How did you travel?
• Who else experienced these events with you?
• What do you remember when you arrived?
• Was it day or night? What did you eat? Where did you sleep?

Ask the student to share their journey for the post-migration process, moving here:

Now, I would like to hear more about your experience during your journey. What events have happened to you since you’ve moved here?

Questions for to ask the student:
• What do you like about living here?
• What are you curious about living here?
• How have you been brave?
• What inside strengths have you used?
• What outside supports have you used?
• What do you miss about your home country?
• Have you experienced any difficult events here?
• Who else experienced these difficult events with you?
• When did these experiences happen to you?
• Where did these events happen to you?
• What are you looking forward to?

Tips as the student shares their narratives:
If the student is overly upset:
• Focus on the strengths/what students gained.
• Encourage student to “fast forward” (or even skip initially) through the hard parts of the story.
• Remind student of the reasons you want them to share the journey.
• Ask students about facts. e.g., Wait—take me back—was it day or night then? Who was with you? What happened back the night before?
• Use relaxation to calm students. Know before you begin this process what type of relaxation strategies this student prefers.

If the student is disengaged:
• Ask questions about sensations. For example, inquire about what smells they remember, whether it was hot or cold (or the weather), what sounds they remember (unfamiliar languages, music, screaming or quiet voices), unusual food they ate, what they brought/carried with them.
• Encourage student to slow down the story. e.g., Try to slow down the story by telling me more information like who was there, what you saw, and what you heard.
B. Screen Students for Post-Traumatic Stress

Thank the student for sharing their journey. Ask the student if they are experiencing symptoms of post-traumatic stress.

Thank you for sharing with me your story. It seems to me that you were very brave and courageous throughout your entire journey! Also, it was really brave of you to tell me your story. Sometimes, after someone has experienced difficult events, they may have reactions, feelings or thoughts that they may not have had before these difficult events. Everyone reacts differently to difficult events, and all reactions are normal! I’d like to ask you some questions to see how you are doing now.

Questions about re-experiencing:
- Do you have dreams about what happened or other nightmares?
- Do you have upsetting thoughts or pictures in your mind, even if you don’t want those thoughts?
- Do you feel like you are living through the bad things that have happened to you again?

Questions about avoidance:
- Do you try to stay away from people or things that make you remember what happened?
- Do you try not to think about or talk about what happened?

Questions about physiological arousal:
- Do you feel like you are jumpy easily, like when you hear a loud noise?
- Do you have trouble falling asleep?

Questions about mood:
- Do you feel angry, sad, or mad much of the time?
- Do you have trouble feeling happy?
- Do you feel like being alone and not being with friends?
- Do you have trouble paying attention?

Explain to the student that it can be helpful to continue sharing parts of their journey with a trusted adult if they experience symptoms of post-traumatic stress.

Thank you for answering those questions for me!

If the student endorses symptoms of post-traumatic stress:
Thank you again for sharing your journey with me. It sounds like you may still be having some trouble with the difficult parts of your journey. Many other students who have been in situations like you have also had difficulty. As I mentioned in the beginning of today’s session, we can sometimes feel better about the difficult things from our journey through thinking about or talking about it more. You can share your journey by saying it out loud, imagining it, drawing it, or writing about it. The more you practice sharing the story, the more you get used to it and usually the less scary or stressful it feels.
Discuss with student options for continuing to process the journey either through meeting with you individually, working independently or with another trusted adult, and/or seeking additional mental health supports in the school or community.

**If the student does not endorse symptoms of post-traumatic stress:**
Thank you again for sharing your journey story with me. It sounds like you are not having some of the troubles that some students have after they have gone through a journey from one country to another, like nightmares, avoiding things, or feeling upset much of the time. If you do find yourself having those things happen, I would encourage you to seek help either from me, or from another trusted adult. As I mentioned in the beginning of today’s session, we can sometimes feel better about the difficult things from our journey through thinking about or talking about it more. You can share your journey by saying it out loud, imagining it, drawing it, or writing about it. The more you practice sharing the journey, the more you get used to it and usually the less scary or stressful it feels.

**C. Review Journey Narrative with Students**
Thank the student for sharing their journey and guide them through the My Journey worksheet.

Thank you for sharing your journey with me. That was really brave of you! I would now like to talk about some of your journey with you.

I am going to ask you some questions, and then I am going to fill out your answers on this sheet. [Show students My Journey worksheet.]
- What do you remember growing up in your home country that you liked?
- Are there things you remember about your home country that make you smile?
- What things do you miss about your home country?
- What do you like about living here?
- What have you noticed that’s different here from your home country?
- What are you curious about living here?
- What has been difficult about living here?
- What **inside strengths** helped you get through your journey?
- What **outside supports** helped you get through your journey?
- What did you **gain or learn** from your experience?
- Your journey does not end here. What is one goal you hope to accomplish over the next year?

**D. Prepare Student for the Parts They Will Share in Group**
Help the student pick up to three parts they may share with the group.

Thank you for sharing your journey with me. I know sharing the journey takes courage. In coming weeks, you will share some of the things that you shared with me with the group. I would like to help you pick up to three things from your journey to share with the group. I would like you to pick things that you think would be helpful to share. You can pick things that would help you get used to talking about what happened or you can pick
things that would show the strengths that you have used. Which things do you think you would you like to share with the group?

Problem solve with the student about some of their concerns about sharing with the group.

Do you have any concerns about sharing parts of your journey in group? How can I help you share parts of your journey?

Explain to the student how they might support one another when they are sharing a journey narrative.

It may be easy or difficult for you to share your journey with the group. For other students, it also may be easy or difficult for them to share their journey. Imagine how it might feel to share parts of your journey and imagine what you would like other students to say to you as you share your narrative. It takes courage to share a personal story with other students, and I want you all to support each other! Do you have any ideas for other things you may say to someone after they've shared their journey? [Allow students to share]. Thank you!

E. Relaxation Exercise: Student Choice
End the session with a relaxation exercise that the student chooses.

Before you leave today, I would like to do a relaxation exercise with you. Which exercise would you like to do?

---

27 TIP: If the student selects parts of their journey that may be very disturbing for other students to hear (e.g., gruesome details about death or war), encourage them to talk about those parts with you individually and to identify other parts that may not be as upsetting to other students to share in group. e.g., That is a very difficult part of your story. It may be helpful for you and me to keep talking about that part, but it may be too difficult for other students to hear about. Are there other parts of your journey that may be helpful for you to share?

28 TIP: If the student is very concerned about sharing parts of their journey in the group, you can ask them to share only one part. You can encourage students to share some of their strengths, or some of their goals for the future.
My Journey

**Home Country.** What do you remember growing up in your home country that you liked? Are there things you remember about your home country that make you smile? What things do you miss about your home country?

What do you like about living here? What has been difficult about living here?

What **inside strengths** helped you on your journey?

What **outside supports** helped you on your journey?

What have you **gained and learned** from your experience?

**Future.** Your journey does not end here. What is one goal you hope to accomplish over the next year?

What do your life look like one year from now? Five years from now?

What are your hopes and dreams?
Individual Meeting with Parents/Caregivers

Prior to a student starting STRONG, meet parent/caregiver (in person, if possible) and review the following:

1) Describe to parent that the STRONG program consists of 10 group sessions with students who are newcomers. Explain that STRONG sessions occur during school hours and students are excused from class. Explain to parents that in the STRONG program, students will learn coping and problem-solving skills to help them adjust to school.

2) Ask if parent can participate in the STRONG program by:
   a. Attending the group parent/caregiver session.
   b. Reading the STRONG letters sent home.
   c. Helping their child with the skills to be practiced at home.

3) Discuss student strengths, challenges, and possible goals to work toward on the Steps to Success activity. (This may include something their child has been avoiding, feels worried about doing, or something that is hard for the child to do.)

   Questions to help facilitate discussion include:
   i. Tell me about your child’s strengths. What about any challenges they struggle with?
   ii. Are there any goals your child may benefit from working toward?
   iii. Has your child been avoiding something they used to enjoy?
   iv. Is your child avoiding other things like:
      ✓ sleeping alone or being in the dark?
      ✓ being alone or separating from you?
      ✓ going to school or speaking in school?
      ✓ talking about stressful or scary thing they have gone through?

4) Review the program sessions with the parents:

   Session 1: My Inside Strengths and Outside Supports
   Session 2: Understanding Stress
   Session 3: Common Stress Reactions and Identifying Feelings
   Session 4: Measuring and Managing Feelings
   Session 5: Using Helpful Thoughts
   Session 6: Steps to Success
   Session 7: Problem-Solving
   Session 8: My Journey Part I
   Session 9: My Journey Part II
   Session 10: Graduation
   Individual Session

5) Ask parents if they have any questions or concerns.
Parent/Caregiver Session

Session Outline:
A. Introduction to the Orientation Session
B. Introduction to the Program
C. Overview of the Group Sessions
D. Closing

Objectives:
- Parents will identify 2 relaxation exercises and 2 ways they can support their children through the program.
- Parents will understand the core components of the STRONG program.

Materials:
- Relaxation Exercises
- Resources (if appropriate)
A. Introduction to the Orientation Session
Introduce yourself and give an outline of what today’s orientation session will look like:

Hi, my name is ________. I am the leader for the STRONG program here at ______ School. I would like you to give you an introduction, and then, I would like you to give you an overview of the program that we are running with your children. I will close with a discussion to hear your questions and get your feedback.

If there is a small group, ask parents to introduce themselves. Ask teachers and interpreters to introduce themselves as well.

To start off, I would like everyone to go around and introduce yourself. Please say your name and one of your strengths.

B. Introduction to the Program
Explain the importance of the program to parents. Explain how students’ academic success is often connected to their well-being.

Before I begin telling you about the STRONG program, I would like to share with you why I think the program is important. A student’s ability to succeed in school is often related to their well-being. When students have difficulty adjusting to a new classroom and a new environment, it is hard for them to concentrate on the material and focus in the classroom. We believe this is important for ALL students!

Explain that the goal of the program is to help children adjust to the school. Another goal is to help children feel better after a stressful event, so they can do well in school and in their day-to-day life.

The goal of our program is to help your child adjust to school. Another goal of the program is to help your child feel better after a stressful event, so that they can do well in school and their day-to-day life. We want to share information about the sessions so that you can reinforce what your child have been learning in the program at home and support your child through the program.

C. Overview of the Group Sessions
Explain to parents that you will be going over the main concepts and components of the group sessions. Explain to parents how the groups are set up and scheduled at the school. Share that teachers are supportive of the group. Explain to parents the structure of each session.

Today, I will describe the main ideas and parts of the program. Your child will be in a group of 4 - 8 students, all of whom are newcomers. All the teachers and staff members in the school know about the group and are supportive of your child attending the group! [Explain the specifics of how the program was scheduled at the school. For example: We have tried our best to schedule the students’ group during their non-academic classes or during non-instructional periods when possible.] Also, if needed, the teachers will work out with your child how they can make up any work they may miss in class, but your child’s teacher recognizes that this is important for your child and will not penalize your child for participating.

Now, I would like to explain the general structure of each session. Each session, the students play an introduction or ‘get to know you game’ in the beginning. An example of a game could be the STRONG Leader asking all of the students to share their favorite
subject or activity outside of school. We play this introduction game so that students can become more comfortable with each other. One of the main goals of the program is that students build a support system of other students in the school.

After the introduction, the STRONG Leader may lead the group in an activity or discussion about different topics. I will explain the different topics after I finish explaining the structure of the sessions. After the group activity or discussion, the STRONG Leader will lead the students in a relaxation exercise. Relaxation exercises are types of exercises that you can do to help you calm down if you start to feel upset, worried, or stressed. Also, you can do a relaxation exercise if you notice yourself breathing heavily or if your heart is pounding. One example of a relaxation exercise is a deep breathing relaxation exercise or muscle relaxation exercise. If you practice these exercises over time, they can help you become calmer. Does anyone do relaxation exercises now? [Allow parents to respond.] We encourage you to practice the relaxation exercises with your child! At the end of the session, we will hand out a sheet of the relaxation exercises that you can do with your child.

Finally, we end the session with sending home a letter with information about the session. We also encourage the students to practice the relaxation exercises with their parents at home!

Explain to parents the core components of the first session.

Now, I would like to explain the topics that we introduce in each session. The goal of the first session is to demonstrate to students that they already have a set of inside strengths and outside supports. Inside strengths relate to the parts of who the person is, and outside supports are things, places, and people you can go to for support.

Explain to parents the core components of the second session.

In the second session, we explain the concept of stress, which is something that you feel when you are worried, uncomfortable about something, upset, or nervous, and we also review common reactions to stress. Additionally, introduce definitions of thoughts, feelings, and actions, and the idea that our feelings are connected to our thoughts and actions.

Explain to parents the core components of the third session.

In the third session, we explain traumatic events and common reactions to traumatic events, which means a really stressful event, where in some way your life is in danger. Traumatic or stressful events can lead to reactions such as having a lack of appetite, stomachache, headache, feeling sad, feeling scared, feeling angry, feeling nervous, having nightmares, or jumping when there is a noise. We also help students practice identifying feelings through fun activities.

Explain to parents the core components of the fourth session.

In this session, we introduce the idea of the Feelings Thermometer in order to show students that their feelings can be really strong and intense, but other times, they can be mild. We also shared different actions students can take when they are feeling upset, such as calling a friend, doing something enjoyable, playing a game, and talking to an adult.
Explain to parents the core components of the fifth session.

In the fifth session, we look at how thoughts are connected to different actions, and we encourage students to think about more helpful thoughts, which we call ‘SuperThinker thoughts’ when they are starting to feel stressed. Examples of SuperThinker thoughts include, I can do it!; It’s okay if I can’t fall asleep right now; I can do my breathing exercise.

Explain to parents the core components of the individual session.

Halfway through the program, I will meet with students individually to discuss their journey from their host country. In this session, we discuss the stressful events that may have happened during their journey, and their strengths, resilience, and what they have learned throughout their journey. I help the students pick one part of the journey to share with the other students in the group.

Explain to parents the core components of the sixth session.

In the sixth session, students are encouraged to set short-term and long-term goals, and to approach some things they may be avoiding. We help students break their goal down into smaller steps.

Explain to parents the core components of the seventh session.

In the seventh session, we teach students steps to problem solving, which include defining the problem, brainstorming possible solutions, identifying pros and cons, choosing the best solution, and trying out the solution. We also share with students helpful actions they can take when they are trying to solve a problem, such as getting support from others, relaxing their body, using helpful thoughts, and doing a healthy or fun activity.

Explain to parents the core components of the journey narrative in the 8th and 9th sessions.

In the individual session and during the 8th and 9th sessions, we ask students to share aspects of their journey from their home country with other students in the group. We want students to emphasize their strengths, resilience, and what they have learned throughout their journey.

Explain to parents the core components of the 10th session.

In the final session, we review all the material from the sessions with a game called BINGO. We ask students to think of their favorite skills they have learned through the session and list them on a worksheet called Skills for Success.

D. Closing (includes resource list for parents, if appropriate)

Thank you all for coming in today! Does anyone have any questions about today’s session? [Allow parents to ask questions.] I will also stay around after the session to see if you have questions. We will give you some worksheets that share some relaxation exercises that you can do with your child. I would like to close by highlighting some of the resources for you and your child, both at our school and in the community. [Share resource list; specific resources will depend on the site]. Thanks again for coming to today’s session!
Examples of resources include:

- Community organizations that support newcomers
- Free/low-cost case-management/social workers that can help link newcomers to resources
- Free/low-cost health care
- Free/low cost language classes
- Job training/employment services
- Local faith institutions
- Parent groups and organizations in the school setting
- Organizations to help newcomers with housing
- Legal services for newcomers
Deep Breathing

Practice deep breathing.

Muscle Relaxation

**Hands & Arms:** Pretend you are squeezing a whole lemon in your left hand. Squeeze it hard. Try to squeeze all the juice out. Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Now drop the lemon and relax.

**Arms & Shoulders:** Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them up high over your head like you are furry, comfortable cat.

**Face and Nose:** A pesky old fly has landed on your nose, try to get him off without using your hands. Now relax your nose.

**Stomach:** Make your stomach very hard like a baby elephant is walking on it! Now let your stomach go soft.

Take a deep breath in... and a deep breath out. Put one hand on your stomach and one hand on your chest. Imagine you are getting ready to blow up a balloon. Breathe in and count 1, 2, 3 slowly. Now imagine you are blowing ALL the air out of a balloon.
Body Scan

To begin, start off by taking three deep breaths. Deep breath in 1, 2, 3, and out 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in 1, 2, 3, and out 1, 2, 3.

Start paying attention to different parts of your body. Notice different parts of your body without changing anything. Pay attention to your fingers. Think about your fingertips and notice how they feel right now. Just observe how your fingers feel. Think about each finger.

Focus on your whole arms, and then your neck, and your head… Think about your stomach and back, just notice and observe how they’re feeling. Notice your legs. Do they feel heavy? Light? Think about each part is feeling right now and focus on it.

Think about your whole body. Scan your whole body from head to toe. Notice how your whole body feels. Notice any changes that might have happened. End with three deep breaths. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. In, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3.

My Calm Place

Get yourself in a comfortable position, whether that’s sitting up or laying down. Close your eyes if you’d like. Take several deep breaths in. Breathe in 1, 2, 3 and breathe out 1, 2, 3. Continue breathing in through our nose and out through your mouth. Count 1-2-3. Now think of a place that makes you feel happy and at peace. This could be anywhere. It can be a place that you know very well, or it can be an imaginary place. It could be a calm room, or outside in nature by water or in a field, or anywhere else that you feel happy and at peace. Get a clear picture of that place in your mind. Keep breathing slowly and deeply, 1, 2, 3 in and 1, 2, 3 out. Now that you have a clear picture in your mind, begin adding details. What do you see there? What do you hear? How does this calm, happy place smell? How does your body feel in this place? You feel calm and safe here. Remain still while you feel calm and relaxed. Continue taking deep breaths in and out and enjoy being in this place…. Continue breathing 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3.

Drawing

Use art to relax your body. Take a few minutes to draw or write something that is calming. Choose what you wish to draw. You may wish to draw your Calm Place or draw shapes or use colors in a way that you find relaxing.
Teacher/Interpreter Session

Outline
A. Introduction to Orientation Session
B. Introduction to the Newcomer Experience
C. Overview of the Program
D. Tips for Working with Newcomer Students
E. Tips for Engaging Parents

Objectives
● Teachers will understand components of the newcomer experience.
● Teachers will understand tips and strategies for working with newcomer students.
● Teachers will understand the core components of the STRONG program.

Materials:
● Relaxation Exercises
A. Introduction to the Orientation Session
Introduce yourself and give an outline of what the orientation session will look like.

Hi, my name is ______. I am the program leader for the STRONG program. I will give you an overview of the experience of newcomers, and then, I will give you an overview of the program that we are running with the newcomer students. I will close with some tips for parent engagement, as well as some tips for how to work with newcomer students.

If there is a small group, ask teachers/interpreters to introduce themselves.

To start off, I would like everyone to introduce themselves. Please say your name, your role in the school, and one of your strengths.

B. Introduction to the Newcomer Experience
Thank teachers/interpreters for introducing themselves and explain that every newcomer experience is different. Emphasize that newcomers have many strengths and are resilient.

Thank you for your introductions! I would like to begin today by sharing some information about the newcomer experience so that you can have context for our program. I would like to emphasize that though many of the students may be coming from the same country, their experiences may be different. Additionally, students will handle their adjustment differently -- some students may be having a difficult time in their transition, while some others may not. Some students may be struggling through the traumatic events they experienced in their home country, while other students may be having the most difficulty with becoming accustomed to a new country. I want to emphasize that despite their hardships, newcomer students have a unique set of strengths and are incredibly resilient.

Explain stressors of preflight (violence and combat exposure, forced labor, hunger, or loss of family/loved ones), migration (separation from caregivers, violence, suicide, separation from family members, stress of waiting for refugee applications), and resettlement aspects of the newcomer experience (loss of homeland, family, friends, and material possessions, conflict between homeland and new culture, and acculturation).

As many of you are probably aware, newcomer students experience a range of stressors in their home country (or 'pre-flight'), during their migration from their home country, and in resettlement to the new country. Some stressors that newcomers may experience preflight include witnessing violence, being exposed to combat, being forced to do labor, lacking food, or losing family or loved ones. After leaving their home country, refugees may migrate to a refugee camp. Sometimes refugees can stay in refugee camps for several years. Stressors during the flight from their home country and in refugee camps include: separation from their caregivers, traumatic events (e.g. violence, suicide, separation from family members, and lack of basic needs being met), and the stress of waiting for their refugee applications. Finally, newcomers have likely experienced a wide range of stressors as they have resettled. Stressors include the loss of homeland, family, friends, and material possessions, the conflict between homeland and a new culture, and acculturation.
Explain the impact of the stressors on student health and well-being (symptoms of anxiety, depression, and posttraumatic stress). Share that some students may lose their trust in adults, feel doubtful, or inferior. Explain that newcomers may have different conceptions about health seeking or mental health treatment.

These stressors can impact students' health and well-being. For instance, students may experience symptoms of anxiety, depression, and posttraumatic stress. Additionally, some students may lose their trust in the ability of adults to care for them, and they may be mistrustful, be doubtful, or feel inferior. Additionally, some students may lose their moral perspective. However, some students may be reluctant to seek professional help - different cultures have different perspectives of how acceptable it is to seek help and how acceptable it is to seek mental health treatment.

Share protective factors for newcomer youth (e.g. social support, amount of time they have been here, parents' well-being, connections to culture of origin, and acculturation).

However, there are some factors that help buffer the impact of stress on newcomers. For example, a students' social support network, the amount of time they have been here, and parents’ well-being are all protective factors. Additionally, students’ ability to both maintain connections to their culture of origin, as well as acculturate can have positive impacts.

C. Overview of the Program

Explain to teachers/interpreters that you will be going over the main concepts and components of the sessions. Explain to teachers/interpreters the structure of each session.

I would like to explain the general structure of each session. Each session, the students play an introduction or ‘get to know you game’ in the beginning. An example of a game could be the program leader asking all of the students to share their favorite subject or activity outside of school. We play this introduction game so that students can become more comfortable with each other. One of the main goals of the program is that students build a support system of other students in the school.

After the introduction, the program leader may lead the group in an activity or discussion about different topics. I will explain the different topics after I finish explaining the structure of the sessions. After the group activity or discussion, the program leader will lead the class in a relaxation exercise. We review deep breathing, muscle relaxation, body scan, guided imagery, and drawing relaxation exercises with the students. We encourage you to practice the relaxation exercises with all students in your classroom! At the end of the session, we will hand out a sheet of the relaxation exercises that you can do with your students.

Finally, we end the session with encouraging students to practice the relaxation exercises and other skills at home and in school. One of our goals is that the students practice and use the skills that they learn in the classroom.

Explain to teachers/interpreters the core components of the first session.

Now, I would like to explain the topics that we introduce in each session. The goal of the first session is to demonstrate to students that they already have a set of inside
strengths and outside supports. Inside strengths relate to the parts of who the person is, and outside supports are things, places, and people that students can go to for support.

Explain to teachers/interpreters the core components of the second session.

In the second session, we explain the concept of stress, which is something that you feel when you are worried, uncomfortable about something, upset, or nervous; and we also review common reactions to stress. We also introduce definitions of thoughts, feelings, and actions, and the idea that our feelings are connected to our thoughts and actions.

Explain to teachers/interpreters the core components of the third session.

In the third session, we define traumatic events, which are really stressful events where in some way your life is in danger. Traumatic events can happen at many points during a newcomer’s journey and can lead to reactions such as a lack of appetite; heavy heart, stomachaches, or headaches; sadness, loneliness, anger, or nervousness; nightmares; avoidance of people or places; or guardedness. We also help students practice identifying feelings through a worksheet.

Explain to teachers/interpreters the core components of the fourth session.

In this session, we introduce the idea of the feelings thermometer to show students that their feelings can be strong and intense, but other times, they can be mild. We also shared different thoughts students can think, such as ‘I can do this,’ and actions students can take when they are feeling upset, such as calling a friend, doing something enjoyable, playing a game, and talking to an adult.

Explain to teachers/interpreters the core components of the fifth session.

In the fifth session, we look at how thoughts are connected to different actions, and we encourage students to think more helpful thoughts. Examples of more helpful thoughts include, ‘I can do it!’ or ‘It’s okay if I can’t fall asleep right now, I can do my breathing exercise.’

Explain to teachers/interpreters the core components of the individual session.

Halfway through the program, I will meet with students individually to discuss their journey from their host country. In this session, we discuss the stressful events that may have happened during their journey, and their strengths, resilience, and what they have learned throughout their journey. I help the students pick one part of the journey to share with the other students in the group.

Explain to teachers/interpreters the core components of the sixth session.

In the sixth session, students are encouraged to set short-term and long-term goals, and to approach some things they may be avoiding. We help students break their goals down into smaller steps.

Explain to teachers/interpreters the core components of the seventh session.

In the seventh session, we teach students steps to problem solving. We also share helpful actions students can take when they are trying to solve a problem, such as getting support from others or relaxing their body.
Explain to teachers/interpreters the core components of the journey narrative in the 8th and 9th sessions.

*In the individual session and during the 8th and 9th sessions, we ask students to share aspects of their journey from their home country with other students in the group. We want students to emphasize their strengths, resilience, and what they have learned throughout their journey.*

Explain to teachers/interpreters the core components of the 10th session.

*In the final session, we review all of the material from the sessions with a game called trivia. We ask students to think of their favorite skills they have learned through the session and list them on a worksheet called Skills for Success.*

**D. Tips for Working with Newcomer Students**
Explain to teachers that they can promote well-being of the newcomer students in their classroom. Ways that teachers can promote the well-being of newcomer students in their classroom include: promoting the idea of diversity and unity, addressing discrimination, encouraging newcomer students to work with non-newcomer students, using visual aids, oral storytelling, and creative techniques, and incorporating breathing exercises.

*In your classroom, you can help promote the well-being of newcomer students. One of the BEST ways to promote the well-being of newcomer students is by promoting the idea of diversity in your classroom. There are several resources, including the websites ‘Teaching Tolerance’ and ‘Bridging Youth and Refugee Services,’ that have ideas about promoting diversity in the classroom. One website, ‘Bridging Youth and Refugee Services’ has examples of books that share aspects of the refugee experience. You can read parts of the books in your classroom and have students discuss the material.*

*Another way to promote newcomer students’ well-being is to address cases of bullying and discrimination. Newcomer students are more likely to be bullied than non-newcomer students, and to make them feel safe, it is important that you address cases of bullying and discrimination. Another way to promote newcomer students' well-being is to encourage newcomer students and non-newcomer students to work together through group work and activities.*

*Many newcomer students will be learning a new language when they first come here. Another way to promote newcomer students’ academic success and well-being is to supplement some of your class material with visual aids. Additionally, incorporating creative techniques, like acting, drawing, dancing, or oral story-telling may be another way to reach out to newcomer students.*

*Another way to support newcomer students is to incorporate relaxation exercises, such as deep breathing, into your schedule. Finally, some newcomer students may have lost their faith in adults, given some of their experiences before moving. It is important to be patient when forming relationships with newcomers and to establish a sense of safety and trust in your classroom.*

**E. Tips for Engaging Parents**
Explain that there may be some barriers to engaging parents, including parents’ belief that they should not be involved in their children’s education.
Now, I would like to share some tips for engaging parents. Though there are a wide variety of beliefs about education among newcomer parents, there are many newcomer parents who believe that they should not be involved in their children’s education. Many education systems abroad do not expect that parents are involved in their children’s education. Rather, the teachers have a high level of authority with children and are considered the expert on children’s education. Many newcomer parents, however, view education as key to their children’s success. It is important to convey that STRONG participation is private and is intended to assist children with adjusting to the school or community, so participation will not result in harm or punishment to students or families.

One way to engage parents is to explain the expectations around parental involvement in education. If you have a conversation with a parent, it is important that you share some expectations around education, but also elicit what the parents’ expectations are around education. It can be helpful to have community members deliver that information and promote a discussion with newcomer parents. Does anyone have other recommendations for engaging parents?

[Time permitting], facilitate a discussion about strategies that have worked with newcomer students.

*Does anyone have strategies they have used with newcomer students?* [Allow teachers to discuss.]

*Does anyone have strategies they have used to promote inclusion or combat discrimination in their classroom?* [Allow teachers to discuss.]

*Does anyone have strategies they have used to engage parents?* [Allow teachers to discuss.]

Thank teachers and interpreters for attending the session.

*Thank you all for attending the session today! Please reach out to me if you have any questions.*
Deep Breathing

Practice deep breathing.

Take a deep breath in... and a deep breath out.
Put one hand on your stomach and one hand on your chest. Imagine you are getting ready to blow up a balloon.
Breathe in and count 1, 2, 3 slowly.
Now imagine you are blowing ALL the air out of a balloon.

Muscle Relaxation

**Hands & Arms:** Pretend you are squeezing a whole lemon in your left hand. Squeeze it hard. Try to squeeze all the juice out. Feel the tightness in your hand and arm as you squeeze. Now drop the lemon and relax.

**Arms & Shoulders:** Stretch your arms out in front of you. Raise them up high over your head like you are furry, comfortable cat.

**Face and Nose:** A pesky old fly has landed on your nose, try to get him off without using your hands. Now relax your nose.

**Stomach:** Make your stomach very hard like a baby elephant is walking on it! Now let your stomach go soft.
Body Scan

To begin, start off by taking three deep breaths. Deep breath in 1, 2, 3, and out 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in 1, 2, 3, and out 1, 2, 3.

Start paying attention to different parts of your body. Notice different parts of your body without changing anything. Pay attention to your fingers. Think about your fingertips and notice how they feel right now. Just observe how your fingers feel. Think about each finger.

Focus on your whole arms, and then your neck, and your head… Think about your stomach and back, just notice and observe how they're feeling. Notice your legs. Do they feel heavy? Light? Think about each part is feeling right now and focus on it.

Think about your whole body. Scan your whole body from head to toe. Notice how your whole body feels. Notice any changes that might have happened. End with three deep breaths. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. Deep breath in, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3. In, 1, 2, 3, and out, 1, 2, 3.

My Calm Place

Get yourself in a comfortable position, whether that’s sitting up or laying down. Close your eyes if you’d like. Take several deep breaths in. Breathe in 1, 2, 3 and breathe out 1, 2, 3. Continue breathing in through our nose and out through your mouth. Count 1-2-3. Now think of a place that makes you feel happy and at peace. This could be anywhere. It can be a place that you know very well, or it can be an imaginary place. It could be a calm room, or outside in nature by water or in a field, or anywhere else that you feel happy and at peace. Get a clear picture of that place in your mind. Keep breathing slowly and deeply, 1, 2, 3 in and 1, 2, 3 out. Now that you have a clear picture in your mind, begin adding details. What do you see there? What do you hear? How does this calm, happy place smell? How does your body feel in this place? You feel calm and safe here. Remain still while you feel calm and relaxed. Continue taking deep breaths in and out and enjoy being in this place…. Continue breathing 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3. 1, 2, 3.

Drawing

Use art to relax your body. Take a few minutes to draw or write something that is calming. Choose what you wish to draw. You may wish to draw your Calm Place or draw shapes or use colors in a way that you find relaxing.
References


doi:10.1037/a0029844


