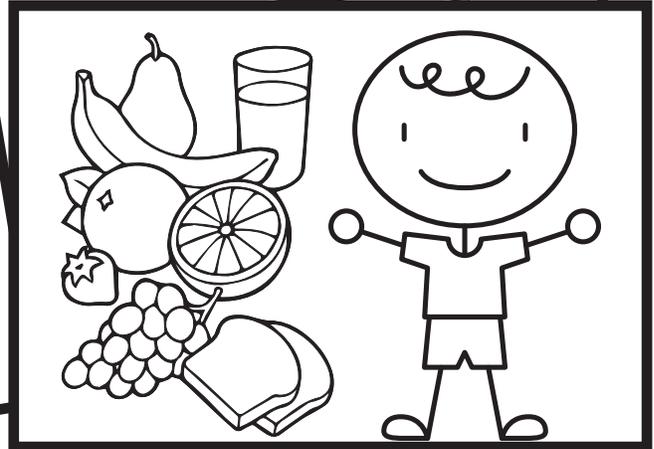
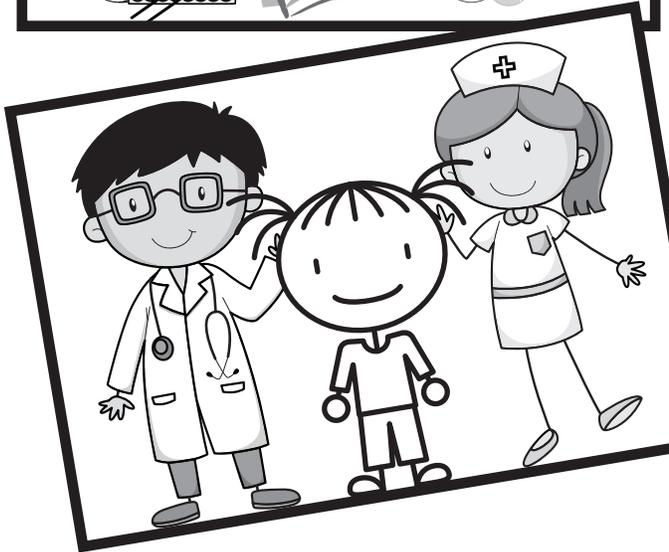
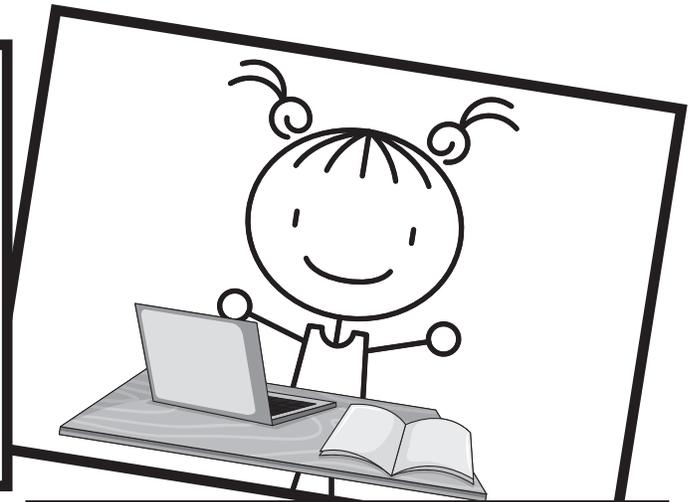
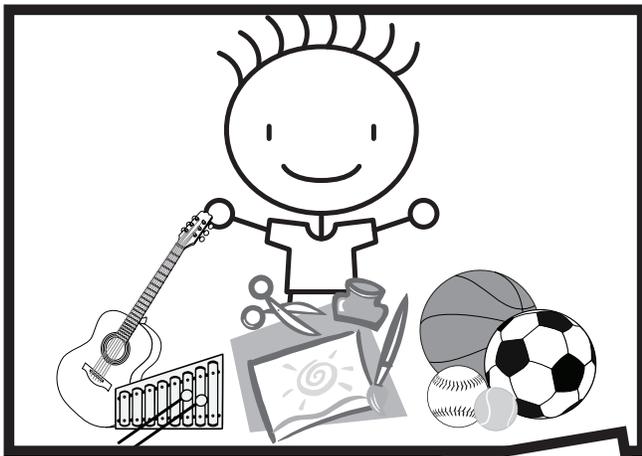




My RIGHTS in Foster Care

An Activity Book for Young Children in Care





Instructions for using the *My Rights in Foster Care* activity book

For Caseworkers:

The purpose of this resource is to help young children in foster care in learning about their rights. Please remove this page before the child completes the activity book.

Who should use this book?

This book was designed for caseworkers to use with young children who are in foster care. Caseworkers are strongly encouraged to sit with the child and assist the child in completing the booklet. The caseworker may invite other adults involved in the child's life to join the caseworker and the child in completing the booklet, including foster parents and kinship caregivers. The adults in a child's life have a shared responsibility to teach children in care about their rights and to help them understand the role that adults have in upholding their rights.

How should this book be used?

Caseworkers should find a quiet place to sit with the child and allow ample time to go through the booklet with the child. This provides the opportunity to start a conversation with the child about their rights. Depending on the age and development of the child, some activities may be appropriate for children to do on their own while the caseworker is present. Consider the cultural identity of children as you explore their rights with them.

Once the child completes the booklet, a copy of the booklet should be shared with the foster parent, kinship caregiver, attorney for the child and any other caseworker who is responsible for planning for the child.

Bill of Rights for Children and Youth in Foster Care

The information in the book corresponds to the rights outlined in the *New York State Bill of Rights for Children and Youth in Foster Care*. Older children in care (age 14 and above) must be given a copy of the entire Bill of Rights and have their rights explained to them. The Bill of Rights form can be downloaded as OCFS-2132 or OCFS-2132-S (Spanish).



**Office of Children
and Family Services**

My Rights in Foster Care

An Activity Book for Young Children in Care

This document is provided under a contractual agreement between the New York State Office of Children and Family Services and Welfare Research, Inc. (WRI).

Acknowledgement

This material was developed by WRI under a training and administrative services agreement with the New York State Office of Children and Family Services.

Disclaimer

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**Office of Children
and Family Services**

This book belongs to YOU

This book belongs to: _____

My caseworker's name is: _____

Phone number: _____

Email: _____

My attorney's name is: _____

Phone number: _____

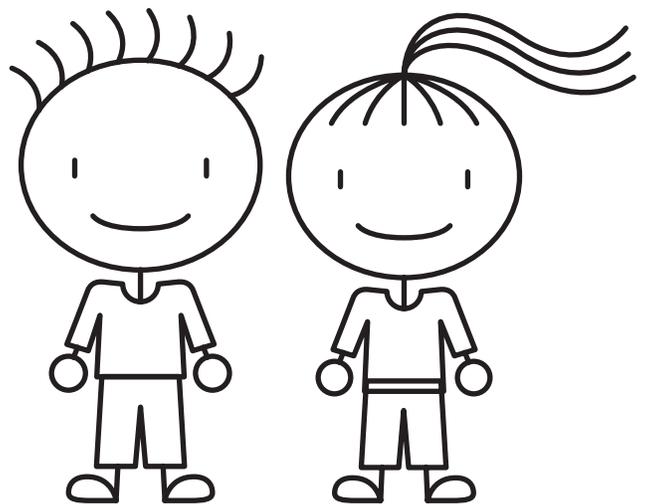
Email: _____

This book is about your rights while you are in foster care.

Sometimes families need help taking care of their children, and kids go to live with a foster family.

That's called being in foster care. Being in foster care is not your fault, and it is **NOT** because of something you have done.

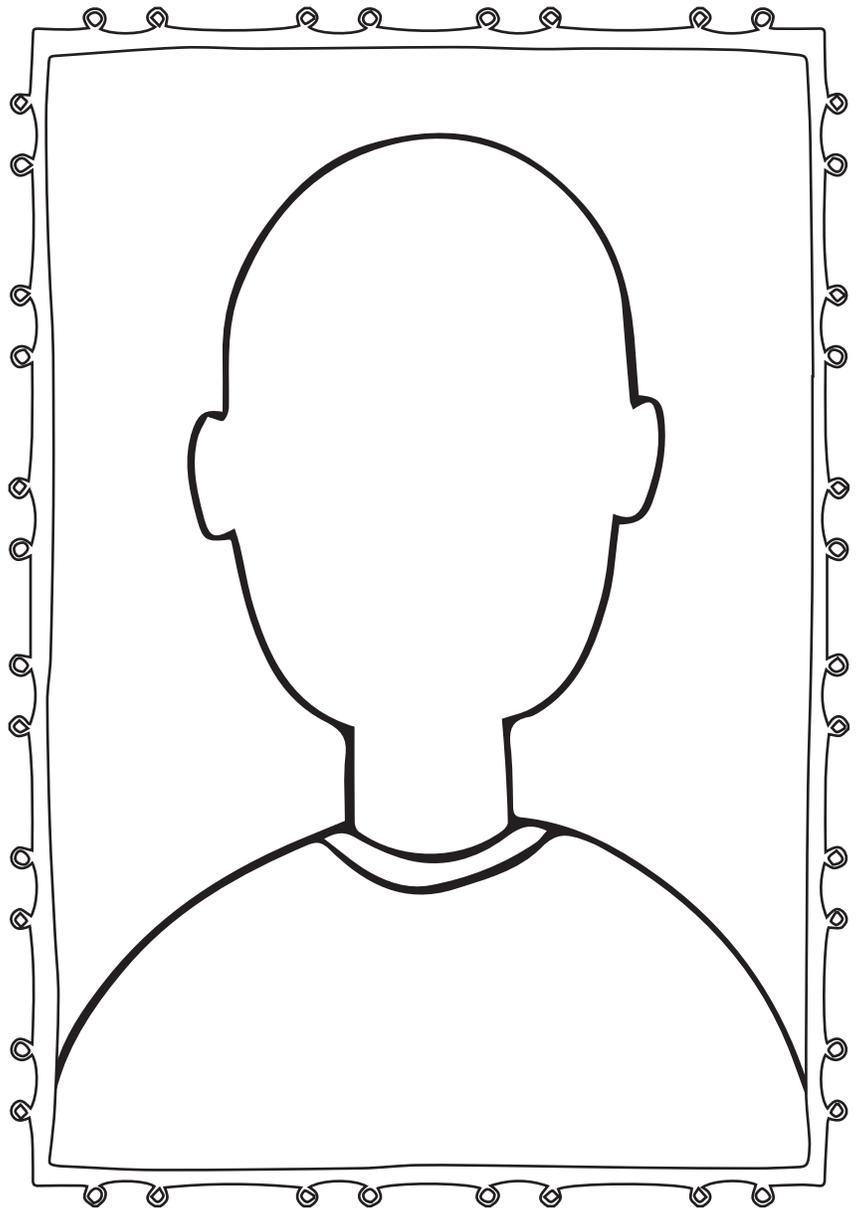
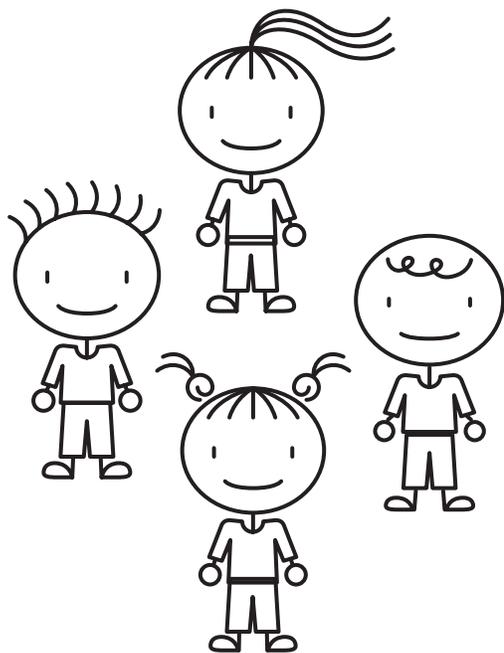
Being in foster care will be different from being at home. But it will be OK. While you are in foster care, you have the right to be in a safe place and to be taken care of.



About ME

My age: _____

My grade in school: _____



My favorite thing to do: _____

My favorite food: _____

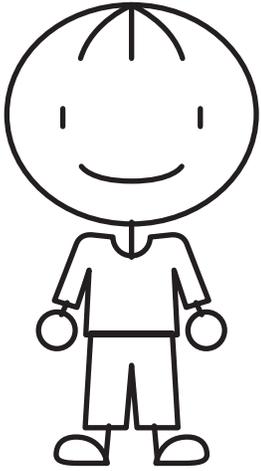
My favorite color: _____

2

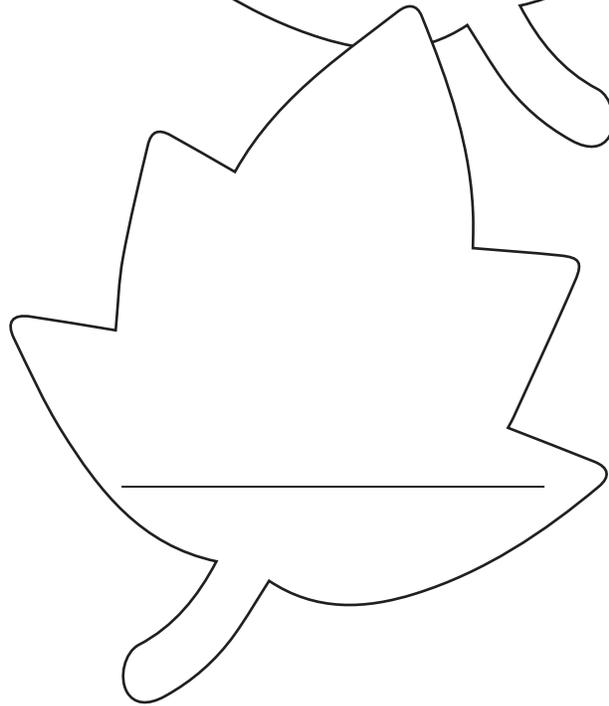
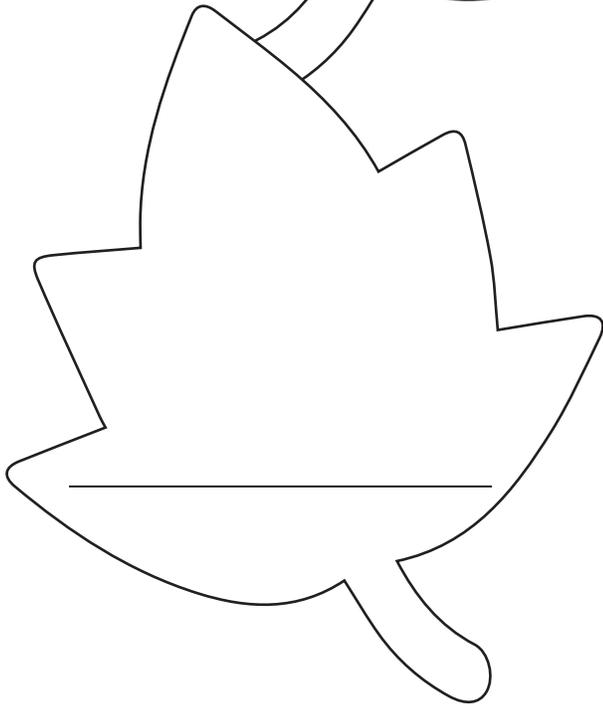
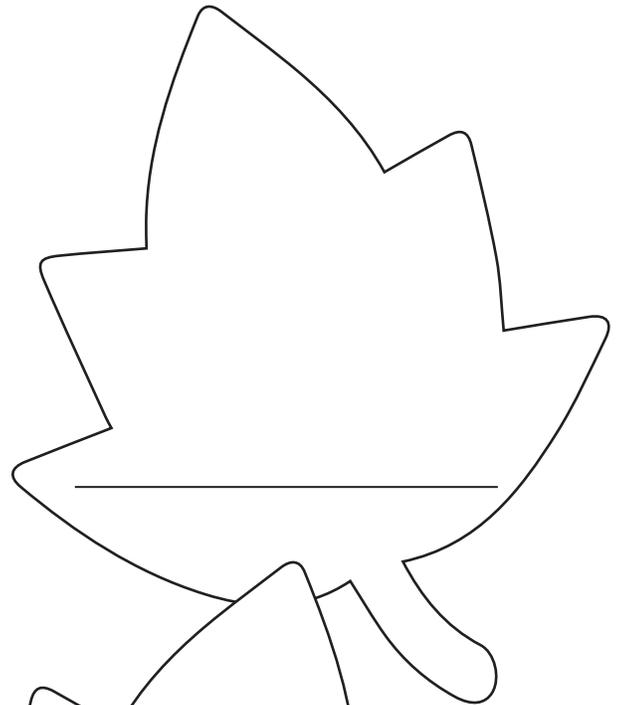
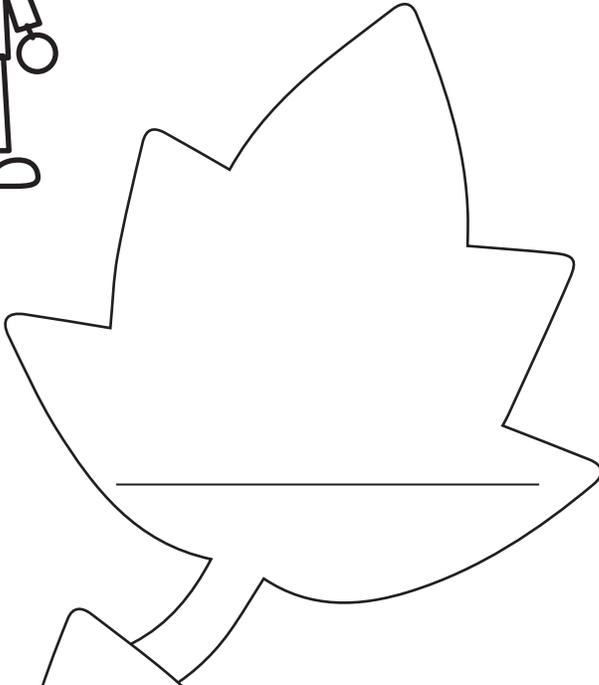
Encourage the child to draw and color the face so it looks like him/her. As age-appropriate, the adult can help the child fill in the information next to and below the face.



My FAMILY and FRIENDS



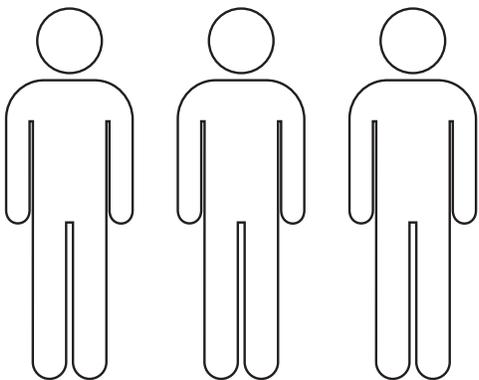
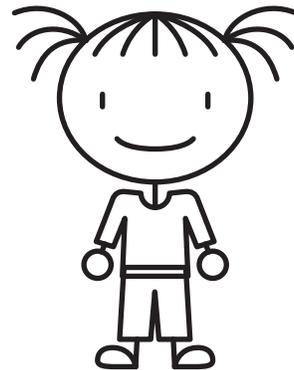
Think about the people you care about and those who care about you. Write a person's name in each leaf and then color the leaf with the best color for that person.



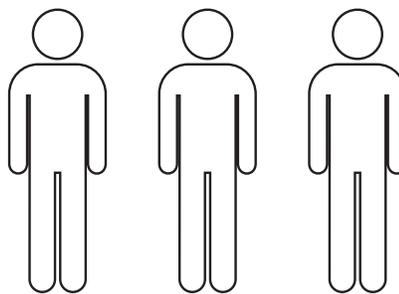
Ask or help the child to write the name of a friend or family member in each leaf — just first names or titles such as “Grandma” are fine.

Where I LIVE now

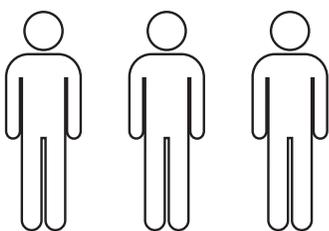
Circle the people who live with you now in foster care. If you know their names, write their names on the lines below them.



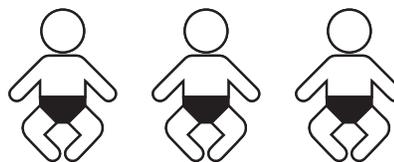
Grownups (Adults)



Teenagers



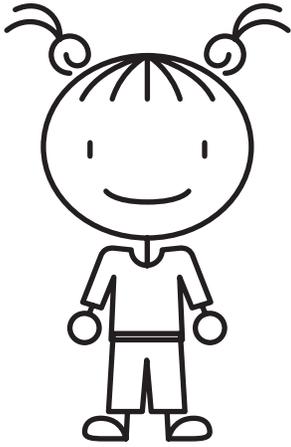
Children



Babies



My RIGHTS in foster care



You have rights when you are in foster care.

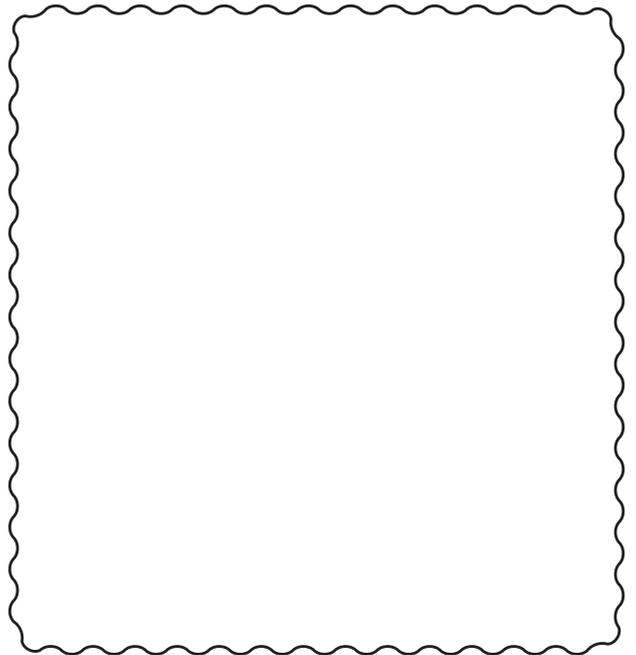
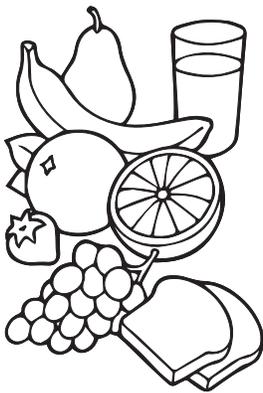
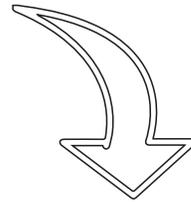
What are rights?

Rights are about what you need to be safe and healthy.

Rights belong to you and nobody can take them away from you.

Can you think of something that you need to be safe and healthy?

Circle one or draw it in the box.

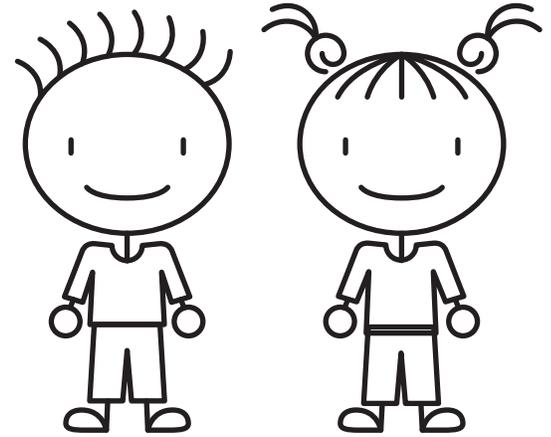


Encourage the child to talk about the things they like that they need to be safe and healthy. If they don't identify anything, help them think about what it means to be safe and healthy and have rights.

I have the right to be SAFE (and to FEEL SAFE)

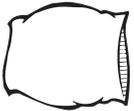
This means:

- Having a safe place to live, play, and learn
- Not being hit, bullied, or hurt
- Living with people you can trust



What makes you feel safe?

Find the words in the list!



Y	V	F	H	N	Q	D	C
O	Z	R	W	S	A	F	E
S	M	I	L	E	N	V	P
O	G	E	F	C	A	T	R
P	W	N	D	U	X	N	O
I	E	D	X	R	Y	C	T
L	P	Y	S	E	Z	K	E
L	E	P	K	T	L	R	C
O	Q	B	T	R	U	S	T
W	A	R	M	C	R	E	D

FRIEND

PROTECT

PILLOW

SAFE

SECURE

SMILE

TRUST

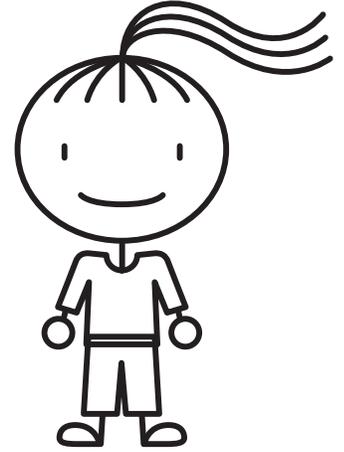
WARM



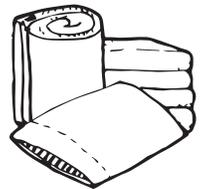
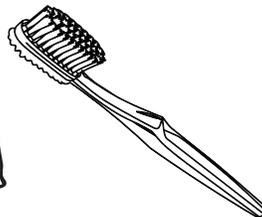
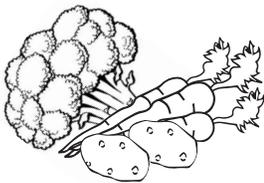
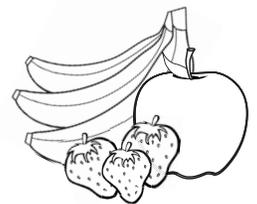
I have the right to be HEALTHY

This means:

- Having enough food to eat and clothes to wear
- Having my own comfortable place to sleep
- Getting enough exercise
- Seeing a doctor and a dentist
- Talking to a counselor about my feelings



Picture match (draw lines to things that match up)



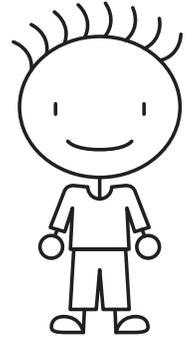
Make sure the child understands the roles of the people in the list (doctor, dentist, counselor). Ask if the child has had visits with these people in the past.

I have the right to

VISIT MY FAMILY (if it's safe)

This means:

- Having regular visits with your parents if its all right. It might be OK to talk on the phone.
- If your brothers or sisters are not in the same home as you, you should be able to visit or talk to them too.

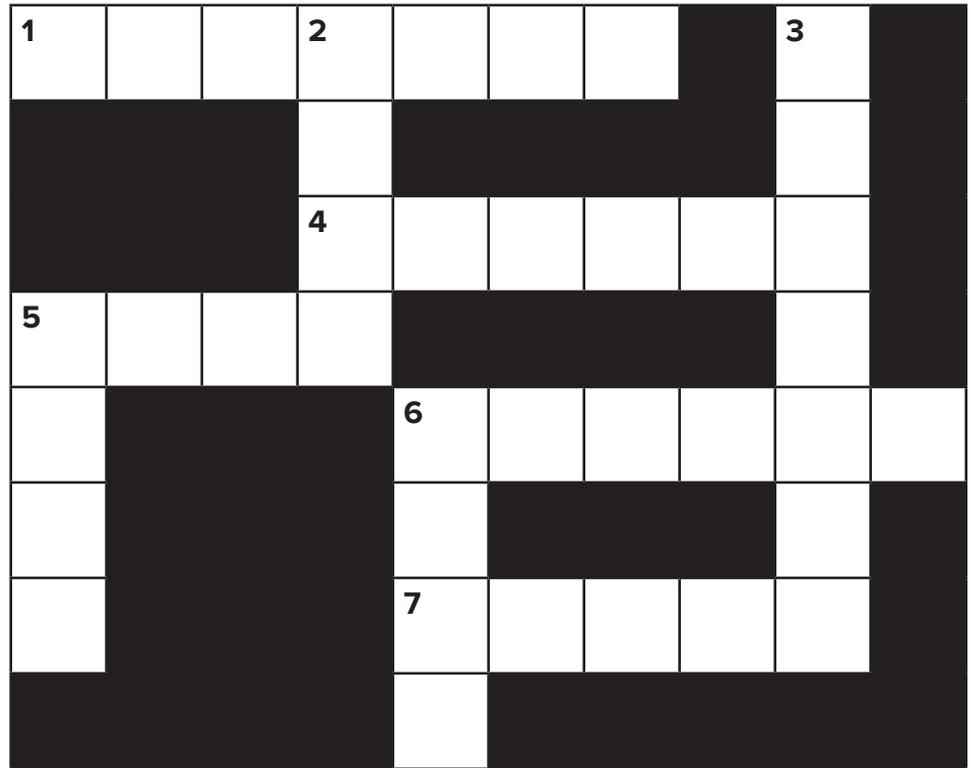


Across

1. A boy who has the same parent as you
4. _____ to your teacher.
5. A place for a picnic
6. A girl who has the same parent as you
7. When people see each other for a short time

Down

2. When your mouth makes words
3. Join two things together
5. What you do at recess
6. Put money in your piggy bank



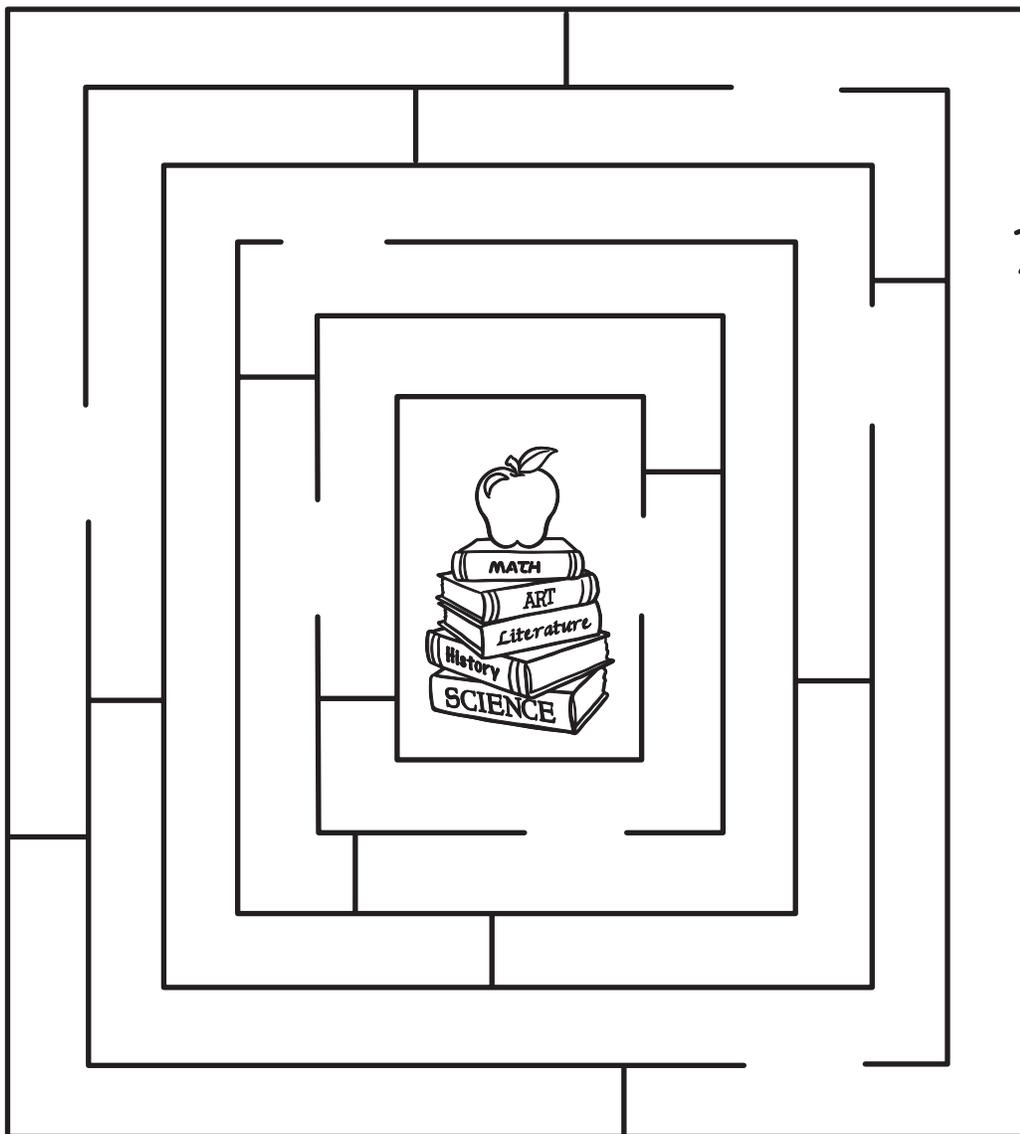
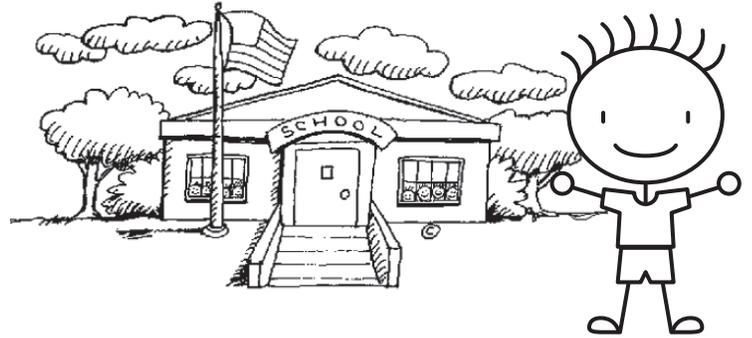
Across
1. brother
4. listen
5. park
6. sister
7. visit

Down
2. talk
3. connect
5. play
6. save



I have the right to LEARN

You will go to school so you can keep up with your schoolwork. Be sure to ask for help in school if you need it.

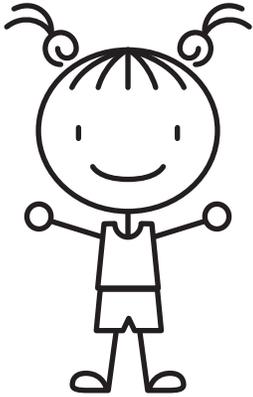


Help me find the school books.



Try to engage the child about his/her previous experiences in school. Reinforce the message that they can tell you about any problems.

I have the right to do the THINGS I LIKE to do



Everyone has something they are good at. Everyone has things they really like to do.

What do you like to do? Circle as many as you want.

SPORTS

Baseball/softball

Football

Soccer

Swimming

Running

Basketball

Gymnastics



HOBBIES

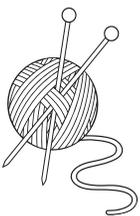
Making models

Sewing or knitting

Hiking

Reading

Collecting things



MUSIC

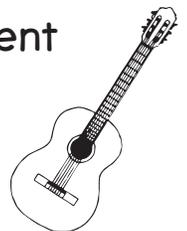
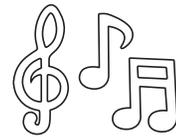
Singing by myself

Playing an instrument

Singing in a group

Listening to music

Dancing

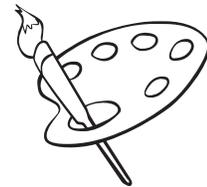


ART

Drawing

Painting

Making videos



OTHER STUFF

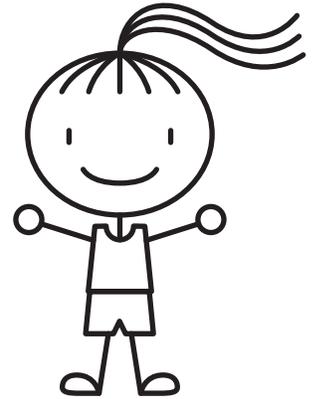


I have the right to BE MYSELF

There's nobody just like you. There are ways that you are different from other people, and there are ways that you are the same as other people.

You have the right to be yourself, to be respected, and to be treated fairly.

Here are some things children say about themselves. Can you think of something you would say?



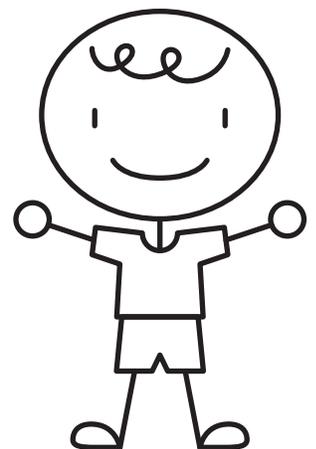
There are some foods I'm not supposed to eat!

I always have a light on at night!

I speak more than one language!

My family is from another country!

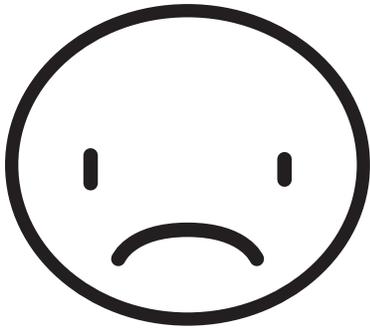
Dogs make me nervous!



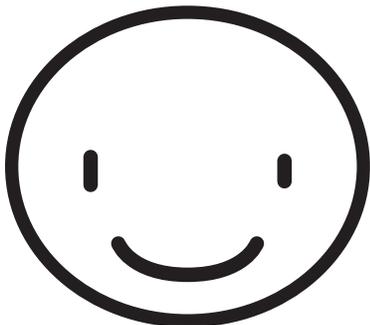
Read the comments with the child. Help the child identify a special thing about himself or herself and write in the empty speech bubble.

I have the right to be HEARD

Everyone needs someone to talk to. You have a right to talk to your caseworker every month – with nobody else listening. You have the right to talk to your attorney.



Who can you talk to when you have problems or you don't feel safe?



Who can you talk to when you're happy and excited?



Who can you talk to when you have questions about your rights or your time in foster care?

Help the child identify adult helpers with whom they feel safe to share their feelings and worries. Help the child write their names next to the “emojis.” You may want to connect with these supportive adults and communicate that the child has identified them as an adult helper who can be trusted to talk to.





Office of Children and Family Services

Capital View Office Park
52 Washington Street
Rensselaer, NY 12144

Visit our website at:
ocfs.ny.gov

For foster care and adoption information, call:
1-800-345-KIDS (5437)

To report child abuse and maltreatment, call:
1-800-342-3720
TDD/TTY: 1-800-638-5163

For information on the
Abandoned Infant Protection Act, call:
1-800-505-SAFE (7233)

For child care complaints, call 1-800-732-5207
In New York City, call 311 or 1-800-732-5207

*“... promoting the safety, permanency, and well-being of
our children, families, and communities. ...”*

Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, the New York State Office of Children and Family Services will make this information available in an appropriate format upon request.