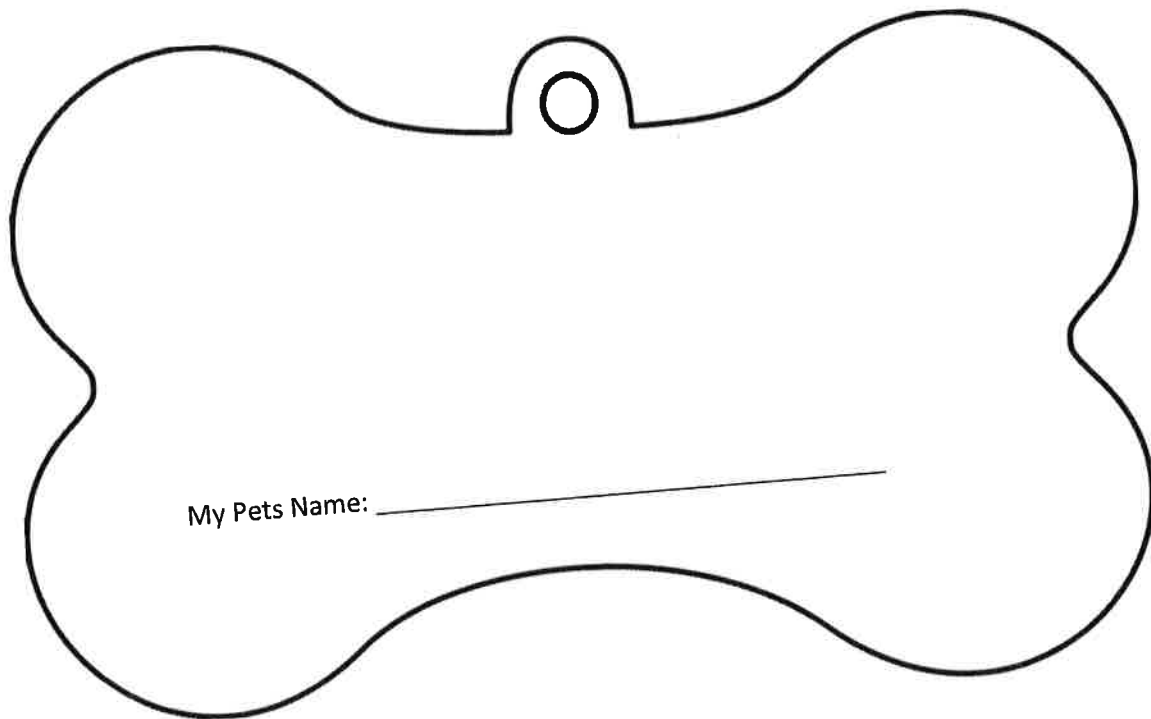


I Miss My Pet:

A workbook for children about pet loss



Developed by:

Katie Nurmi

This is YOUR book about you and your pet who is gone. I wrote this book because when I was a child, nobody really wanted to let me talk about how I felt when my pets died. I felt very alone and hurt. I also had a lot of questions and there were things I didn't understand that were scary.

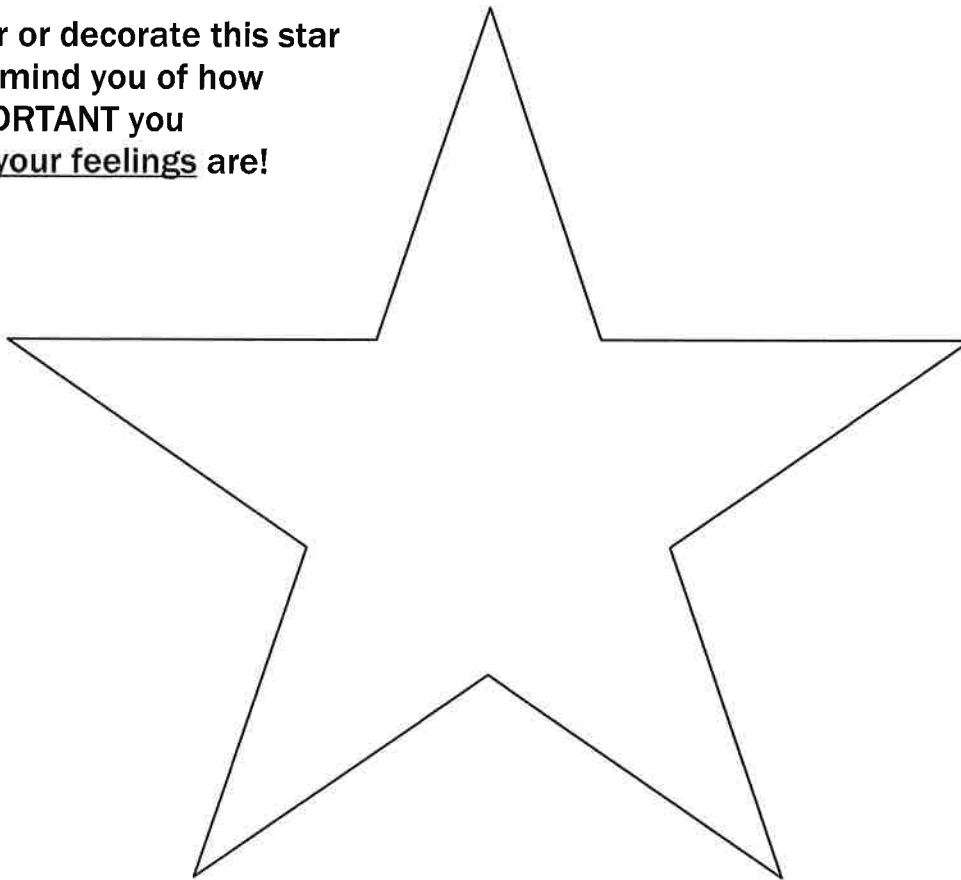
Now that I am a grown up, I talk to lots of kids about how they feel when their pets die. I want to be able to share what those children have taught me. Some of the most important things I know, I have learned from children like you!!

This is a long book, and sometimes working on it can be hard. So, I want you to give yourself a sticker on each page as you get it done. Remember that you are doing hard work, but very important work.

I hope this activity book will help you to feel less scared and less hurt and not so alone.

That is my wish, for you. You are a very special person !!

**Color or decorate this star
to remind you of how
IMPORTANT you
and your feelings are!**



I gratefully acknowledge the support and collaboration of my Solid Foundation French students, and all the other wonderful children in my life, in the development of this workbook!

About Me:

My name is _____

I am _____ years old. My birthday is _____.

I live with _____, _____,

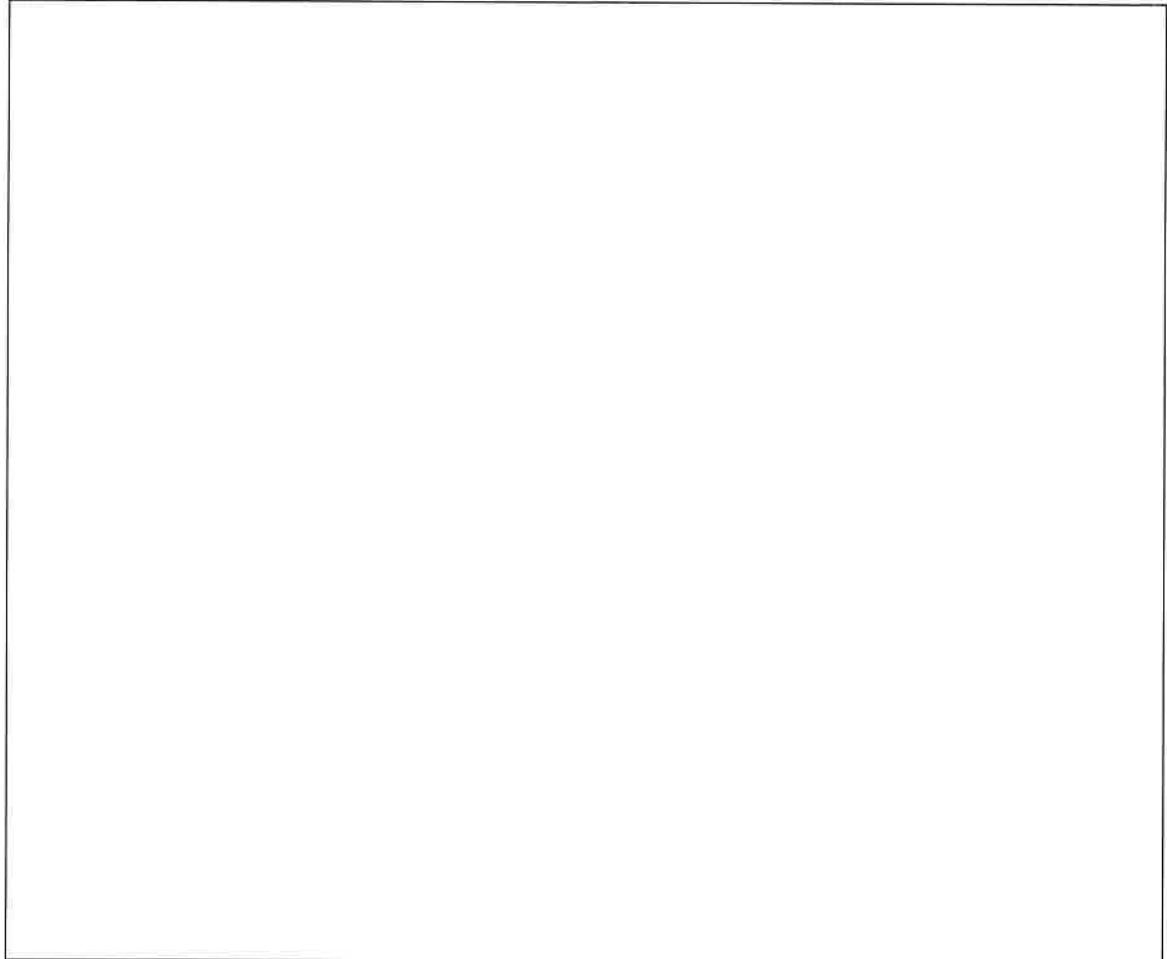
_____.

My pet was a DOG CAT [other kind?] _____.

His / Her name was _____, but sometimes

I called him / her _____.

This is a picture of my family & me:



When you lose a pet...

Dogs and cats and other animals do not get to be as old as people do. They are not made to live as long as people, even if nothing bad ever happens to them. Animals know this and they don't worry about it.

People do worry about it. They don't usually like to talk about what happens when an animal or a person dies because it can be sad or scary to think about.

Animals don't stop to think about being sad because they are very busy loving us and being special.

Our animals always love us, no matter what.

Some animals even have important jobs to do in a family, like looking out for strangers or helping someone who can't see. Cats sometimes have the job of catching mice so they don't live in our houses.

There are different reasons for missing a pet.

Sometimes pets get sick when they get older and die. They might get sick or hurt and can't get better. Sometimes, grown-ups have to make very hard decisions about what is the best thing to do. The veterinarian (the animal doctor) can't always make the pet better. This is very hard.

It is also very hard when a pet dies and we are not expecting it, like if there is an accident. Sometimes, pets get lost or run away. People spend a lot of time looking for them everywhere and even put up signs or ask for help in the newspaper. But sometimes they can't find their pets. Not knowing what happened can be really hard.

This book will help you talk about what happened. It is important to be able to ask questions.

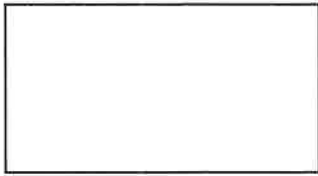
Saying “good-bye” is really hard!

Lots of people wish that they could have had a chance to say “Good-bye” to their pet.

Often, we feel sad about not saying things we wanted to say to our pets, or not doing things they liked to do when they were still with us.

You can’t go back and change things that happen, but a lot of people find ways to say “Good-bye” to their pets after they are gone. At the end of this book, there are some ideas about how to do this. The important thing to remember is that their bodies may not be with you any more, but their memory always will be with you.

That is why this special way of saying “good-bye” is called a “MEMORIAL.” This word has the word “memory” inside it.



M E M O R I A L

M E M O R Y

WORDS FOR FEELINGS:

We all need words so we can talk about what happened and how we feel. If, we don’t know the words, that makes it hard to talk about it.

People feel all different kinds of ways when they lose a pet. Grown-ups and children don’t always feel the same kinds of feelings. In fact, no two people feel exactly the same.

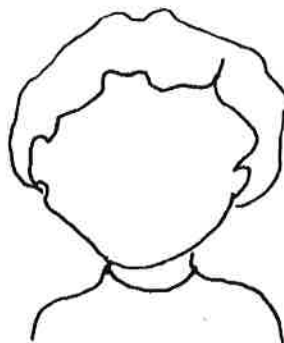
Using FEELING WORDS lets people know things about how they might be able to help you with your problem. Being able to name your feelings helps you, and others, to understand them. Here are some words for feelings. They are good words to know.

Can you make the faces show the feelings?

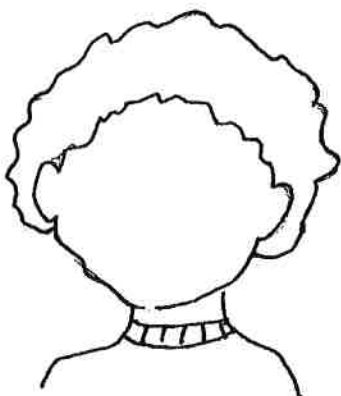
Sad



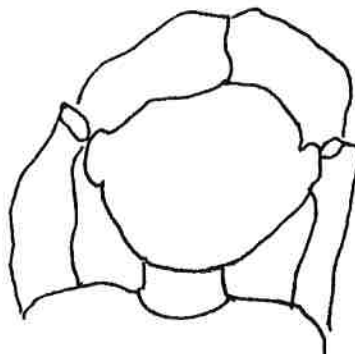
Scared



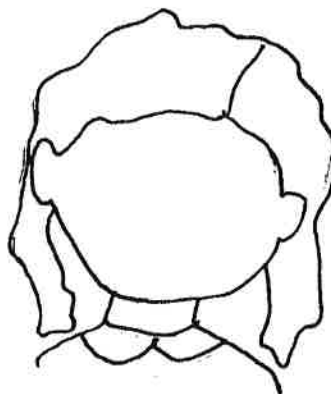
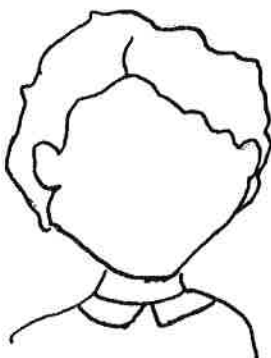
Lonely



Angry



You choose... write the feeling name under the face...



Can you think of other feeling words?

If you can, you can write them on this page, or ask someone to write them for you. Then you can draw them.

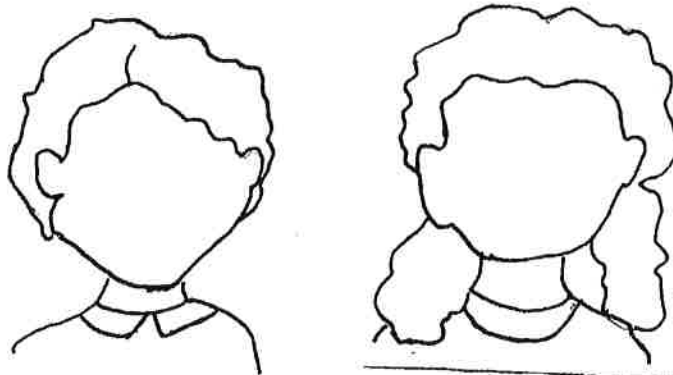
Confused is a feeling word that means you are feeling a LOT of different feelings all at the same time.

Are you feeling confused?

- ☞ If you have questions and need answers
- ☞ If you think what happened MIGHT be your fault.
- ☞ If you have many feelings, and some don't fit together.

If any of these things are true for you, it is probably **CONFUSION**.

- Can you make the faces look **CONFUSED**?



CONFUSION is a whole lot of things put together:

- Can you name the different feelings in the **CONFUSION**?

FEELINGS: _____, _____, _____

Just like in arithmetic:

Feeling + Feeling + Feeling (a lot of them!) = confused

Grief... This is a word for what we all feel when somebody or something leaves us, and is not coming back. It is what we feel when we have lost something that is important to us, like a person or an animal. Dying is a kind of leaving and a special kind of loss. Grief is the feeling we have when this happens.

Grief is something we feel in lots of different ways...

- Sometimes, we feel “numb.” It is hard to feel anything. We can’t believe somebody or something is gone.
- Sometimes, we feel alone and we have a kind of “empty” feeling – like there is something missing. That is because there IS something missing.
- Sometimes, we even feel sick with stomach aches & headaches.
- Sometimes, the things we are used to doing, like feeding a pet, or walking a dog, or playing with a pet—all the things we used to do with and for our pet—leaves a big hole. When it is the time we used to do things with our pet, the hole feels bigger.

Our Grief is something very important to talk about with a good listener. (We will talk about how to find a good listener a little later.)

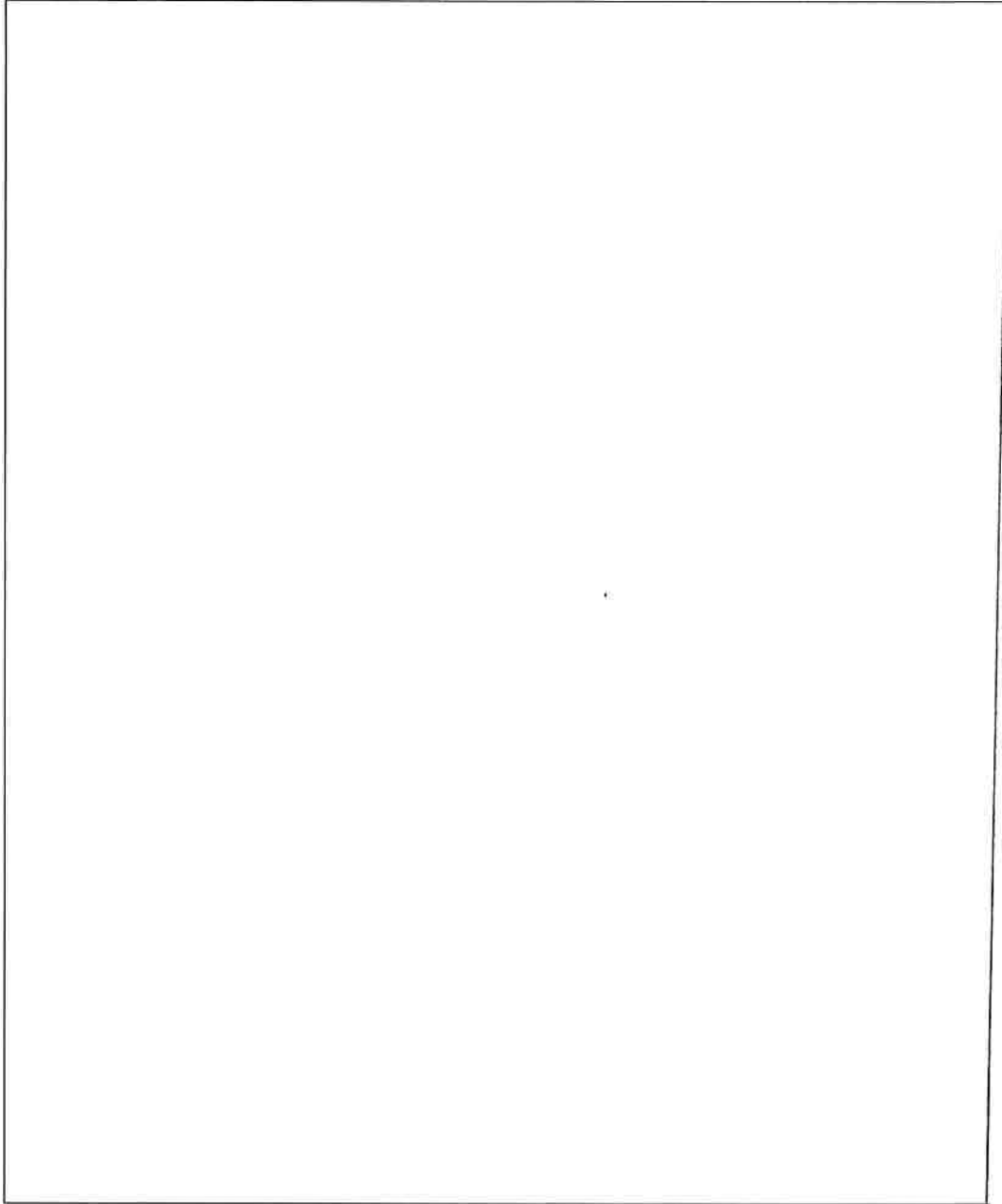
Your grief is your own. Everybody does not feel grief in the same ways. That’s why talking about it is so important.

Some things that might happen... Maybe some of this is happening to you.

- | | |
|---|---|
| _____ I cry a lot. | _____ My tummy or my head hurts. |
| _____ It’s hard to sleep. | _____ I don’t want to go to school. |
| _____ I can’t feel anything,
even good things. | _____ I get in fights more often,
or I am always grumpy. |
| _____ I worry a lot. | _____ I don’t want to play with my friends. |

Can you think of others things that are happening?

Can you DRAW what your "GRIEF" looks like to you?



This may be a very sad picture right now. You will not feel this way always..... I promise.

HEALING:

Something called "HEALING" happens after we lose someone or something important. But it takes time for this to happen.

If you fall down when you are playing, and you get a cut or a scrape, your mom or another grown-up usually cleans your hurt up and puts a band-aid on it to protect it. (I know...sometimes a grown-up will put medicine on the hurt place, and sometimes it STINGS!!! ☹)

Sometimes, remembering stings too. Remembering is part of healing. It is part of the hurt getting better.

HEALING happens best when we can talk about what we feel with someone who is a good listener.

A GOOD LISTENER.. 🦋

1. LISTENS and does not say your feelings are dumb.
2. Lets you talk about what YOU want to talk about.
3. Does not interrupt you when you are talking.
4. Sometimes helps you to name what you are feeling.

This last thing is important, because when things have NAMES, they are not so scary. A GOOD LISTENER can sometimes give you names for things, like feelings.

Can you think of other things a good listener does or does not do?

1. _____

2. _____

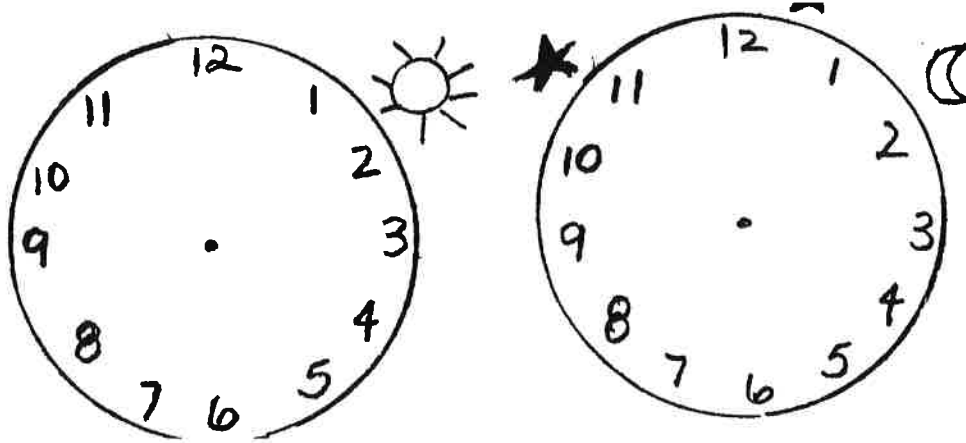
3. _____

Do you know someone who is a good listener? Sometimes your mom or dad can be a very good listener, or another grown-up.

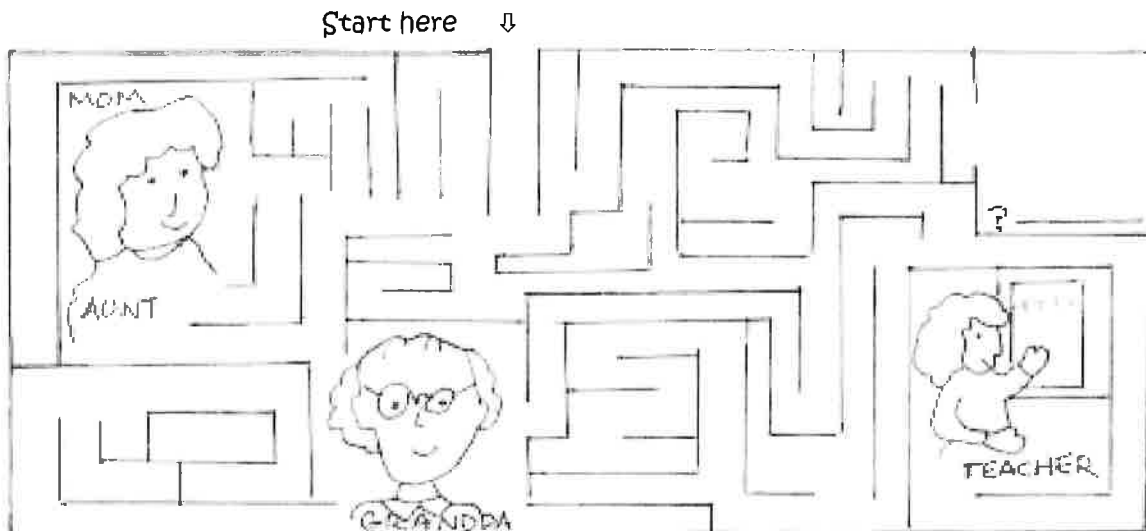
Sometimes grown-ups are busy, or have feelings of their own, so sometimes the trick is finding a GOOD TIME to SHARE what you feel. You can always ASK a grown-up when a GOOD TIME would be.

⊕ A GOOD TIME is _____.

Fill in the clocks, or draw a picture to remind you.



Can you draw lines through the maze to find the good listeners?



HEALING:

Something called "HEALING" happens after we lose someone or something important. But it takes time for this to happen.

If you fall down when you are playing, and you get a cut or a scrape, your mom or another grown-up usually cleans your hurt up and puts a band-aid on it to protect it. (I know...sometimes a grown-up will put medicine on the hurt place, and sometimes it STINGS!!! ☹)

Sometimes, remembering stings too. Remembering is part of healing. It is part of the hurt getting better.