MUSIC city COUNSELOR

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PURCHASE!

Hey y'all, Laura here! I so appreciate when you please take a moment to leave a review on my resources on my TpT Store. Thanks for your support! Enjoy the resource!

♥ Laura Oathout

LET'S CONNECT!

TpT

For helpful ideas, engaging resources, and freebies, please check out my **website** and **membership**!

♥ **WEBSITE:** www.musiccitycounselor.com

♥ **MEMBERSHIP:** www.counselorcollab.com

DIVORCE

SMALL GROUP CURRICULUM

MIDDLE SCHOOL 5TH - 8TH

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BINDER SPINES

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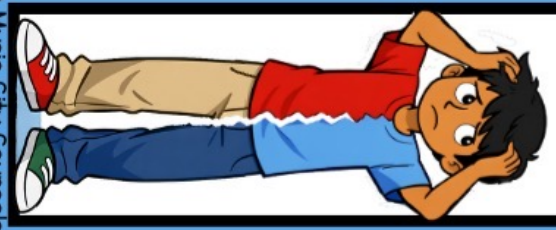

DIVORCE SMALL GROUP

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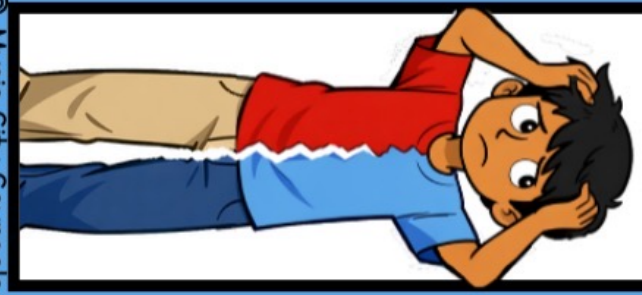

DIVORCE SMALL GROUP

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DIVORCE SMALL GROUP

ASCA MINDSETS & BEHAVIORS:

Category 1: Mindset Standards

- **M1**: Belief in development of whole self, including a healthy balance of mental, social/emotional, and physical well-being.
- **M2**: Sense of acceptance, respect, support and inclusion for self and others in the school environment.
- **M3**: Positive attitude toward work and learning.

Category 2: Behavior Standards

- **B-SMS 6**: Ability to identify and overcome barriers.
- **B-SMS 7**: Effective coping skills.
- **B-SMS 10**: Ability to manage transitions and adapt to change.
- **B-SS 3**: Positive relationships with adults to support success.
- **B-SS 8**: Advocacy skills for self and others and ability to assert self, when necessary.

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GENERAL DIRECTIONS:

- I recommend having **6-8 students participate in group.**
- I recommend meeting **weekly for 10 weeks for 30-minute sessions.**
- This group is **flexible** to meet the needs and developmental level of your students. You can implement all 10 sessions in the order presented. Or you may change the order of sessions, pick and choose certain sessions, or add in your own materials.
- To select students for group, use your **data**! Use your needs assessment data, teacher referrals, parent referrals, and school data (i.e. discipline referrals, progress reports, test scores, etc.).
- Give the included **teacher referral form** to your teachers.
- Once you have selected your students, send home the **parent letter**. Some districts require parent permission to participate in group and others do not. Both an **English and Spanish version** are included.
- **Editable versions** of all the forms are included in a separate file in the zip folder.
- **Hall passes, reminders, and an attendance chart** are provided.
- A **student workbook** is included that students will work from in each session. Please provide one to each student. Both full color and black/white versions are included.
- A detailed **session plan** is included for each session as well as all the instructional materials you will need. Student activities are provided in **full color and black/white.**
- Each session is aligned to the **ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors.**
- A **pretest** is included in Session 2 and a **posttest** is included in Session 10. Use this data to show student growth and progress.
- A **PowerPoint and digital for Google Slides presentation** is provided for Session 9. You can find it on Google Drive here:

CLICK HERE FOR THE GOOGLE SLIDES PRESENTATION

- **Questions?** Please contact me any time at laura@musiccitycounselor.com. I'm here to help!

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SESSION OUTLINE:

- Session 1: Introductions & Icebreakers
- Session 2: Divorce Dictionary
- Session 3: My Family Story
- Session 4: Exploring My Feelings
- Session 5: Exploring My Worries
- Session 6: My Circle of Control
- Session 7: Tips for Living in Two Homes
- Session 8: Kids' Rights
- Session 9: Coping with Family Changes
- Session 10: Group Closure & Reflection

*IMPORTANT NOTE: This group is **flexible**. You may change the order of sessions, pick and choose certain sessions, or add in your own materials.*

GROUP FORMS

NOTE: Editable versions of these forms are included in the zip folder.

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TEACHER REFERRAL FORM

group counseling

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Teacher Name: _____

Grade Level: _____

I will be facilitating a small group called **"Two Homes, One Me."** We will focus on coping with family changes: divorce and separation. We will meet once/week for 30 minutes for 10 weeks. Your referrals help me ensure that my services are needed and relevant for our students. Please fill out this form to let me know which students would be the best fit for this group, and which day/time work best for your classroom schedule. Thank you for your time and effort! Please contact me any time with questions or suggestions.

_____

- School Counselor

Student Name:	Preferred Day/Time to Meet:	Comments:

TEACHER REFERRAL FORM

group counseling

© Music City Counselor

Teacher Name: _____

Grade Level: _____

I will be facilitating a small group called **"Two Homes, One Me."** We will focus on coping with family changes: divorce and separation. We will meet once/week for 30 minutes for 10 weeks. Your referrals help me ensure that my services are needed and relevant for our students. Please fill out this form to let me know which students would be the best fit for this group, and which day/time work best for your classroom schedule. Thank you for your time and effort! Please contact me any time with questions or suggestions.

_____

- School Social Worker

Student Name:	Preferred Day/Time to Meet:	Comments:

TEACHER REFERRAL FORM

group counseling

© Music City Counselor

Teacher Name: _____

Grade Level: _____

I will be facilitating a small group called **"Two Homes, One Me."** We will focus on coping with family changes: divorce and separation. We will meet once/week for 30 minutes for 10 weeks. Your referrals help me ensure that my services are needed and relevant for our students. Please fill out this form to let me know which students would be the best fit for this group, and which day/time work best for your classroom schedule. Thank you for your time and effort! Please contact me any time with questions or suggestions.

_____

- School Psychologist

Student Name:	Preferred Day/Time to Meet:	Comments:

TEACHER REFERRAL FORM
group counseling

© Music City Counselor

Teacher Name: _____

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I will be facilitating a small group called **"Two Homes, One Me."** We will focus on coping with family changes: divorce and separation. We will meet once/week for 30 minutes for 10 weeks. Your referrals help me ensure that my services are needed and relevant for our students. Please fill out this form to let me know which students would be the best fit for this group, and which day/time work best for your classroom schedule. Thank you for your time and effort! Please contact me any time with questions or suggestions.

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Student Name:	Preferred Day/Time to Meet:	Comments:

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group counseling

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Teacher Name: _____

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- School Psychologist

Student Name:	Preferred Day/Time to Meet:	Comments:

FROM THE DESK OF THE school counselor

Dear Caregiver, _____

Your child _____ has been referred to participate in a small group with their School Counselor called **"Two Homes, One Me."** This group will focus on **coping with family changes: divorce and separation.**

Our group will meet for a total of 10 weeks starting on _____.
We will meet for 30 minutes on _____ at _____.

Students will learn:

- Vocabulary terms surrounding divorce and separation
- To share their stories, feelings, and worries
- What they can and cannot control
- Tips for living in two homes
- How to use coping skills and positive affirmations

This group is optional, but highly recommended. Please fill out the permission form below and return it to your child's teacher.

Please don't hesitate to contact me any time at _____ with questions, comments, or suggestions. I'm here to help!

Thank you so much,

_____
School Counselor

Student Name: _____
Caregiver Name: _____

☐ Yes, I give permission for my child to participate in group.
☐ No, I don't give permission for my child to participate in group.

Caregiver Signature: _____

© Music City Counselor

FROM THE DESK OF THE school social worker

Dear Caregiver, _____

Your child _____ has been referred to participate in a small group with their School Social Worker called **"Two Homes, One Me."** This group will focus on **coping with family changes: divorce and separation.**

Our group will meet for a total of 10 weeks starting on _____.
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Please don't hesitate to contact me any time at _____ with questions, comments, or suggestions. I'm here to help!

Thank you so much,

_____
School Social Worker

Student Name: _____
Caregiver Name: _____

☐ Yes, I give permission for my child to participate in group.
☐ No, I don't give permission for my child to participate in group.

Caregiver Signature: _____

© Music City Counselor

FROM THE DESK OF THE school psychologist

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Your child _____ has been referred to participate in a small group with their School Psychologist called **"Two Homes, One Me."** This group will focus on **coping with family changes: divorce and separation.**

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School Counselor

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Caregiver Name: _____

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Caregiver Name: _____

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Caregiver Signature: _____

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Caregiver Name: _____

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☐ No, I don't give permission for my child to participate in group.

Caregiver Signature: _____

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DESDE EL ESCRITORIO DE LA consejera escolar

Queridos Padres de Familia, _____

Su hijo/a _____ ha sido recomendado para participar en un grupo pequeño con su consejera escolar que se llama **"Two Homes, One Me."** Este grupo se centrará en **afrontando los cambios familiares: divorcio y separación**

Nuestro grupo se reunirá por un total de 10 semanas a partir del _____. Nos reuniremos por 30 minutos el _____ a las _____.

Los estudiantes aprenderán:

- Términos de vocabulario relacionados con el divorcio y la separación
- Compartir sus historias, sentimientos y preocupaciones
- Lo que pueden y no pueden controlar
- Estrategias para vivir en dos hogares
- Cómo usar habilidades de afrontamiento y afirmaciones positivas

Este grupo es opcional, pero muy recomendable. Por favor complete el formulario de permiso a continuación y devuélvalo al maestro de su hijo. No dude en ponerse en contacto conmigo en cualquier momento al _____ si tiene preguntas, comentarios o sugerencias. ¡Estoy aquí para ayudar!

Muchas gracias,

_____
Consejera Escolar

Nombre del Estudiante: _____
Nombre del Padre de Familia: _____

☐ Sí, doy permiso para que mi hijo/a participe en el grupo.
☐ No, no doy permiso para que mi hijo participe en el grupo.

Firma: _____

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DESDE EL ESCRITORIO DEL consejero escolar

Queridos Padres de Familia, _____

Su hijo/a _____ ha sido recomendado para participar en un grupo pequeño con su consejero escolar que se **llama "Two Homes, One Me."** Este grupo se centrará en **afrontando los cambios familiares: divorcio y separación**

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Muchas gracias,

_____
Consejero Escolar

Nombre del Estudiante: _____

Nombre del Padre de Familia: _____

☐ Sí, doy permiso para que mi hijo/a participe en el grupo.

☐ No, no doy permiso para que mi hijo participe en el grupo.

Firma: _____

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DESDE EL ESCRITORIO DE LA trabajadora social

Queridos Padres de Familia, _____

Su hijo/a _____ ha sido recomendado para participar en un grupo pequeño con su trabajadora social que se llama **"Two Homes, One Me."** Este grupo se centrará en **afrontando los cambios familiares: divorcio y separación**

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Muchas gracias,

_____
Trabajadora Social

Nombre del Estudiante: _____

Nombre del Padre de Familia: _____

☐ Sí, doy permiso para que mi hijo/a participe en el grupo.

☐ No, no doy permiso para que mi hijo participe en el grupo.

Firma: _____

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DESDE EL ESCRITORIO DEL trabajador social

Queridos Padres de Familia, _____

Su hijo/a _____ ha sido recomendado para participar en un grupo pequeño con su trabajador social que se llama **"Two Homes, One Me."** Este grupo se centrará en **afrontando los cambios familiares: divorcio y separación**

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Muchas gracias,

_____
Trabajador Social

Nombre del Estudiante: _____

Nombre del Padre de Familia: _____

☐ Sí, doy permiso para que mi hijo/a participe en el grupo.

☐ No, no doy permiso para que mi hijo participe en el grupo.

Firma: _____

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DESDE EL ESCRITORIO DE LA psicóloga escolar

Queridos Padres de Familia, _____

Su hijo/a _____ ha sido recomendado para participar en un grupo pequeño con su psicóloga escolar que se llama **"Two Homes, One Me."** Este grupo se centrará en **afrontando los cambios familiares: divorcio y separación**

Nuestro grupo se reunirá por un total de 10 semanas a partir del _____. Nos reuniremos por 30 minutos el _____ a las _____.

Los estudiantes aprenderán:

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Muchas gracias,

_____
Psicóloga Escolar

Nombre del Estudiante: _____

Nombre del Padre de Familia: _____

☐ Sí, doy permiso para que mi hijo/a participe en el grupo.

☐ No, no doy permiso para que mi hijo participe en el grupo.

Firma: _____

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DESDE EL ESCRITORIO DEL psicólogo escolar

Queridos Padres de Familia, _____

Su hijo/a _____ ha sido recomendado para participar en un grupo pequeño con su psicólogo escolar que se llama **"Two Homes, One Me."** Este grupo se centrará en **afrontando los cambios familiares: divorcio y separación**

Nuestro grupo se reunirá por un total de 10 semanas a partir del _____. Nos reuniremos por 30 minutos el _____ a las _____.

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Muchas gracias,

_____
Psicólogo Escolar

Nombre del Estudiante: _____

Nombre del Padre de Familia: _____

☐ Sí, doy permiso para que mi hijo/a participe en el grupo.

☐ No, no doy permiso para que mi hijo participe en el grupo.

Firma: _____

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DESDE EL ESCRITORIO DE LA consejera escolar

Queridos Padres de Familia, _____

Su hijo/a _____ ha sido recomendado para participar en un grupo pequeño con su consejera escolar que se llama **"Two Homes, One Me."** Este grupo se centrará en **afrontando los cambios familiares: divorcio y separación**

Nuestro grupo se reunirá por un total de 10 semanas a partir del _____. Nos reuniremos por 30 minutos el _____ a las _____.

Los estudiantes aprenderán:

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Muchas gracias,

_____
Consejera Escolar

Nombre del Estudiante: _____
Nombre del Padre de Familia: _____

☐ Sí, doy permiso para que mi hijo/a participe en el grupo.
☐ No, no doy permiso para que mi hijo participe en el grupo.

Firma: _____

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DESDE EL ESCRITORIO DEL consejero escolar

Queridos Padres de Familia, _____

Su hijo/a _____ ha sido recomendado para participar en un grupo pequeño con su consejero escolar que se llama **"Two Homes, One Me."** Este grupo se centrará en **afrontando los cambios familiares: divorcio y separación**

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Muchas gracias,

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Nombre del Estudiante: _____

Nombre del Padre de Familia: _____

☐ Sí, doy permiso para que mi hijo/a participe en el grupo.

☐ No, no doy permiso para que mi hijo participe en el grupo.

Firma: _____

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DESDE EL ESCRITORIO DE LA trabajadora social

Queridos Padres de Familia, _____

Su hijo/a _____ ha sido recomendado para participar en un grupo pequeño con su trabajadora social que se llama **"Two Homes, One Me."** Este grupo se centrará en **afrontando los cambios familiares: divorcio y separación.**

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Muchas gracias,

_____
Trabajadora Escolar

Nombre del Estudiante: _____

Nombre del Padre de Familia: _____

☐ Sí, doy permiso para que mi hijo/a participe en el grupo.

☐ No, no doy permiso para que mi hijo participe en el grupo.

Firma: _____

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DESDE EL ESCRITORIO DEL trabajador social

Queridos Padres de Familia, _____

Su hijo/a _____ ha sido recomendado para participar en un grupo pequeño con su trabajador social que se llama **"Two Homes, One Me."**
Este grupo se centrará en **afrontando los cambios familiares: divorcio y separación.**

Nuestro grupo se reunirá por un total de 10 semanas a partir del _____.
Nos reuniremos por 30 minutos el _____ a las _____.

Los estudiantes aprenderán:

- Términos de vocabulario relacionados con el divorcio y la separación
- Compartir sus historias, sentimientos y preocupaciones
- Lo que pueden y no pueden controlar
- Estrategias para vivir en dos hogares
- Cómo usar habilidades de afrontamiento y afirmaciones positivas

Este grupo es opcional, pero muy recomendable. Por favor complete el formulario de permiso a continuación y devuélvalo al maestro de su hijo. No dude en ponerse en contacto conmigo en cualquier momento al _____ si tiene preguntas, comentarios o sugerencias. ¡Estoy aquí para ayudar!

Muchas gracias,

_____
Trabajador Escolar

Nombre del Estudiante: _____
Nombre del Padre de Familia: _____

☐ Sí, doy permiso para que mi hijo/a participe en el grupo.
☐ No, no doy permiso para que mi hijo participe en el grupo.

Firma: _____

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DESDE EL ESCRITORIO DE LA psicóloga escolar

Queridos Padres de Familia, _____

Su hijo/a _____ ha sido recomendado para participar en un grupo pequeño con su psicóloga escolar que se llama **"Two Homes, One Me."**
Este grupo se centrará en **afrontando los cambios familiares: divorcio y separación.**

Nuestro grupo se reunirá por un total de 10 semanas a partir del _____.
Nos reuniremos por 30 minutos el _____ a las _____.

Los estudiantes aprenderán:

- Términos de vocabulario relacionados con el divorcio y la separación
- Compartir sus historias, sentimientos y preocupaciones
- Lo que pueden y no pueden controlar
- Estrategias para vivir en dos hogares
- Cómo usar habilidades de afrontamiento y afirmaciones positivas

Este grupo es opcional, pero muy recomendable. Por favor complete el formulario de permiso a continuación y devuélvalo al maestro de su hijo. No dude en ponerse en contacto conmigo en cualquier momento al _____ si tiene preguntas, comentarios o sugerencias. ¡Estoy aquí para ayudar!

Muchas gracias,

_____
Psicóloga Escolar

Nombre del Estudiante: _____
Nombre del Padre de Familia: _____

☐ Sí, doy permiso para que mi hijo/a participe en el grupo.
☐ No, no doy permiso para que mi hijo participe en el grupo.

Firma: _____

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DESDE EL ESCRITORIO DEL psicólogo escolar

Queridos Padres de Familia, _____

Su hijo/a _____ ha sido recomendado para participar en un grupo pequeño con su psicólogo escolar que se llama **"Two Homes, One Me."**
Este grupo se centrará en **afrontando los cambios familiares: divorcio y separación**.

Nuestro grupo se reunirá por un total de 10 semanas a partir del _____.
Nos reuniremos por 30 minutos el _____ a las _____.

Los estudiantes aprenderán:

- Términos de vocabulario relacionados con el divorcio y la separación
- Compartir sus historias, sentimientos y preocupaciones
- Lo que pueden y no pueden controlar
- Estrategias para vivir en dos hogares
- Cómo usar habilidades de afrontamiento y afirmaciones positivas

Este grupo es opcional, pero muy recomendable. Por favor complete el formulario de permiso a continuación y devuélvalo al maestro de su hijo. No dude en ponerse en contacto conmigo en cualquier momento al _____ si tiene preguntas, comentarios o sugerencias. ¡Estoy aquí para ayudar!

Muchas gracias,

_____
Psicólogo Escolar

Nombre del Estudiante: _____
Nombre del Padre de Familia: _____

☐ Sí, doy permiso para que mi hijo/a participe en el grupo.
☐ No, no doy permiso para que mi hijo participe en el grupo.

Firma: _____

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TWO HOMES, ONE ME

reminder

Hi _____!

I'm looking forward to seeing you for group on _____ at _____.

- _____

School Counselor

© Music City Counselor

TWO HOMES, ONE ME

reminder

Hi _____!

I'm looking forward to seeing you for group on _____ at _____.

- _____

School Counselor

© Music City Counselor

TWO HOMES, ONE ME

reminder

Hi _____!

I'm looking forward to seeing you for group on _____ at _____.

- _____

School Social Worker

© Music City Counselor

TWO HOMES, ONE ME

reminder

Hi _____!

I'm looking forward to seeing you for group on _____ at _____.

- _____

School Social Worker

© Music City Counselor

TWO HOMES, ONE ME

reminder

Hi _____!

I'm looking forward to seeing you for group on _____ at _____.

- _____

School Psychologist

© Music City Counselor

TWO HOMES, ONE ME

reminder

Hi _____!

I'm looking forward to seeing you for group on _____ at _____.

- _____

School Psychologist

© Music City Counselor

TWO HOMES, ONE ME reminder

Hi _____!

I'm looking forward to seeing you for group on _____ at _____.

- _____

School Counselor

© Music City Counselor

TWO HOMES, ONE ME reminder

Hi _____!

I'm looking forward to seeing you for group on _____ at _____.

- _____

School Counselor

© Music City Counselor

TWO HOMES, ONE ME

reminder

Hi _____!

I'm looking forward to seeing you for group on _____ at _____.

- _____

School Social Worker

© Music City Counselor

TWO HOMES, ONE ME

reminder

Hi _____!

I'm looking forward to seeing you for group on _____ at _____.

- _____

School Social Worker

© Music City Counselor

TWO HOMES, ONE ME reminder

Hi _____!

I'm looking forward to seeing you for group on _____ at _____.

- _____

School Psychologist

© Music City Counselor

TWO HOMES, ONE ME reminder

Hi _____!

I'm looking forward to seeing you for group on _____ at _____.

- _____

School Psychologist

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TWO HOMES, ONE ME

hall pass

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TWO HOMES, ONE ME

hall pass

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TWO HOMES, ONE ME

hall pass

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hall pass

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hall pass

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TWO HOMES, ONE ME

hall pass

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TWO HOMES, ONE ME

hall pass

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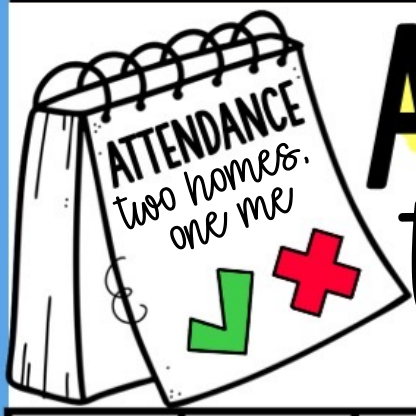
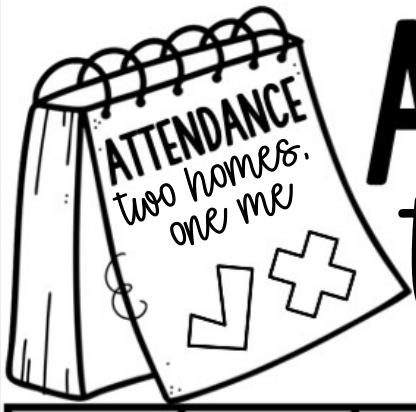


ATTENDANCE CHART

two homes. one me

© Music City Counselor

Week	Student Name _____	Student Name _____	Student Name _____	Student Name _____	Student Name _____	Student Name _____	Student Name _____	Student Name _____
Week 1								
Week 2								
Week 3								
Week 4								
Week 5								
Week 6								
Week 7								
Week 8								
Week 9								
Week 10								



ATTENDANCE CHART

two homes. one me

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Week	Student Name _____	Student Name _____	Student Name _____	Student Name _____	Student Name _____	Student Name _____	Student Name _____	Student Name _____
Week 1								
Week 2								
Week 3								
Week 4								
Week 5								
Week 6								
Week 7								
Week 8								
Week 9								
Week 10								

FULL COLOR WORKBOOK

Please print one of these workbooks for each student and have it available to them at each session.

© Music City Counselor

© Music City Counselor

Student Name: _____

Counselor Name: _____

TWO HOMES, ONE ME GROUP

workbook

FEELINGS

check-in

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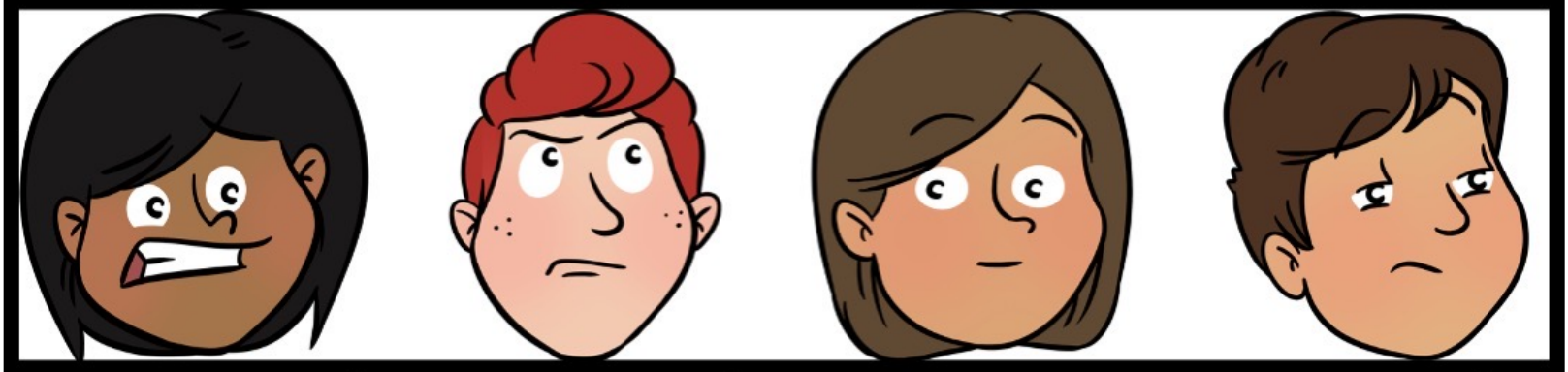
Happy Sad Angry Calm

Tired Anxious Hurt Excited



Stressed Annoyed Content Bored

ALL ABOUT me

My name is

_____

Favorite ice cream

Favorite school subject

When I grow up...

Favorite sport

Pets

Favorite season

Favorite book

PASSPORT

Places I'd like to travel

Favorite hobby

My family

Favorite snack

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Name:_____

SMALL GROUP pre-survey

I can define divorce, separation, custody, visitation, and other terms relating to family changes.			
I can openly share my family story with others.			
I can name common feelings that kids and teens experience relating to family changes.			
I can identify my feelings relating to the changes in my family.			
I can name common worries that kids and teens experience relating to family changes.			
I can identify my worries relating to the changes in my family.			
I can define and use the Circle of Control.			
I can name things, situations, and problems that are inside my Circle of Control.			
I can name things, situations, and problems that are outside my Circle of Control.			
I understand and can describe my custody schedule.			
I know helpful tips for living in two homes.			
I know and understand my rights in a divorce or separation.			
I can use a variety of coping skills to help me deal with the changes in my family.			

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SMALL GROUP: the deets

GROUP PURPOSE

This is a safe, supportive place where you can share about the changes in your family. One of the hardest parts of divorce and separation is feeling like you're the only one struggling. Here in group, you'll see others have similar worries, feelings, and experiences as you do! You are not alone! Here in group, you'll learn to understand your feelings, build healthy coping skills, and adjust to your new family structure.

CONFIDENTIALITY

What you say in here, stays in here!

UNLESS:

- Someone is hurting you.
- You are hurting someone else.
- You are hurting yourself.
- You give me permission to share.

GROUP GOALS

1. To understand family changes like divorce and separation.
2. To share your story.
3. To learn and practice coping skills.
4. To build self-confidence and self-awareness.

GROUP RULES

1. **What's shared here, stays here.** We respect privacy. Personal stories shared in group are not repeated outside this room.
2. **Respect others.** Be kind, accepting, and supportive. Do not judge.
3. **One person talks at a time.** Listen when someone is speaking. Do not interrupt.
4. **Everyone belongs.** Different feelings, identities, thoughts, and experiences are welcome here.

IN GROUP, YOU'LL FEEL

This group will make you feel:

- Understood
- Supported
- Equipped
- Confident
- Capable

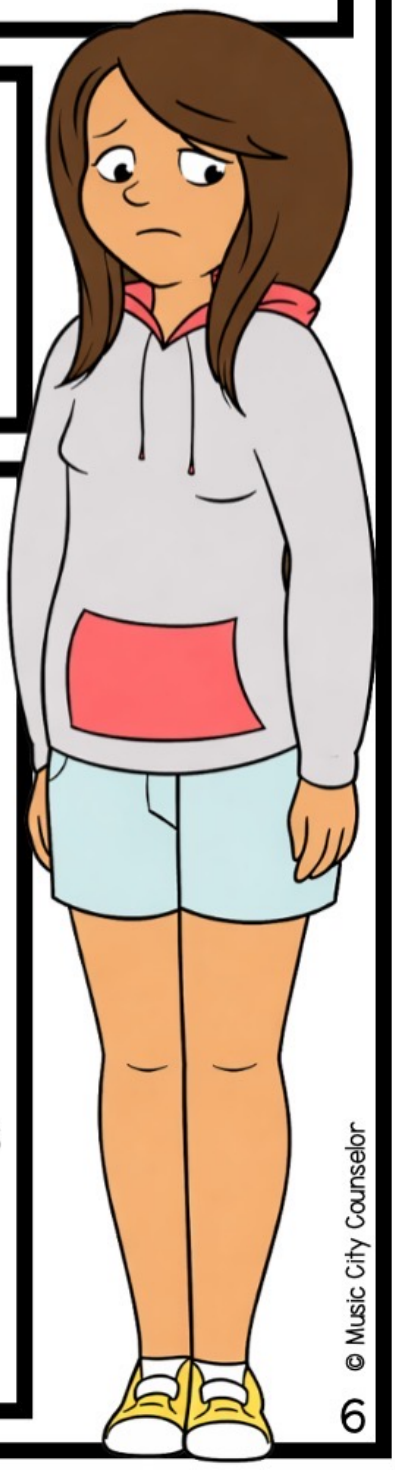
DIVORCE VS. SEPARATION

WHAT IS SEPARATION? >>>

Separation is when parents decide to live apart or take space from each other, but they are still legally married. Some parents separate to figure things out, and others stay separated long-term. During a separation, routines like where kids and teens stay, schedules, and rules may start to change.

WHAT IS DIVORCE? >>>

Divorce is when parents legally end their marriage. This usually involves court decisions about things like custody, schedules, and responsibilities. Divorce makes the separation official and permanent in a legal sense.



STATE-BY-STATE DIFFERENCES: >>>

Divorce and separation can look different depending on the state someone lives in because each state has its own laws and rules. In some states, parents have to wait a certain amount of time before a divorce is final, while other states move faster. Some states require parents to try mediation or counseling first, and others do not. Rules about custody, visitation, and shared time can also vary, including how schedules are decided. Because of these differences, parents often work with lawyers or the court system in their state to figure out what applies to their family. What matters most for kids and teens is knowing that adults are responsible for handling the legal parts, and kids and teens are not expected to understand or manage the laws themselves.

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DIVORCE dictionary

A - C

C - L

L - S

S - V

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DIVORCE dictionary

- **ADJUSTMENT:**
  the process of adapting or getting used to changes. With family changes, it means learning how to handle new routines, feelings, family members, and homes. It does not happen all at once. Adjustment takes time.
- **BLENDED FAMILY:**
  a family formed when a parent starts a new relationship or marriage and brings together people from different families. This can include stepparents, stepsiblings, or other family members who did not grow up together but are now part of the same family.
- **BOUNDARIES:**
  limits that help protect your feelings, time, and responsibilities during a divorce or separation. They mean knowing what is okay for you to be involved in and what is not your job to handle, such as adult problems or conflicts between parents. Boundaries help keep kids and teens from feeling overwhelmed or caught in the middle.
- **CONFLICT:**
  when parents disagree, argue, or have tension with each other. This can include arguments, negative communication, or ongoing disagreements. Remember: adult conflict is not your responsibility to fix.
- **CONSISTENCY:**
  having routines and expectations stay the same as much as possible after changes in your family. This can include regular schedules, rules, and daily habits that help you feel more stable. Consistency helps make big changes feel easier to handle.
- **COUNSELING:**
  meeting with a trained adult to talk about your thoughts and feelings. It gives you a safe place to ask questions, share worries, and learn ways to cope with changes. Counseling is meant to support you, not to judge or blame anyone.

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DIVORCE dictionary 2

COURT:
a legal place where a judge helps make decisions when parents cannot agree. The court may decide things like custody, schedules, or other family plans with the best interest of the child in mind.

CUSTODY:
a legal term that explains where a child or teen lives and who is responsible for making important decisions for them. It can affect schedules, routines, and choices about school, health care, and activities. Plans are meant to keep you safe and supported.

DIVORCE:
when two married adults decide to legally end their marriage. It means they will no longer be married to each other, but they are still your parents. It is an adult decision about their relationship, and it is not caused by kids and teens.

GRIEF:
the mix of feelings that can come with loss of a loved one or major family changes. It can include sadness, anger, confusion, and missing how things used to be. Grief is normal and can come and go over time as you adjust.

JOINT CUSTODY:
both parents share responsibility for caring for their child(ren) or teen after a divorce or separation. This can include sharing time and making important decisions together. Joint custody is meant to keep both parents involved in a child's life when possible.

LEGAL CUSTODY:
having the responsibility to make important decisions about a child(ren) or teen's life. This includes decisions about school, medical care, and other major needs. Legal custody can be shared by both parents or handled by one parent, depending on the situation.

C-1

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DIVORCE dictionary

- **LOYALTY CONFLICT:**
when a child feels torn between parents during or after a divorce or separation. It can feel like you have to choose sides, keep secrets, or protect one parent's feelings. Loyalty conflict is not fair to kids and teens, and it is not your responsibility to take sides.
- **MEDIATION:**
a process where parents meet with a neutral adult to help them talk through disagreements during a divorce or separation. The mediator helps parents work toward agreements about things like schedules and custody without going to court. It's meant to reduce conflict and focus on what is best for the child or teen.
- **PARENTING PLAN:**
a written agreement that explains how parents will care for their child(ren) after a divorce or separation. It includes things like schedules, living arrangements, and how decisions will be made. The goal of a parenting plan is to create stability and clear expectations for the child(ren).
- **PHYSICAL CUSTODY:**
where a child(ren) or teen lives and who they live with most of the time after a divorce or separation. It helps decide daily routines like school days, bedtime, and where personal belongings are kept. It can be shared between parents or mainly with one parent.
- **SEPARATION:**
when parents stop living together but are not legally divorced yet. It often means changes in routines, living arrangements, and family time.
- **SHARED TIME:**
the time a child(ren) or teen spends with each parent after a divorce or separation. It explains how days, nights, weekends, and holidays are divided between parents. The goal is to keep healthy relationships with both parents whenever possible.

L - S

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DIVORCE dictionary

STEPPARENT:

a parent's new spouse or long-term partner after a divorce or separation. A stepparent may live in the home or be part of family activities. Building a relationship with a stepparent can take time and look different for everyone.

STEPSIBLING:

the child of a parent's new spouse or partner after a divorce or separation. Stepsiblings may live in the same home part-time or full-time. It can take time to adjust to sharing space, routines, and relationships with stepsiblings.

TRANSITION:

the process of moving from one routine or situation to another. When it comes to a divorce or separation, this can include switching homes, changing schedules, or adjusting to new family rules. Transitions can feel challenging at first, and it is normal to need time to adjust.

VISITATION:

the scheduled time a child spends with the parent they do not live with after a divorce or separation. Plans are made for how and when parents and their children spend time together. Visitation schedules are meant to support strong and consistent relationships.

VISITATION CENTER:

a safe, supervised place where a child can spend time with a parent during or after a divorce or separation. Trained adults are present to help make sure visits are calm and safe for everyone. Visitation centers are used when families need extra support around visits.

S - V

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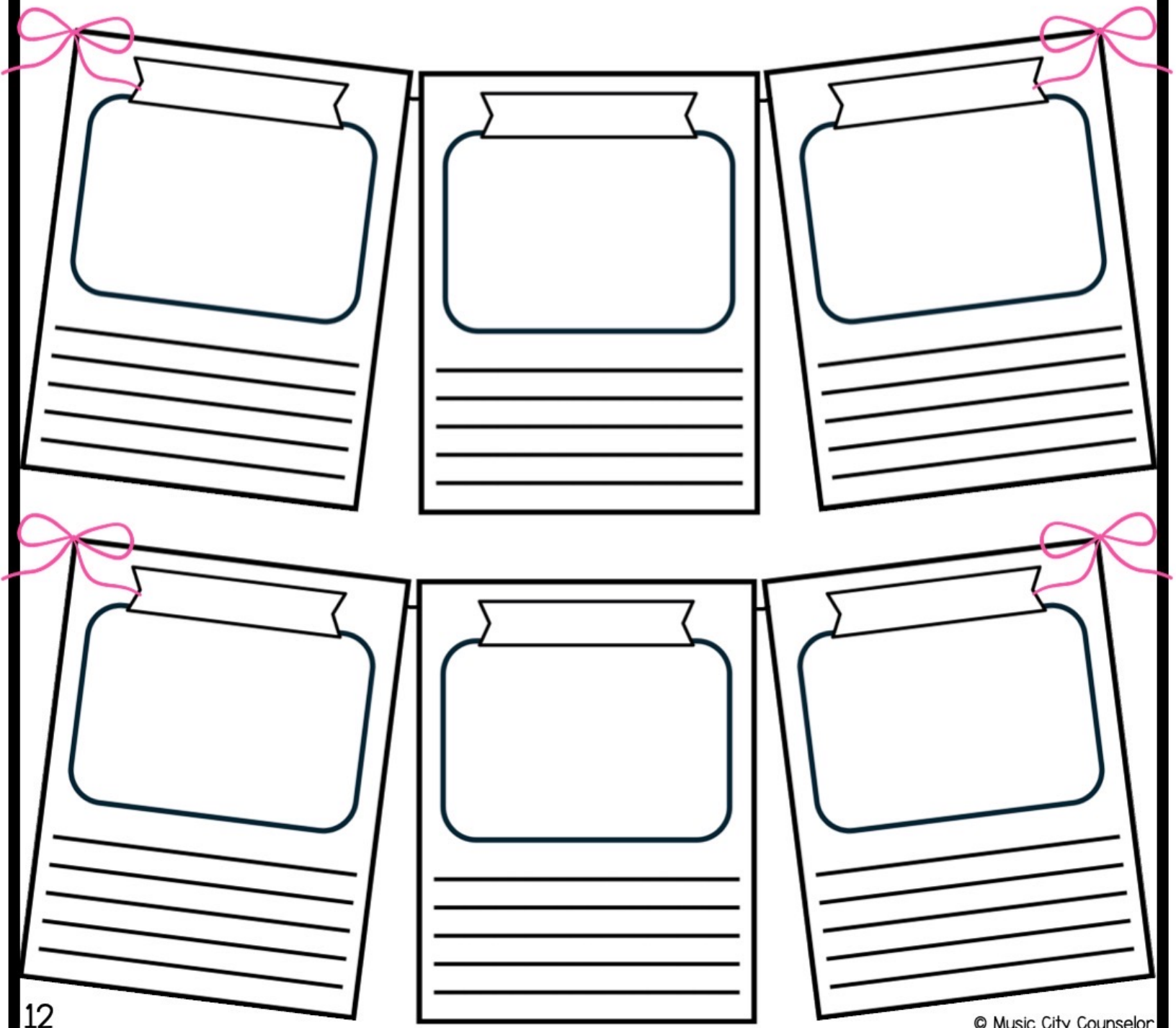
FAMILY CHANGES timeline

DIRECTIONS: >>>

Create a timeline that describes your life *before*, *during*, and *after* your family changes. Include events, milestones, feelings, routines, family living arrangements, etc. Write the title of the event in the banner, draw a picture in the box, and write about it on the lines.



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BEFORE, DURING, & AFTER

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DIRECTIONS: >>>

Draw and write about your life, feelings, experiences, living arrangements, and circumstances before, during, and after the changes in your family.

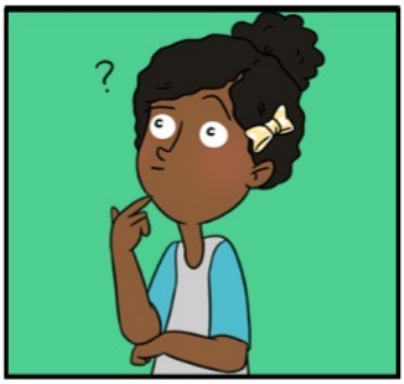
BEFORE: >>>

DURING: >>>

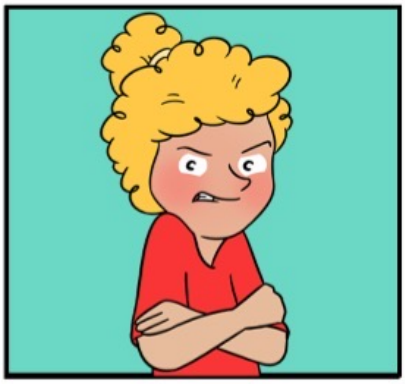
AFTER: >>>

FAMILY CHANGES >>> can make us feel...

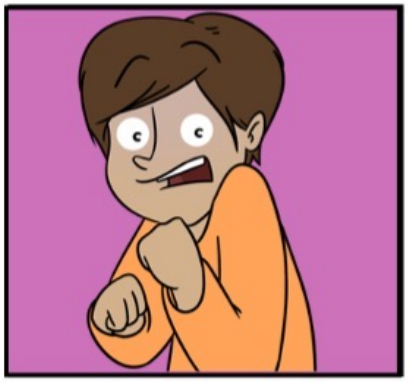
Sad



Confused



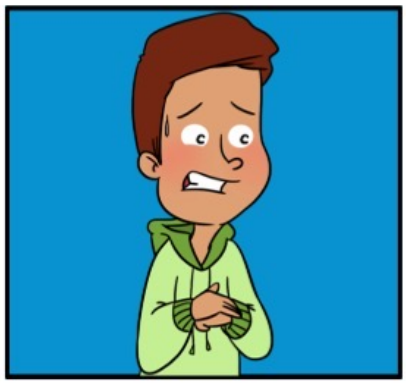
Angry



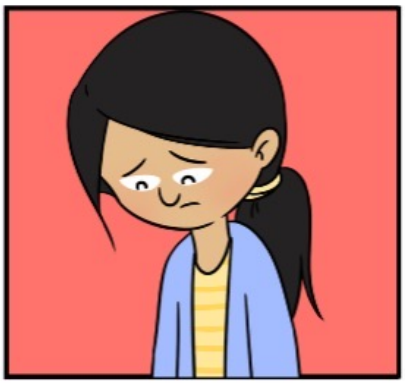
Scared

Guilty

Relieved



Nervous



Lonely

Shocked

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MY FEELINGS

DIRECTIONS:

Draw and write about your feelings surrounding the changes in your family.

When I think about how things used to be, I feel:

I wish my parents knew:

One feeling that surprises me:

My heart feels:

The hardest feeling I've dealt with:

I feel stressed when:

Most often I feel:

Mixed feelings I've had:

When I think about my family now, I feel:

COMMON WORRIES

family changes

- Where will I live most of the time?
- Will I have to change schools?
- Will I still see both parents regularly?
- What will holidays and birthdays look like now?
- Will my parents fight at my games or school events?
- Will I have to choose sides?
- Is this somehow my fault?
- Will one parent love me less?
- Will my parents stop loving each other forever?
- Will one of my parents move far away?
- What will my friends think?
- Do I have to explain this to everyone?
- Will we have less money?

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COMMON WORRIES

family changes

- Will we have to move houses?
- What happens to our pets?
- Will I have new stepparents or stepsiblings?
- What if I don't like or get along with the new people in my family?
- Where will my stuff stay?
- What if I forget something at the other house?
- Will the rules be different at each house?
- What if I miss one parent when I am at the other house?
- What if they get back together? What if they do not?
- Who do I talk to when I feel upset?
- What if my parents talk badly about each other?
- Will things ever feel normal again?

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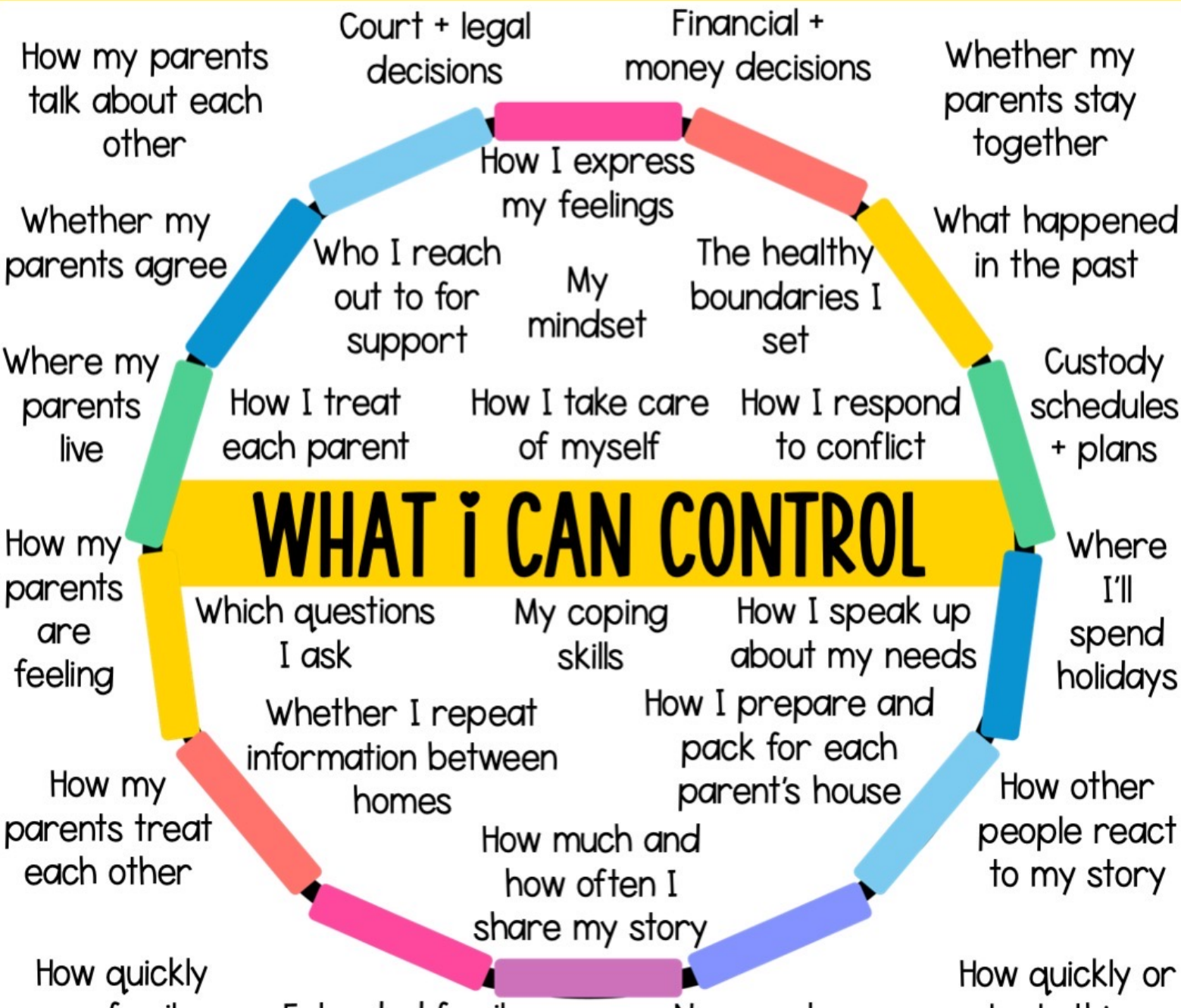
CIRCLE OF CONTROL

family changes

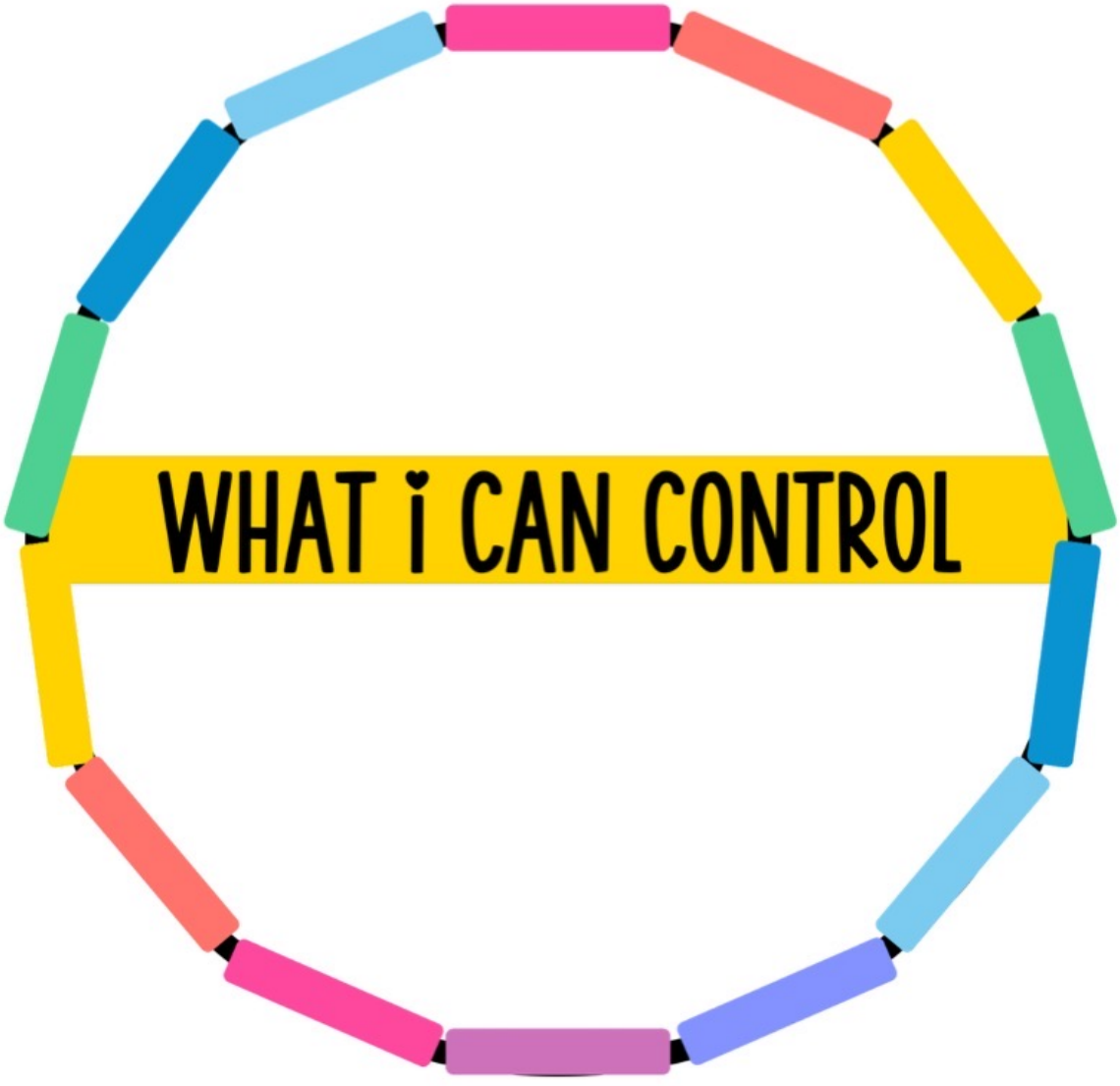
WHAT I CAN'T CONTROL



CIRCLE OF CONTROL

DIRECTIONS: Write *inside* the circle the things you *can control* about the changes in your family. Write *outside* the circle the things you *cannot control* about the changes in your family.

WHAT I CAN'T CONTROL



MY SCHEDULE

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

MY WEEKLY SCHEDULE:

WEEK 1:

SUNDAY:	MONDAY:	TUESDAY:	WEDNESDAY:	THURSDAY:	FRIDAY:	SATURDAY:

NOTES:

WEEK 2:

SUNDAY:	MONDAY:	TUESDAY:	WEDNESDAY:	THURSDAY:	FRIDAY:	SATURDAY:

NOTES:

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LIVING IN two homes

1. USE A SHARED CALENDAR

Keep track of where you will be each day, practices, assignments, and events. Knowing the plan helps you feel more prepared and less stressed.

2. CREATE A PACKING SYSTEM

Make a checklist for switching homes. Include schoolwork, chargers, sports gear, medications, and comfort items. A routine makes transitions smoother.

3. KEEP ESSENTIALS IN BOTH HOMES

If possible, keep basic clothes, toiletries, and school supplies at each house. This reduces the feeling of constantly moving your whole life back and forth.

4. MAKE BOTH SPACES FEEL LIKE YOURS

Bring personal items, photos, books, and decorations so both homes feel comfortable, familiar, and cozy. This makes both places feel like home and like they're your own.

5. STAY OUT OF ADULT CONFLICTS

Remember the Circle of Control. You are not responsible for solving problems between your parents or carrying messages. If you feel stuck in the middle, talk to a trusted adult.

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LIVING IN two homes

6. EXPECT MIXED EMOTIONS

You might feel happy at one home and sad at the other. And the next week, next day, or next moment that can change! You might miss one parent while being with the other. All of this back-and-forth is normal.

7. SPEAK UP RESPECTFULLY

If something about your schedule, space, or communication is not working, calmly share your needs. Your voice matters. Use a respectful but strong tone.

8. BUILD SMALL TRANSITION ROUTINES

Listen to a certain playlist, pack your bag the same way, or text a friend before switching homes. Predictable habits make change feel steadier and less stressful.

9. STAY CONNECTED TO OTHERS

Keep friendships, activities, and trusted adults in your life. Stability outside your homes can help you feel grounded. Reach out for support when you need it.

10. ASK FOR HELP

If living in two homes starts affecting your sleep, grades, mood, or friendships, talk to a counselor, teacher, coach, or another trusted adult. Getting support is a strong and healthy choice.

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KIDS' RIGHTS >>>

KIDS' RIGHTS EXPLAINED >>>

Kids and teens do not make the legal decisions in a divorce, but they do have rights. These rights are about safety, stability, and being cared for.

1. To be loved by both parents.
2. To show love for both parents.
3. To be a kid/teen and not worry about grown-up problems.
4. To remain part of both parents' lives (when possible/healthy).
5. To be heard and listened to.
6. To ask questions about what is happening and how it affects you.
7. To stay out of adult conflict.
8. To stay neutral. You do not have to take sides.
9. To communicate as you please. You are not a "message carrier" or "spy" between parents.
10. To express your needs, desires, and preferences.
11. To not be blamed. This is NOT your fault. You did not cause it, and you cannot fix it.
12. To support from a counselor, trusted adult, teacher, coach, or friend.

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MY RIGHTS, my voice

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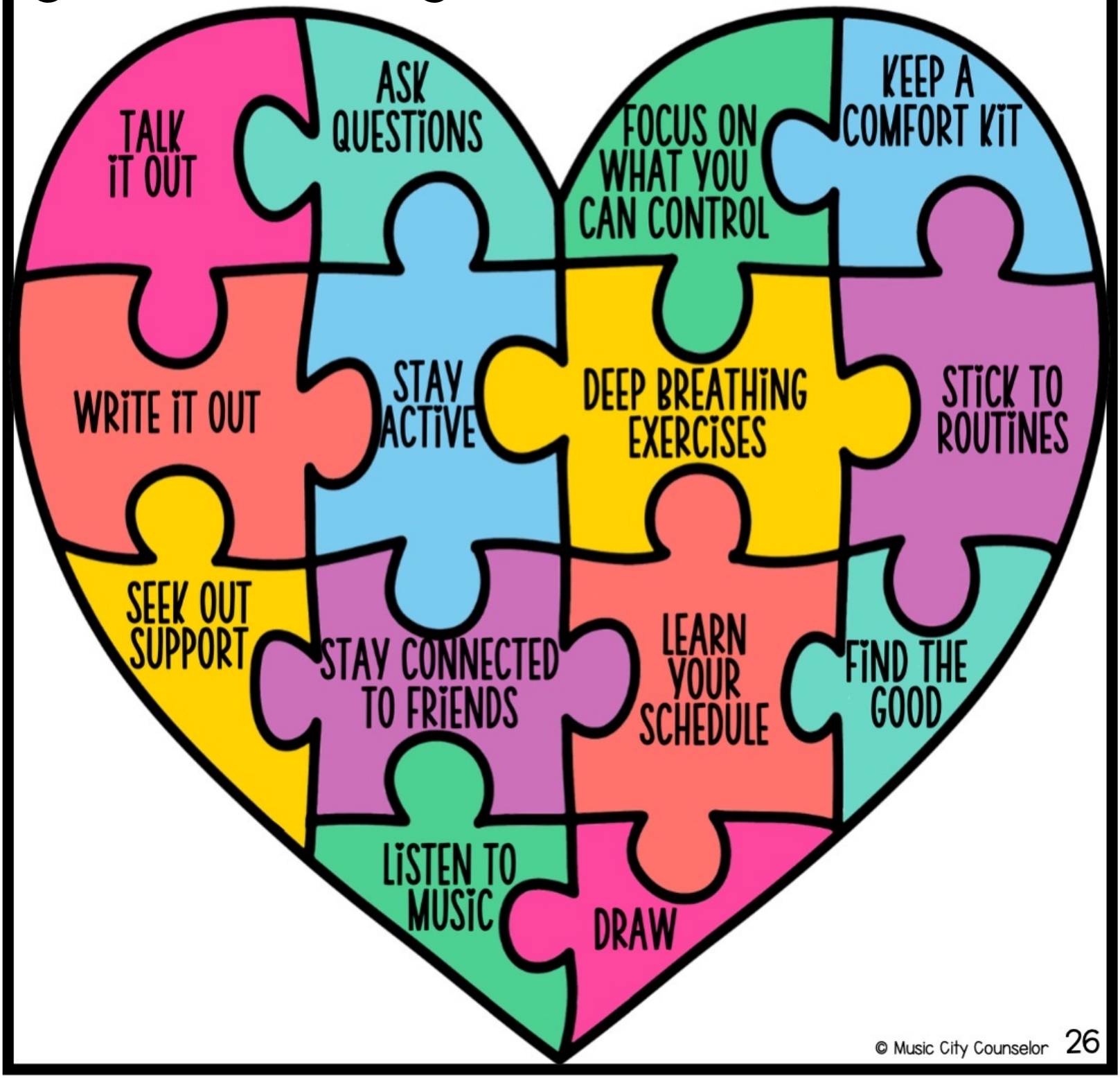
COPING WITH family changes



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A LETTER TO future me

Dear Future Me, Date:

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MY TIME IN GROUP

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IN GROUP I LEARNED:

MY FAVORITE MEMORY IN GROUP

MY FAVORITE ACTIVITY WAS:

I WILL KEEP PRACTICING:

IF I COULD CHANGE ONE THING ABOUT GROUP, IT WOULD BE:

Name:_____

SMALL GROUP post-survey

I can define divorce, separation, custody, visitation, and other terms relating to family changes.			
I can openly share my family story with others.			
I can name common feelings that kids and teens experience relating to family changes.			
I can identify my feelings relating to the changes in my family.			
I can name common worries that kids and teens experience relating to family changes.			
I can identify my worries relating to the changes in my family.			
I can define and use the Circle of Control.			
I can name things, situations, and problems that are inside my Circle of Control.			
I can name things, situations, and problems that are outside my Circle of Control.			
I understand and can describe my custody schedule.			
I know helpful tips for living in two homes.			
I know and understand my rights in a divorce or separation.			
I can use a variety of coping skills to help me deal with the changes in my family.			

BLACK LINE WORKBOOK

Please print one of these workbooks for each student and have it available to them at each session.

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Student Name: _____

Counselor Name: _____

TWO HOMES, ONE ME GROUP workbook

FEELINGS check-in

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Happy Sad Angry Calm

Tired Anxious Hurt Excited

Stressed Annoyed Content Bored

ALL ABOUT me

My name is

Favorite ice cream

Favorite school subject

When I grow up...

Favorite sport

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Pets

Favorite season

Favorite book

PASSPORT

Places I'd like to travel

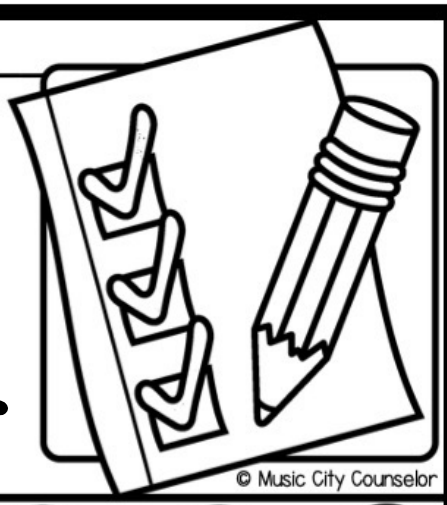
Favorite hobby

My family

Favorite snack

Name:_____

SMALL GROUP pre-survey



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SMALL GROUP: the deets

GROUP PURPOSE

This is a safe, supportive place where you can share about the changes in your family. One of the hardest parts of divorce and separation is feeling like you're the only one struggling. Here in group, you'll see others have similar worries, feelings, and experiences as you do! You are not alone! Here in group, you'll learn to understand your feelings, build healthy coping skills, and adjust to your new family structure.

CONFIDENTIALITY

What you say in here, stays in here!

UNLESS:

- Someone is hurting you.
- You are hurting someone else.
- You are hurting yourself.
- You give me permission to share.

GROUP GOALS

1. To understand family changes like divorce and separation.
2. To share your story.
3. To learn and practice coping skills.
4. To build self-confidence and self-awareness.

GROUP RULES

1. **What's shared here, stays here.** We respect privacy. Personal stories shared in group are not repeated outside this room.
2. **Respect others.** Be kind, accepting, and supportive. Do not judge.
3. **One person talks at a time.** Listen when someone is speaking. Do not interrupt.
4. **Everyone belongs.** Different feelings, identities, thoughts, and experiences are welcome here.

IN GROUP, YOU'LL FEEL

This group will make you feel:

- Understood
- Supported
- Equipped
- Confident
- Capable

DIVORCE VS. SEPARATION

WHAT IS SEPARATION? >>>

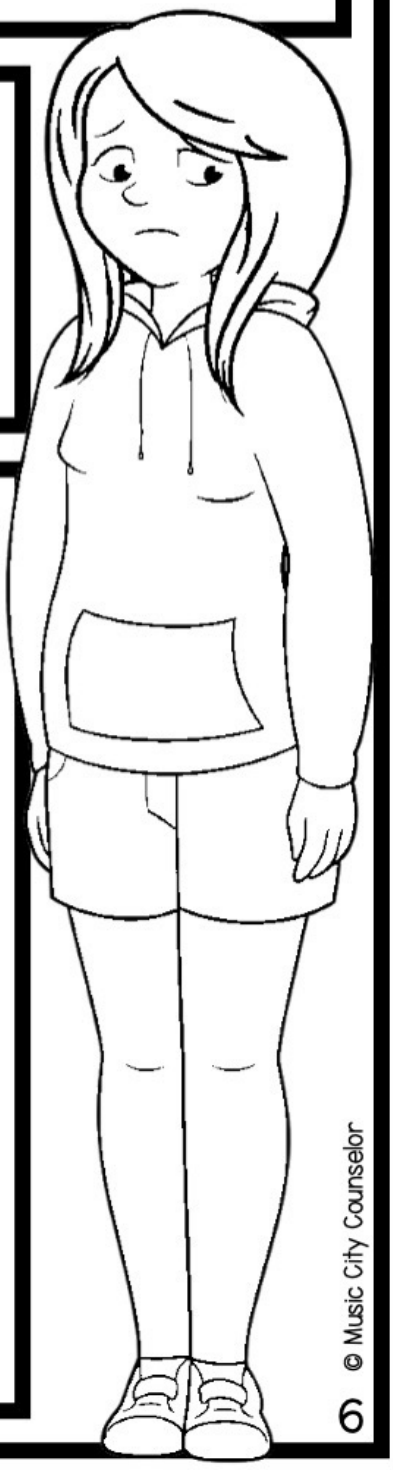
Separation is when parents decide to live apart or take space from each other, but they are still legally married. Some parents separate to figure things out, and others stay separated long-term. During a separation, routines like where kids and teens stay, schedules, and rules may start to change.

WHAT IS DIVORCE? >>>

Divorce is when parents legally end their marriage. This usually involves court decisions about things like custody, schedules, and responsibilities. Divorce makes the separation official and permanent in a legal sense.

STATE-BY-STATE DIFFERENCES: >>>

Divorce and separation can look different depending on the state someone lives in because each state has its own laws and rules. In some states, parents have to wait a certain amount of time before a divorce is final, while other states move faster. Some states require parents to try mediation or counseling first, and others do not. Rules about custody, visitation, and shared time can also vary, including how schedules are decided. Because of these differences, parents often work with lawyers or the court system in their state to figure out what applies to their family. What matters most for kids and teens is knowing that adults are responsible for handling the legal parts, and kids and teens are not expected to understand or manage the laws themselves.



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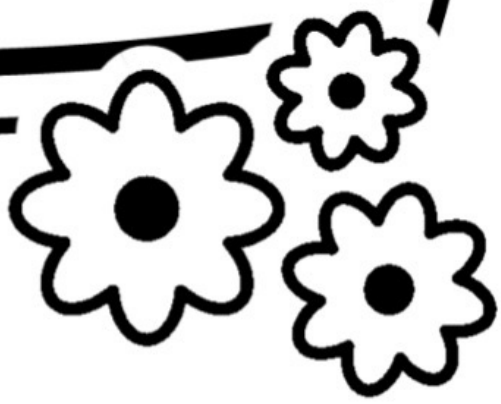
DIVORCE dictionary



A - C

C - L

L - S

S - V

DIVORCE dictionary

ADJUSTMENT:

the process of adapting or getting used to changes. With family changes, it means learning how to handle new routines, feelings, family members, and homes. It does not happen all at once. Adjustment takes time.

BLENDED FAMILY:

a family formed when a parent starts a new relationship or marriage and brings together people from different families. This can include stepparents, stepsiblings, or other family members who did not grow up together but are now part of the same family.

BOUNDARIES:

limits that help protect your feelings, time, and responsibilities during a divorce or separation. They mean knowing what is okay for you to be involved in and what is not your job to handle, such as adult problems or conflicts between parents. Boundaries help keep kids and teens from feeling overwhelmed or caught in the middle.

CONFLICT:

when parents disagree, argue, or have tension with each other. This can include arguments, negative communication, or ongoing disagreements. Remember: adult conflict is not your responsibility to fix.

CONSISTENCY:

having routines and expectations stay the same as much as possible after changes in your family. This can include regular schedules, rules, and daily habits that help you feel more stable. Consistency helps make big changes feel easier to handle.

COUNSELING:

meeting with a trained adult to talk about your thoughts and feelings. It gives you a safe place to ask questions, share worries, and learn ways to cope with changes. Counseling is meant to support you, not to judge or blame anyone.

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DiVORCE dictionary 2

◦ COURT:

a legal place where a judge helps make decisions when parents cannot agree. The court may decide things like custody, schedules, or other family plans with the best interest of the child in mind.

◦ CUSTODY:

a legal term that explains where a child or teen lives and who is responsible for making important decisions for them. It can affect schedules, routines, and choices about school, health care, and activities. Plans are meant to keep you safe and supported.

◦ DiVORCE:

when two married adults decide to legally end their marriage. It means they will no longer be married to each other, but they are still your parents. It is an adult decision about their relationship, and it is not caused by kids and teens.

◦ GRiEF:

the mix of feelings that can come with loss of a loved one or major family changes. It can include sadness, anger, confusion, and missing how things used to be. Grief is normal and can come and go over time as you adjust.

◦ JOiNT CUSTODY:

both parents share responsibility for caring for their child(ren) or teen after a divorce or separation. This can include sharing time and making important decisions together. Joint custody is meant to keep both parents involved in a child's life when possible.

◦ LEGAL CUSTODY:

having the responsibility to make important decisions about a child(ren) or teen's life. This includes decisions about school, medical care, and other major needs. Legal custody can be shared by both parents or handled by one parent, depending on the situation.

C-1

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DIVORCE dictionary

◦ LOYALTY CONFLICT:

when a child feels torn between parents during or after a divorce or separation. It can feel like you have to choose sides, keep secrets, or protect one parent's feelings. Loyalty conflict is not fair to kids and teens, and it is not your responsibility to take sides.

◦ MEDIATION:

a process where parents meet with a neutral adult to help them talk through disagreements during a divorce or separation. The mediator helps parents work toward agreements about things like schedules and custody without going to court. It's meant to reduce conflict and focus on what is best for the child or teen.

◦ PARENTING PLAN:

a written agreement that explains how parents will care for their child(ren) after a divorce or separation. It includes things like schedules, living arrangements, and how decisions will be made. The goal of a parenting plan is to create stability and clear expectations for the child(ren).

◦ PHYSICAL CUSTODY:

where a child(ren) or teen lives and who they live with most of the time after a divorce or separation. It helps decide daily routines like school days, bedtime, and where personal belongings are kept. It can be shared between parents or mainly with one parent.

◦ SEPARATION:

when parents stop living together but are not legally divorced yet. It often means changes in routines, living arrangements, and family time.

◦ SHARED TIME:

the time a child(ren) or teen spends with each parent after a divorce or separation. It explains how days, nights, weekends, and holidays are divided between parents. The goal is to keep healthy relationships with both parents whenever possible.

L - S

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DIVORCE dictionary

STEPPARENT:

a parent's new spouse or long-term partner after a divorce or separation. A stepparent may live in the home or be part of family activities. Building a relationship with a stepparent can take time and look different for everyone.

STEPSIBLING:

the child of a parent's new spouse or partner after a divorce or separation. Stepsiblings may live in the same home part-time or full-time. It can take time to adjust to sharing space, routines, and relationships with stepsiblings.

TRANSITION:

the process of moving from one routine or situation to another. When it comes to a divorce or separation, this can include switching homes, changing schedules, or adjusting to new family rules. Transitions can feel challenging at first, and it is normal to need time to adjust.

VISITATION:

the scheduled time a child spends with the parent they do not live with after a divorce or separation. Plans are made for how and when parents and their children spend time together. Visitation schedules are meant to support strong and consistent relationships.

VISITATION CENTER:

a safe, supervised place where a child can spend time with a parent during or after a divorce or separation. Trained adults are present to help make sure visits are calm and safe for everyone. Visitation centers are used when families need extra support around visits.

S - V

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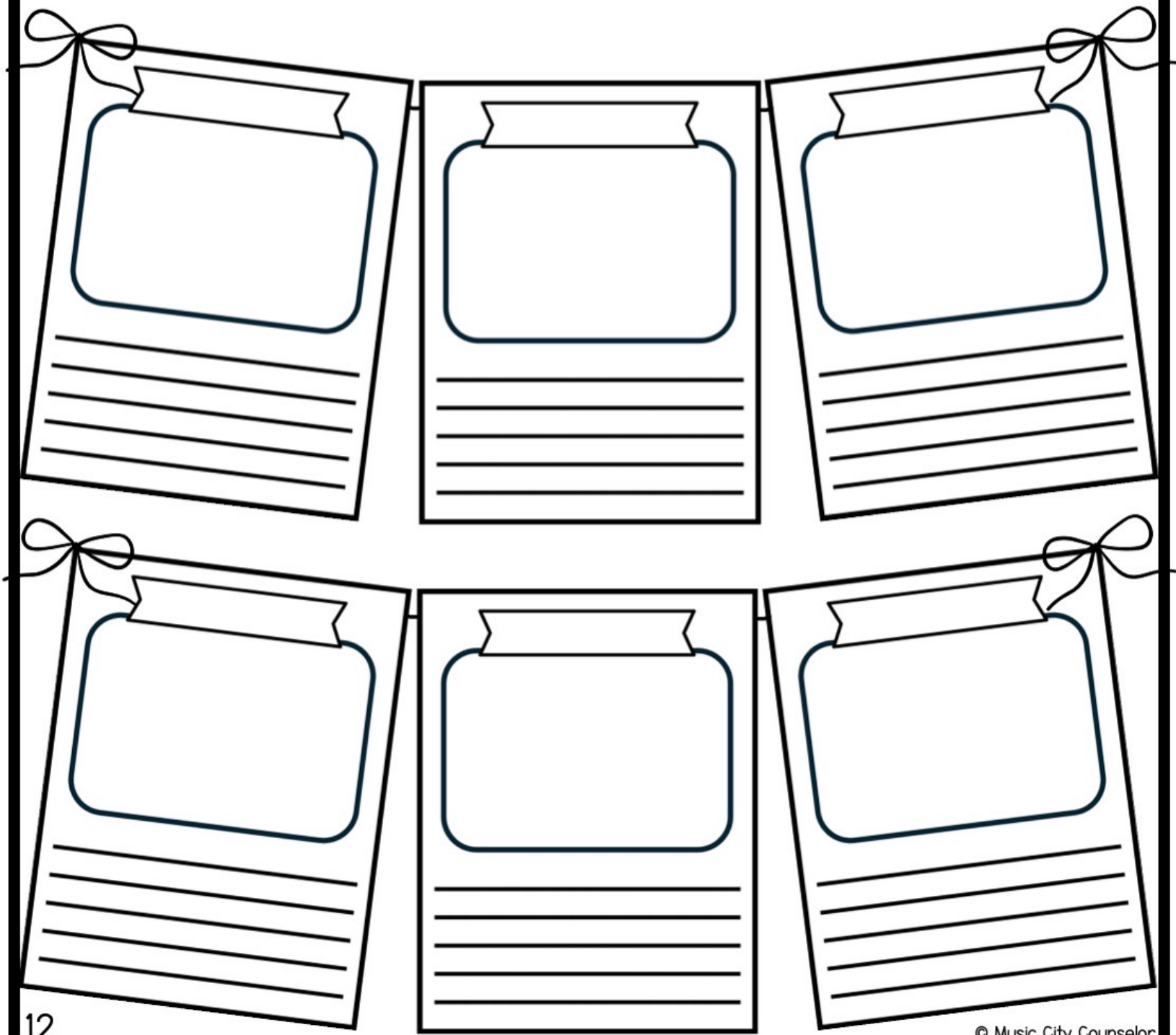
FAMILY CHANGES timeline

DIRECTIONS

Create a timeline that describes your life *before*, *during*, and *after* your family changes. Include events, milestones, feelings, routines, family living arrangements, etc. Write the title of the event in the banner, draw a picture in the box, and write about it on the lines.



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BEFORE, DURING, & AFTER

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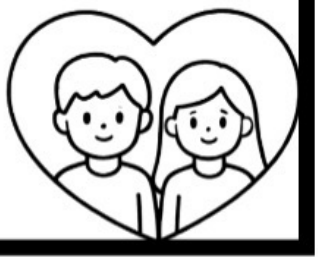
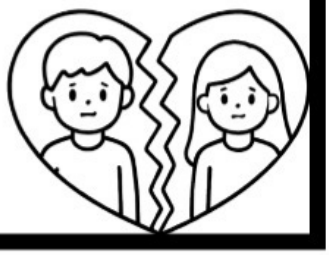
DIRECTIONS: >>>

Draw and write about your life, feelings, experiences, living arrangements, and circumstances before, during, and after the changes in your family.

BEFORE: >>>



DURING: >>>



AFTER: >>>

FAMILY CHANGES can make us feel...

Sad

Confused

Angry

Scared

Guilty

Relieved

Nervous

Lonely

Shocked

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MY FEELINGS

DIRECTIONS:

Draw and write about your feelings surrounding the changes in your family.

When I think about how things used to be, I feel:

I wish my parents knew:

One feeling that surprises me:

My heart feels:

The hardest feeling I've dealt with:

I feel stressed when:

Most often I feel:

Mixed feelings I've had:

When I think about my family now, I feel:

COMMON WORRIES

family changes

- Where will I live most of the time?
- Will I have to change schools?
- Will I still see both parents regularly?
- What will holidays and birthdays look like now?
- Will my parents fight at my games or school events?
- Will I have to choose sides?
- Is this somehow my fault?
- Will one parent love me less?
- Will my parents stop loving each other forever?
- Will one of my parents move far away?
- What will my friends think?
- Do I have to explain this to everyone?
- Will we have less money?

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COMMON WORRIES

family changes

- Will we have to move houses?
- What happens to our pets?
- Will I have new stepparents or stepsiblings?
- What if I don't like or get along with the new people in my family?
- Where will my stuff stay?
- What if I forget something at the other house?
- Will the rules be different at each house?
- What if I miss one parent when I am at the other house?
- What if they get back together? What if they do not?
- Who do I talk to when I feel upset?
- What if my parents talk badly about each other?
- Will things ever feel normal again?

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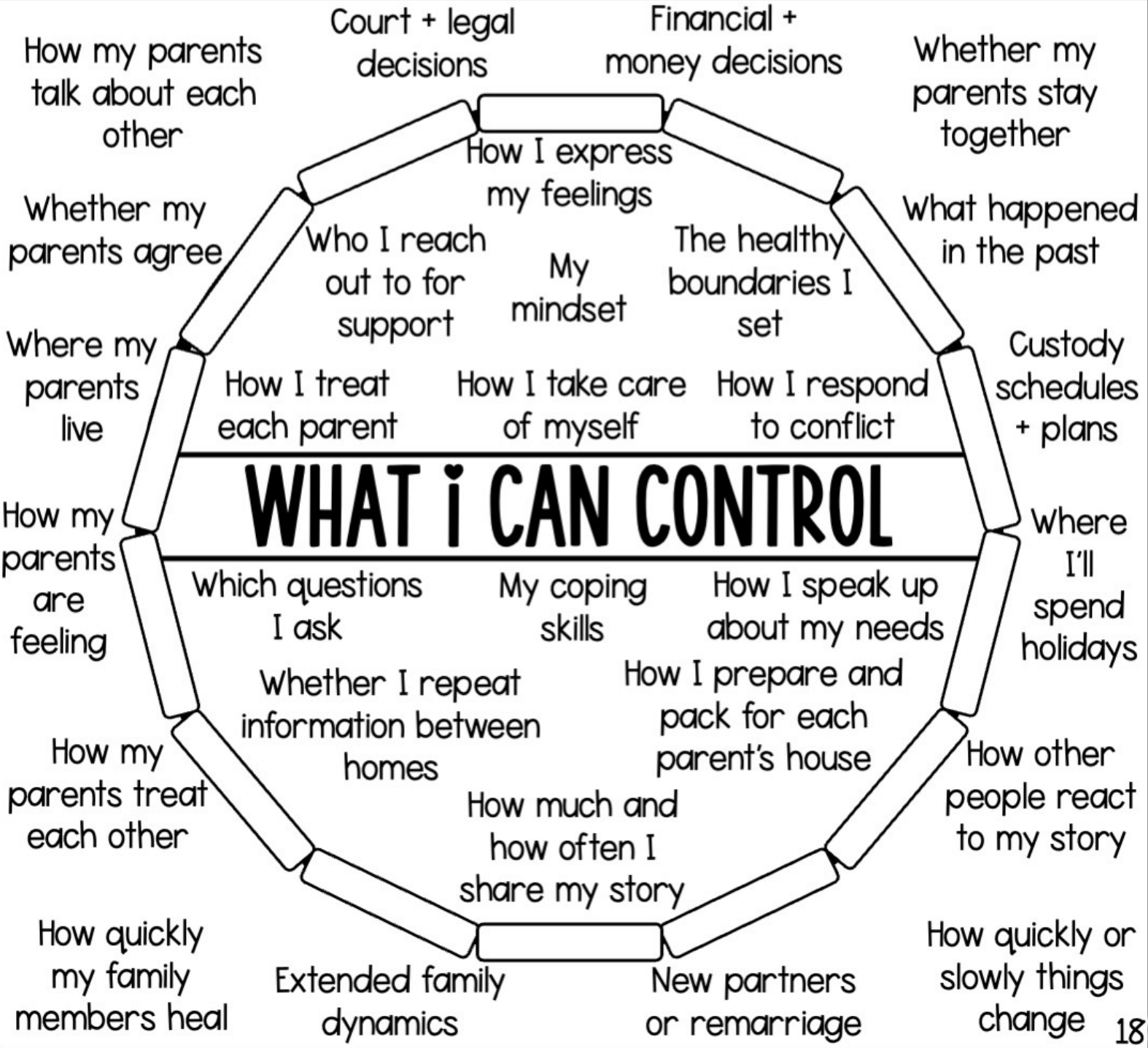
CIRCLE OF CONTROL

family changes

WHAT I CAN'T CONTROL



CIRCLE OF CONTROL

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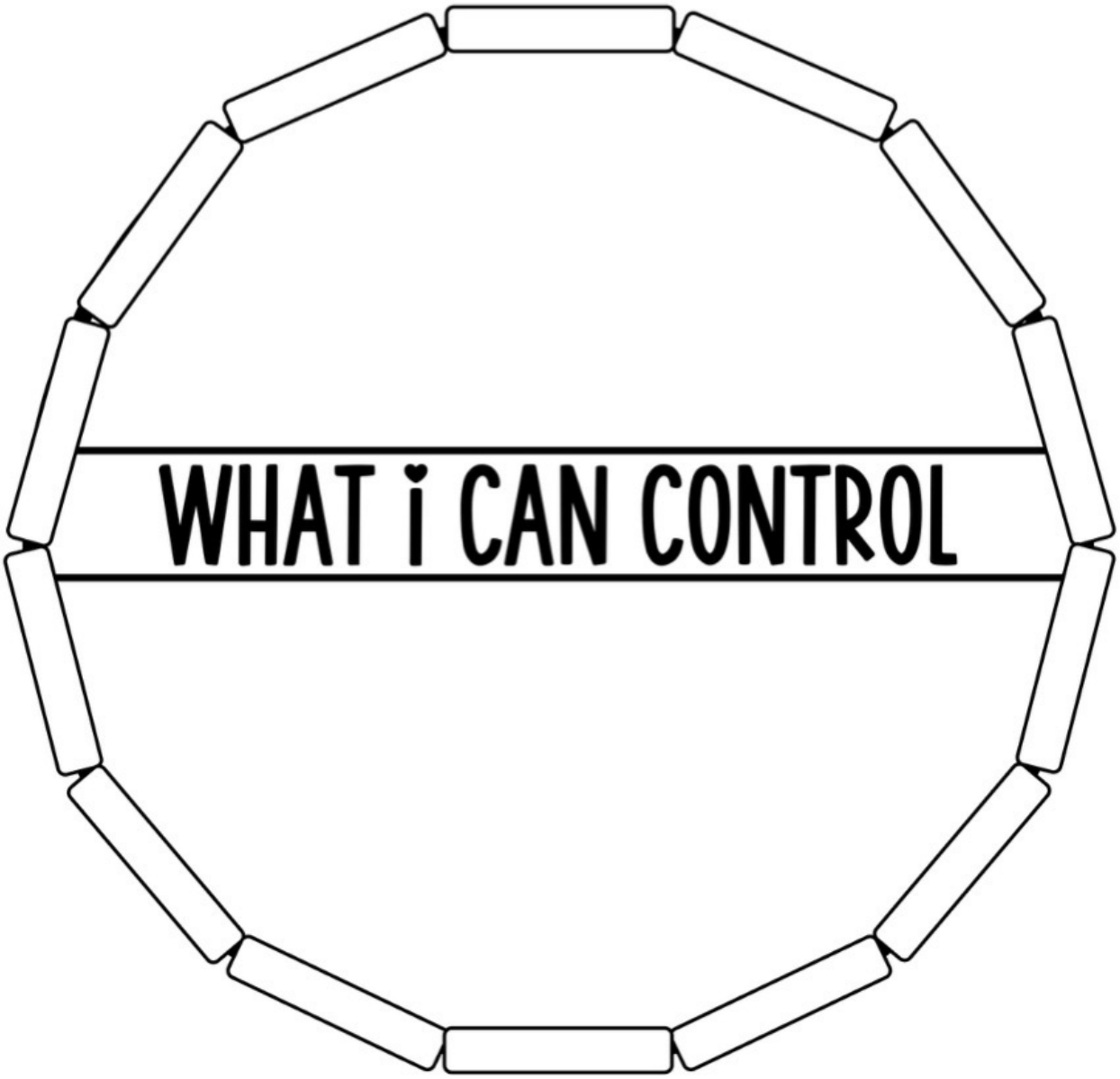
DIRECTIONS: Write *inside* the circle the things you *can control* about the changes in your family. Write *outside* the circle the things you *cannot control* about the changes in your family.

WHAT I CAN'T CONTROL



MY SCHEDULE

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

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MY WEEKLY SCHEDULE:

WEEK 1:

SUNDAY:	MONDAY:	TUESDAY:	WEDNESDAY:	THURSDAY:	FRIDAY:	SATURDAY:

NOTES: _____

WEEK 2:

SUNDAY:	MONDAY:	TUESDAY:	WEDNESDAY:	THURSDAY:	FRIDAY:	SATURDAY:

NOTES: _____

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LIVING IN two homes

1. USE A SHARED CALENDAR

Keep track of where you will be each day, practices, assignments, and events. Knowing the plan helps you feel more prepared and less stressed.

2. CREATE A PACKING SYSTEM

Make a checklist for switching homes. Include schoolwork, chargers, sports gear, medications, and comfort items. A routine makes transitions smoother.

3. KEEP ESSENTIALS IN BOTH HOMES

If possible, keep basic clothes, toiletries, and school supplies at each house. This reduces the feeling of constantly moving your whole life back and forth.

4. MAKE BOTH SPACES FEEL LIKE YOURS

Bring personal items, photos, books, and decorations so both homes feel comfortable, familiar, and cozy. This makes both places feel like home and like they're your own.

5. STAY OUT OF ADULT CONFLICTS

Remember the Circle of Control. You are not responsible for solving problems between your parents or carrying messages. If you feel stuck in the middle, talk to a trusted adult.

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LIVING IN two homes

6. EXPECT MIXED EMOTIONS

You might feel happy at one home and sad at the other. The next week, next day, or next moment that can change! You might miss one parent while being with the other. All of this back-and-forth is normal.

7. SPEAK UP RESPECTFULLY

If something about your schedule, space, or communication is not working, calmly share your needs. Your voice matters. Use a respectful but strong tone.

8. BUILD SMALL TRANSITION ROUTINES

Listen to a certain playlist, pack your bag the same way, or text a friend before switching homes. Predictable habits make change feel steadier and less stressful.

9. STAY CONNECTED TO OTHERS

Keep friendships, activities, and trusted adults in your life. Stability outside your homes can help you feel grounded. Reach out for support when you need it.

10. ASK FOR HELP

If living in two homes starts affecting your sleep, grades, mood, or friendships, talk to a counselor, teacher, coach, or another trusted adult. Getting support is a strong and healthy choice.

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KIDS' RIGHTS >>>

KIDS' RIGHTS EXPLAINED >>>

Kids and teens do not make the legal decisions in a divorce, but they do have rights. These rights are about safety, stability, and being cared for.

1. To be loved by both parents.
2. To show love for both parents.
3. To be a kid/teen and not worry about grown-up problems.
4. To remain part of both parents' lives (when possible/healthy).
5. To be heard and listened to.
6. To ask questions about what is happening and how it affects you.
7. To stay out of adult conflict.
8. To stay neutral. You do not have to take sides.
9. To communicate as you please. You are not a "message carrier" or "spy" between parents.
10. To express your needs, desires, and preferences.
11. To not be blamed. This is NOT your fault. You did not cause it, and you cannot fix it.
12. To support from a counselor, trusted adult, teacher, coach, or friend.

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MY RIGHTS, my voice

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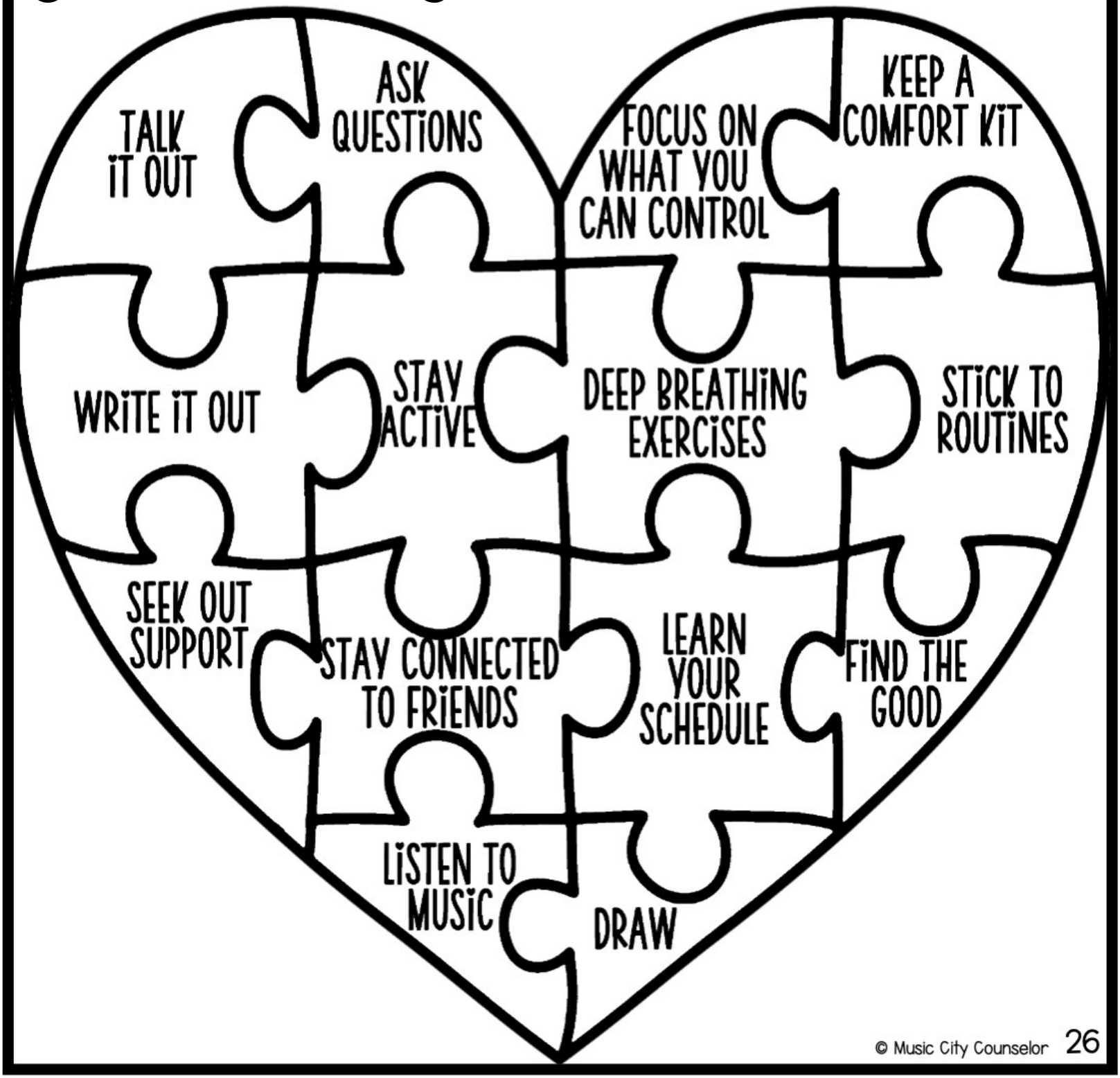
COPING WITH family changes



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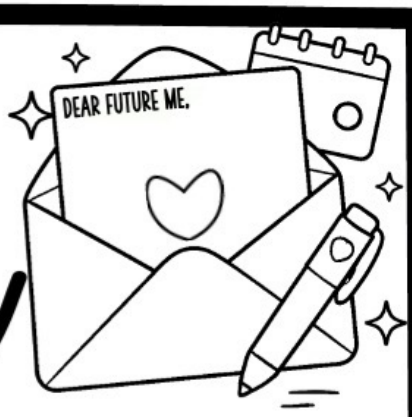
A LETTER TO *future me*



Dear Future Me, Date:

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MY TIME IN GROUP

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IN GROUP I LEARNED:

MY FAVORITE MEMORY IN GROUP

MY FAVORITE ACTIVITY WAS:

I WILL KEEP PRACTICING:

IF I COULD CHANGE ONE THING ABOUT GROUP, IT WOULD BE:

Name:_____

SMALL GROUP post-survey

I can define divorce, separation, custody, visitation, and other terms relating to family changes.			
I can openly share my family story with others.			
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I can define and use the Circle of Control.			
I can name things, situations, and problems that are inside my Circle of Control.			
I can name things, situations, and problems that are outside my Circle of Control.			
I understand and can describe my custody schedule.			
I know helpful tips for living in two homes.			
I know and understand my rights in a divorce or separation.			
I can use a variety of coping skills to help me deal with the changes in my family.			

SESSION PLANS & ACTIVITIES

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SESSION 1: INTRODUCTIONS & ICEBREAKERS

SESSION GOALS:

- Students will introduce themselves and get to know their peers.
- Students will assess their knowledge of family changes with a pre-survey.
- Students will learn the rules of group.
- Students will learn the definition and limits of confidentiality.
- Students will understand the purpose, goals, and content of group.

ASCA ALIGNMENT:

- **M 1.** Belief in development of whole self, including a healthy balance of mental, social/emotional and physical well-being.
- **M 2.** Sense of acceptance, respect, support and inclusion for self and others in the school environment.
- **M 3.** Positive attitude toward work and learning.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- 1 workbook per student
- Pencils
- Markers or crayons

DIRECTIONS:

- **Before group: print a workbook for each student.** Choose either the full color or the black line version. Staple it in the top left-hand corner.
- Start by welcoming students to the **"Two Homes, One Me" group** and giving them a **workbook**. They can write their name and counselor's name on the blank lines on the cover page.
- Tell students that we are going to do a little icebreaker activity to help them get to know each other. Ask student to turn to **page 3 in their workbook, "All About Me."** This page is full of fun doodles that let students express their favorite things, hobbies, dreams, etc. Students can start by writing their name where it says, "My name is" and drawing a picture of themselves in the picture frame. Then, they can write words and draw little pictures for each category. Once they're done, ask students to share their page with the group.
- Ask students to turn to **page 4 in their workbook, "Small Group Pre-Survey."** Explain that this little form will help us understand how much progress they make in group. It's okay if they don't know the answers now – they'll learn as we go! Read each question aloud and ask students to circle or color the "yes" 🙂, "maybe" 😐, or "not yet" ☹️ faces.
- Ask students to turn to **page 5 in their workbook: "Small Group: The Deets."** This page explains the purpose, rules, and goals of group, as well as confidentiality and how group will make them feel. Read through each section and spark a discussion with students:
  - What do you hope to learn in group?
  - What goals do you have for group?
  - What rules would you add to this list?
  - Why is confidentiality important?
  - What does the group purpose mean to you?
- **Close** by saying that next week we will learn some key terms around family changes.

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SESSION 2: DIVORCE DICTIONARY

SESSION GOALS:

- Students will learn the definitions of divorce and separation.
- Students will learn that the terms of divorce and separation vary by state.
- Students will learn key vocabulary words relating to family changes.

ASCA ALIGNMENT:

- **M 1.** Belief in development of whole self, including a healthy balance of mental, social/emotional and physical well-being.
- **B-SMS 6:** Ability to identify and overcome barriers.
- **B-SMS 10:** Ability to manage transitions and adapt to change.
- **B-SS 3:** Positive relationships with adults to support success.
- **B-SS 8:** Advocacy skills for self and others and ability to assert self, when necessary.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- 1 workbook per student
- 1 printed craft per student (2 versions included)
- Scissors
- Pencils
- Markers or crayons

DIRECTIONS:

- **Before group:** print a printed craft for each student (2 pages, full color and black/white provided).
- **Greet students and explain** that today we will dive headfirst into learning about family changes.
- Feel free to start each session with a **feelings check-in (page 2 in the workbook).**
- Explain that we're going to start with the very basics! Ask students to **turn to page 6 in their workbooks.** Ask a different volunteer to read each of the 3 boxes on the page – the definition of divorce, the definition of separation, and the state-by-state differences. Generate a discussion around:
  - Does anything about these definitions surprise you?
  - If you feel comfortable, please share whether your parents are in a separation or a divorce, and a little bit about what that looks like for you. We'll share more details about our families another time!
  - Did you know that the terms of divorce and separation vary by state? Do you know anything about how the process works in our state? If so, share!
- **A folded informational craft** is provided (both male and female versions, full color and black/white) that explains this information. This is a great "make-and-take" for students. Students can cut around the circle on the "Divorce & Separation" cover page and cut around the circle on the second page. Then, students can place some glue where it says, "Glue Here" and glue the cover page onto the second page. This creates a little flip book. If students are using the black/white version, they can color it. Please see the **sample** on the next page.
- Next, **explain** there are a lot of new vocabulary words and confusing legal jargon when it comes to divorce and separation. Learning these terms and the language adults are using can make things feel less confusing and scary for kids and teens. Knowing what these words mean can help you make sense of changes, ask questions, and feel more confident about what's happening in your life instead of feeling left in the dark. At the same time, learning this vocabulary does NOT mean you are responsible for adult decisions. Divorce is an adult situation, and adults are the ones who handle the legal choices, plans, and problems. The goal is not to burden you or make you feel like you have to take sides or solve anything. This knowledge is meant to help you feel informed and supported, not pressured. You get to understand what's going on, but you are still allowed to be a kid who focuses on school, friends, hobbies, and your own feelings. Knowing these words gives you power, not responsibility!
- Ask students to **turn to pages 7-11 in their workbooks: Divorce Dictionary.** This is a Divorce Dictionary with 23 terms relating to family changes. Ask each student to choose 2-3 terms – ideally some they are NOT familiar with. Make sure students each choose different words. Ask students to:
  - Read the definition to the group.
  - Circle a word or sentence that stands out.
  - Share their reaction: "This word makes me feel..." "I hear this word when...." "This word used to confuse me because..." "I'd like to learn more about..."
- Explain that this is also a great resource that students can come back to at any time if something happening at home is confusing.
- **Close** by saying that next week we will share our family stories.

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SAMPLE

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DiVORCE & SEPARATiON
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DIVORCE & SEPARATION
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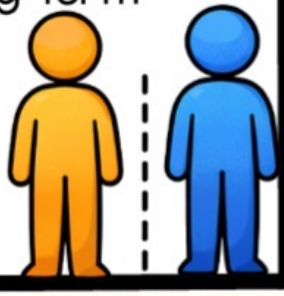
GLUE HERE

SEPARATION:

Parents decide to live apart or take space from each other, but they are still legally married.

PARENT(S) MAY CHOOSE TO:

- Work to figure out next steps
- Make custody arrangements
- Relocate to another city or state
- Stay separated long-term
- Get back together
- Start dating
- Start divorce proceedings



DIVORCE:

Parents legally end their marriage. It's official and permanent in a legal sense.

COURT DECISIONS MAY BE MADE ON:

- Legal custody
- Physical custody
- Parenting plans
- Child support
- Finances
- Division of property
- Name changes
- Tax decisions

STATE DIFFERENCES:

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Each state has its own laws and rules. In some states, parents have to wait a certain amount of time before a divorce is final, while other states move faster. Some states require parents to try mediation or counseling first, and others do not. Rules about custody, visitation, and shared time can also vary.

REMEMBER: Adults are responsible for handling these legal and financial issues...NOT kids!

DIVORCE & SEPARATION
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DIVORCE & SEPARATION
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GLUE HERE

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REMEMBER: Adults are responsible for handling these legal and financial issues...NOT kids!

SESSION 3: MY FAMILY STORY

SESSION GOALS:

- Students will process their personal experiences with divorce and separation.
- Students will create a timeline that helps them better understand the changes in their family and how their story has unfolded.
- Students will openly share their stories with group members.

ASCA ALIGNMENT:

- **M 1.** Belief in development of whole self, including a healthy balance of mental, social/emotional and physical well-being.
- **M 2.** Sense of acceptance, respect, support and inclusion for self and others in the school environment.
- **B-SMS 6:** Ability to identify and overcome barriers.
- **B-SMS 10:** Ability to manage transitions and adapt to change.
- **B-SS 3:** Positive relationships with adults to support success.
- **B-SS 8:** Advocacy skills for self and others and ability to assert self, when necessary.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- 1 workbook per student
- 1 printed "Before" house and 1 printed "After" house, laminated
- 2 sets of the printed people, cut-out, laminated
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Pencils
- Markers or crayons

DIRECTIONS:

- **Before group:** I recommend laminating the 2 houses pages and the cut-out people prior to group so this set can be reused. Please cut out each of the people. I suggest printing 2 sets of people so that students can use the same family members twice, on their "Before" and their "After" pages. It's also helpful to use sticky tack or hook-and-loop fastener dots for students to attach their cut-out people to the houses. This way, when they share their story, they can hold up the pages for all group members to see without the people falling off. Both full color and black line are included. **Please see the sample on the next page.**
- Greet students and explain that today we will share our stories.
- Feel free to start each session with a **feelings check-in (page 2 in the workbook).**
- **Explain** that sharing your story has *so* many benefits. When parents separate or divorce, a lot of kids and teens feel alone in it. You may think, "No one really gets what this is like for me." But when someone shares something similar, your brain and body realize, "Oh, I'm not the only one." Sharing also helps you organize your own thoughts. When you share your story out loud, you start to understand your own feelings and experiences better. It also helps you feel less shame and build your confidence and resilience. Sharing your own story can even help others feel less alone and possibly feel brave enough to share *their* story. At the same time, sharing is a *choice*. You are allowed to only share a little, share a lot, or pass for today. That is all okay!
- Set out the **"Before the Changes" house and the "After the Changes" houses pages** on the table. Lay out the **2 sets of cut-out people** so all students can see them. Ask for a volunteer to go first. Ask the volunteer to choose a cut-out person that represents themselves and one for each of their family members that lived in their home before the changes. If there isn't a person that looks exactly like them or their family member, that's okay! Just find the most similar ones they can. Then, the volunteer places the cut-out people on the "Before" house. Ask the volunteer to share:
    - Who are each of these people?
    - Describe your living arrangement(s) before the family changes.
    - What was it like living in that house together?
    - How did it feel living in that house together?
    - Share any experiences, events, or milestones that took place in that house.
- Next, ask the volunteer to place the same cut-out people (use the second set) on the **"After the Changes" houses.** This represents what their living arrangements look like now, after the changes. If someone lives in both houses (i.e. joint custody), they can place that person in the middle of the 2 homes. They can also add any additional new family members such as stepparents and stepsiblings who didn't live with them before the changes. Ask the volunteer to share:
    - Who are each of these people?
    - Describe your living arrangement(s) now, after the family changes.
    - What is it like living in this home, or 2 homes?
    - How does it feel living in this house/homes?
    - Share any experiences, events, or milestones that have taken place in this house/homes.
    - How are things different now? How are some things still the same?
- Continue playing until each student has had a turn. If a student does not want to participate, he/she can pass.
- **On page 12 of the workbook, a timeline activity** is included that lets students draw and write about the major milestones, events, feelings, experiences, and circumstances of their lives before, during, and after the changes. **On page 13 of the workbook**, a "before, during, and after" activity is included that lets students write and draw about their lives before, during, and after the changes in their families. Students can work on either of these pages if they don't feel comfortable participating in the interactive activity, if there's extra time, or another time.
- **Close** by saying that next week we will focus on our feelings surrounding the changes in our families.

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SAMPLE

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BEFORE the changes

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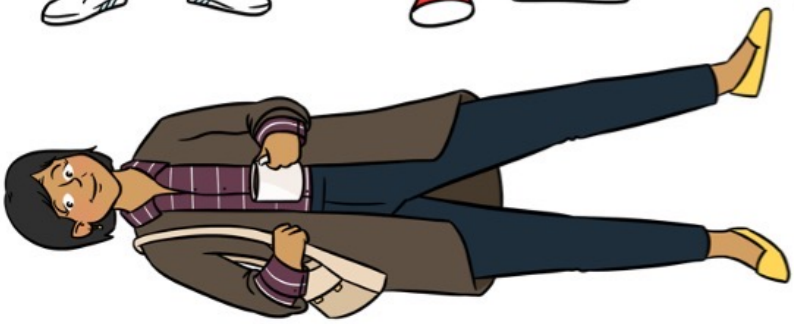
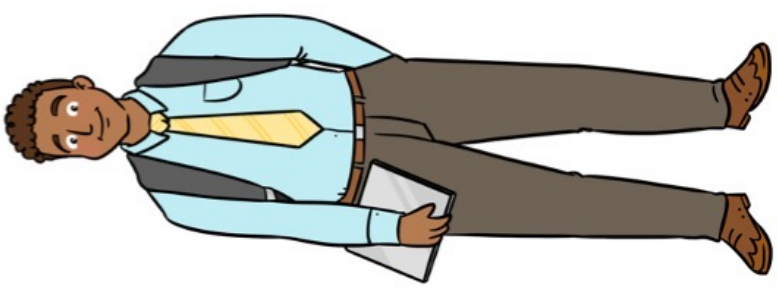
AFTER the changes

ADULTS





KIDS, TEENS, & BABIES

BEFORE the changes

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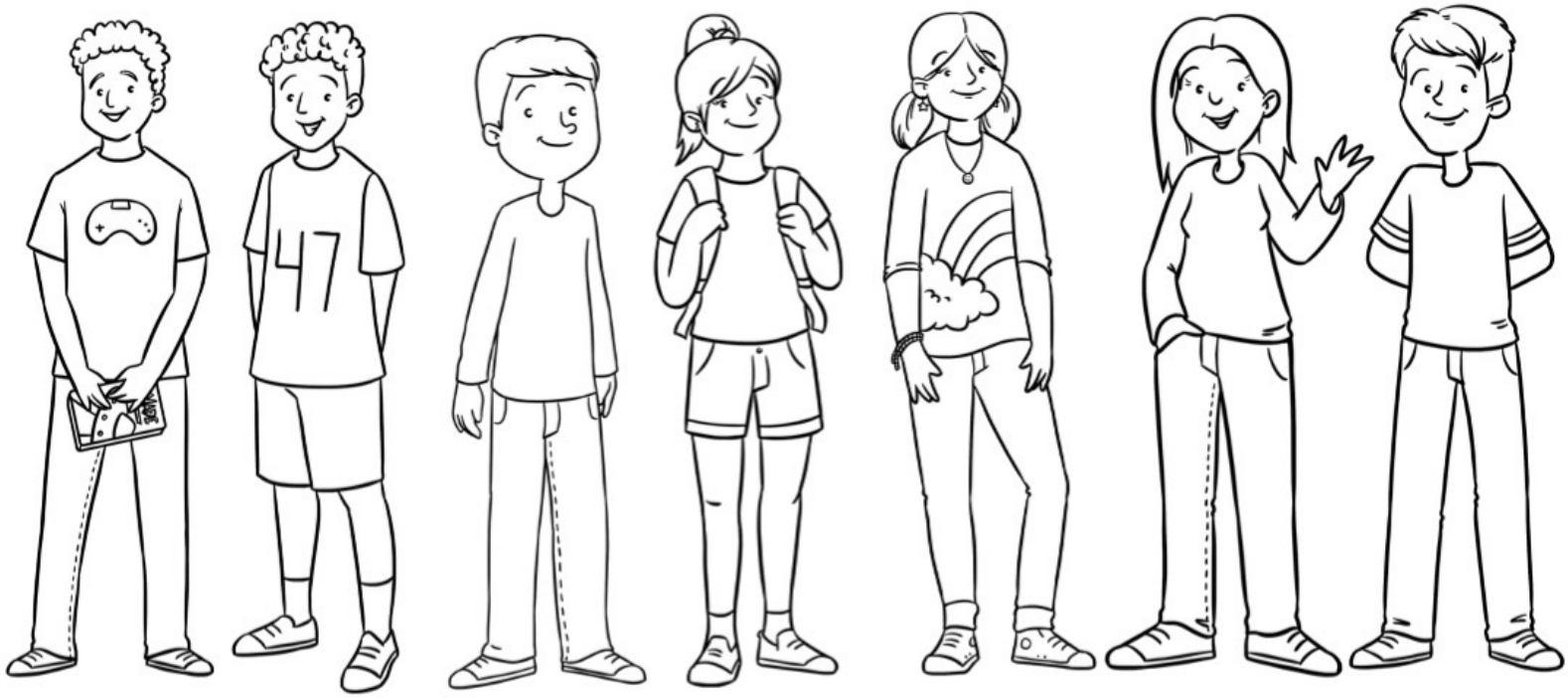
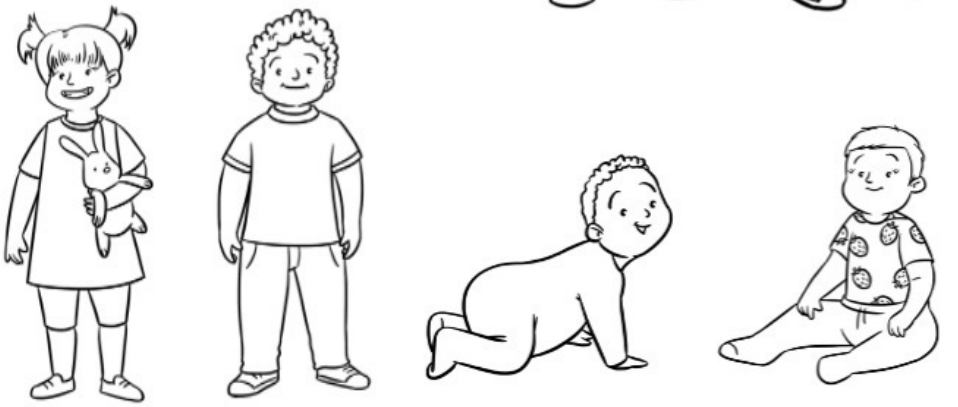
AFTER the changes

ADULTS

KIDS, TEENS, & BABIES





SESSION 4: EXPLORING MY FEELINGS

SESSION GOALS:

- Students will identify their feelings about the changes in their family.
- Students will explore their feelings about common childhood experiences with divorce and separation.

ASCA ALIGNMENT:

- **M 1.** Belief in development of whole self, including a healthy balance of mental, social/emotional and physical well-being
- **B-SMS 6:** Ability to identify and overcome barriers.
- **B-SMS 10:** Ability to manage transitions and adapt to change.
- B-SS 8: Advocacy skills for self and others and ability to assert self, when necessary.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- 1 workbook per student
- 1 set of 6 printed feelings labels, cut-out
- 1 set of 30 printed feelings scenario cards, cut-out

DIRECTIONS:

- **Before group: print and cut-out the feelings labels and feelings scenario cards.**
- **Greet students and explain** that today we will identify, explore, and share our feelings about the changes in our families.
- Feel free to start each session with a **feelings check-in (page 2 in the workbook).**
- **Explain** that divorce and separation can bring up LOTS of different feelings. Your feelings about it can change from day to day, week to week, year to year, and even minute to minute. ALL of your feelings are okay! Identifying and talking about your feelings is one of the first and most important steps in coping with family changes. Feelings do not disappear just because we ignore them. If we do not name them, they can come out sideways. That might look like snapping at friends, shutting down, getting in trouble at school, headaches, stomachaches, or feeling tired all the time. When we name a feeling, we take away some of its power.
- Ask students to **turn to page 14** in their workbooks. This page lists **9 common feelings** that kids and teens experience relating to their parents' divorce and separation. Talk through each of these feelings with students and generate a discussion around:
    - Have you felt this way relating to the changes in your family? If so, when? Explain.
    - Do any of these feelings surprise you? Why or why not?
    - Which of these feelings have you experienced the most relating to the changes in your family? Explain.
    - Which of these feelings have you experienced the least relating to the changes in your family? Explain.
    - How did you feel when you first found out about the changes in your family?
    - How do you feel now about the changes in your family?
    - Have you felt mixed feelings – aka more than one emotion at the same time? Explain.
- Next, lay the **6 emotions labels** face up on the table and leave space under them for students to place the feelings scenario cards. Place the **30 feelings scenario cards** in a pile on the table. Ask students to take turns choosing a card and reading it aloud/showing it to the group. Then, the student places the card under the appropriate label that shows how they would feel in that situation. Generate a discussion around:
    - Have you experienced this situation before? If so, how did it feel?
    - Why did you choose to place the card under that feeling?
    - Could this card be placed under multiple feelings? If so, which ones, and why?
    - Are any of these cards particularly triggering or painful for you? Explain.
    - Do any of these cards not apply to your family situation at all? Explain.
- Continue playing until you run out of cards. If there's time at the end, students can work on **page 15 in their workbooks.** This page lets them further explore and identify their feelings.
- **Close** by saying that next week we will dive into our worries about the changes in our family and learn about the Circle of Control.

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SAMPLE

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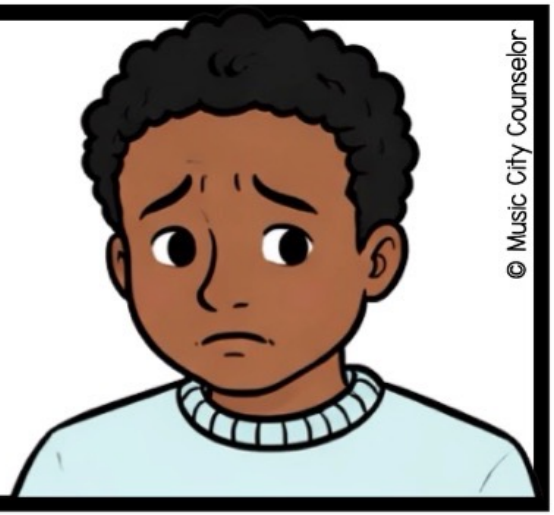
i WOULD FEEL

SAD >>>



© Music City Counselor

i WOULD FEEL

ANGRY >>>

© Music City Counselor

i WOULD FEEL

SCARED >>>

© Music City Counselor

I WOULD FEEL

NERVOUS

© Music City Counselor

I WOULD FEEL

SHOCKED

© Music City Counselor

I WOULD FEEL

RELIEVED

© Music City Counselor

I WOULD FEEL

SAD >>>

© Music City Counselor

I WOULD FEEL

ANGRY >>>

© Music City Counselor

I WOULD FEEL

SCARED >>>

© Music City Counselor

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© Music City Counselor

I WOULD FEEL
SHOCKED >>>

© Music City Counselor

I WOULD FEEL
RELIEVED >>>

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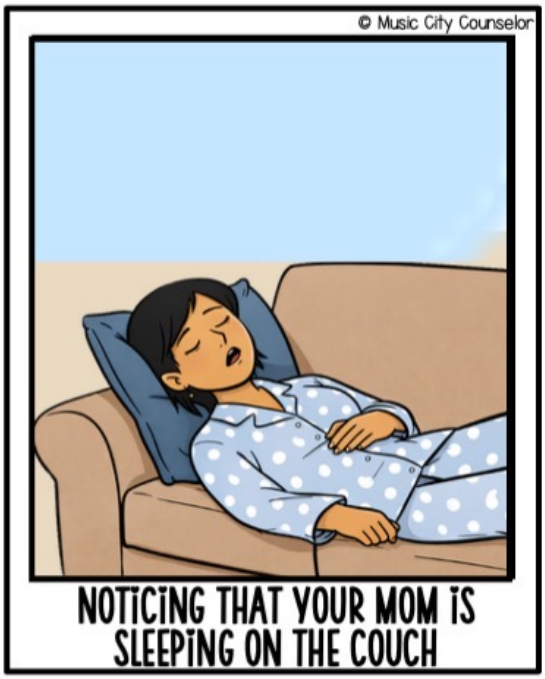
FEELINGS SCENARIO CARDS

HEARING YOUR PARENTS ARGUE

FEELING TENSION IN THE HOME BUT NO ONE WILL EXPLAIN WHAT IT IS

NOTICING THAT YOUR DAD ISN'T WEARING HIS WEDDING RING



NOTICING THAT YOUR MOM IS SLEEPING ON THE COUCH

DAD YELLING AT YOU TO "STAY OUT OF IT" WHEN YOU ASK A QUESTION

A PARENT VENTING TO YOU ABOUT THE OTHER PARENT

FEELINGS SCENARIO CARDS

NOTICING YOUR DAD BEING SNEAKY ABOUT HIS PHONE

A PARENT ASKING YOU TO TAKE SIDES

SENSING SOMETHING BAD IS COMING

YOUR SIBLING SAYING THEY THINK YOUR PARENTS ARE GETTING DIVORCED

BEING TOLD YOUR PARENTS ARE SEPARATING

BEING TOLD YOUR PARENTS ARE DIVORCING

FEELINGS SCENARIO CARDS

HAVING TO CHOOSE WHICH HOUSE TO STAY IN FIRST

PACKING A BAG TO GO BETWEEN TWO HOMES

SEEING ONE PARENT MOVE OUT

SEEING YOUR MOM CRY

HEARING YOUR PARENTS TALK ABOUT COURT DATES, FINANCES, ETC.

FRIENDS ASKING QUESTIONS ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED IN YOUR FAMILY

FEELINGS SCENARIO CARDS

HOLIDAYS AND BIRTHDAYS BEING DIFFERENT FOR THE FIRST TIME

ADJUSTING TO TWO HOMES

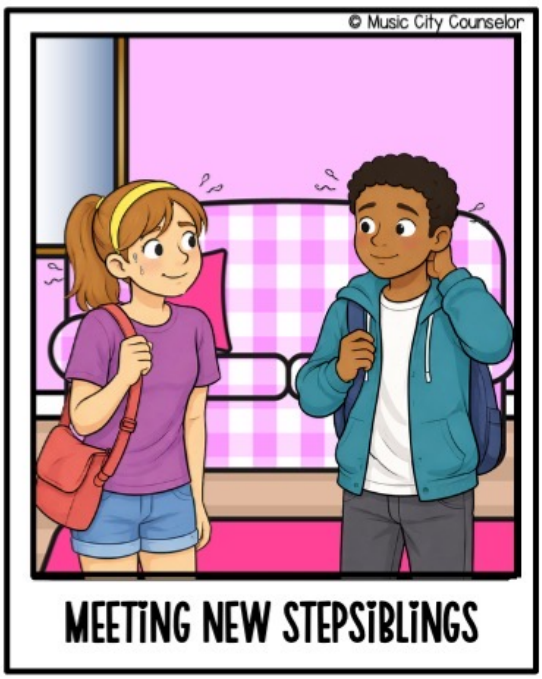
SEEING A PARENT DATE SOMEONE NEW

FEELING GUILTY FOR HAVING FUN AT ONE PARENT'S HOUSE

MISSING HOW THINGS WERE BEFORE

NOTICING THAT THE FIGHTING AND ARGUING HAVE FINALLY STOPPED

FEELINGS SCENARIO CARDS



FEELINGS SCENARIO CARDS

HEARING YOUR PARENTS ARGUE

FEELING TENSION IN THE HOME BUT NO ONE WILL EXPLAIN WHAT IT IS

NOTICING THAT YOUR DAD ISN'T WEARING HIS WEDDING RING

NOTICING THAT YOUR MOM IS SLEEPING ON THE COUCH

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A PARENT VENTING TO YOU ABOUT THE OTHER PARENT

FEELINGS SCENARIO CARDS

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SENSING SOMETHING BAD IS COMING

YOUR SIBLING SAYING THEY THINK YOUR PARENTS ARE GETTING DIVORCED

BEING TOLD YOUR PARENTS ARE SEPARATING

BEING TOLD YOUR PARENTS ARE DIVORCING

FEELINGS SCENARIO CARDS

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HAVING TO CHOOSE WHICH HOUSE TO STAY IN FIRST

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PACKING A BAG TO GO BETWEEN TWO HOMES

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SEEING ONE PARENT MOVE OUT

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SEEING YOUR MOM CRY

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HEARING YOUR PARENTS TALK ABOUT COURT DATES, FINANCES, ETC.

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FRIENDS ASKING QUESTIONS ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED IN YOUR FAMILY

FEELINGS SCENARIO CARDS

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HOLIDAYS AND BIRTHDAYS BEING DIFFERENT FOR THE FIRST TIME

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ADJUSTING TO TWO HOMES

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SEEING A PARENT DATE SOMEONE NEW

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FEELING GUILTY FOR HAVING FUN AT ONE PARENT'S HOUSE

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MISSING HOW THINGS WERE BEFORE

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NOTICING THAT THE FIGHTING AND ARGUING HAVE FINALLY STOPPED

FEELINGS SCENARIO CARDS

HAVING TO EXPLAIN YOUR FAMILY SITUATION AT SCHOOL

SEEING YOUR PARENTS GET ALONG WORSE OVER TIME

SEEING YOUR PARENTS GET ALONG BETTER OVER TIME

FORGETTING THINGS AT ONE PARENT'S HOUSE THAT YOU NEED

MEETING NEW STEPPARENTS

MEETING NEW STEPSIBLINGS

SESSION 5: EXPLORING MY WORRIES

SESSION GOALS:

- Students will learn common worries that kids experience surrounding their parents' divorce or separation.
- Students will learn that worrying is a normal and human part of coping with family changes.
- Students will identify and explore their worries about the changes in their family.

ASCA ALIGNMENT:

- **M 1.** Belief in development of whole self, including a healthy balance of mental, social/emotional and physical well-being
- **B-SMS 6:** Ability to identify and overcome barriers.
- **B-SMS 10:** Ability to manage transitions and adapt to change.
- B-SS 8: Advocacy skills for self and others and ability to assert self, when necessary.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- 1 workbook per student
- 1 printed backpack (2 pieces of paper) per student
- 2 sets of printed worry cards per student
- Markers or crayons
- Pencils
- Scissors
- Glue

DIRECTIONS:

- **Before group:** print a backpack (2 pages) and 2 sets of worry cards for each student. Cut out the worry cards.
- **Greet** students and explain that today we will explore our worries surrounding the changes in our families.
- Feel free to start each session with a **feelings check-in (page 2 in the workbook).**
- **Explain** that when families go through changes it can feel confusing, scary, and overwhelming. If you've felt worried, stressed, or unsure about what's going to happen next, that's completely normal. Your brain is wired to notice change, and when something important shifts, it tries to protect you by asking questions like: What will happen to me? Will things be okay? Will people still love me the same? Those worries do not mean you are weak. They mean you care. They mean your brain is trying to make sense of something important. Talking about your worries is important because worries grow when they stay stuck inside. Saying them out loud helps your brain organize them. Sharing them shows you that you are not alone in what you're feeling. And talking about them with grown-ups you trust can clarify things you may be guessing about. Sometimes we carry worries quietly because they we don't want to "add stress" to our parents. But your feelings matter! You deserve space to ask questions and share what is on your mind.
- Ask students to **turn to pages 16-17 in their workbooks.** Ask volunteers to read aloud the common worries associated with family changes. Generate a discussion with students around:
  - Which of these worries feel the most real and relatable to you? Why?
  - Are there any worries on this list that surprised you? Explain.
  - Are there any worries on this list that you've felt, and didn't realize that others have felt, too? Explain.
  - How do worries about family changes show up for you in everyday life (at school, with friends, at home)?
  - What do you think makes some worries feel bigger or harder to talk about than others?
  - If a friend was having one of these worries, what would you want them to know or remember?
  - Are there any worries that you would add to this list?
- **Explain** that sometimes worries about your parents' divorce or separation can feel like carrying a backpack that you never asked for. At first, the backpack might feel light. Maybe it just has one or two worries inside. But over time, more worries can get added. Each worry is like another heavy book or rock being dropped into the backpack. You might not notice it right away, but after a while, your shoulders start to feel tired. You might feel more irritated, distracted in class, emotional, or exhausted. That is what emotional weight can feel like. The hard part is that no one else can see your backpack. On the outside, you may look totally fine. But on the inside, you might be carrying a lot. The most important thing to remember is that backpacks are not meant to carry everything alone. You can take things out. You can ask someone to help hold your heavy load. You can decide which worries are actually yours' to carry. Talking and writing about your worries is like opening the backpack and saying, "This is heavy. I need help with this one."
- Give each student a **backpack cut-out (2 pieces of paper) and 2 sets of worry cards.** Ask students to write one worry about the changes in their family on the thought bubble on each card. Then, ask students to cut out each card. Next, students can cut out each of the backpack pieces (front side and back side). Students place a line of glue along the dotted lines where it says: "Glue Here." Please do not glue along the top edge - we will leave that part open. Then, students glue the front of the backpack to the back of the backpack. This will create a pocket/opening. Then, students place their worry cards inside the backpack. **Please see the sample on the next page.** Once they're finished, volunteers can share their worry backpacks with the group.
- **Close** by saying that next week we will learn about the Circle of Control.

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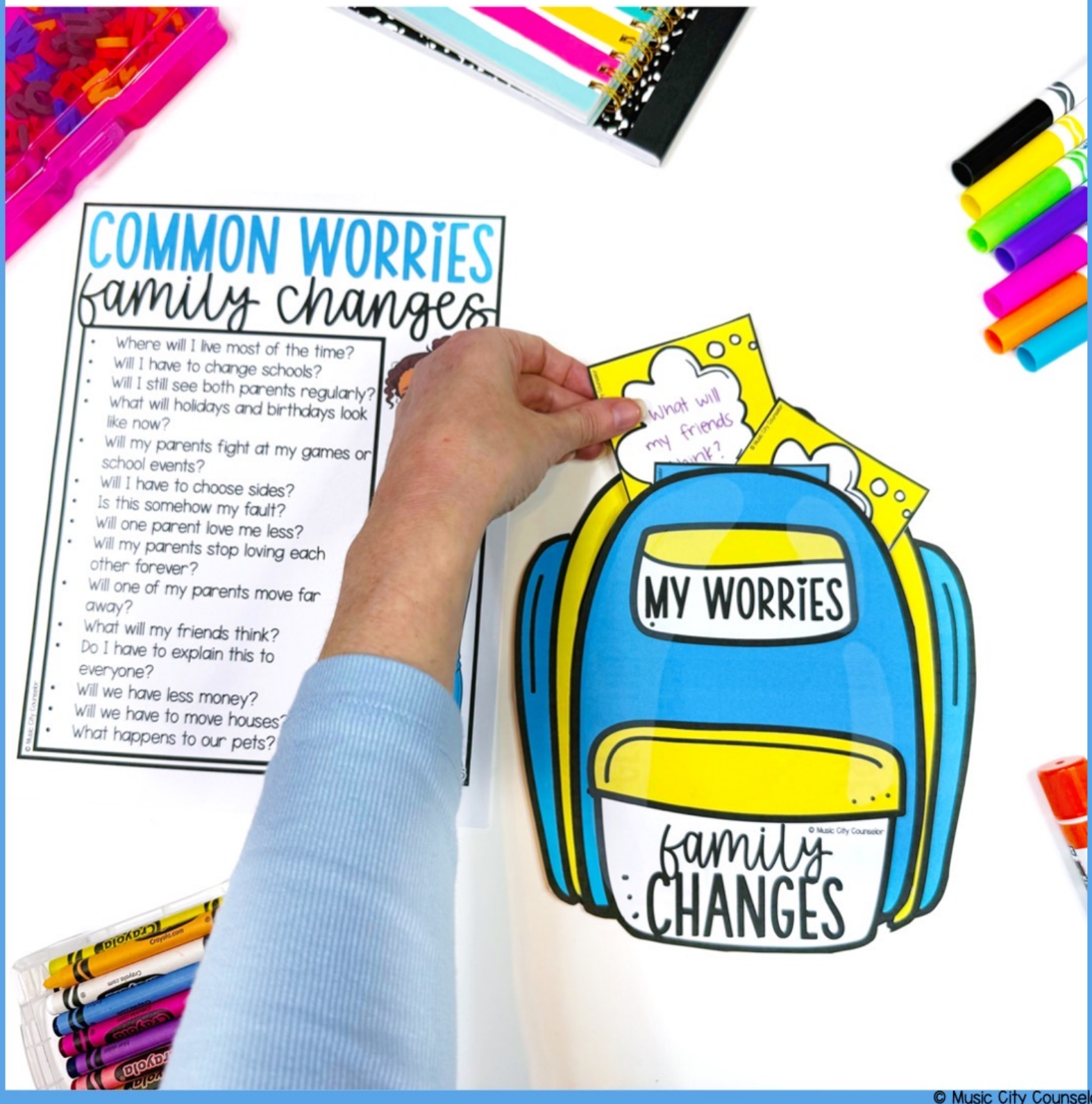
SAMPLE



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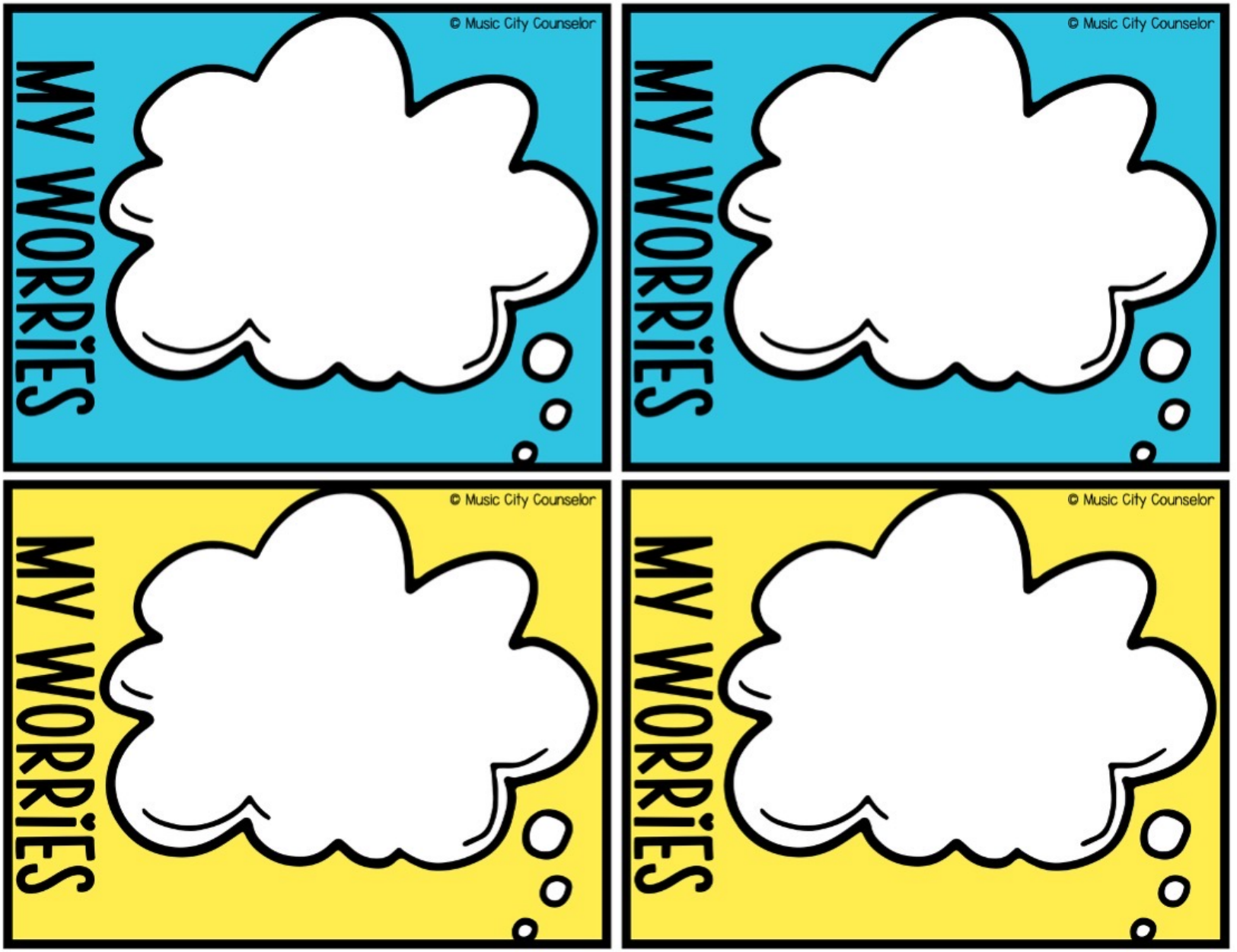
FRONT SIDE OF BACKPACK

BACK SIDE OF BACKPACK

WORRY CARDS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MY WORRIES
© Music City Counselor
MY WORRIES
© Music City Counselor
MY WORRIES
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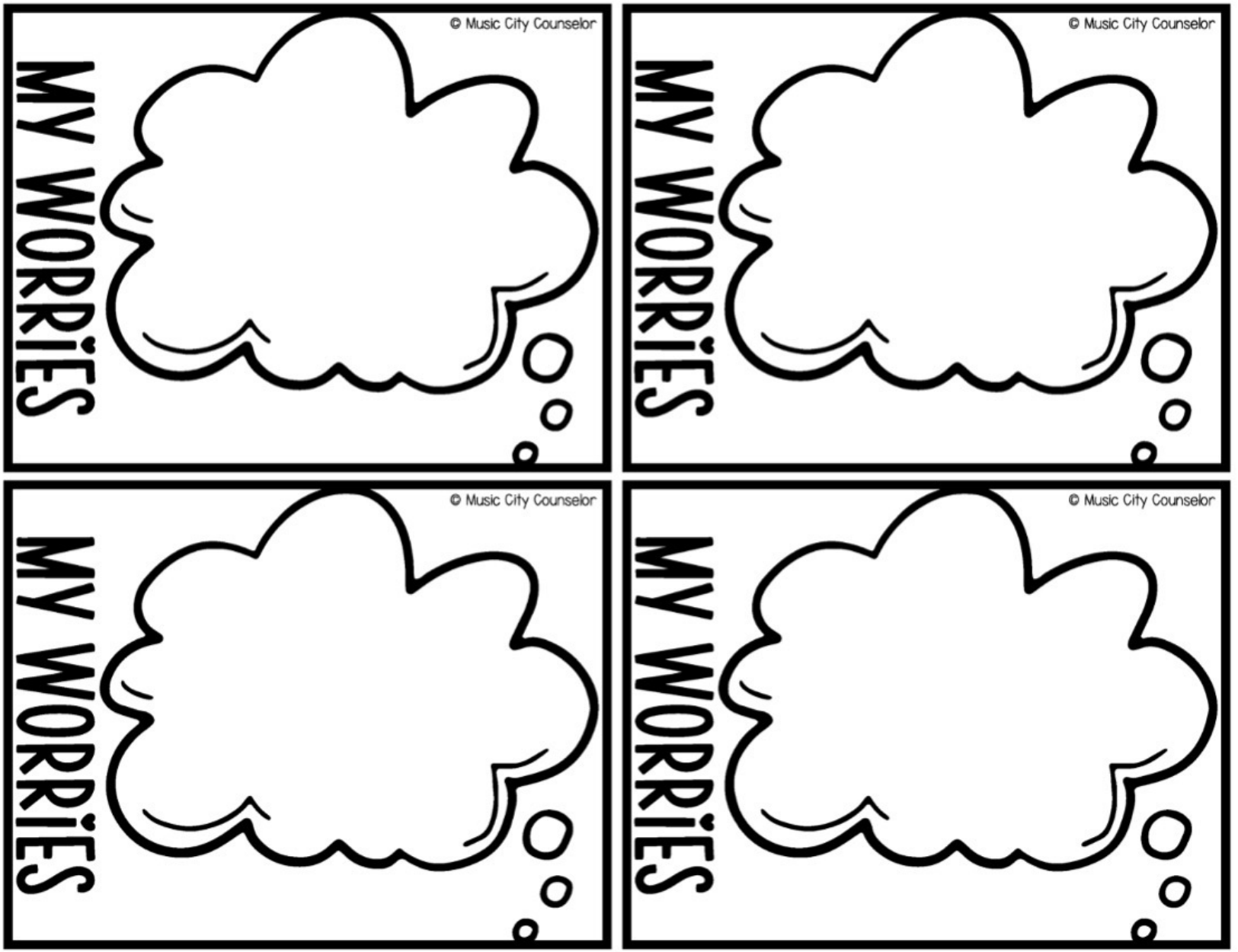
MY WORRIES

MY WORRIES
family
CHANGES

GLUE HERE
GLUE HERE
GLUE HERE

WORRY CARDS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MY WORRIES
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MY WORRIES
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MY WORRIES
© Music City Counselor
MY WORRIES

SESSION 6: MY CIRCLE OF CONTROL

SESSION GOALS:

- Students will learn how to use a "Circle of Control."
- Students will explore the aspects of their parents' divorce or separation that they can control.
- Students will explore the aspects of their parents' divorce or separation that they cannot control.

ASCA ALIGNMENT:

- **M 1.** Belief in development of whole self, including a healthy balance of mental, social/emotional and physical well-being.
- **B-SMS 6:** Ability to identify and overcome barriers.
- **B-SMS 10:** Ability to manage transitions and adapt to change.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- 1 workbook per student
- 1 printed and cut-out circle, taped or glued together (over 4 pages)
- 2 printed and cut-out "can" and "can't" control labels
- 35 printed and cut-out "can and can't control cards"

DIRECTIONS:

- **Before group:** print and cut out the circle pieces, then glue or tape them together so they form a circle. Print and cut out the "What I Can't Control" and "What I Can Control" labels. Print and cut out the 35 "can and can't control" cards.
- **Greet** students and explain that today we will learn about the Circle of Control.
- Feel free to start each session with a **feelings check-in (page 2 in the workbook).**
- **Explain** that there are some things that you can control about the changes in your families, and other things that you can't control. If you focus on trying to control the "out of our control" things, it can cause you to feel anxious, helpless, and stressed. Those "out of control" things are grown-up problems or choices that grown-ups make. These things belong to adults. Even if they affect you, they are not your responsibility to fix. When you spend all your energy worrying about things outside your control, you feel powerless and stressed. But when you focus on what is inside your circle of control, you feel stronger and steadier. A helpful question to ask yourself is, "Is this mine to carry?" If it is outside your control, it is not yours to solve. If it is inside your control, that is where your power lives.
- Place the **circle on the table** with the **"What I Can Control" label** in the middle of the circle. Place the **"What I Can't Control" label** outside the circle. Place the **35 cut-out "can and can't control cards"** in a pile on the table. Ask volunteers to take turns grabbing a card and reading it aloud to the group. Then, the volunteer places it inside the circle if it's something they can control, and outside the circle if it's something they can't control. **Please see the sample on the next page.** As you play, generate a discussion around:
    - What made you decide this situation was inside your control or outside your control?
    - Do any of these cards feel tricky or "in between?" Why?
    - How does it feel when something is outside your control? What emotions or thoughts come up?
    - How does it feel when something is inside your control? What emotions or thoughts come up?
    - When something is inside your control, what power do you actually have in that situation?
    - Did any card surprise you by being outside your control?
    - If you are stuck worrying about something outside your control, what could you shift your focus to instead?
    - What is one thing in your control this week that you want to focus on?
- **Page 18 in the workbook** shows this same activity that students can refer back to at any time. **Page 19 in the workbook** is a blank Circle of Control page that lets students write things they can and cannot control inside and outside of the circle. Students can work on this if you have time left at the end of group, or another time.
- **Close by** saying that next week we'll focus on understanding our custody schedule and learn tips for living in 2 homes.

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SAMPLE

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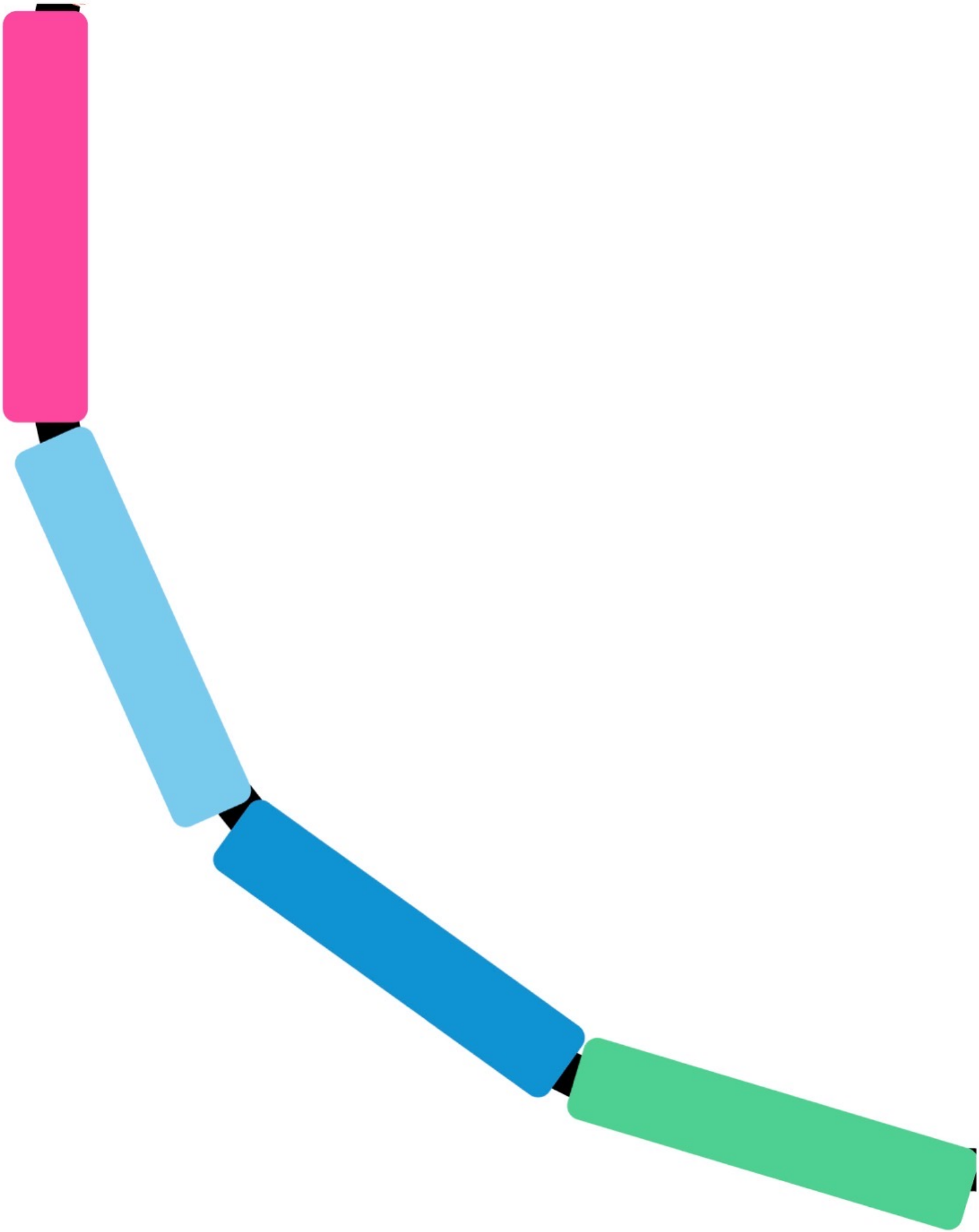

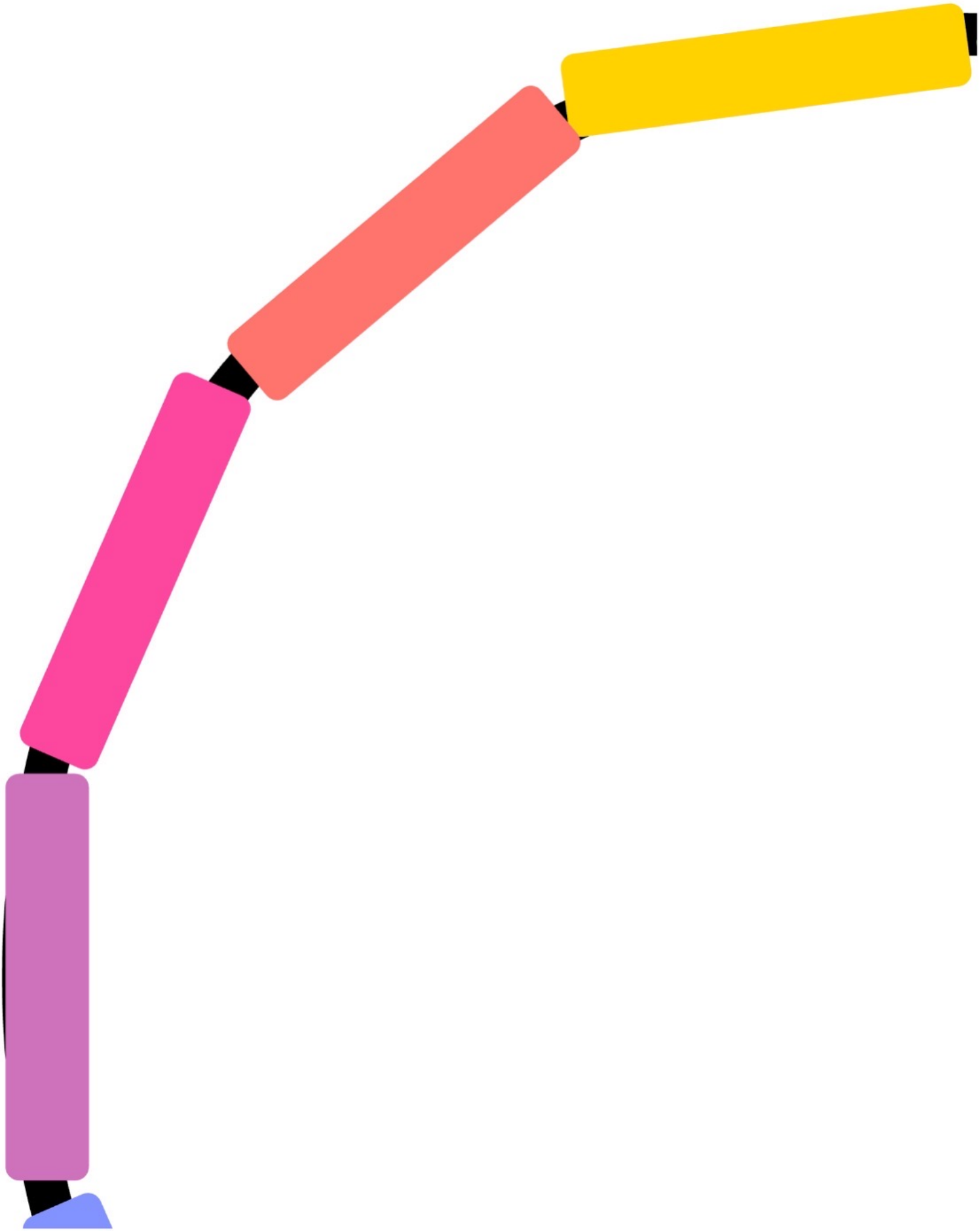

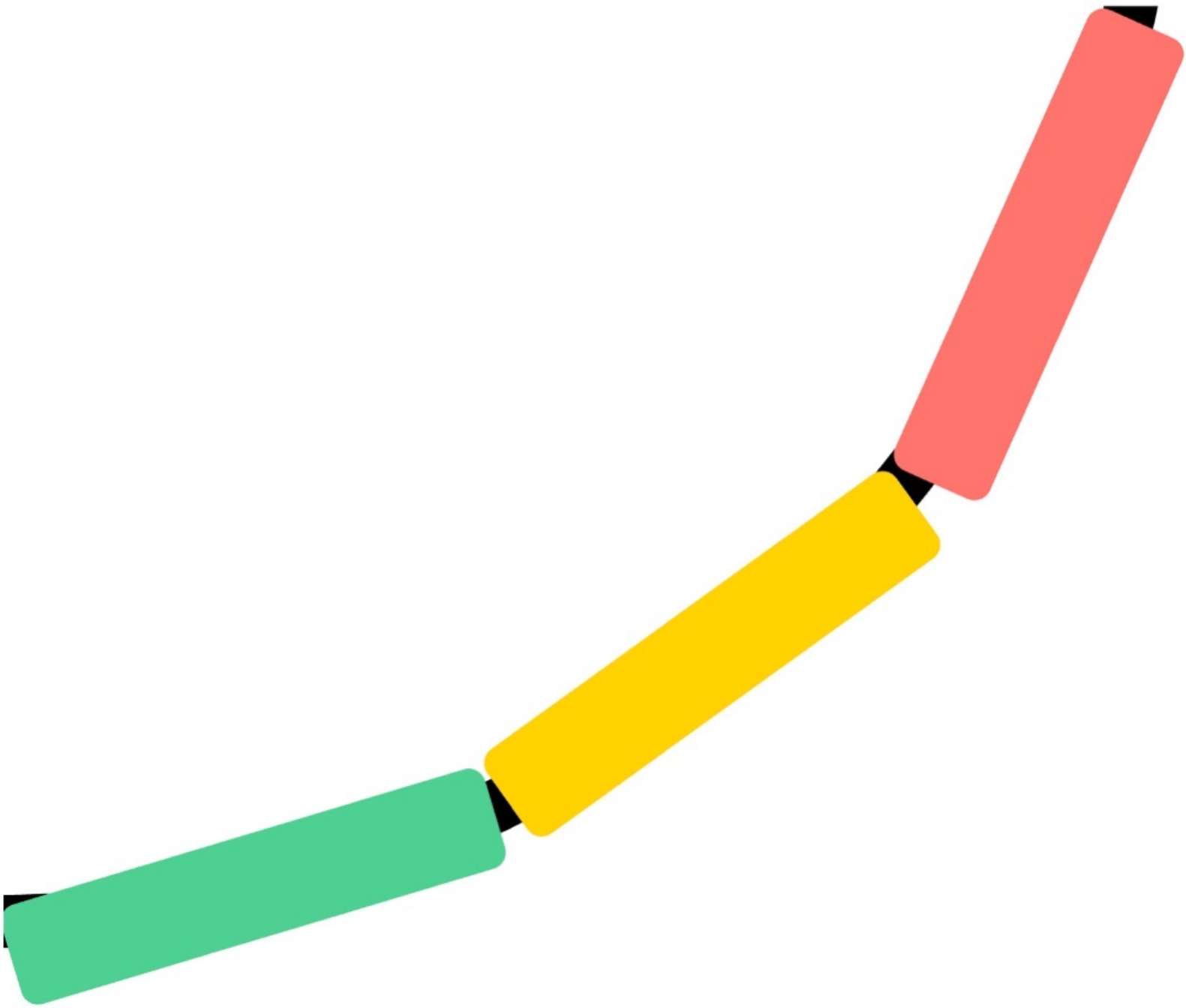

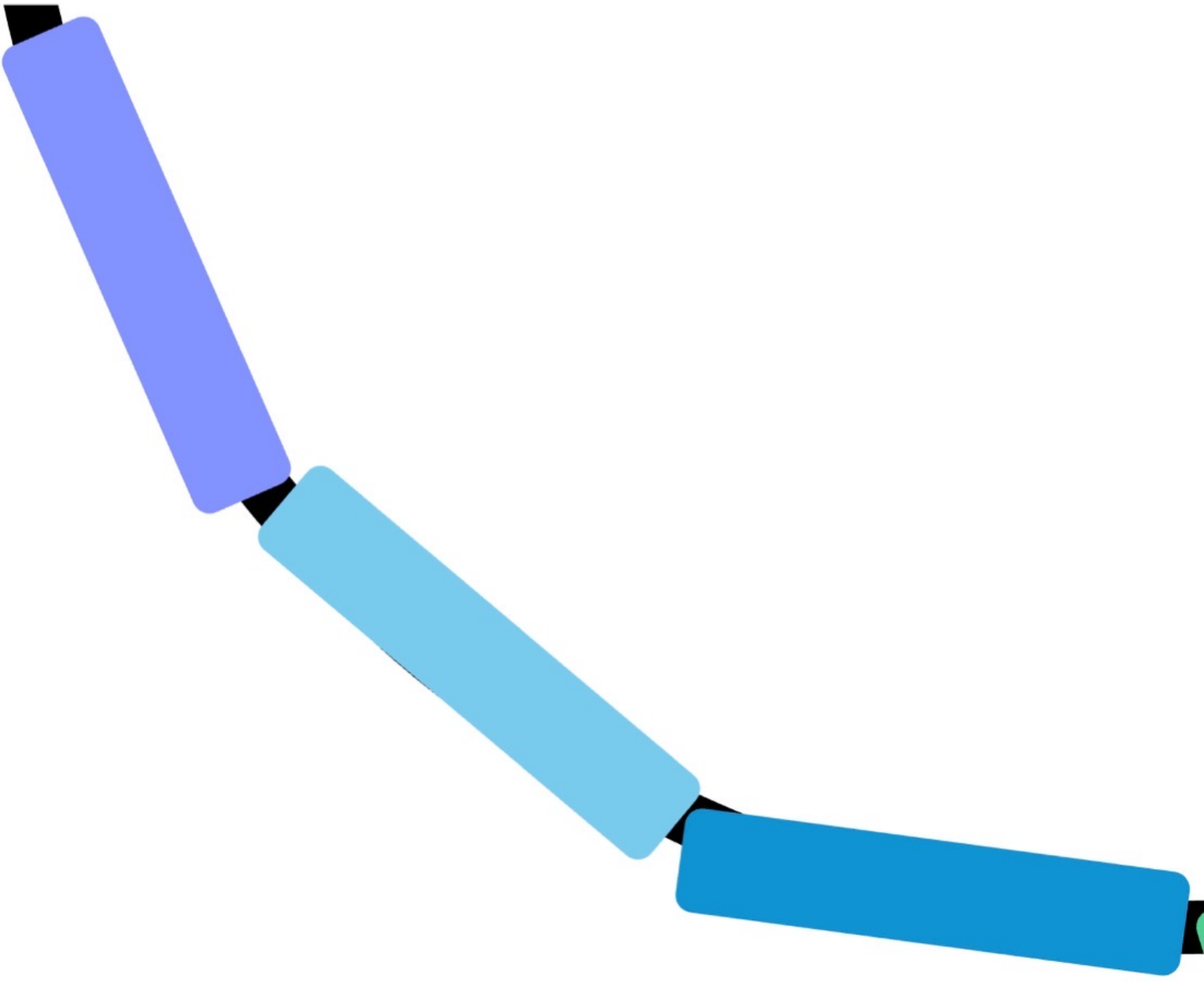

WHAT i CAN'T
CONTROL
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WHAT i CAN
CONTROL
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CAN & CAN'T CONTROL CARDS

CAN & CAN'T CONTROL CARDS

How my parents talk about each other

© Music City Counselor

How quickly or slowly things change

© Music City Counselor

Extended family dynamics

© Music City Counselor

Where my parents live

© Music City Counselor

How other people react to my story

© Music City Counselor

How quickly my family members heal

© Music City Counselor

CAN & CAN'T CONTROL CARDS

Court decisions

© Music City Counselor

The past

© Music City Counselor

Custody schedules

© Music City Counselor

How my parents treat each other

© Music City Counselor

How I respond to conflict

© Music City Counselor

How I treat each parent

© Music City Counselor

CAN & CAN'T CONTROL CARDS

My mindset

© Music City Counselor

The healthy boundaries I set

© Music City Counselor

How I express my feelings

© Music City Counselor

Which questions I ask and don't ask

© Music City Counselor

Who and when I reach out to for support

© Music City Counselor

My coping skills

© Music City Counselor

CAN & CAN'T CONTROL CARDS

How I speak up about my needs

© Music City Counselor

How I take care of myself

© Music City Counselor

Whether I repeat information between homes

© Music City Counselor

How much and often I share my story

© Music City Counselor

How I pack and prep for each house

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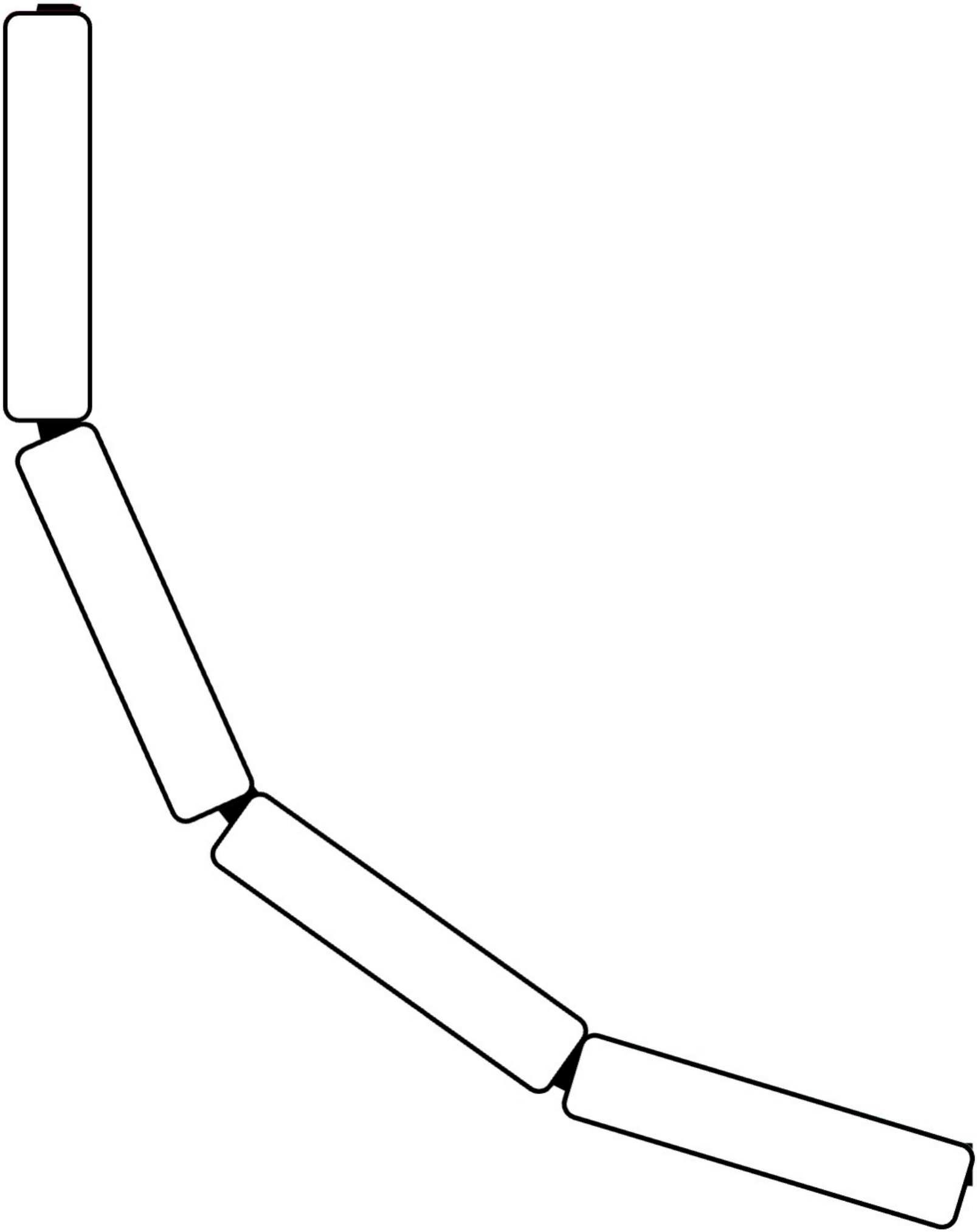

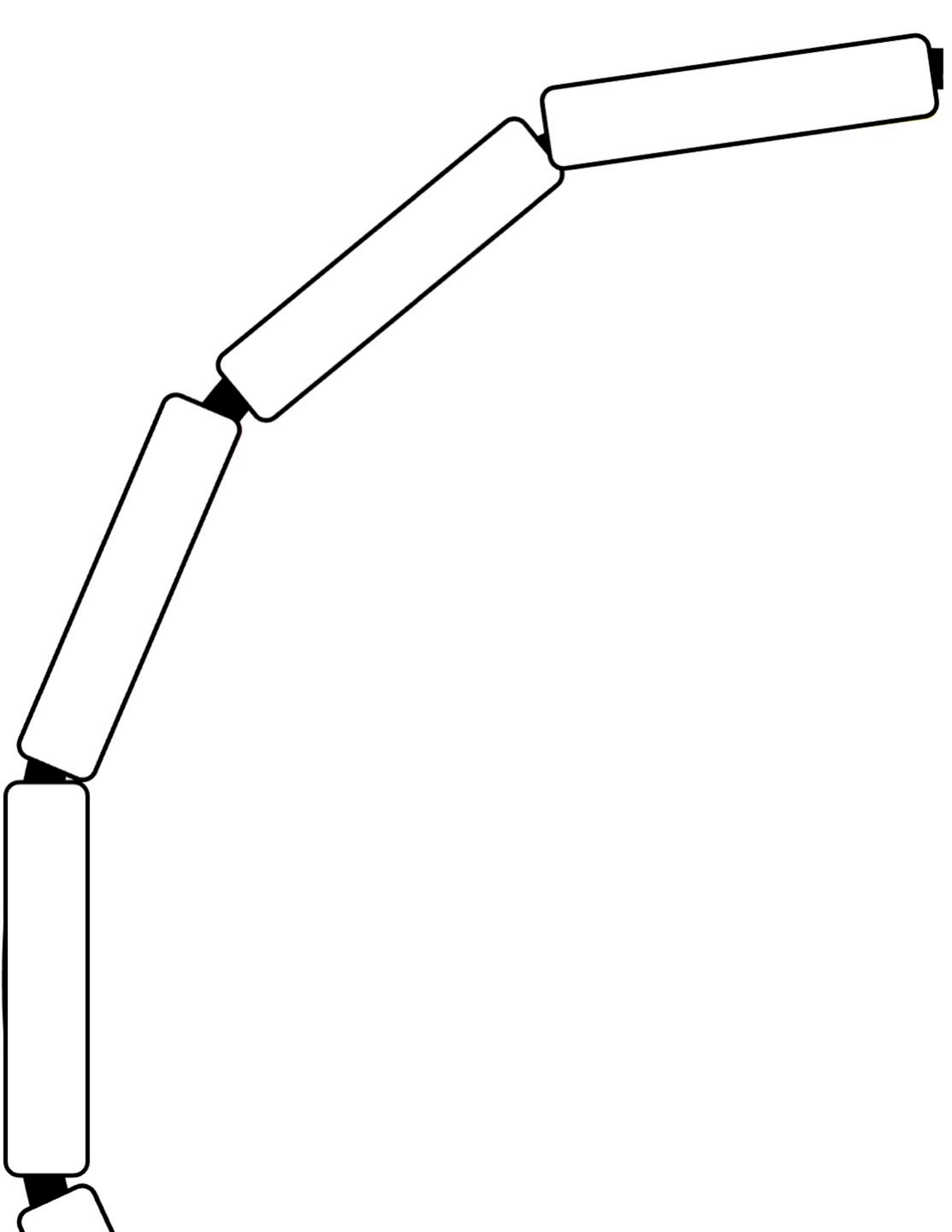

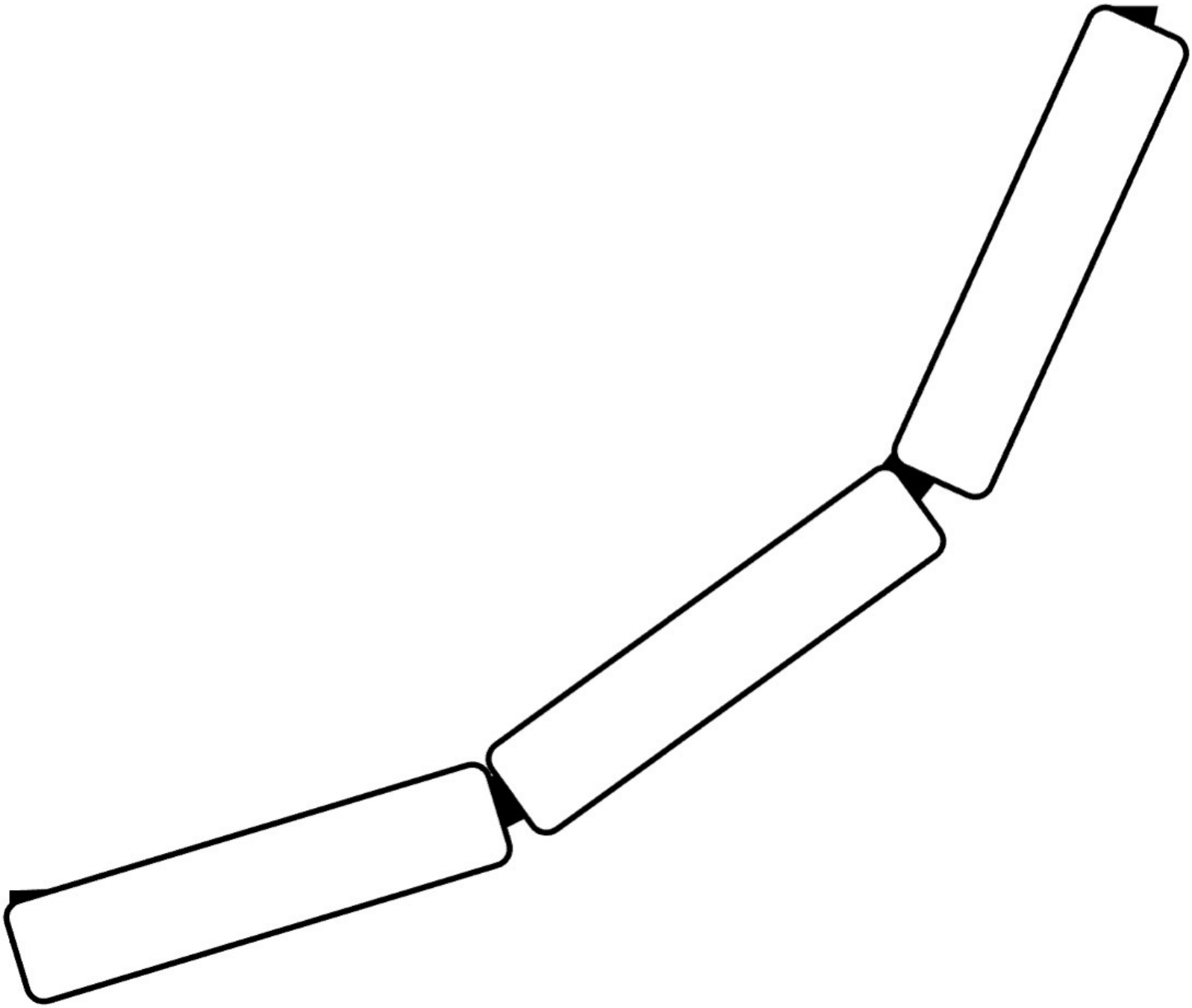

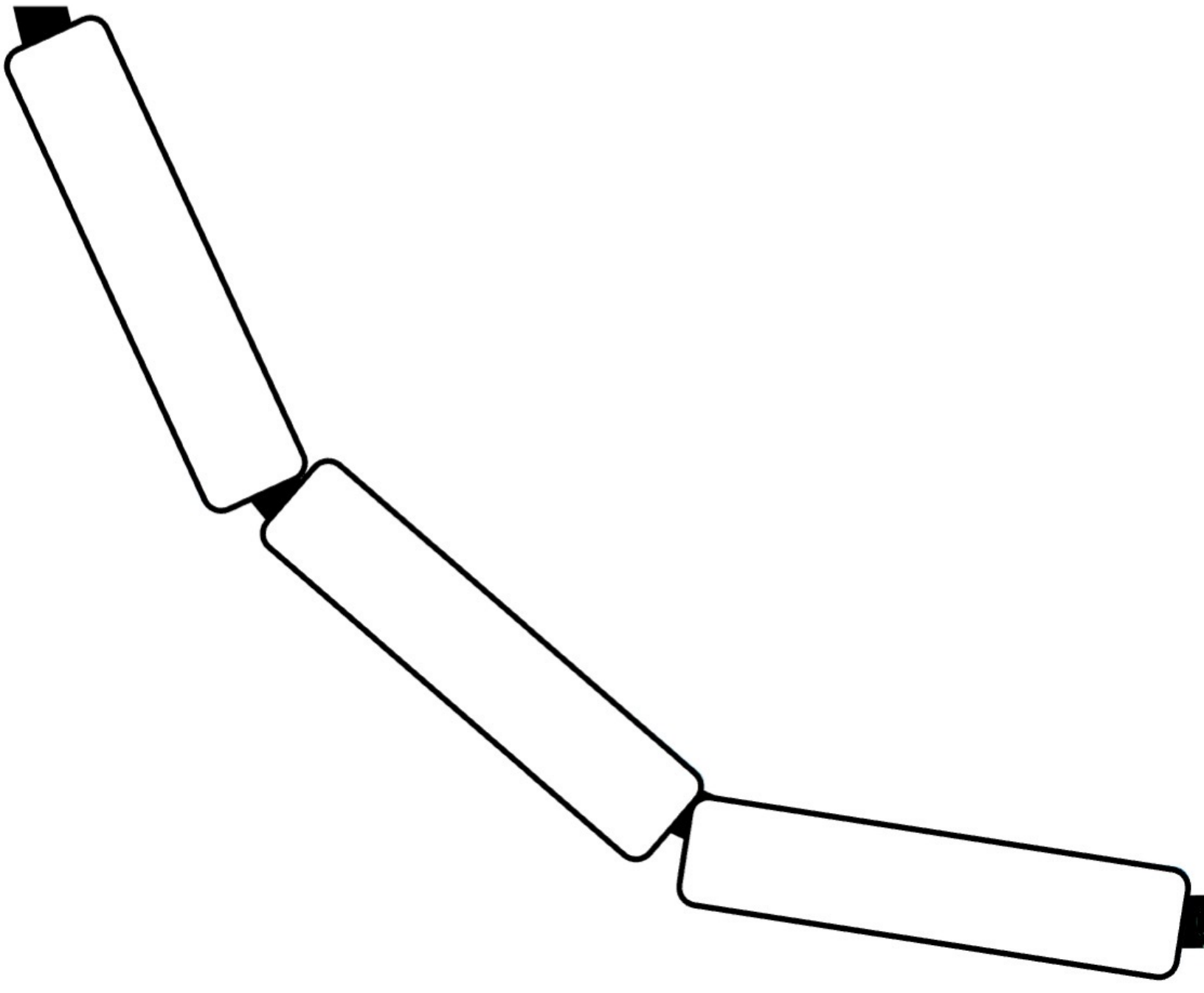

WHAT i CAN'T
CONTROL
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WHAT i CAN
CONTROL
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CAN & CAN'T CONTROL CARDS

Financial decisions

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Whether my parents agree

© Music City Counselor

How my parents feel

© Music City Counselor

Whether my parents stay together

© Music City Counselor

New partners or re-marriage

© Music City Counselor

Where I'll spend holidays

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CAN & CAN'T CONTROL CARDS

How my parents talk about each other

© Music City Counselor

How quickly or slowly things change

© Music City Counselor

Extended family dynamics

© Music City Counselor

Where my parents live

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How other people react to my story

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CAN & CAN'T CONTROL CARDS

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How I take care of myself

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Whether I repeat information between homes

© Music City Counselor

How much and often I share my story

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How I pack and prep for each house

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SESSION 7: TIPS FOR LIVING IN TWO HOMES

SESSION GOALS:

- Students will explore, understand, and share their custody schedule.
- Students will learn 10 tips for living in two homes.

ASCA ALIGNMENT:

- **M 1.** Belief in development of whole self, including a healthy balance of mental, social/emotional and physical well-being.
- **B-SMS 6**: Ability to identify and overcome barriers.
- **B-SMS 10**: Ability to manage transitions and adapt to change.
- B-SS 8: Advocacy skills for self and others and ability to assert self, when necessary.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- 1 workbook per student
- Pencils

DIRECTIONS:

- **Greet** students and explain that today we will explore our custody schedule and learn 10 tips for living in two homes.
- Feel free to start each session with a **feelings check-in (page 2 in the workbook).**
- **Explain** that when your parents are divorced or separated, your custody schedule is basically your life map. It tells you where you will be, when you will switch homes, and what your weeks will look like. Understanding your schedule lowers stress, helps you stay organized, and helps you communicate your needs. Writing down your schedule in a planner, on a calendar, or in your phone helps you keep track of your week, plan ahead, and feel more in control of your life.
- Ask students to **turn to pages 20 – 21 in their workbooks. Two different schedule templates** are included. Page 20 offers a monthly template and page 21 offers a weekly (2 weeks) template. Ask students to fill in the schedule that makes the most sense to them (or both, if they prefer). Once they are finished, ask volunteers to share their schedule with the group. Then, generate a discussion around:
    - What do you notice about your schedule?
    - How does this schedule make you feel?
    - Are there any days or weeks that feel harder or easier for you? Explain.
    - How do "switch days" usually feel for you? What makes them smoother or more stressful?
    - How can you plan ahead and prep for each house?
    - Is there anything about your schedule that you wish grown-ups knew? Is there anything you need to share with your parents? Explain.
    - Is there anything about your schedule that you're wondering about or want to ask about?
    - If you could make a change to your schedule, what would it be? Why?
- Ask students to **turn to pages 22 – 23 in their workbooks**. These pages offer **10 Tips for Living in Two Homes.** Ask volunteers to read these aloud. Generate a discussion around:
    - Which tip feels the most helpful to you right now? Why?
    - Was there a tip that you're already doing without realizing it? How has it helped?
    - Which tip might be hardest for you to use? What makes it challenging?
    - If you could add an 11th tip based on your experience, what would it be?
    - What is one small thing you could try this week from this list?
    - How might these tips help someone who is adjusting to living in two homes?
- **Close by** saying that next week we will focus on coping skills.

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SESSION 8: KIDS' RIGHTS

SESSION GOALS:

- Students will learn about their rights in a separation or divorce.
- Students will apply these rights to their own life circumstances.

ASCA ALIGNMENT:

- **M 1.** Belief in development of whole self, including a healthy balance of mental, social/emotional and physical well-being.
- **B-SMS 6:** Ability to identify and overcome barriers.
- **B-SMS 10:** Ability to manage transitions and adapt to change.
- **B-SS 8:** Advocacy skills for self and others and ability to assert self, when necessary.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- 1 workbook per student
- Pencils

DIRECTIONS:

- **Greet** students and explain that today we will learn all about our rights as kids/teens in a divorce or separation.
- Feel free to start each session with a **feelings check-in (page 2 in the workbook).**
- **Explain** that when parents get divorced or separated, a lot of decisions are being made by adults. Courts, lawyers, and parents are figuring out schedules, money, and legal details. That can make it feel like kids and teens have no say and no power. But kids and teens do have rights. Kids' rights in a divorce are not about deciding whether your parents stay together. They are about protection, safety, and respect.
- Ask students to **turn to page 24 in their workbooks.** Ask volunteers to read the list of Kids' Rights aloud. Generate a discussion around:
    - How does it feel to know that you have rights during your parents' divorce or separation?
    - Which right feels the most important to you personally? Why?
    - Was there a right on this list that you did not realize you had before? Explain.
    - Which right do you think is hardest for adults to remember? What makes it challenging?
    - What does "staying out of adult problems" look like in real life?
    - How can you make your parents aware of your rights?
    - If your rights are not being respected, what can you do?
- Ask students to **turn to page 25 in their workbooks.** In pairs or individually, students will create their own list of rights in their parents' divorce or separation. Students can choose the rights from the provided list, edit them, or rewrite them in their own words. They can also create their own. Ask students to create a list of 10 rights they believe are most important. Once they're done, ask volunteers to share their list with the group. Generate a discussion around:
    - Why did you choose the rights you included on your list?
    - How does your list differ from other group members' lists?
    - Which right do you think kids/teens need to hear most during a divorce or separation? Explain.
    - How would life look if one of these rights was not respected?
    - How would life look if all of these rights were respected?
    - Which right connects most to your everyday life right now?
    - If your parents read your list, what would you want them to understand?
    - Were there any rights that surprised you once you started talking about them?
    - How can knowing your rights change the way you handle difficult situations and feelings?
- **Close** by saying that next week we will focus on coping strategies.

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SESSION 9: COPING WITH FAMILY CHANGES

SESSION GOALS:

- Students will learn a puzzle metaphor for coping with divorce and separation.
- Students will learn 14 coping strategies to deal with family changes.

ASCA ALIGNMENT:

- **M 1.** Belief in development of whole self, including a healthy balance of mental, social/emotional and physical well-being.
- **SMS 6:** Ability to identify and overcome barriers.
- **B-SMS 7:** Effective coping skills.
- **B-SMS 10:** Ability to manage transitions and adapt to change.
- **B-SS 3:** Positive relationships with adults to support success.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- 1 workbook per student
- PowerPoint or Google Slides presentation
- 4 or so sets of cut-out heart coping skills puzzle pieces (14)
- 1 Ziplock bag for each puzzle
- Pencils

DIRECTIONS:

- **Before group:** print and cut out 4 or so sets of heart puzzle pieces (enough for students to work with a partner on a puzzle). Keep each set of puzzle pieces together in a Ziplock bag.
- **Greet** students and explain that today we will learn how to cope with family changes.
- Feel free to start each session with a **feelings check-in (page 2 in the workbook).**
- Open the **PowerPoint** or digital for Google Slides presentation. Review the presentation with students. It talks through how divorce or separation can make us feel like the life we knew was broken into a bunch of little pieces, like a puzzle that needs to be put back together. **Coping skills are the puzzle pieces that help us rebuild our lives.** The presentation reviews a total of **14 coping strategies**, one for each puzzle piece in the heart puzzle. Ask students to take turns reading aloud the description of each coping skill. If it is a strategy that you can practice in that moment (i.e. breathing, focusing on what you can control, asking questions), model and practice it with students! As you talk through each strategy, ask students:
    - Have you tried this coping skill before? If yes, when? Was it helpful or not helpful?
    - Does this coping skill seem helpful to you? Why or why not?
    - Is this a coping skill that you use often? Why or why not?
    - Would you like to learn more about this coping skill? Why or why not?
    - Which are your favorite, go-to coping skills?
    - Which coping skills don't seem to help you?
- Assign each student a partner (or let them choose). Give each pair a **bag of heart coping skills puzzle pieces.** Ask students to put together the puzzle with their partner. If you choose the black/white version, they can decorate their puzzle after it is complete or as they go. Once their puzzle is made, generate a discussion around:
    - Which coping piece feels most important to you right now? Why?
    - Was there a coping strategy on the puzzle that you had not thought about before?
    - Which piece do you think would be hardest for you to use? What might get in the way?
    - How do the pieces work together instead of alone?
    - Which coping skill could you try this week?
    - What would you add as an extra puzzle piece based on your experience?
    - How does the puzzle of your life look now? How is it different from your old puzzle?
    - How does it feel to see the puzzle put back together?
    - When will you know that your puzzle is put back together? Explain.
- **Page 26 in their workbook** includes the heart puzzle image with all 14 coping strategies on it. This is a great reference page for when students need support in the future.
- **Close** by saying that next week will be our last week of group! We'll do some closing activities.

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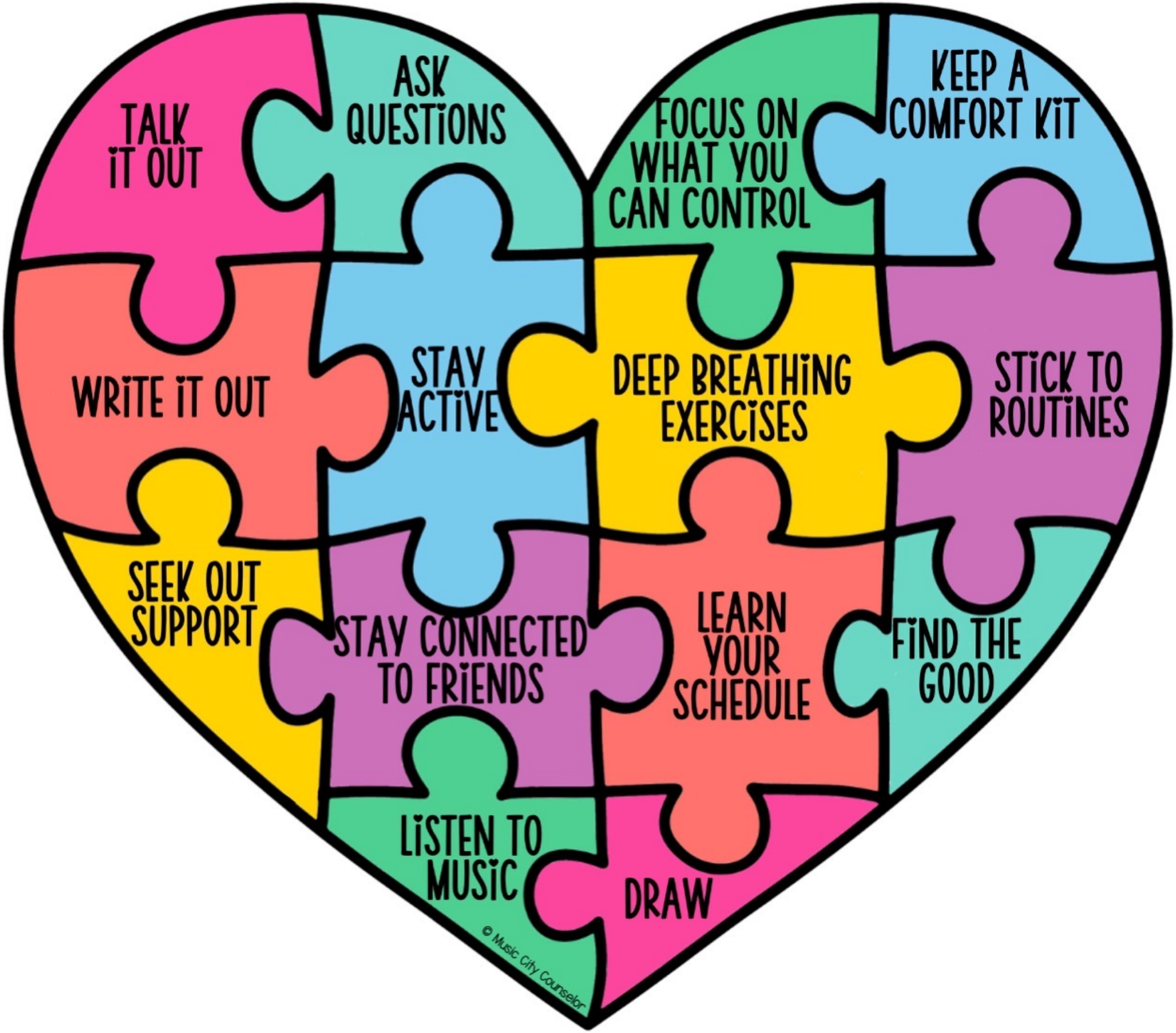
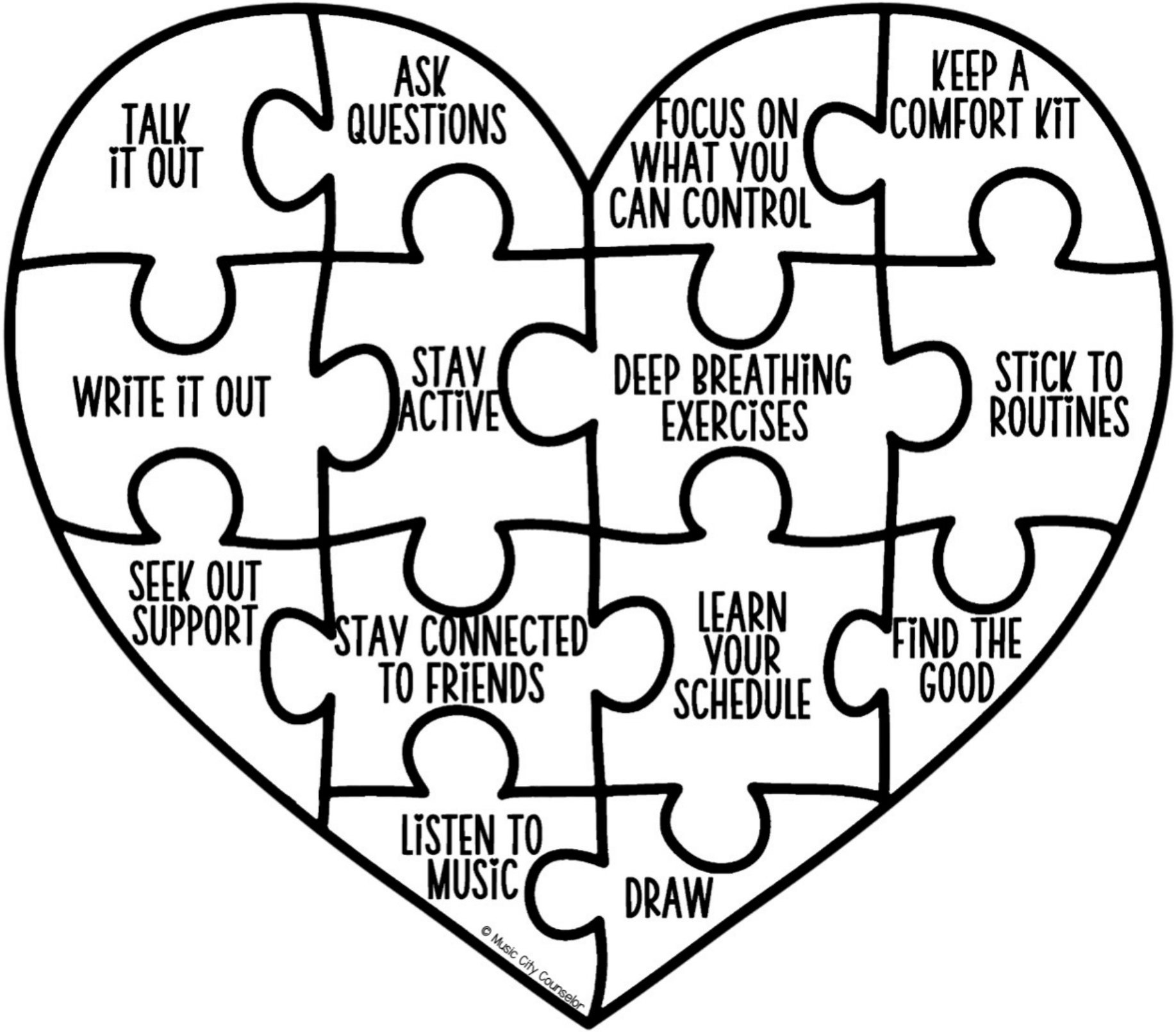
COPING STRATEGIES PUZZLE



COPING STRATEGIES PUZZLE



SESSION 10: GROUP CLOSURE & REFLECTION

SESSION GOALS:

- Students will assess their knowledge of divorce and separation and coping skills learned in group with a post-survey.
- Students will reflect on their experiences, memories, and lessons learned in group.

ASCA ALIGNMENT:

- **M 1.** Belief in development of whole self, including a healthy balance of mental, social/emotional and physical well-being.
- **B-SMS 6:** Ability to identify and overcome barriers.
- **B-SMS 10:** Ability to manage transitions and adapt to change.
- **B-SS 3:** Positive relationships with adults to support success.
- **B-SS 8:** Advocacy skills for self and others and ability to assert self, when necessary.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- 1 workbook per student
- 1 printed set of positive affirmation bookmarks
- Pencils
- 1 printed certificate per student

DIRECTIONS:

- **Before group,** write up a **certificate** for each student. Print the set of bookmarks and cut them out.
- **Greet** students and explain that this is our **final group session**. Today we're going to **reflect** on what we learned and experienced in group.
- Feel free to start each session with a **feelings check-in (page 2 in the workbook).**
- **Ask students to turn to page 27 in their workbook, "A Letter to Future Me."** Ask students to write a short letter to themselves 6 – 12 months in the future. Provide prompts like:
  - "One coping skill that helped me..."
  - "Something I'm proud of..."
  - "Something I hope for..."
  - "Something I wish for..."
  - "A reminder to myself on hard days..."
- Ask for volunteers who feel comfortable sharing to read their letter aloud to the group.
- Ask students to turn to **page 28 in their workbook, "My Time in Group."** They can write in each box about their experiences, memories, favorites, and lessons learned in group.
- Ask students to turn to **page 29 in their workbook, the post-survey.** Explain that this little form will help us understand how much progress they have made in group. Read each question aloud and ask students to circle or color the "yes" 🙂, "maybe" 😐, and "not yet" ☹ faces.
- With your remaining time, show students the different cut-out **positive affirmation bookmarks.** Ask students to choose one that would be the most helpful and meaningful reminder to them to help them continue to cope with the changes in their family. If you use the black/white version, students can decorate them.
- Thank each student for participating in group. Give them a **certificate** for successfully completing group!

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I am
LOVED.
No matter
WHAT!

© Music City Counselor

All of my
FEELINGS
are
OKAY!

© Music City Counselor

Things are
DIFFERENT,
but they're still
GOOD!

© Music City Counselor

I can talk
OPENLY
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Family changes
ARE NOT
my
FAULT.

© Music City Counselor

I am
STRONG
enough to
HANDLE
CHANGES.

© Music City Counselor

Good things
HAPPEN
in my life
EVERY DAY!

© Music City Counselor

I am
IMPORTANT
and my
FEELINGS
MATTER!

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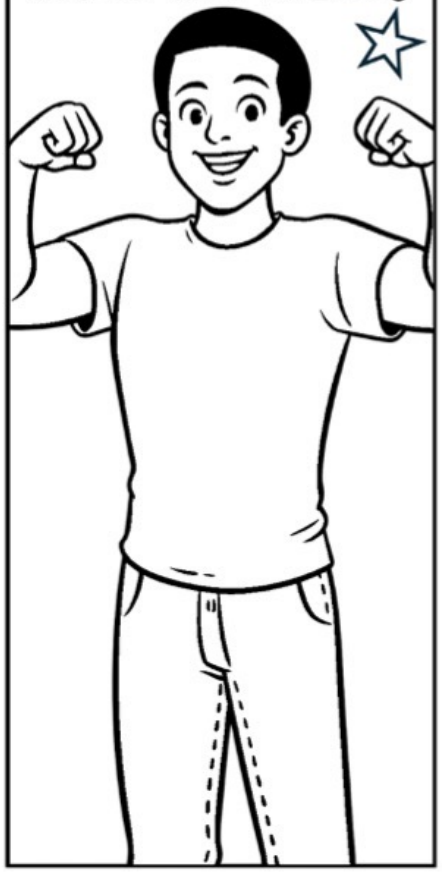

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Good things
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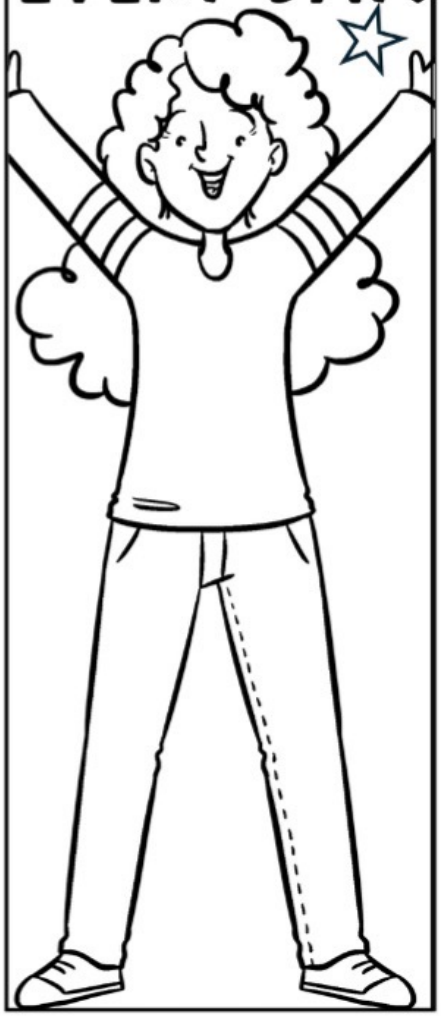

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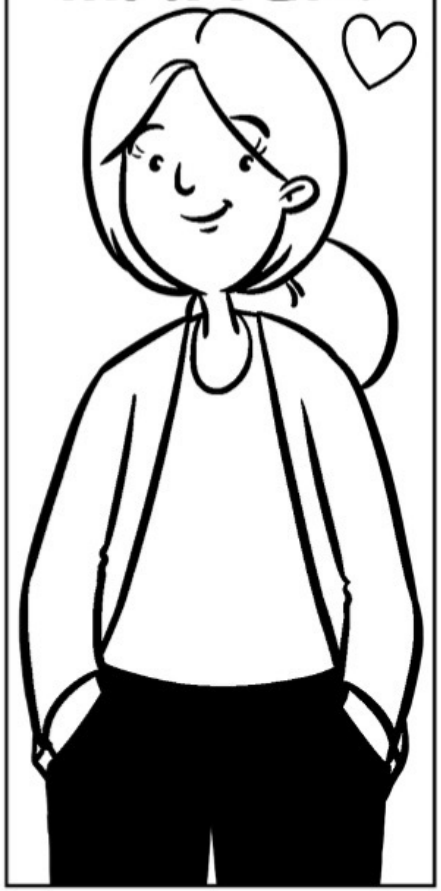
I am
iMPORTANT
and my
FEELiNGS
MATTER!



CONGRATULATIONS

_____

on your completion of "The Two Homes, One Me" Group!

_____

School Name

_____

School Counselor

_____

Date

CONGRATULATIONS

_____

on your completion of "The Two Homes, One Me" Group!

_____

School Name

_____

School Social Worker

_____

Date

CONGRATULATIONS

_____

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_____

School Name

_____

School Psychologist

_____

Date

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♥ Laura Oathout

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