

Coping with big feelings **FIRST AID KIT**

Theory suggests that when grieving, it's healthy for people to experience the pain of grief, rather than avoiding it. Children experience big feelings by jumping in and out of their grief, known as puddle jumping and is this normal. By normalising these big emotions and giving children strategies to help them cope, it can feel less frightening.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- A small box with a lid or a decorated envelope, an empty key ring or a small jar



HOW TO MAKE A FIRST AID KIT

Talk together about what helps during tough days or when emotions feel overwhelming. Encourage the child to write or draw pictures of things that bring them comfort. Help them think about their senses as they come up with ideas—for example, who or what they could hug, petting an animal, or going outside to jump in leaves. They can then create small models of these comforting things using playdough or air-dry clay. Alternatively, they could design a symbol to represent their idea and attach it to a keyring.

Here are some ideas....self hug, tear up a ball of paper and throw at a wall, 10 star jumps, find 5 things that are blue, pop some bubble wrap, colour a picture, listen to music, talk to a friend.

BOOKS THAT CAN HELP

Ruby's Worry by Tom Percival is a wonderfully worded book about worries. children could make a list of what worries them, and discuss in pairs to make them smaller, like Ruby's.



The Huge Bag of Worries by Virginia Ironside also addresses fears and anxieties and helps younger children talk about managing their feelings. From this, the children could make or draw a bag to put their worries in.



Sad Book by Michael Rosen is another poignant book that is aimed for older children and young people. After reading the book, you could discuss what makes the children feel angry, and what their coping strategies are. They could make a toolkit that they can refer to when things feel overbearing for them.

