

Hurricane Preparedness

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SECTION 1

GUIDE FOR BEHAVIORAL STRATEGIES AND PREPARDNESS



What are they?

De-escalation strategies can be used to bring comfort during stressful situations.



Why we created them:

Family Initiative has created the following visual charts detailing different strategies caregivers can use specifically during a hurricane or bad weather.



Materials Included:

“De-escalation guide” chart

“Hurricane Energy Gauge” chart

“Emotion Strategy Board” chart

Guide to assist children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or Sensory Differences during a Hurricane.

Prior to a hurricane:

Children with ASD often have trouble adapting to changes and situations in which sensory overload may occur. The first step is to prepare the child for what may happen during a hurricane. Caregiver(s) should review social stories with the child and inform them of where they would go in the case of an evacuation. Caregiver(s) should also make a list of items the child should bring with them if evacuation is needed. Include items that will help assist with sensory overload and the client's ability to self-regulate (see list below). They should also include preferred games/activities for the child to engage in while displaced.

Sensory items that may be helpful include:

1. Weighted pillows/blankets
2. Noise cancelling headphones
3. Fidget/sensory toys (such as stress balls, squishes, slim, play-doh, putty, fidget spinners, etc.)
4. Comfort item (if applicable)
5. Chewing gum and/or chewy toy
6. Coloring supplies
7. Calming activities such as word searches, books, music, etc.
8. Sunglasses or hats (if sensitive to strong lights)
9. Visuals or social stories to help with routine changes and available self-regulation techniques (for example hurricane social stories and energy gauge).
10. Communication device or pictures (if applicable)

During a Hurricane:

Caregiver(s) should remain calm and provide praise for appropriate behavior and calm energy (i.e. child having nice hands and feet, following directions, etc.), provide comfort and reassurance to the child as evacuation occurs. Review social stories and communicate with the child on what is happening/where they are going. If the child begins to show precursor behaviors such as covering eyes or ears, backing away from crowds, etc. Or the child begins to engage in maladaptive behaviors, including self-injurious behaviors (i.e. hitting self with an open or closed fist), successful or attempts of elopement (running away, leaving the designated area without permission), physical aggression (i.e. pushing or hitting others), property destruction (i.e. damaging items such as throwing or swiping inappropriate items that could result in the item no longer being usable) or verbal aggression (yelling, screaming, profanity etc.). Adults should implement self-regulation techniques.

Self-Regulating Techniques and Behavior Intervention:

When Maladaptive Behaviors occur:

- If Self-Injurious Behaviors (SIB) occur such as head banging, hitting self in the head or other body parts, etc. An adult/caregiver should place a pillow, stuffed animal or other soft item between the child's hand and body part to decrease injuries.

- If physical aggression (PA) occurs the adult may put the soft item in between the child and the targeted individual. The adult should back up after the child is in a safe area.
- If elopement behavior occurs the adult should run/follow after them to ensure safety but provide minimal attention. The Adult should then prompt the child to return to the original area and prompt the child to sit, use functional communication to request items, and assist with self-regulation behaviors (see below).
- If property destruction occurs, as many items as possible should be removed from reach of the child and self-regulation techniques implemented.
- The adult should prompt the child away from people and direct them to sit or lay in a safe area. This may include a corner in a chair or on a bed/couch/blanket/bean bag. The adult may offer arm squeezes or other sensory (see self-regulation procedures below).

When Children Experience Sensory Overload:

- When the child shows signs of sensory overload or differences such as covering eyes or ears, engaging in behaviors when a crowd or loud noises are present, etc. The following techniques may assist with self-regulation:
 - Prompt to child to where noise cancelling headphones. If unavailable the child or adult can cover their ears.
 - Prompt the child to lay down and cover themselves with a blanket to reduce sensory input. Weighted blanket/pillows or pressure such as arm/hand squeezes, hugs, etc. may also assist with sensory issues.
 - The child may also make a tent of blankets to provide a dark space away from people or bright lights.
 - If the lights are too bright the child may wear sunglasses or a hat to help shield or dim the lights.
 - If available, the child should also be prompted to go to another room or area that is quieter and includes less people.

When Children experience low energy:

- Feelings related to low energy include being tired, sick, sad, or hurt. The child may engage in decreased responding/attention, increased yawning, laying down, or putting head down, etc. Maladaptive behaviors are likely to occur at this level.
- To assist with increasing the child's energy and assist with self-regulation techniques, caregivers may prompt the child to engage in these activities:
 - Drinking water or having a snack
 - Going for a walk
 - Stretching or engaging in a type of exercise such as yoga, or wall push-ups.
 - Reading a book or completing activities such as word searches, etc.

When children experience high energy:

- High energies are related to the following feeling: scared, excited, overwhelmed, angry, etc. Children with high energy may engage in yelling, hyperactivity, running around, jumping up and down, attempting to climb items, etc. Maladaptive behaviors are likely to occur at this level.

- To assist with increasing the child's energy and assist with self-regulation techniques, caregivers may prompt the child to engage in these activities:
 - Give them something to chew such as gum, a snack or a chewy.
 - Offer a quiet place or soft area to lay down or take a break, such as a bed, bean bag, couch, etc.
 - Assist with sensory needs (such as headphones, sunglasses, weighted blanket or pillow, squeezes (arm or hand squeezes) as well as fidget toys including putty, stress balls, etc.
 - Offer calming activities to promote relaxation such as counting to 10, taking deep breaths, listening to calming music, reducing lights, drawing, word searches, etc.

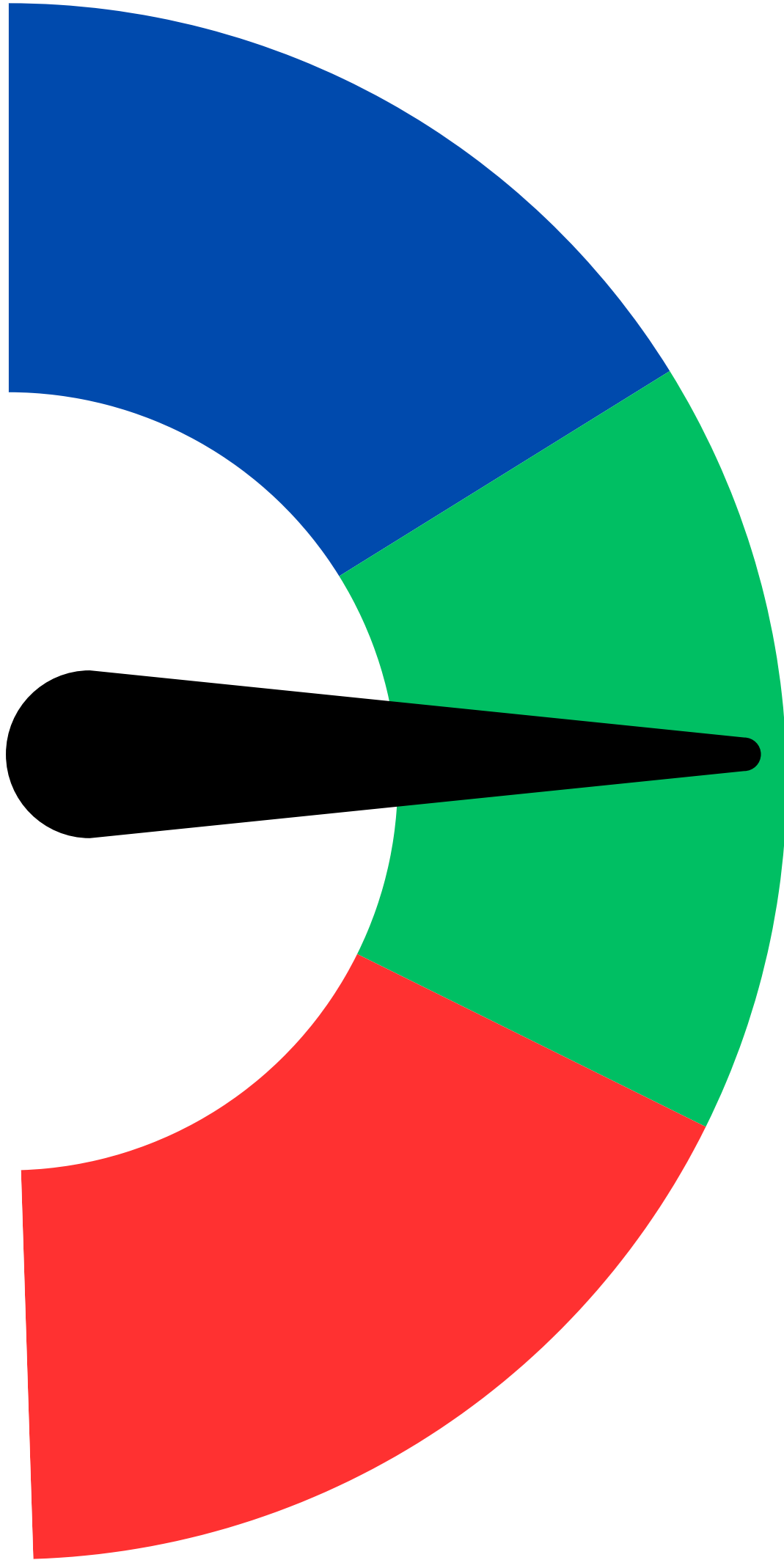
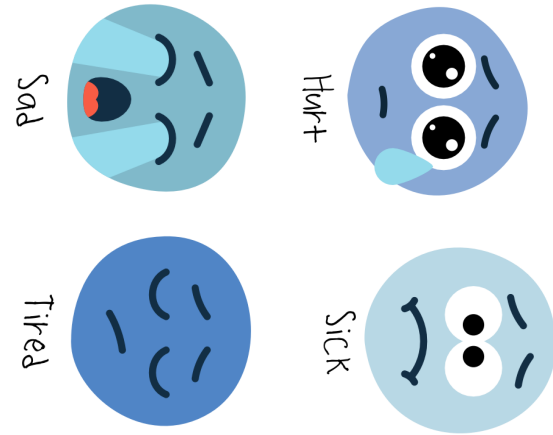
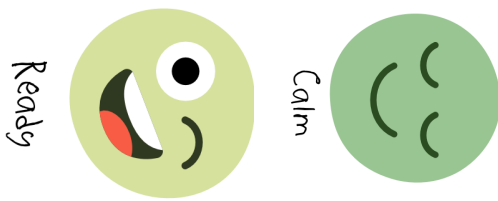
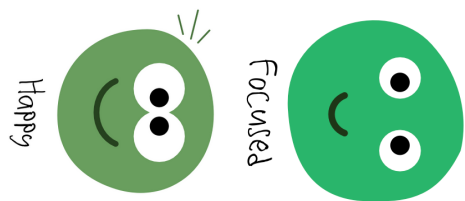
When children experience calm energy:

- If someone has calm energy this may mean that they are focused, calm, happy, and ready to work/listen, etc. The child is not currently engaging in maladaptive behaviors, has nice hands and feet, and is ready to work and follow directions.
- When the child is calm, this is the time for caregivers or adults to review expectations and rules, discuss emotions, model and teach self-regulation techniques, work on functional communication by utilizing words/picture/or devices to communicate needs.
- Children with calm energy may engage in talking about their feelings and thoughts, thinking happy thoughts, engaging in positive affirmations, being a friend, asking for a hug, etc.

The use of first/then statements may also assist children with following directions and completing activities as needed. Children should be given first/then statements and adults/caregivers should use motivating items/activities to reinforce appropriate responding and compliance with directions. Here are some examples of first/then statements:

- First pack and go to the car then iPad
- First wait then coloring
- First break then games

My Engine is on:



Low Energy

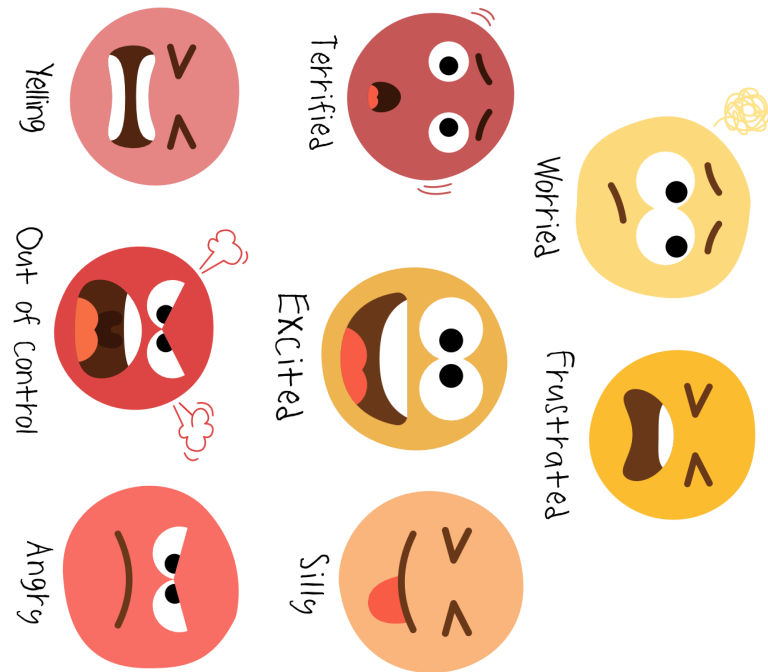
I have low energy and need to increase my Energy using items in my blue zone tool box.

Calm Energy

I have nice hands and feet. I am ready to work and follow directions.

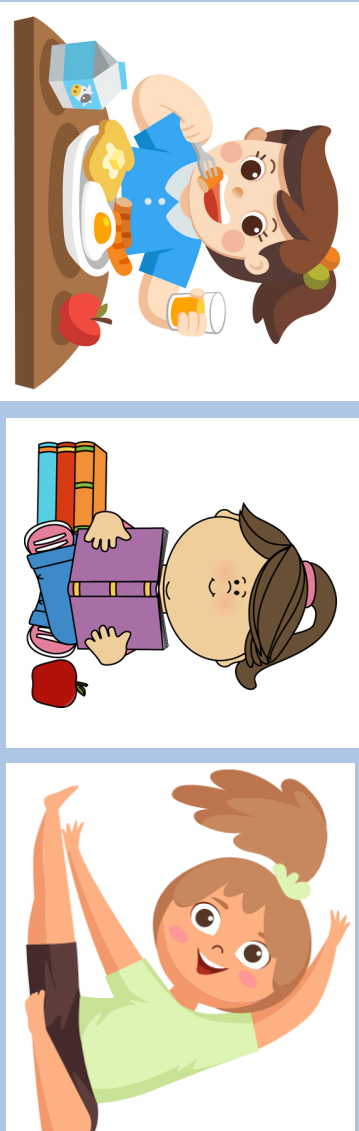
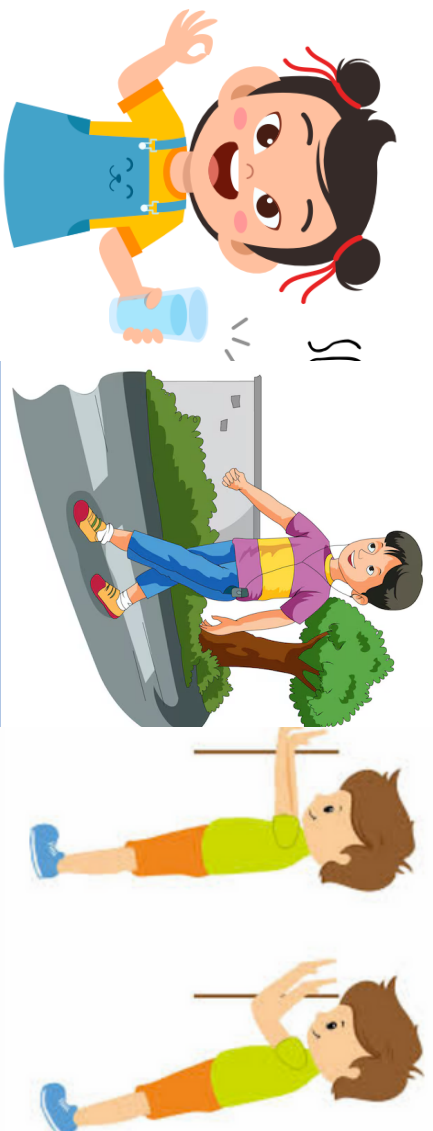
High Energy

I have high energy and need to decrease my Energy using items in my red zone tool box.



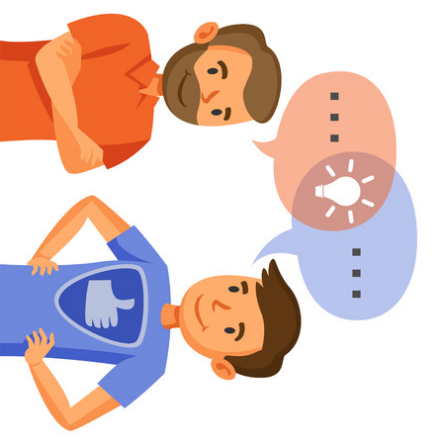
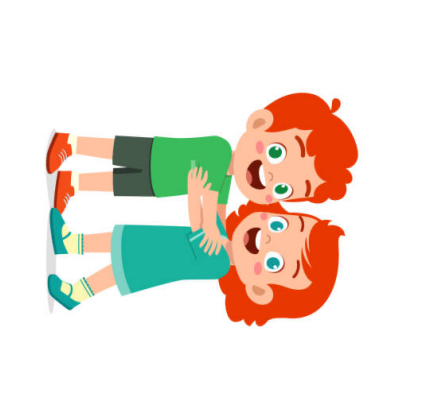
Blue Zone Tool Box
for
Low Energy

When I have low energy, I can drink water, take a walk, complete wall push ups, have a snack, read a book, or do some stretching.



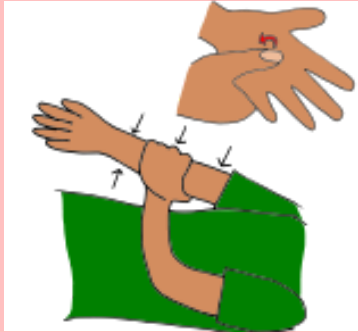
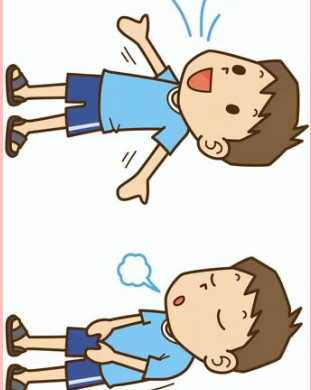
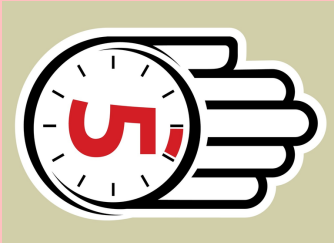
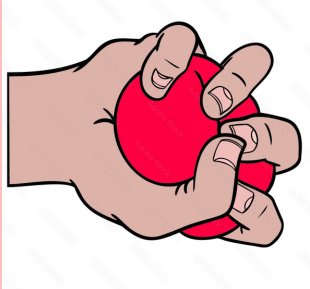
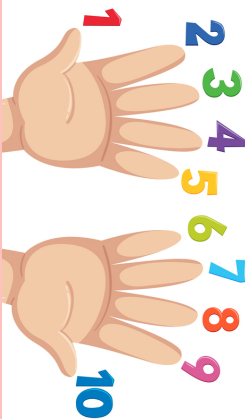
Green Zone Tool Box
for
Calm Energy

When I have calm energy, I can ask for a hug, talk about my feelings and thoughts, think happy thoughts, and be a friend.



Red Zone Tool Box
for
High Energy

When I have high energy, I can chew gum, count to 10, use a fidget (i.e. stress ball), take a break, take deep breaths, listen to music, draw, or ask for arm squeezes.



Feeling sad?



Listen to music



Color or draw a picture

Feeling scared?



Ask for a hug



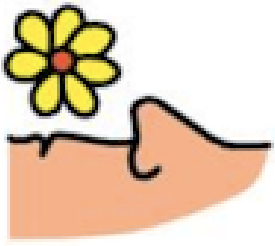
Talk to an adult about
how you're feeling

Feeling overwhelmed?

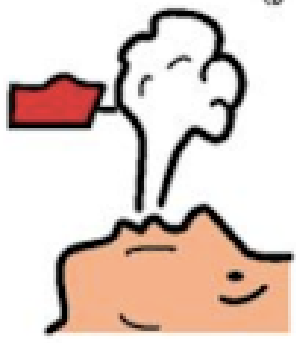


Take a walk

Smell the flower



Blow out the candle



Take deep breaths

SECTION 2

SOCIAL STORIES



What are they?

Social stories are written with the specific purpose of teaching a child a concept using a combination of kid friendly words and pictures. Social stories help relieve anxiety, teach positive behaviors and support children during transitional periods.



Why we created them:

Family Initiative has created the following social stories to read with your child before going into a new or scary situation like evacuating for a hurricane.



Materials Included:

**“What Is a Hurricane?” Social
Story**

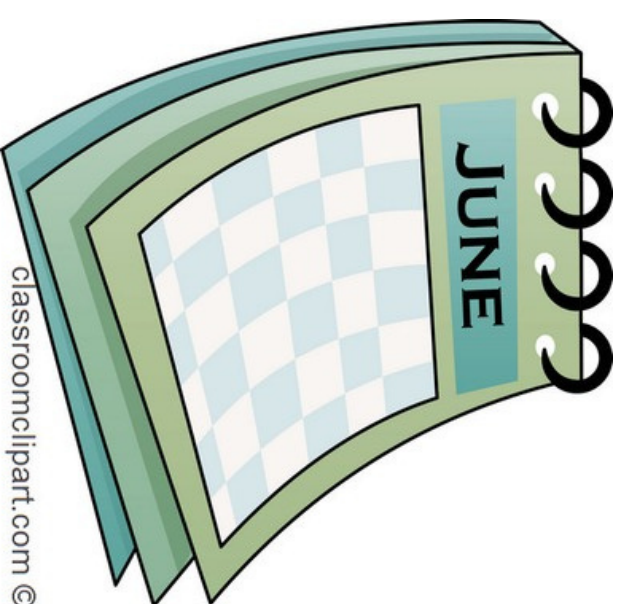
**“Leaving The House” Social
Story**

**“Prepping For a Hurricane”
Social Story**

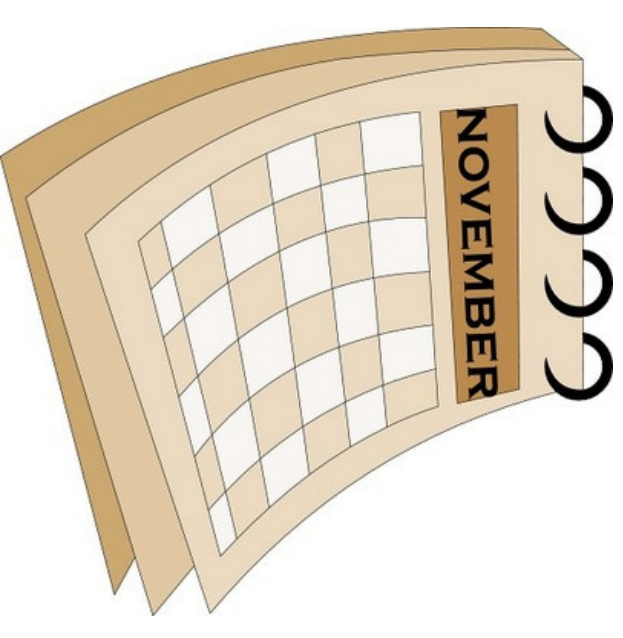
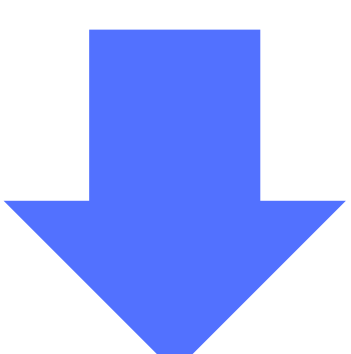
“Evacuation” Social Story

**“Emergency Shelter” Social
Story**

It is hurricane season

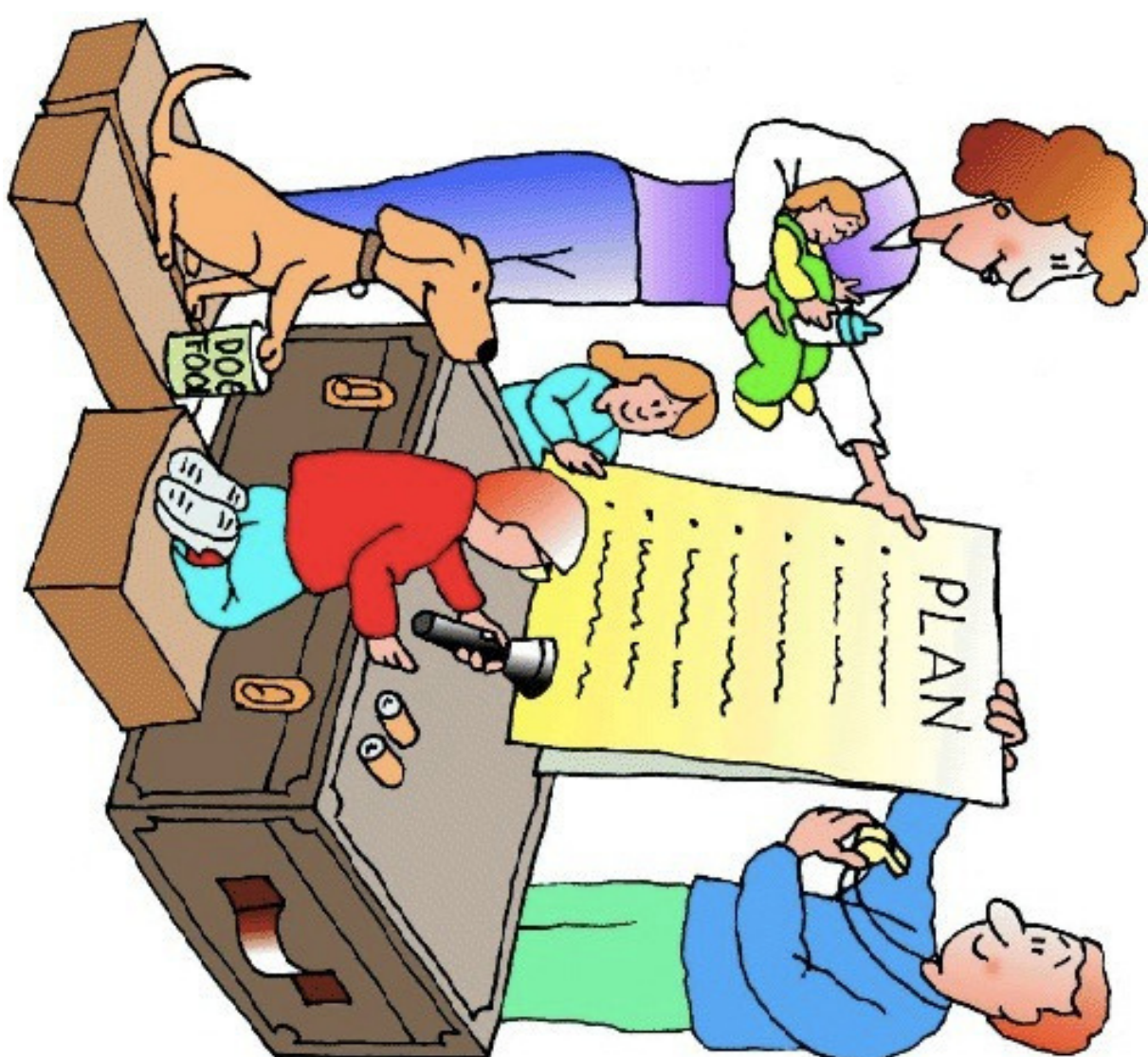
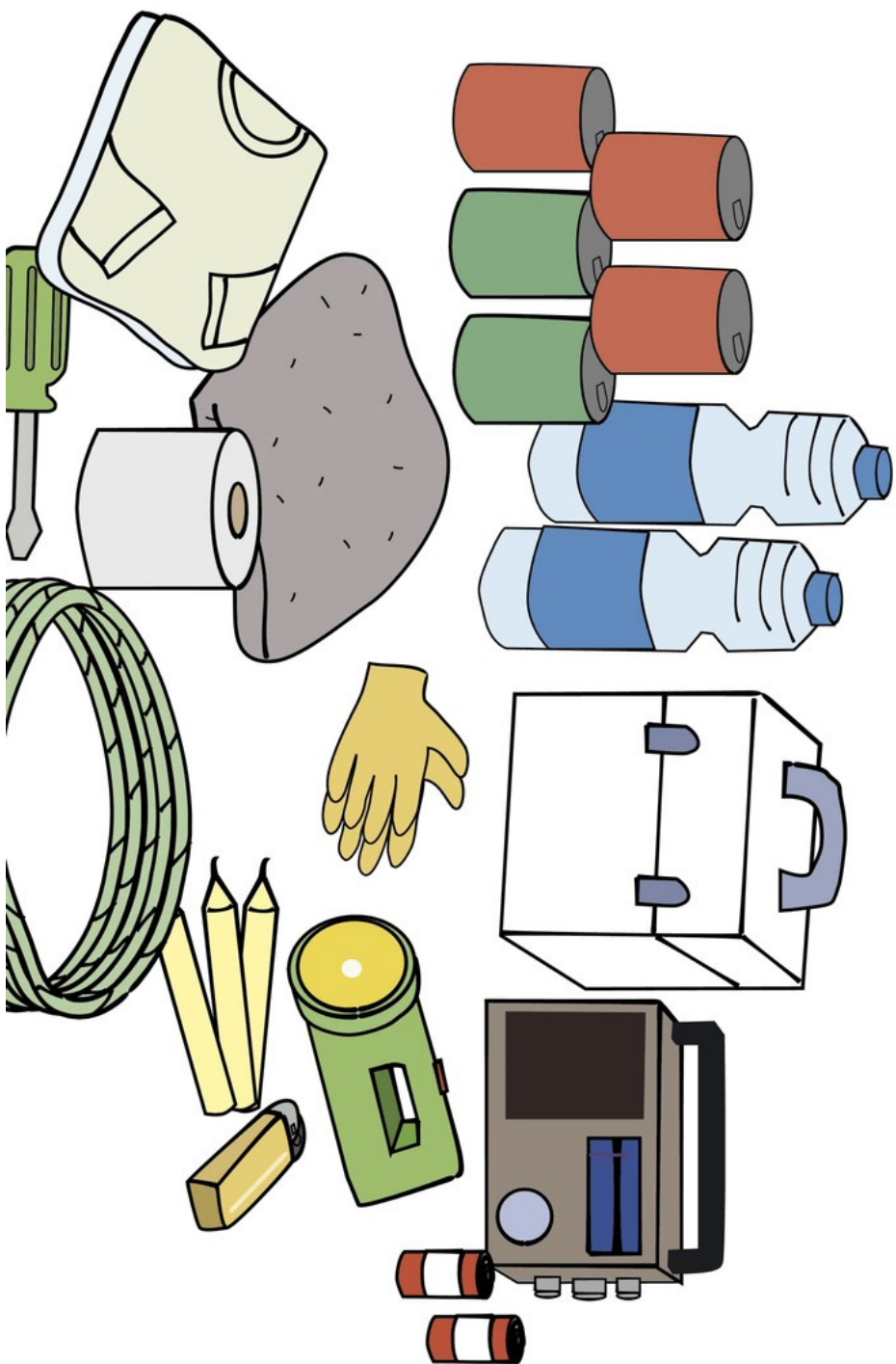


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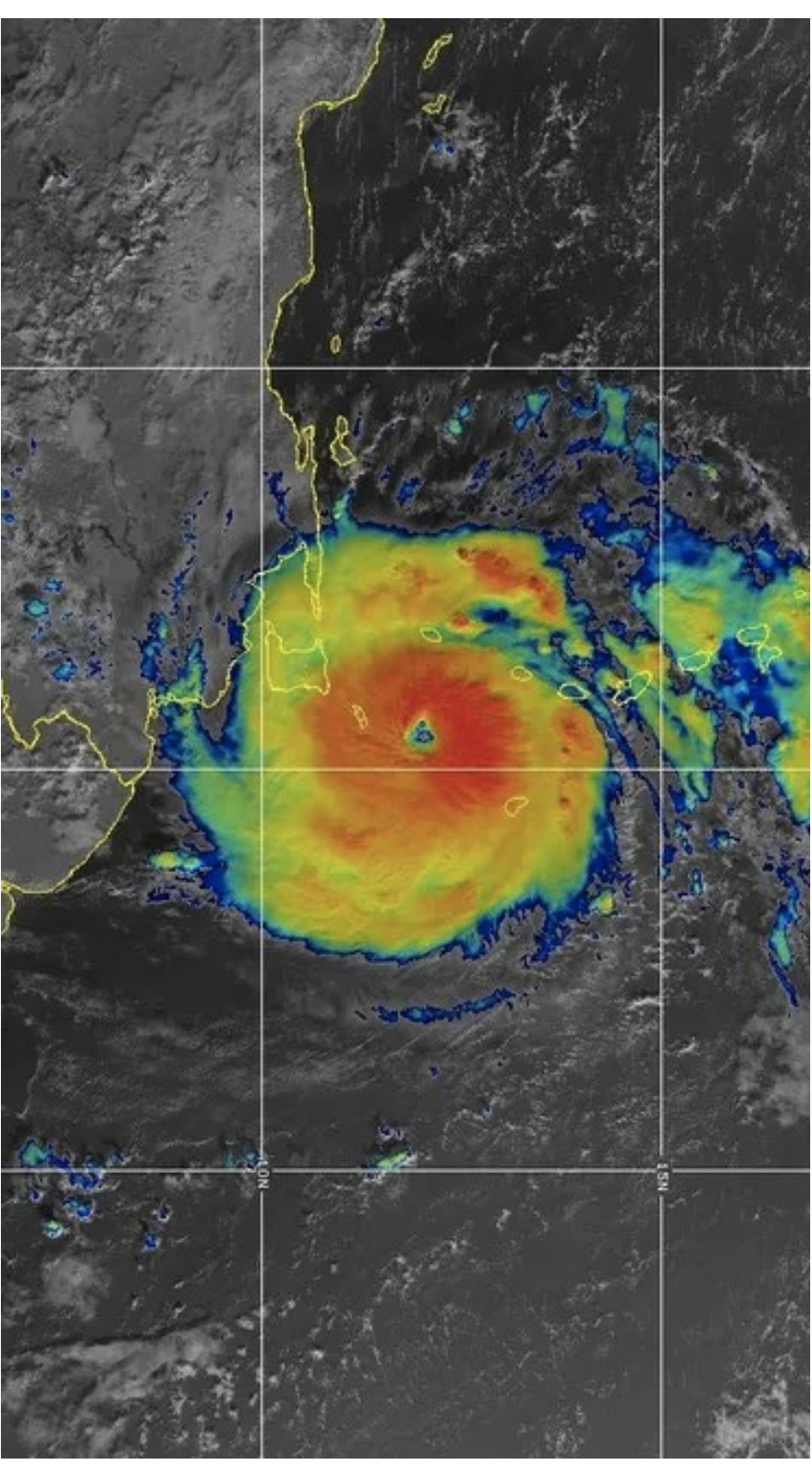




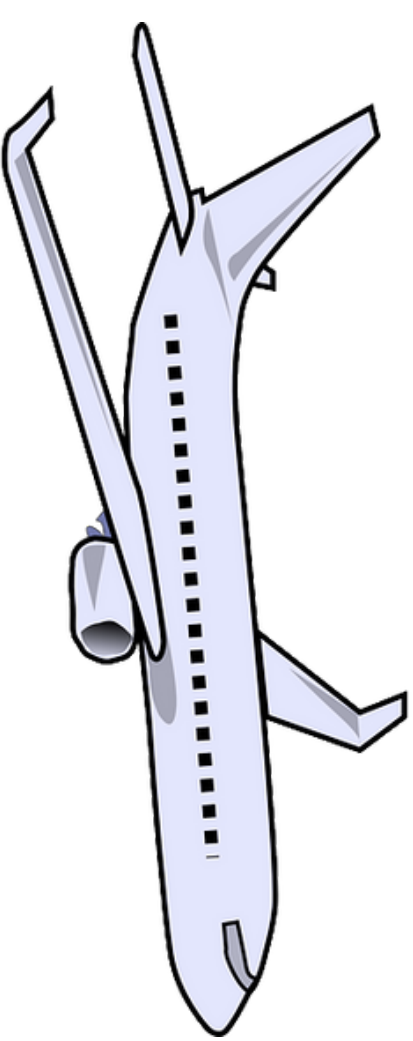
A hurricane is a big storm that can make dark clouds, a lot of rain, thunder, lightning and fast winds.



My family will get ready before the storm comes. We will need to prepare different items that will help keep us happy and safe during the hurricane.



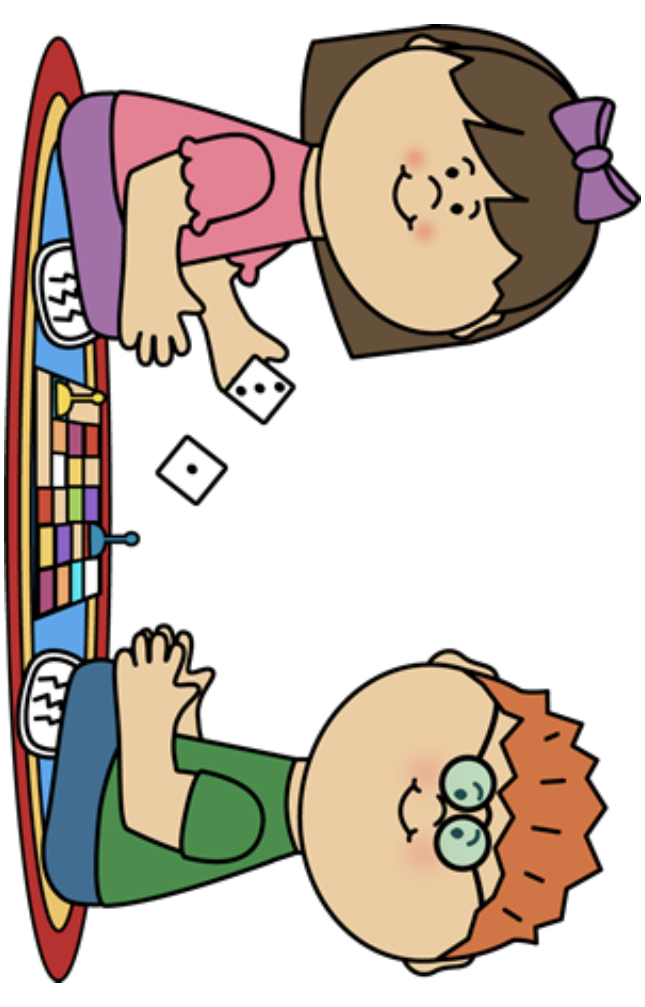
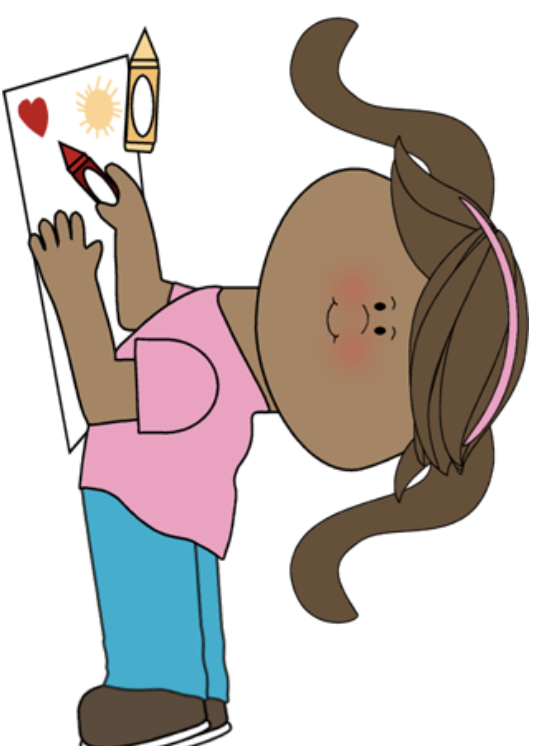
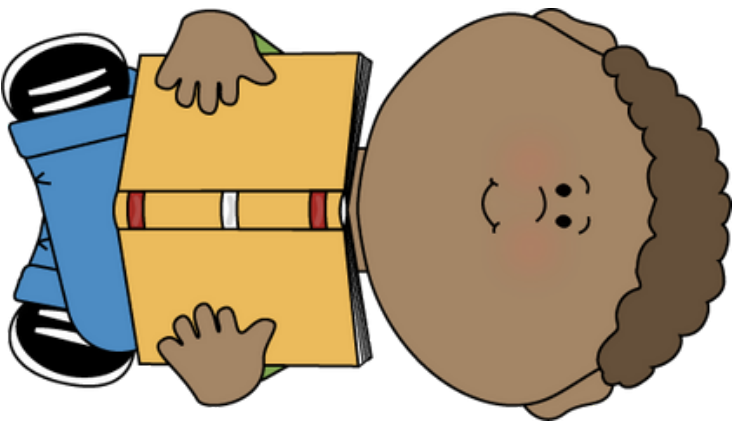
My family and I will watch the T.V. to learn about the hurricane and
how we can stay safe.



My family might leave our house before the hurricane comes. We may drive far in the car or take an airplane.



If we stay home, we may put up hurricane shutters. These shutters will go over our windows and doors. It will make our house darker inside, but it will keep us safe from the hurricane.



My family and I will need to stay inside until the storm is gone. I will hear thunder, lightning, wind and rain but I am safe inside my house. My family and I can play board games, cards, color or read books.

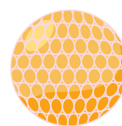


The storm can stay for a few hours or a few days but it will go away.
Once the storm is gone, my family can go back outside.

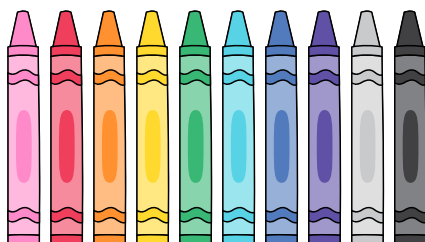
When preparing of a bad storm or leaving the house, I want to make sure I have everything I need.



I will pack a backpack with things that help me stay calm, such as headphones, stress balls, weighted pillow, gum, etc.



I will also pack activities for me to complete such as coloring, word searches, games, etc.



When a bad storm is occurring, I may need to go somewhere safe, such as a shelter.



I will stay with my caregivers at all times while in a shelter.



A shelter may have lots of people and can be loud.



If I need a break from the loud noise, I can ask for headphones, to go for a walk, or to listen to music.



If I need a break from the crowd, I will ask to lay down or cover myself with a blanket.



When there is a bad storm I may need to leave the house.



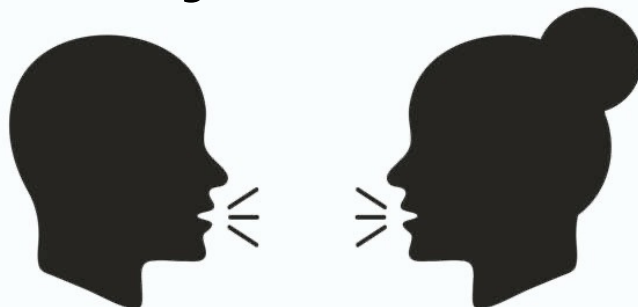
If I need to leave the house, I will listen to my parents and leave calmly with nice hands and feet.



I will stay with my parents at all times.



If I need something, like headphones or a hug, I will use my words and ask.



Evacuation Social Story

When there is a hurricane



You may need to pack up clothes and shoes



You will say goodbye to your house



You may drive far away in your car



You may fly away on an airplane



Leaving your house will keep you safe and happy



SECTION 3

COMMUNICATION BOARD



What are they?

Communication boards are used to help people with limited language skills express themselves. These are especially helpful during stressful situations such as a hurricane.



Why we created them:

Family Initiative has created the following communication boards for your child to utilize during stressful or new situations.



Materials Included:

Basic Needs Communication Board

Yes or No Communication Board

I Need a Break Visual Communication Board

Communication Board



Eat

Yes



Bathroom

No



Drink



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Yes

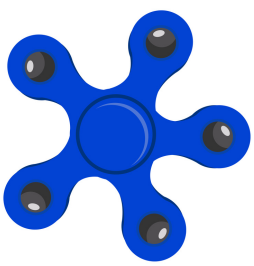
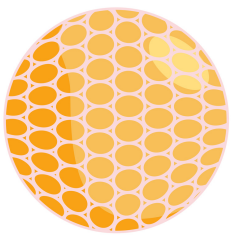


No



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I NEED TO TAKE A BREAK



Fidget(s)



Deep Breaths



Take a Rest



Hug



Go for a Walk



Family Initiative

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