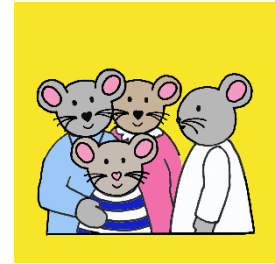


Activity Selection

Use This:

To help the child identify and use positive activities to improve his or her mood.



Goals

- The family will learn the relation between the things we do and how we feel, emphasising the link between positive activities and feeling good
- The child will identify 10 activities that he or she can do to improve his or her mood
- The child will schedule activities that make him or her feel good

Materials

- **Fear Thermometer** and **Fear Ladder** (2 unrated copies for anxiety/trauma), **Feelings Thermometer** (for depression) (pp. 305, 307, 329)
- **Doing Something Fun to Feel Better** worksheet (p. 343)
- **Ten things I Can Do to Feel Better** worksheet (p. 344)
- **Scheduling Time for Fun** worksheet (p. 345)
- **Activity Selection** parent handout (p. 346)
- Pencils, crayons, markers
- **Weekly questionnaires** and **Monitoring sheet** (see pages 268 – 285)
- **Therapist Note Taking Sheet** (p. 267)

If time is tight: Convey the link between activities and feelings and help the child brainstorm a list of 10 activities that he or she could do to feel better.

Main Steps

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Set an Agenda | Remember to start by setting an agenda together and by reviewing any practice assignments. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Obtain Weekly Ratings | If the main focus is traumatic stress or anxiety, use the 0 to 10 scale of the Fear Thermometer to obtain Fear Ladder ratings from both the child and his or her parent. If the main focus is depressed mood, use the Feelings Thermometer to take a rating. Review the Weekly questionnaires and Monitoring sheet in detail. |

<input type="checkbox"/> ACTIVITY Doing Something Fun to Feel Better	<p>1. Induce a negative mood with the child by describing a stressful situation. An example would be: <i>Close your eyes and imagine that you are having a terrible day. You are late to school, and you forgot your homework! At lunch, you spill your drink on your clothes, and a bunch of kids laugh at you. When you get home, your mum makes you clean your room, and you miss your favourite TV show.</i></p> <p>2. Have the child rate his or her mood at the top of the Doing Something Fun to Feel Better worksheet.</p> <p>3. Have the parent engage in a fun, high-energy activity with the child (e.g., hula-hooping, singing a song) for a few minutes, until the child is having fun.</p> <p>4. Have the child do the second mood rating on the Doing Something Fun to Feel Better worksheet.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Debrief the Activity	<p>Briefly discuss with the child the effect of the activity on his or her mood ratings. Explain how low mood was related to thinking about something sad. Note how doing something for only a few minutes can improve mood. If the child's mood rating went up after the activity, note how well this activity worked for the child; if the child's mood rating remained the same or declined after the activity, discuss possible reasons for this (e.g., child didn't like activity, too little time).</p> <p>Example script</p> <p><i>So we just did something really quick and it raised your mood by 2 points! You went from a 5 to a 7! That's great! And I bet hula-hooping isn't even one of your favourite activities! What's an activity that you really love doing? What do you think your rating would be if you were doing that instead?</i></p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Discuss Connection Between Feelings and Actions	<p>Discuss how what we do – our activities – can affect our mood, or how we feel. Explain that doing activities we enjoy can make us feel good and that doing activities we do not enjoy (or doing nothing) can make us feel bad (or bored). Have the child think of a time when he or she felt sad, did nothing, and continued to feel bad as well as a time when he or she felt sad, did something fun and felt better.</p> <p>Example script</p> <p><i>So what we do affects how we feel. When we are in a good mood, we probably want to do a lot of fun things. But when we are in a bad mood, we may not want to do anything fun, and then we may just stay in a bad mood. Can you think of a time when you were in a bad mood or were upset, and you didn't do anything (or maybe you decided not to do something fun) and you stayed in a bad mood? What about a time when you felt bad, did something fun, and then felt better?</i></p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Discuss Four Types of Activities	<p>Discuss with the child four types of activities that can improve mood and have the child list some examples for each activity:</p>

- **Activities that I have enjoyed before:** explain how doing things we usually like makes us feel better
- **Activities with someone I like:** emphasise how doing something with someone we like or would like to know better is a great way to build relationships and improve mood
- **Activities that keep me busy:** explain how scheduled activities help us stay busy and in a good mood. Have the child identify some of his or her interests and link those interests to clubs, groups, or teams (e.g., Scouts, choir, football, drama) the child can join
- **Activities that help someone else:** emphasise how helping others can make us feel good

<input type="checkbox"/> Complete <i>Ten Things I Can Do to Feel Good</i> Worksheet	<p>Help the child complete the <i>Ten Things I Can Do to Feel Good</i> worksheet. Make sure the activities include the four types of activities previously discussed and are (1) simple, (2) free, (3) available almost any time, (4) safe for children with epilepsy and (5) virtually guaranteed to make the child feel good. Make sure the list includes activities that require energy and activities the child can do on his or her own. Examples include playing with a pet, riding a bike, reading a book, talking to a friend, helping a family member or friend, drawing, and painting fingernails.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Begin <i>Scheduling Time for Fun</i> Worksheet	<p>Explain to the child that staying busy – having plans to do fun things – is a great way to improve your mood or to keep your mood high. Help the child brainstorm one fun activity he or she can do every day, and fill in the first column of the <i>Scheduling Time for Fun</i> worksheet. Work with the child to write – in the left column – one specific activity he or she will plan to do on each day and note when that activity is planned (e.g., after school, after dinner). Refer to the <i>Ten Things I Can Do to Feel Good</i> list if you need to come up with enough ideas to fill the week. Try to make sure that the activities include at least one that uses energy, at least one that is with another person, and at least one that helps someone else (e.g., help clear the table and do dishes after dinner).</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> PRACTICE ASSIGNMENT Complete Worksheet	<p>Explain to the child that the practice assignment for this week is to complete the <i>Scheduling Time for Fun</i> worksheet. Instruct the child to do the activity the two of you have written down (or a substitute activity if necessary) each the day in the coming week. Each day the child should write down what the activity was as well as his or her <i>Feelings Thermometer</i> ratings both before and after the activity.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Review Parent Handout	<p>Review the <i>Activity Selection</i> parent handout. Be sure that the parent is familiar with the concepts so that he or she can assist the</p>

child in using the new concepts and tools introduced in the therapy sessions.

<input type="checkbox"/> Send the materials for the next session	Tell the parent/s you will send a written summary and the materials for the next session. Remind them that they <u>do not</u> need to be completed for next session as you will go through them together in the session. Tell the family you will also send the Weekly questionnaires, Monitoring sheet and Feelings Thermometer which need to be completed for the next session.
	Confirm date and time of the next call.
<input type="checkbox"/> Summarising	Ask if they would like you to summarise the session, if they want to summarise or if you should do it together.

Leave 'Em Laughing

End the session on a positive note with the family by perhaps talking about things that are unrelated to treatment or a game or activity that will leave them feeling good about the work you've done today. The end of each session should be used to praise the family's efforts and to convey support and encouragement.

Helpful Tips

- If you have a hard time coming up with ideas, here are **10 possible activities** you could try: (1) toss a ball back and forth, (2) play rubbish bin basketball (crumble up a piece of paper to make a ball and use the rubbish bin as the goal), (3) hula-hoop, (4) skipping rope, (5) search for cute animal videos on YouTube, (6) do jumping jacks, (7) play a quick game/computer game, (8) play an instrument (maracas, tambourine), (9) play Simon Says, and (10) draw a picture.
- If the child is having difficulty generating activities for the **Ten Things I Can Do to Feel Good** worksheet, offer suggestions based on your earlier session with the parent – when the parent identified activities that improve this child's mood. In addition, you may suggest activities that most children would enjoy (e.g., playing a game with a friend, playing sport, playing with a pet).
- If the child lists passive activities like sleeping or watching TV, accept these answers and write them down. However, make sure to include some activities that require energy (e.g., riding a bike, dancing) or that are more engaging (e.g., reading, painting).
- If the child enters the session in a bad mood, or seems tired, lethargic, or uninterested, this is an opportunity to introduce a mood booster: take a brief mood rating, spend a few minutes engaging in a pleasant activity, then re-rate the mood. If the rating improves, be sure to highlight to the child that what you do changes how you feel.
- The practice assignment for this session – and the **Scheduling Time for Fun** worksheet – can be used again, multiple times. If this child is one who tends to drift into bad moods – or lethargy – at home between sessions, it may be helpful to add the structure of regular weekly planning, looking to the week ahead and

planning one mood-enhancing activity for each day of the week, using the **Scheduling Time for Fun** worksheet.

- Check in on goals: Does the child feel that he or she is making progress? How does the material you covered today relate to the goals you set together?

Special Cases

Depression

If the child enters the session in a bad mood, or seems tired, lethargic, or uninterested, this is an opportunity to introduce a mood booster: take a brief mood rating using the **Feelings Thermometer**, spend a few minutes engaging in a pleasant activity, and then take another mood rating. If the activity was successful, highlight to the child that what we do changes how we feel and then move on to covering the problem solving skill.

How's Your Style?

- Did you praise often?
- Did you review often, by asking questions?
- Did you simplify the steps as needed?
- Did your pace match that of the child or family?
- Did you stay on track?