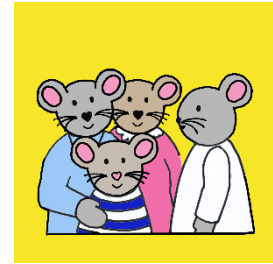


Plans for Coping

Use This:

To identify the child's three favourite skills and teach perseverance.



Goals

- The child will review all the skills he or she has learned with you
- The child will identify the specific coping skills that are more effective for him or her
- The child will learn not to give up when trying to cope with problems or feel better
- The child will learn that when one skill isn't working, he or she can try another

Materials

- *Feelings Thermometer* (p. 329)
- *My Favourite Skills for Feeling Good* worksheet (p. 371)
- *Following My Plans* worksheet (p. 372)
- *Practising My New Skills* worksheet (2 copies) (p. 373)
- *Plans for Coping* parent handout (p. 374)
- *Relapse Prevention* worksheet (p. 319)
- Pens, pencils, markers
- *Weekly questionnaires* and *Monitoring sheet* (see pages 268 – 285)
- *Therapist Note Taking Sheet* (p. 267)

If time is tight: Ask the child to identify his or her three favourite coping skills and emphasise that if one skill doesn't work, it is important to try another.

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 <i>Fear Thermometer</i> to obtain <i>Fear Ladder</i> ratings from both the child and his or her parent. If the main focus is depressed mood, use the <i>Feelings Thermometer</i> to take a rating. Review the <i>Weekly questionnaires</i> and <i>Monitoring sheet</i> in detail. |

<input type="checkbox"/> ACTIVITY <i>My Favourite Skills for Feeling Good</i>	<p>Have the child identify some situations where he or she feels sad, gloomy, upset, stressed, or tired. Then encourage the child to identify as many as possible of the coping skills you have covered in previous sessions (or key phrases used to name the skills). Encourage the child and provide hints when necessary. Praise the child for remembering the skills and for all of his or her hard work in previous sessions.</p> <p>Ask the child what his or her three favourite skills are. You can help by encouraging the child and providing hints and reminders of the skills he or she liked best or used most. Complete the <i>My Favourite Skills for Feeling Good</i> worksheet while discussing the child's three favourite skills and how he or she has used these skills and can use them in the future.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Review Toolbox Concept	<p>Emphasise that, for each person, some of the coping strategies will work better than others. Emphasise the importance of perseverance and making plans, so that if one coping approach doesn't do the trick, the child is ready to try another approach. Explain that the parent is in a unique position to help the child apply the coping skills to real-life situations as they arise because the parent (a) knows many of the new skills his or her child has learned, (b) knows the child well, and (c) is in close touch with the child's daily life.</p> <p>Review the toolbox metaphor with the child, explaining that each coping skill the child has learned is a tool, and different problems require different tools. Describe the child's three favourite skills as the child's best "tools" for solving problems and for coping with bad feelings.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Introduce Idea of Perseverance	<p>Discuss with the child the importance of not giving up when dealing with a challenging situation. Stress that it is important for the child to keep trying new solutions until he or she has succeeded.</p> <div style="background-color: #e0e0e0; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>Example script</p> <p><i>When trying to solve problems, it is important to not give up if one skill doesn't solve the entire problem. Today, I want to talk about why it is important to keep trying your coping skills. Sometimes you may need to use 2 or 3 of the tools in your toolbox to solve a problem, or to feel better.</i></p> </div>
<input type="checkbox"/> Explain <i>Following My Plans</i> Worksheet	<p>Review and help the child fill in the <i>Following My Plans</i> worksheet. The child's favourite skill should be written in the first box under "Try Plan A," the second favourite skill goes under "Try Plan B," and the third favourite skill under "Try Plan C." Emphasise that when the child encounters difficult or challenging situations, it is important to use Plans A, B, <u>and</u> C, and keep trying, rather than giving up.</p>

ACTIVITY

Practising My New Skills

Ask the child to rehearse a situation with you in which the child acts as a therapist and you are a person with a problem. The goal is to have the child coach you through a Plan A, Plan B, and Plan C sequence.

Procedures:

1. Write the following problem under "what's making me feel bad" on one copy of the ***Practising My New Skills*** worksheet: *"I got into a fight with my best friend, and I know that we won't be friends ever again. I feel terrible and don't feel like doing anything."* Say the problem aloud to the child.
2. Write your ***Feelings Thermometer*** rating in the appropriate space on the worksheet.
3. The child should have you come up with a goal rating for the ***Feelings Thermometer*** rating you would *like to have*. Write that on the worksheet.
4. Copy the child's top three skills from the ***Following My Plans*** worksheet onto the ***Practising My New Skills*** worksheet. These should be written under "Plan A," "Plan B," and "Plan C."
5. The child should name the first skill, explain how the skill will help you, and explain to you how to do it. If the child does not explain the skill to you, ask, "What does that mean?" or "How do I do that?"
6. You should then act out the skill (e.g., slow your breathing, do S-T-E-P-S, try a fun activity).
7. The child should ask you what your rating is after each step in the plans. Your ratings should improve but not reach the goal.

These procedures should continue until the last plan has been demonstrated. Your final rating should equal or surpass your goal rating, and you should praise the child for helping you solve your problem and improve your mood.

Review Relapse Prevention worksheet

Review and complete the ***Relapse Prevention*** worksheet with the family.

<input type="checkbox"/> PRACTICE ASSIGNMENT <i>Practising My New Skills Worksheet</i>	<p>Refer to the second copy of the <i>Practising My New Skills</i> worksheet. Have the child identify a situation in session, write that situation at the top of the sheet, write down a rating of his or her feelings when thinking about the situation, and write down a goal rating. Then have the child write in his or her three favourite skills as Plan A, B, and C on the sheet. Provide help as needed, using the <i>My Favourite Skills for Feeling Good</i> worksheet if needed. The child should also fill in the second column "How this will help" for each plan.</p> <p>At home, the child should try out each plan – A, B, and C – and complete the column on the right side of the sheet. Walk the child through the steps to be sure that he or she understands how to do the assignment.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Self-review	<p>Encourage weekly self-review of strategies: As the first booster session will not be for 1 month, encourage the parent to review what has been working well that week and what has not been working so well. This is to ensure strategies are sustained (before the first booster in 1 months' time); try to instigate this weekly for around 10-20 minutes each week.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Send the materials for the next session	<p>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 parent/s you will also send the <i>Weekly questionnaires</i>, and <i>Monitoring sheet</i> which need to be completed for the next session.</p> <p>Confirm date and time of the next call.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Summarising	<p>Ask if they would like you to summarise the session, if they want to summarise or if you should do it together.</p>

Leave 'Em Laughing

Close with some really funny, or enjoyable activity – something that will leave the child either laughing or feeling great. Possibilities: Funniest Home Video, tell some funny jokes, or play a board game that the child really loves.

Helpful Tips

- Be creative! Use your imagination to find ways to help the child understand relaxation.
- Have fun with the role-play! As appropriate, challenge the child by saying “I don’t think that this is going to work!” or “Nothing can help me!” to really test the child’s knowledge of the skills, and the child’s willingness to be persistent. Also, exaggerate when acting out the skills – the child will love it and you’ll have lots of fun.
- Remember to emphasise the concept of “Plan A, Plan B, Plan C” in any sessions you do with the child after this one and in any practice assignments after this one.
- 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 it is successful, be sure to highlight to the child that *what we do changes how we feel*.
- 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?

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?