



National Children's Mental Health Action Week

Activity Workbook



What is National Children's Mental Health Action Week?

It's an entire week dedicated to teaching individuals and communities about the importance of mental health for our children and youth, advocating to improve supports and services, and celebrating the work that has been done on behalf of young people who experience mental health challenges. In May, we promote understanding and celebrate hope, strength, and the resilience of families.



During Acceptance Week, we wear green to inspire action and to show our support for children, youth, and young adults. Find out how National Children's Mental Health Action Week and Mental Health Month (May) is being celebrated in your community and get involved.

Learn more at:

- www.ffcmh.org
- www.ffcmh.org/acceptancecampaign
- www.ffcmh.org/cmha-activities-for-youth
- www.ffcmh.org/resources-youth
- www.ffcmh.org/resources





National Children's Mental Health Action Week

is designed to celebrate YOU and your mental health. Just like a fingerprint, each of us is unique. Answer the questions below to share who you are and what makes you special.

What is your name? _____

What is your favorite color? _____

When is your birthday? _____

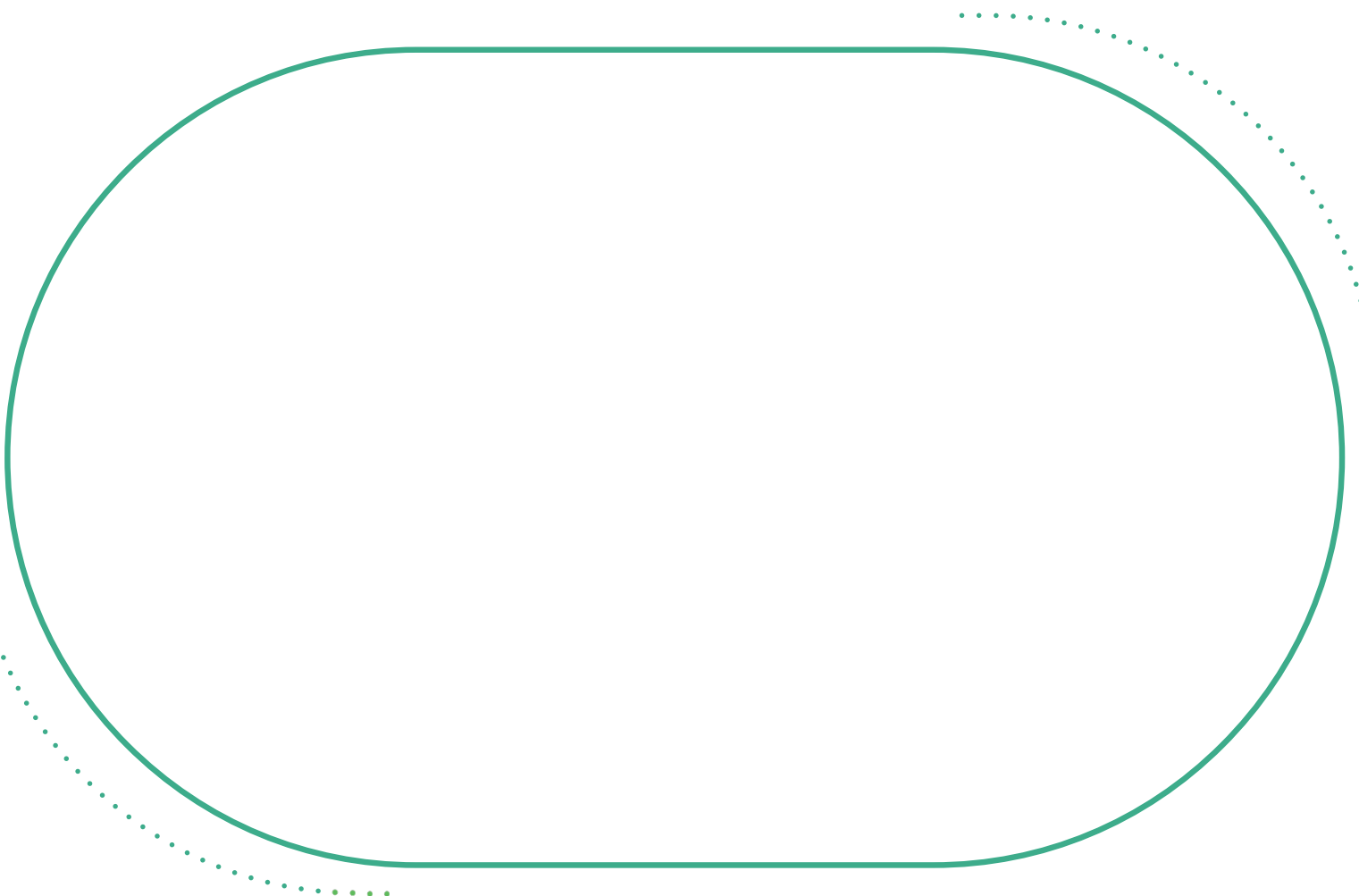
Do you like milk or water? _____

What is the silliest noise you can make? _____

What is your favorite food? _____

What is your eye color? _____

Draw a picture of yourself doing something you love below.



Mood Crew



Meet the DBSA Mood Crew

Early childhood is a time when young ones are learning about their emotions and finding ways to express them. This fun and engaging educational program, designed for ages 4 to 10, helps adults open a positive conversation about feelings with children.

Innovative tools for parents, caregivers, educators, and clinicians

[DBSA's Mood Crew](#) was created with young children in mind. Learning how to recognize and discuss feelings is a key step toward lifelong mental health. The program may be especially valuable for young ones who are having a tough time with emotions. Some children may show early signs of mood disorders, including depression and bipolar disorder. For these young ones, using the mood crew to spark healthy conversations can help build the coping skills that support longterm wellness.

Special thanks to the [Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance](#) for allowing us to share their Mood Crew to help young children learn about and find ways to express their emotions.

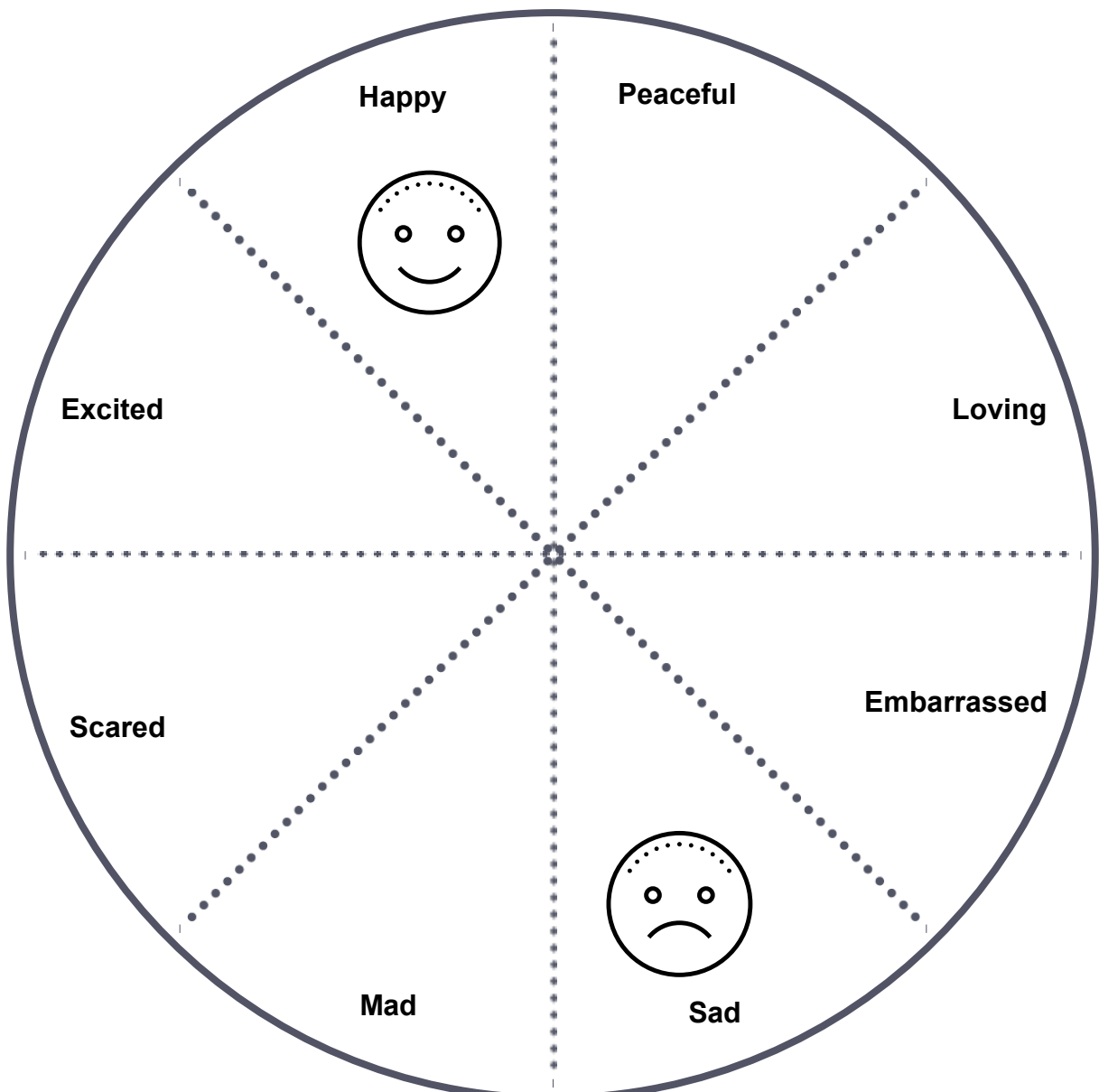
Feelings Wheel

Everyone has feelings and they change all the time. It's important to remember that there is no "right" or "wrong" way to feel in different situations.

For each emotion in this *Feelings Wheel*, you can draw pictures of different times and places that you felt a certain way.

For example, you might have felt *scared* by a large dog. Why not...

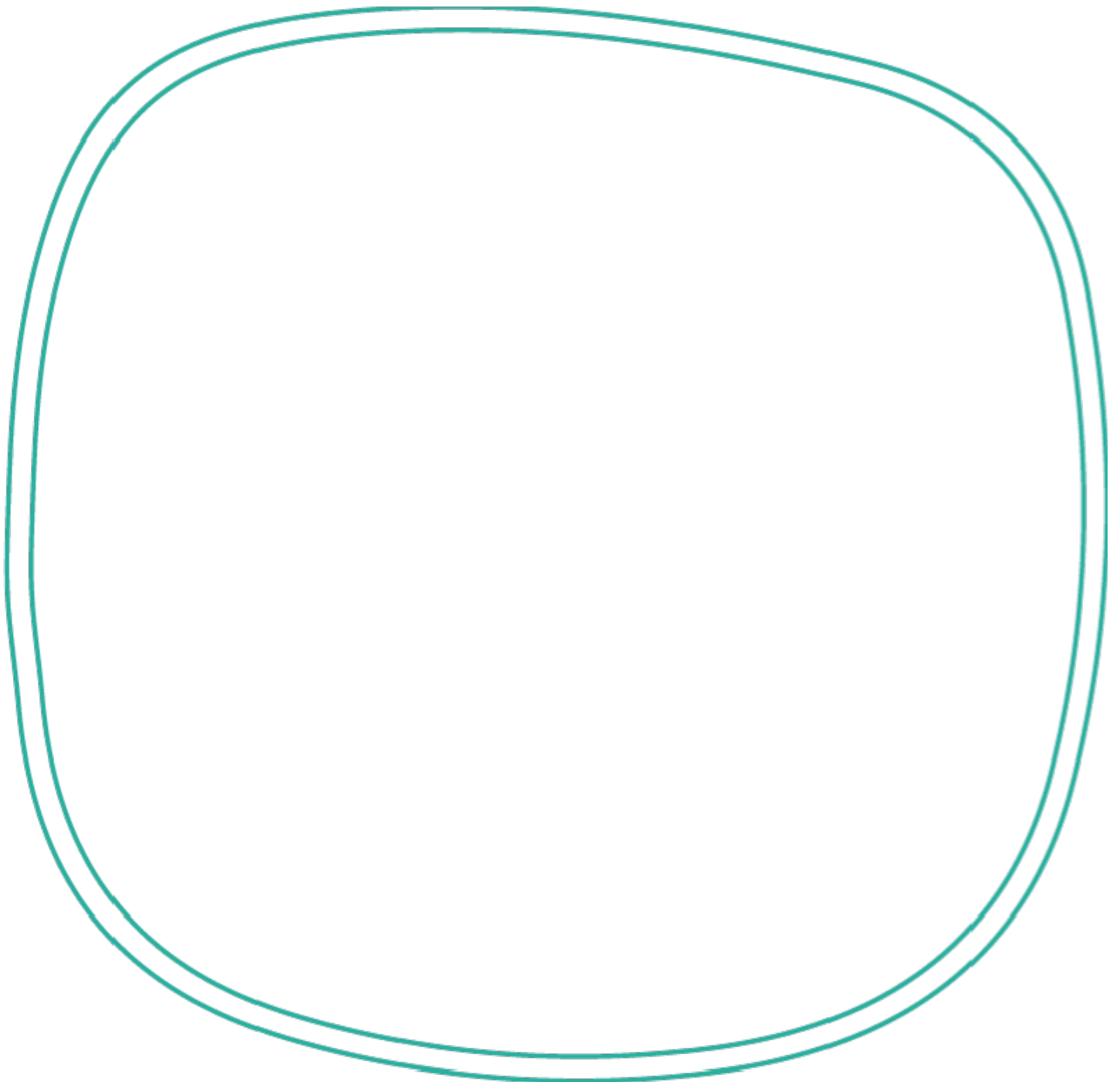
- Draw where you felt that fear in your body.
- What color do you think matches how you felt?
- What was happening, and where were you?





What does hope look and feel like to you.

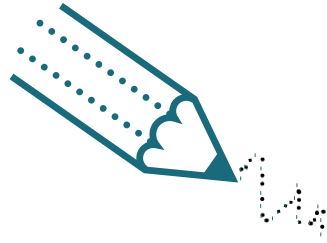
Draw your own picture of hope below.



Gratitude Gifts

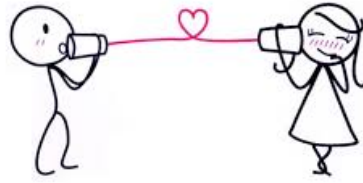
Practicing gratitude means being thankful for people and things that mean something to us. When you feel down, being grateful can make you feel better again. They are like gifts that bring us joy and happiness. What are some things that you feel grateful for in your life? Some examples might include:

- *A loving family member*
- *Your loving pet*
- *A happy memory*
- *A safe place you enjoy*
- *Your best friend*
- *A favorite toy*



Write or draw something that you are grateful for in each of the gift boxes below.





Spread Kindness

Spreading Kindness Activity

Before we are kind to each other, we must first be kind to ourselves. Have a young person send kindness to themselves and then to others to build a respectful and peaceful classroom, neighborhood, and/or community.

What To Do:

1. Share with children and youth that today they are going to spend time sending good wishes to themselves and others. Tell them doing this can help create a chain of kindness in the world.
2. First, have them place their hands on their hearts and take some deep breaths.
3. Ask them to imagine that someone who cares about them has just come into the room and given them a hug.
4. Ask, "What does it feel like when you imagine this person giving you a hug?" They may share that they feel happy, safe, or a warm glow in their hearts.
5. Explain that they have felt kindness inside of themselves, and now they will send kind thoughts to someone else.
6. Now, have them think about phrases that make them feel happy, healthy, safe, and/or at peace.
7. Next, ask them to think of a classmate, neighbor, community member, friend, or loved one they'd like to send good wishes to or who they think might need to receive them.
8. Invite youth to think of their own kind messages and wishes in their own words.
9. Have them create their card, note, and/or drawing and prepare to deliver and/or mail it the person(s) they chose.

Depending on their age, some children may find it helpful to complete the Sending Kindness Reflection worksheet on the next page.

Spreading Kindness Reflection Questions



Sending good wishes to yourselves and others creates a chain of kindness. Decide who you will send kindness to, then close your eyes and picture what it would look like to send good thoughts their way. Write down your reflections below:

How did sending kindness feel in your body?

Why should we send kindness to ourselves?

Why should we send kindness to others?

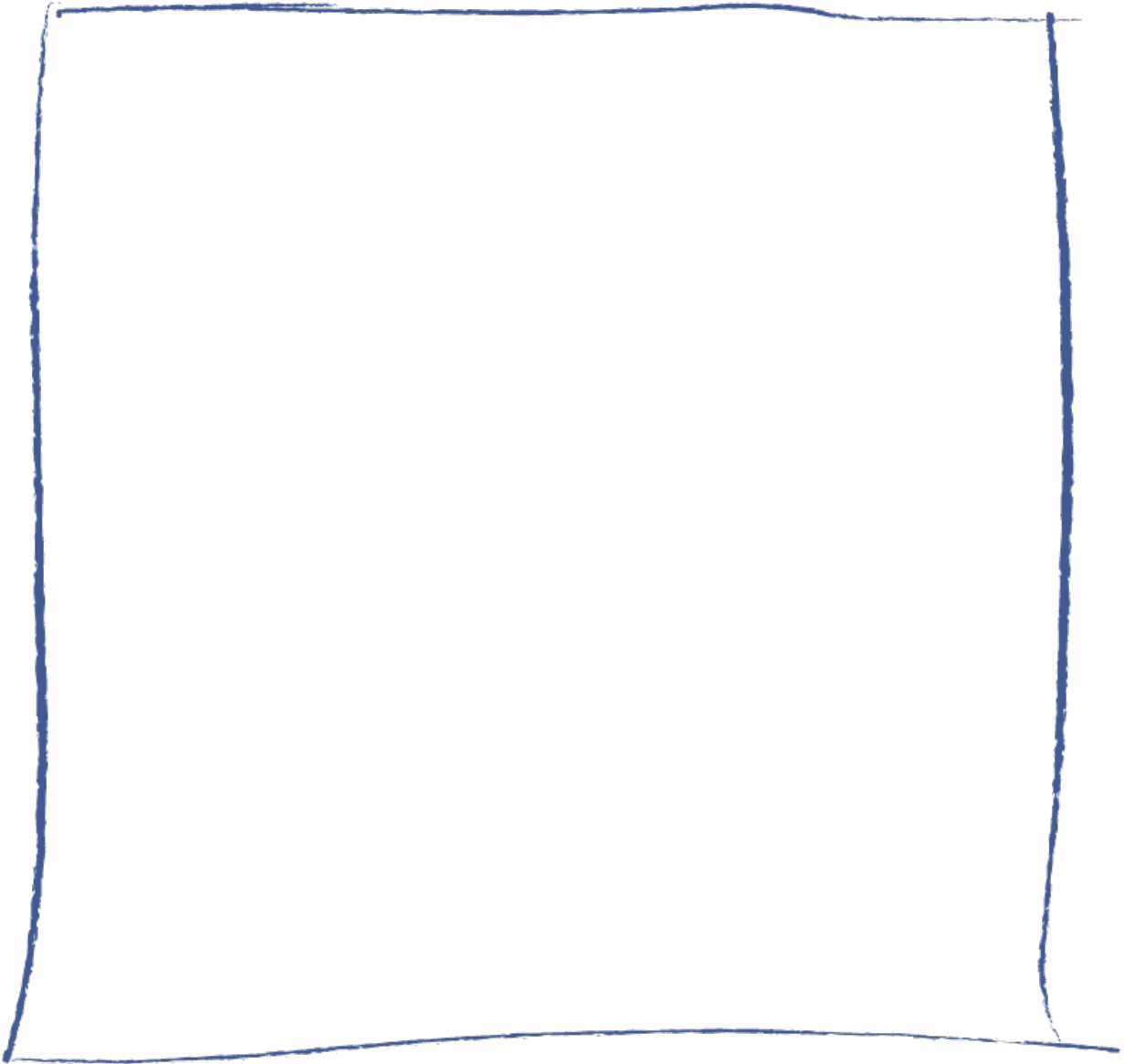
Draw a picture of spreading kindness.

Write other kind wishes for yourself, your family, or your community.



We all have a hand in caring for each other. Trace and color your hand below and share a few ways that you can show kindness to your classmates, friends, and loved ones.

Here's my hand::



I show kindness to others by::



Mindfulness Exercises for Children

The Feeling Exercise

Gather interesting objects such as marbles, a stuffed animal, play dough or anything else interesting to touch and hold. Have a child hold an object and spend a minute noticing the texture, the shape, and how it feels in their hand. Then ask the child to describe what they felt.

The Seeing Game

Ask a child to look silently around the room for one minute. Encourage them to find things they haven't noticed before. This can be something large like a painting or poster on the wall or something small like a crack in the ceiling or magnet on the refrigerator. After a minute, ask the child to share interesting things they noticed.

Ocean Breathing

Have a child sit or lie down in a comfortable position. Have them breathe in slowly through their nose, then out through their mouth as if blowing through a straw. Point out that the slow and steady breathing sounds like ocean waves gently crashing on the shore. Have them continue breathing this way for two minutes.

The Power of Listening

Ring a bell, chime, or something similar that creates a long sound. Ask the child to listen and silently raise their hand when they can't hear the sound anymore. Then ask them to listen for other sounds for one minute. Afterward, ask the child to tell you what other sounds they heard.

Create a Stress Ball

Have a child fill a balloon with rice, small beads, sand, or shredded paper until it's the size of a ball that fits in their hand. Have the child use this as a fidget or to hold and squeeze when they are feeling anxious, stressed, worried, or angry and try *The Feeling Exercise* above with it.

The Body Squeezing Exercise

Have a child sit or lie down in a comfortable position. Ask them to squeeze and then relax the muscles in their body one at a time. After they release each muscle, ask them to pay attention to how it feels when they relax. Here are some tips to help them squeeze particular parts of the body:

1. Curl your toes like you are trying to pick up a pencil with your feet.
2. Tense your legs as if you are standing on your tippy-toes, trying to look over a fence.
3. Suck in your stomach like you are trying to fit through a narrow opening.
4. Make fists with your hands like you are squeezing all of the juice out of an orange.
5. Pretend a bug landed on your nose and you are trying to get it off without using your hands. Scrunch your nose and face and wiggle your jaw to make it fly away.

The Five Senses Exercise

Have a child into a comfortable position and stop talking. Begin to call out each of the five senses one at a time (sight, smell, sound, taste, touch) and ask what them to say what they notice about each one until you move to the next. This is a great activity for the outdoors in nice weather.

Each of these activities can be adapted for groups by taking turns or working in pairs.

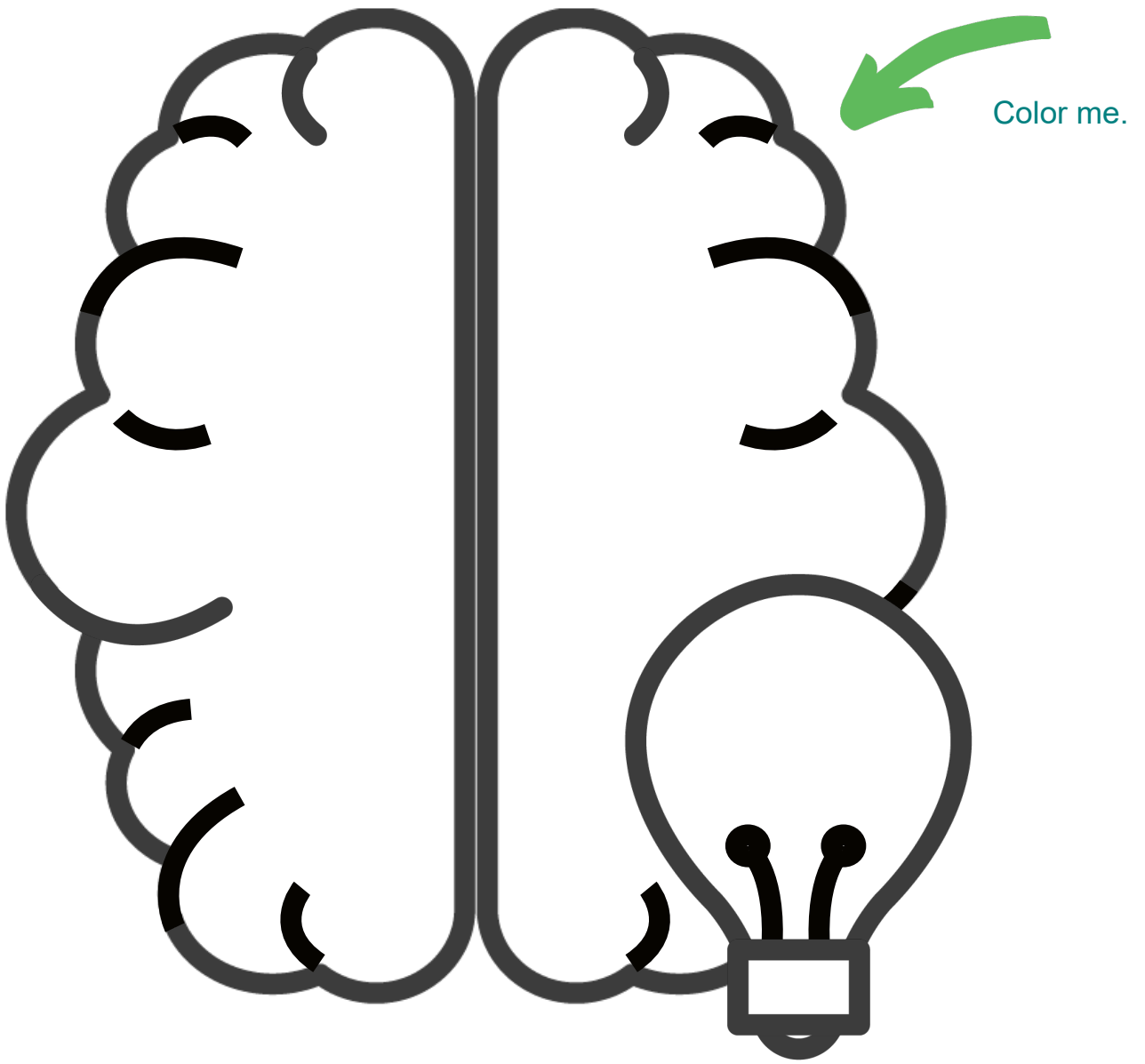


RESPOND TO A TOPIC:

Read about May as Mental Health Month and respond to the prompt below.

During May, we celebrate Children's Mental Health Acceptance Week and Mental Health Awareness Month represented by a green ribbon. The month focuses on bringing tools, resources, and education about mental health to the public. Mental health involves one's social, emotional, and psychological well-being. Mental health affects a person's thoughts, feelings, and actions. Positive mental health allows for better mental clarity, stress management, and daily productivity. Mental Health Awareness Month aims to celebrate self-care and encourage people to discuss and prioritize mental health.

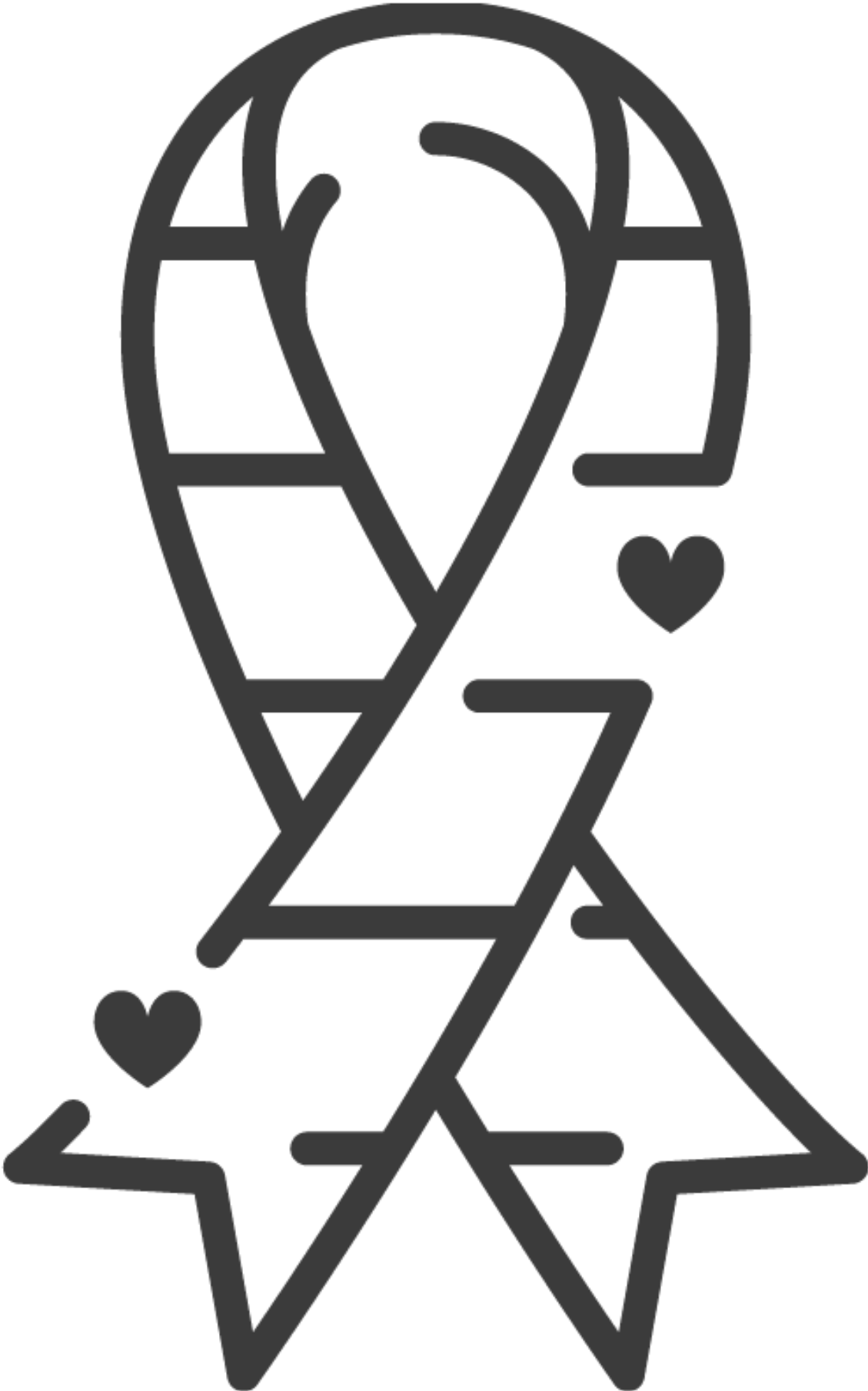
What are some things in your life that create stress for you, and how do you cope and find happiness? Who is someone you can talk to about mental health, and what makes them a good resource for you? What self-care activities help you take care of your mental health? Explain.



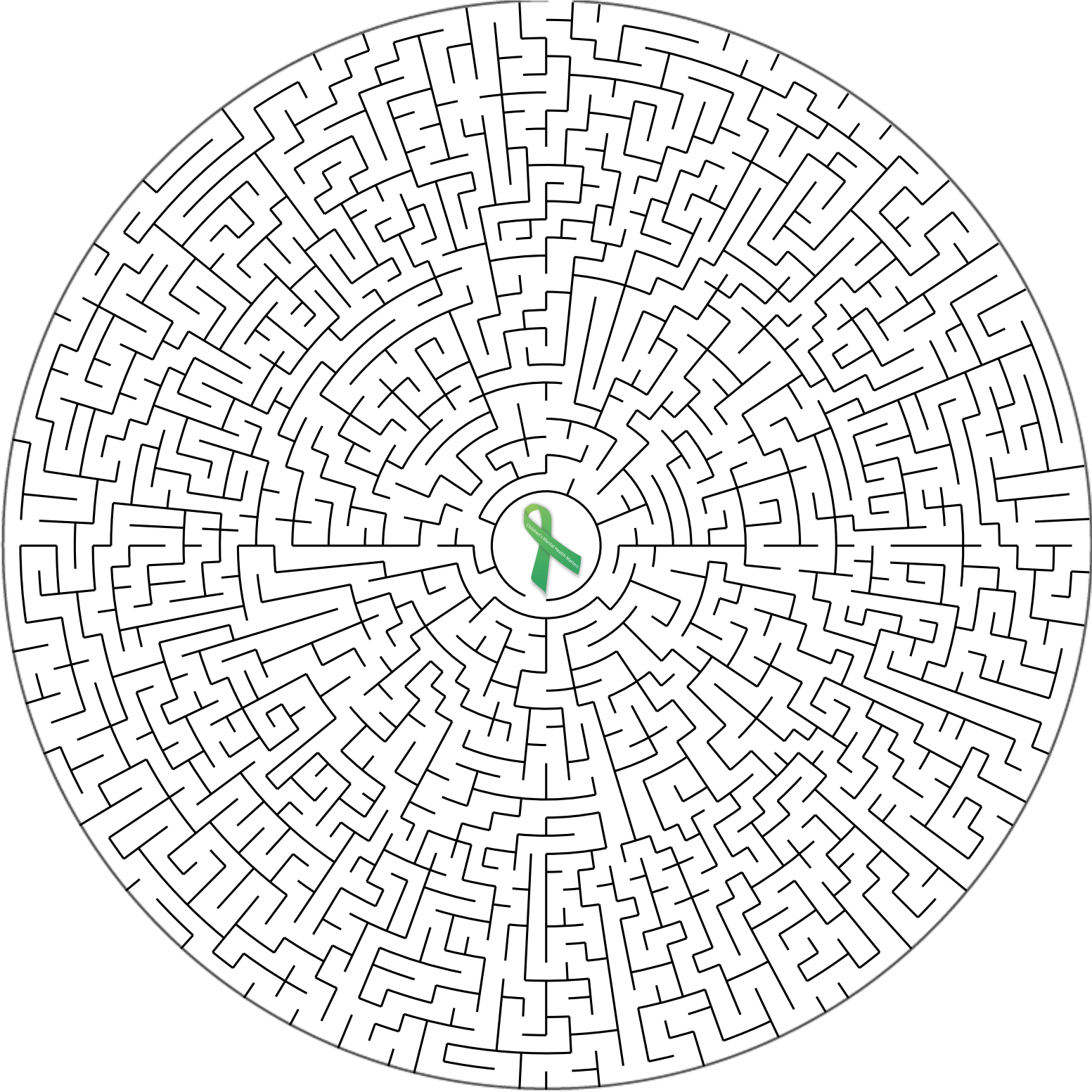
How do you think we can promote positive mental health?

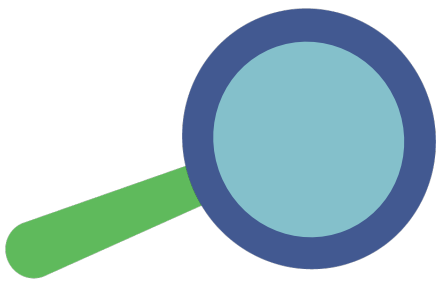
Write your ideas below and share them with teachers, friends, and your family.

Color your own mental health ribbon. Use green or any other colors that make you feel happy, healthy, and hopeful.



Find your way to the green support ribbon in the maze below.





Find the words listed below that relate to children's mental health and the hope, strength, and resilience of families.

C T L B S L G T I A M E N T A L F J
S H G N A G U W S N C E I Z V G Y J
S C W B U R H H I O Q J T Z V X H C
E W H A K E J O E S I A Z G J K H L
N F Y O R E U E P A N E W K M Y V U
D C U O G N M Z Z E V A Y B J I J V
N S B D U J V H K J M H U Z G P U P
I P I F O T H A P F C Z S O L U P C
K F O S N Y H N B A G V T A M O E L
D J W J Y D J E N J L M I X R H T X
B D G P V U O R X A V U G T S T A V
D Q V H Z S Q D Y W W A M L F G C L
D J G E L K K L A A G F A P D N O A
W H W R E A M I N R H M F Y Y E V K
Y E W H K C V H L E T B P E L R D M
F A S G V W I C G N F S D X I T A S
K L A B Q Y M O S E W I A G M S D L
F T B F R C L K V S I G G P A L Y S
Q H I U Q K K P W S D M E D F T I P
N T R O P P U S R Z E U K O D Q U T

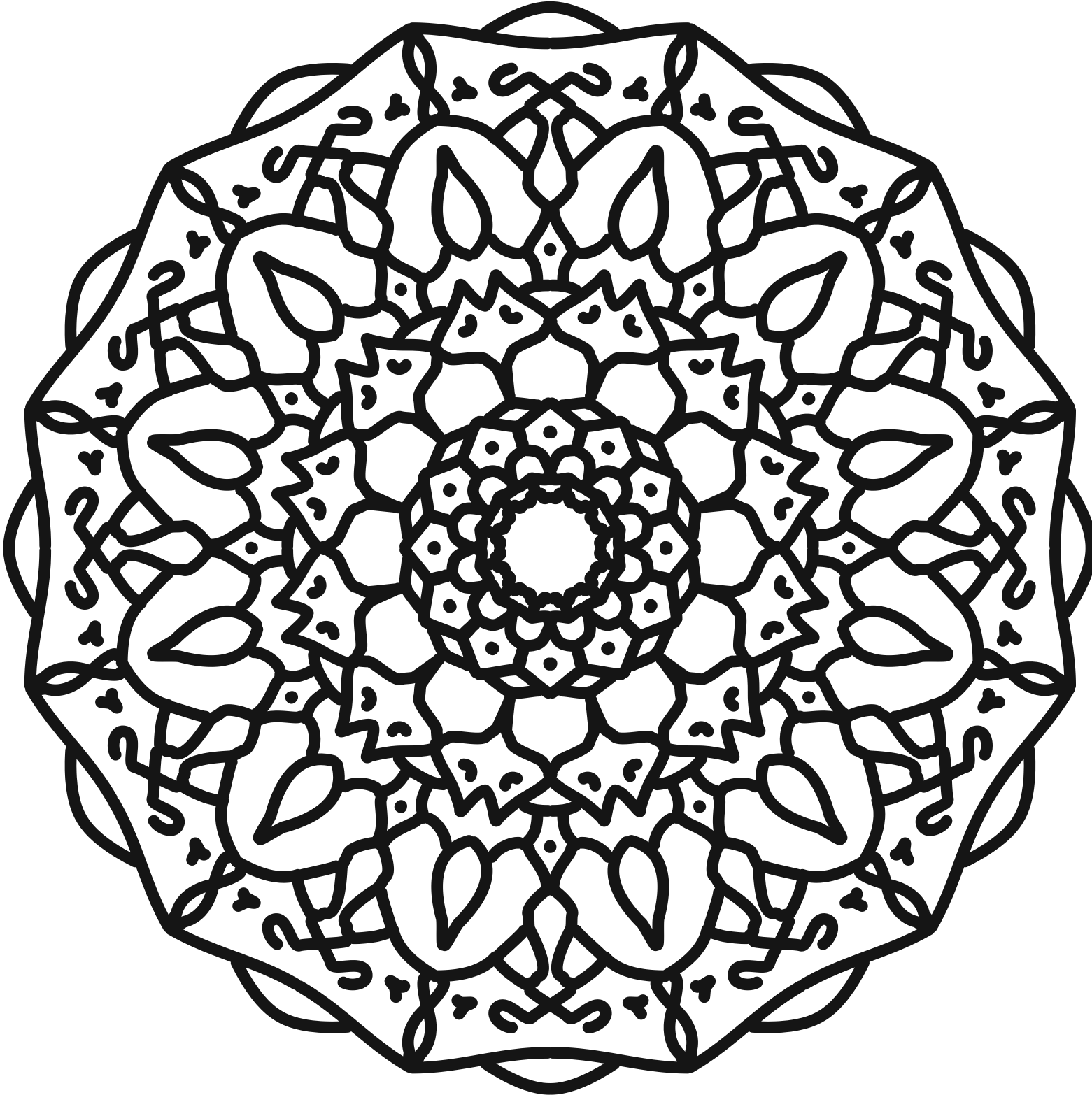
MENTAL
VOICE
GREEN
SUPPORT

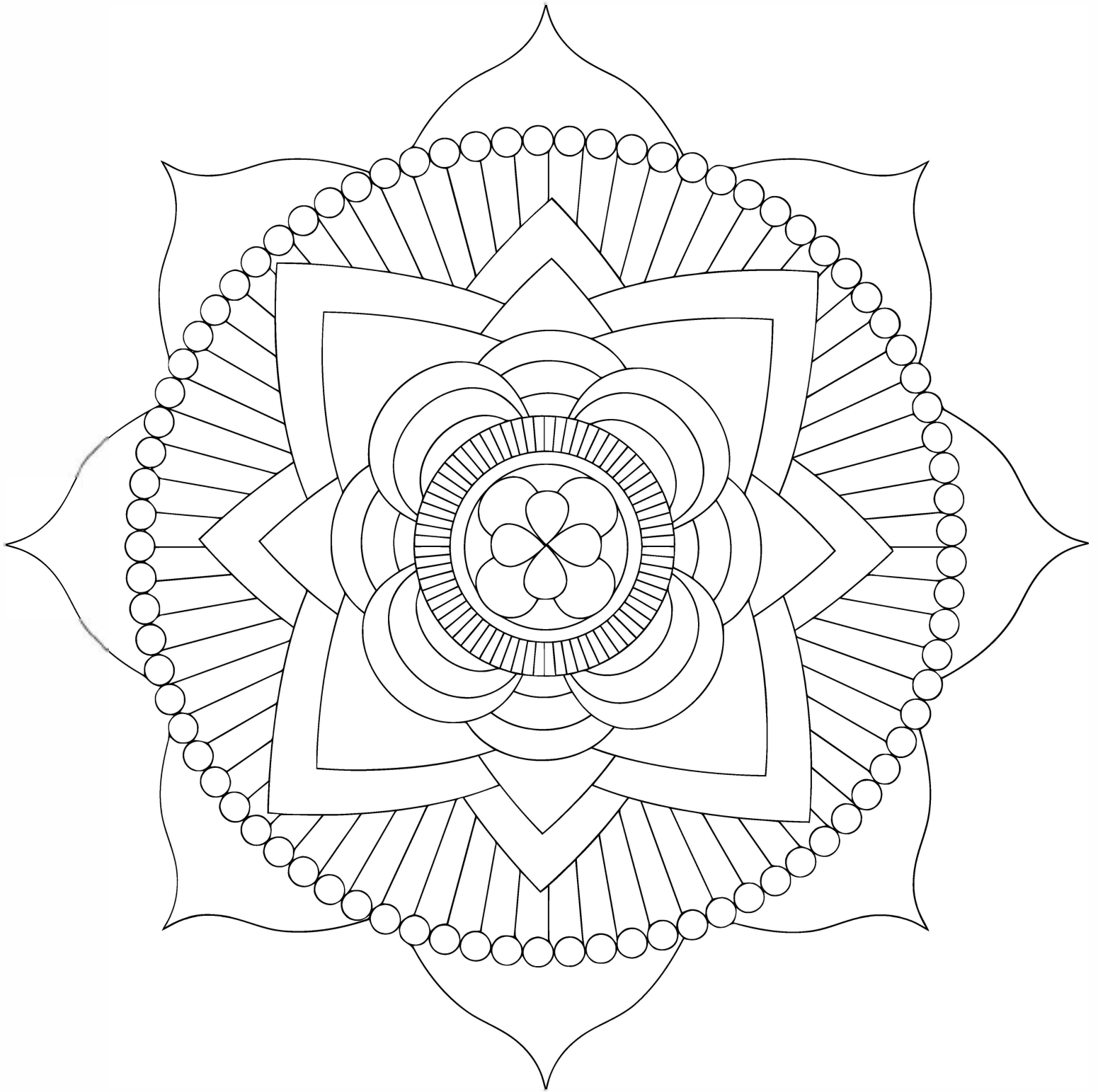
AWARENESS
SUPPORT
KINDNESS
HEALTH

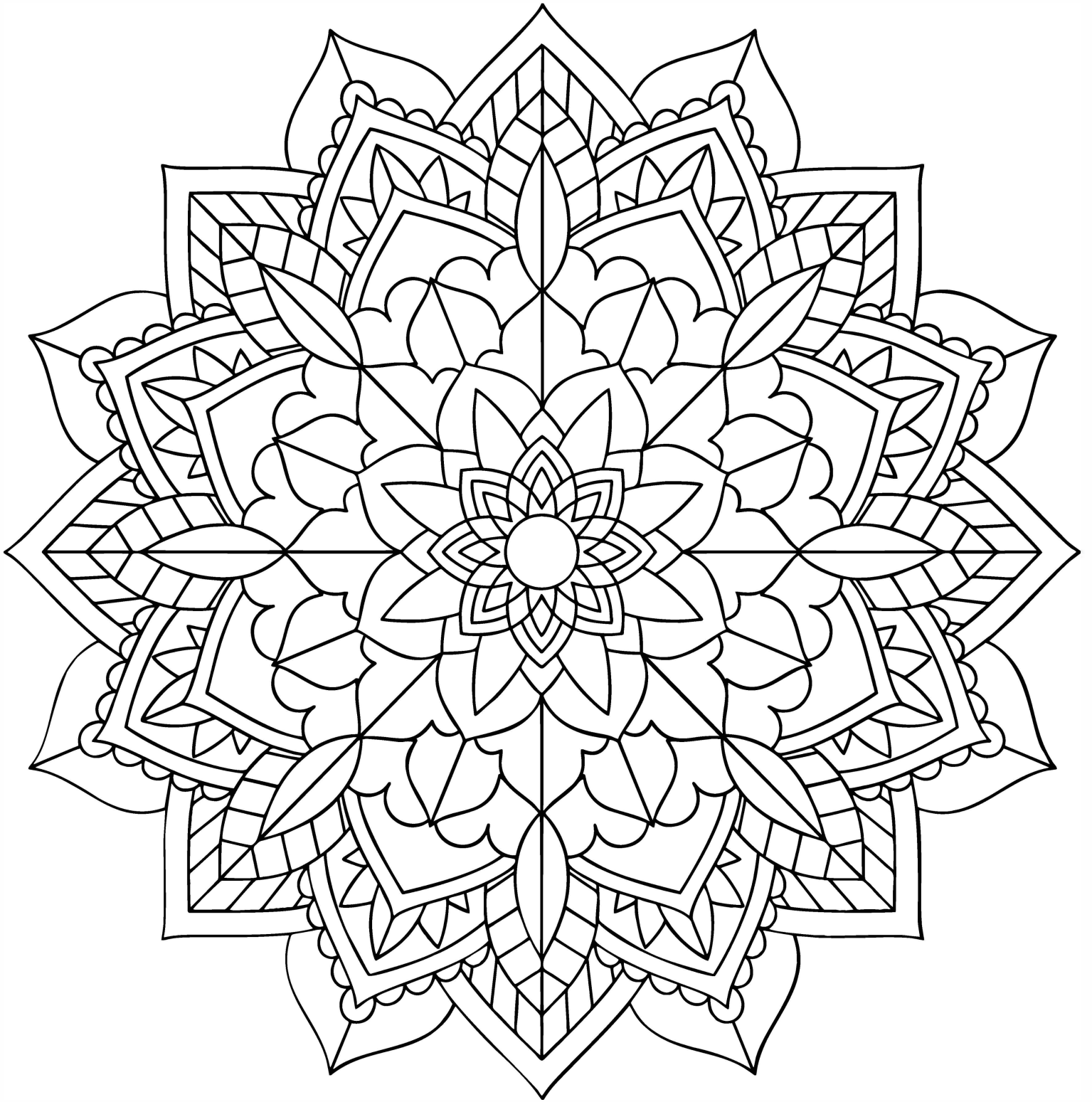
FAMILY
STIGMA
ADVOCATE
YOUTH

STRENGTH
HOPE
CHILDREN
RESILIENCE

Enjoy coloring these pages just for fun or when you need a little self-care.









Join us in promoting action.

We are making a positive change and you can help. The goal is simple. To foster understanding of mental health challenges and needs. Take the pledge to support this important cause.

Here's how you can show your support and help promote action.

- Wear green especially during acceptance Week in May, and tell others why.
- Read up on mental health challenges, the assumptions and judgments associated with them, and ways you can stop them. Below are resources to help you get started.
 - [Reframe Your Language When Talking about Mental Health](#)
 - [4 Ways You Can Stop Mental Health Myths](#)
 - [What Acceptance Means to Children and Youth](#)
- Share the information you've learned with family and friends.
- Get involved in mental health efforts in your community.
- Have your parents [sign up](#) to receive the National Federation of Families news, alerts, and information.

Follow the National Federation of Families:



www.ffcmh.org/cmhawcampaign

Children's Mental Health Matters!