

Dealing

with

It

*A Coping Skills Matching
Game*



Dealing with It: A Coping Skills Matching Game

DESIGNED FOR

Children with anxiety
Children with depression
Children with anger management problems
Children with poor emotional regulation

INTRODUCTION

Dealing with It: A Coping Skills Matching Game is similar to a traditional matching game but it uses cognitive-behavioral coping skills as its content. It is intended to help children identify various coping skills that can help them through difficult situations or feelings. Daily life has many challenges that require emotional management and behavioral adaptation in order to respond well to environmental demands. Unfortunately many children lack the needed skills to accomplish this. They resort to anger outbursts, aggressive behaviors, withdrawal, rebellion, regression, etc. which diminish their quality of life.

None of us were born with the ability to easily utilize coping skills when threatening and stressful experiences occur. Instead, coping skills are learned. While many children learn these skills in families, other children must be taught them by other interested adults.

Children can benefit from the game by

- Learning new kinds of coping skills
- Identifying specific stressful situations where specific coping strategies can be utilized
- Practicing frustration tolerance

GAME RATIONALE

Besides normal developmental changes and challenges, children experience a variety of problems. Some of these problems include abuse, parents' divorce/conflict, sibling conflict, peer pressures and conflict, financial problems, depression, drug or alcohol abuse, etc. Children in these situations who lack healthy coping skills are vulnerable to a plethora of psychological problems (Compas et al. 2001; Eisenberg et al. 1997; Skinner 1995). Indeed, poor coping skills are associated with many internalizing and externalizing problems in childhood (eg. Holahan & Moos, 1991; Mooreland & Dumas, 2008).

Conversely, children who exhibit high levels of positive coping behaviors are better able to deal with normative and stressful life events (Compas et al. 2001) and better manage the stressors of living with multiple risk factors (D'Imperio, Dubow, & Ippolito, 2000). The use of positive coping strategies reduces suicidal ideation and depression (Logan,

2009; Stark, et. al., 2009), ameliorates emotional dysregulation from bullying (Spence, et. al., 2009), adds to adaptive family functioning and greater life satisfaction (Ambrosino, et. al., 2008), is associated with better health outcomes (Steiner, et. al., 2002), and contributes to overall resiliency (Everly & Brown, 2009). Overall, children with positive coping behaviors follow a healthier/more adaptive developmental pathway than children with limited coping skills.

Various evidence-based treatment approaches have included the teaching of coping skills. For example, coping skills are taught prior to the processing of children's traumatic experiences in trauma-focused CBT (eg. Cohen, & Mannarino, 2008), and prior to children's painful medical procedures (eg. Cohen, 2008).

Dealing with It can be used as reinforcement to other traditional interventions with children with both internalizing and externalizing behaviors. The skills that are learned not only assist children with current psychosocial stressors, they can last a lifetime.

PLAYERS

2-4 players, ages 5-12

PROVIDED GAME MATERIALS

Game cards

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS NEEDED

Printer

Paper **OR** cardstock **OR** perforated business card stock

Scissors

Glue or glue stick (if using regular paper)

BEFORE YOU PLAY

If using regular paper:

1. Print out pages 6-15 of this document
2. Paste the fronts of the cards (pp. 6-10 of this document) to the backs of the cards (pp. 11-15 of this document)
3. Cut along all the dotted lines (There are four blank cards provided for you to add some of your own coping skills.)

OPTIONAL: laminate prior to cutting along the dotted lines

OR

If using card stock:

1. Load card stock into the printer (Make sure that none of the sheets stick together.)
2. Print out the fronts of the cards (pp. 6-10 of this document)

3. Reload the printed fronts of the cards into your printer so that the backs can be printed. Make sure that the card stock is facing the right direction. Print pp. 11-15 of this document.
4. Cut along all the dotted lines (There are four blank cards provided for you to add some of your own coping skills.)

OBJECT OF THE GAME

The object of the game is to match more pairs of cards than the other player(s). The player with the most matched pairs wins.

GAME SET-UP

Shuffle *all* of the cards together. Cards are then laid out in a grid format, face down in the middle of the playing area.

RULES

Players decide who goes first. This can be decided by flipping a coin, or doing *Rock/Paper/Scissors*, or any other fair method. Players then take turns flipping pairs of cards over. On each turn, the player will first turn one card over, then a second. If the two cards match, the player describes a stressful situation where this coping skill could be used in her/his life. S/he then removes the two matching cards from the game and sets them beside her/him to count later. If the two cards do not match, the cards are turned back over and placed where they were previously. (When cards are turned over, it is important for players to remember where they are for when the matching card is turned up later in the game.) After all of the cards have been matched, players count the number of pairs that they have collected during the game. The player with the most matched pairs wins.

REFERENCES

- Ambrosino, J.M., Fennie, K., Whittemore, R., Jaser, S., Dowd, M.F., & Grey, M. (2008). Short-term effects of coping skills training in school-age children with type 1 diabetes. *Pediatric Diabetes*, 9(3), 74-82.
- Cohen, J.A. & Mannarino, A.P. (2008). Trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy for children and parents. *Child & Adolescent Mental Health*, 13(4), 158-162.
- Cohen, L.L. (2008). Behavioral approaches to anxiety and pain management for pediatric venous access. *Pediatrics*, 122, 134-139.
- Compas, B., Conner-Smith, J., Saltzman, H., Thomsen, A., & Wadsworth, M. (2001). Coping with stress during childhood and adolescence: Problems, progress, and potential in theory and research. *Psychological Bulletin*, 127, 87-127.
- D'Imperio, R. L., Dubow, E. F., & Ippolito, M. F. (2000). Resilient and stress-affected adolescents in an urban setting. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology*, 29, 129-142.
- Eisenberg, N., Fabes, R. A., & Guthrie, I. (1997). Coping with stress: The roles and regulation of development. In J. N. Sandler & S. A. Wolchik (Eds.), *Handbook of*

- Cohen, J.A. & Mannarino, A.P. (2008). Trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy for children and parents. *Child & Adolescent Mental Health*, 13(4), 158-162.
- Cohen, L.L. (2008). Behavioral approaches to anxiety and pain management for pediatric venous access. *Pediatrics*, 122, 134-139.
- Compas, B., Conner-Smith, J., Saltzman, H., Thomsen, A., & Wadsworth, M. (2001). Coping with stress during childhood and adolescence: Problems, progress, and potential in theory and research. *Psychological Bulletin*, 127, 87-127.
- D'Imperio, R. L., Dubow, E. F., & Ippolito, M. F. (2000). Resilient and stress-affected adolescents in an urban setting. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology*, 29, 129-142.
- Eisenberg, N., Fabes, R. A., & Guthrie, I. (1997). Coping with stress: The roles and regulation of development. In J. N. Sandler & S. A. Wolchik (Eds.), *Handbook of children's coping with common stressors: Linking theory, research, and intervention* (pp. 41-70). New York: Plenum.
- Everly, G.S., & Brown, S. (2009). *The resilient child: Seven essential lessons for your child's happiness and success*. New York, NY, US: DiaMedica Publications.
- Logan, J.E. (2009). Prevention factors for suicide ideation among abused pre/early adolescent youths. *Injury Prevention*, 15(4), 278-280.
- Moreland, A. & Dumas, J. (2008). Evaluating child coping competence: Theory and Measurement. *Journal of Child & Family Studies*, 17(3), 437-454.
- Skinner, E. A. (1995). *Perceived control, motivation, and coping*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Spence, S.H., De Young, A., Toon, C., & Bond, S. (2009). Longitudinal examination of the associations between emotional dysregulation, coping responses to peer provocation, and victimization in children. *Australian Journal of Psychology*, 61(3), p145-155.
- Stark, K.D., Krumholz, L.S., Ridley, K.P., & Hamilton, A. (2009). Cognitive behavioral therapy for youth depression: The ACTION treatment program. In Susan Nolen-Hoeksema & Lori M. Hilt's (Eds.) *Handbook of depression in adolescents*. New York, NY, US: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.
- Steiner, H., Erickson, S. J., Hernandez, N. L., & Paveleski, R. (2002). Coping styles as correlates of health in high school students. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 30(5), 326-335.

**Listen
to Music**



**Listen
to Music**



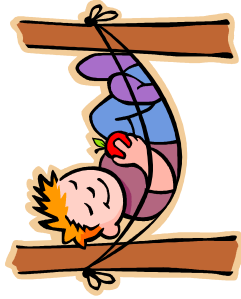
Write



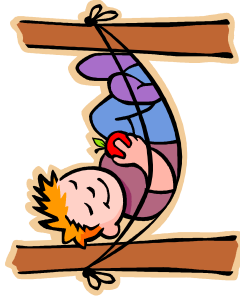
Write



Relax



Relax



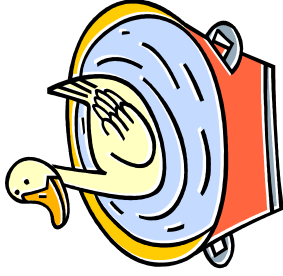
Exercise



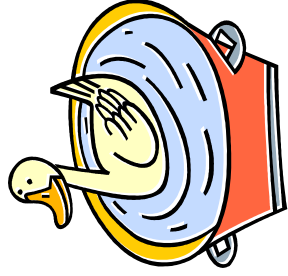
Exercise



Play
with
Water!



Play
with
Water!



Get Support



Get Support



Count to 10



Count to 10



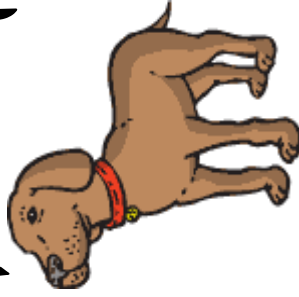
Think of a
Peaceful
Place



Think of a
Peaceful
Place



**Spend time
with a Pet**



**Talk it out
with an Adult**



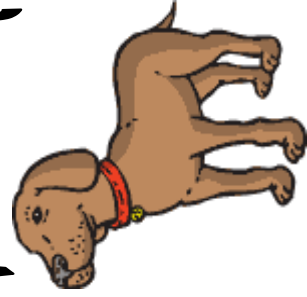
**Talk it out
with a friend**



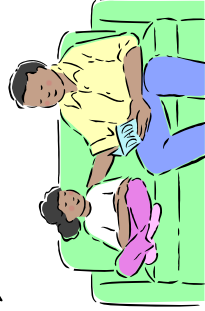
Take a Bath



**Spend time
with a Pet**



**Talk it out
with an Adult**



**Talk it out
with a friend**



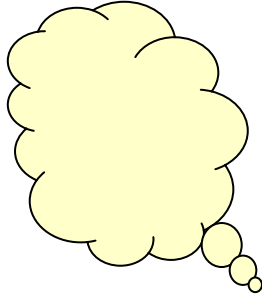
Take a Bath



Draw a Picture



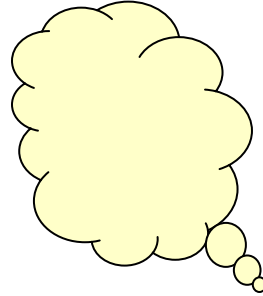
Tell yourself,
"It's OK,
it's OK."



Draw a Picture



Tell yourself,
"It's OK,
it's OK."



Squeeze Play Dough



Play a Sport



Squeeze Play Dough



Play a Sport



Blow Bubbles



Blow Bubbles



Think of Puffy

White Clouds



Think of Puffy

White Clouds



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It



Dealing

with

It

