

The  
**EMOTIONAL  
RECOVERY**  
Resource Kit™

# What Tomorrow May Bring

*A Story/Activity Book for Children  
about Recovering from Traumatic Events*



 **THE BUREAU FOR AT-RISK YOUTH**  
PROMOTING GROWTH THROUGH KNOWLEDGE  
A Guidance Channel Company  
1-800-99-YOUTH  
www.GuidanceChannel.com



The  
**EMOTIONAL  
RECOVERY**  
Resource Kit™

by  
Debra Whiting Alexander, Ph.D.



<b>Memory</b>	Something you can remember for a long time, like a person, place, idea, smell, or experience.
<b>Natural</b>	Something ordinary that is to be expected.
<b>Opinion</b>	A belief or idea of your own that may not be true for someone else.
<b>Ordinary</b>	Usual and normal.
<b>Practicing religion</b>	The way someone expresses spiritual beliefs.
<b>Predictable</b>	What you can expect to happen over and over again in the same way.
<b>Protect</b>	To keep someone or something safe from harm and danger.
<b>Respectful</b>	Acting in polite and considerate ways, and making others just as important as yourself.
<b>Rumor</b>	A story or idea that spreads around between people that is wrong or untrue.
<b>Shock</b>	A sudden and frightening sensation that makes you feel stunned.
<b>Survive</b>	To live through and cope with something very difficult.
<b>Tragedy</b>	A very serious, sad, and unhappy event.
<b>Values</b>	The personal ideas or rules in life that you choose to live by because they are important to you.
<b>War</b>	A conflict or fight where weapons are used between nations.

# **What Tomorrow May Bring**

*A Story/Activity Book for Children  
about Recovering from Traumatic Events*

by  
Debra Whiting Alexander, Ph.D.

© 2002 The Bureau For At-Risk Youth  
All rights reserved. Permission is granted to users of this book to reproduce pages marked  
"Okay to Copy" for professional use. Reproduction of other pages is not permissible.

ISBN #1-56688-613-9

**THE BUREAU<sup>®</sup>  
FOR AT-RISK YOUTH**  
PROMOTING GROWTH THROUGH KNOWLEDGE  
*A Guidance Channel Company*  
1-800-99-YOUTH  
www.GuidanceChannel.com

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

It Started Out Like Any Other Day .....	3
Activity: Understanding What Really Happened .....	5
Understanding the Feelings Inside Me .....	7
Learning How to Feel Better.....	8
Activity: How to Begin Talking About It .....	12
When We Lose People We Love .....	14
Activity: My Favorite Ways to Relax and Have Fun.....	16
When Worries Come Back.....	21
Activity: Lots of People Can Help .....	23
Heroes Can Rise Above Hate .....	25
We Can Help the World Become a Better Place .....	28
Activity: What We Can Do .....	29
Words to Discuss as They Relate to This Story .....	31

NOTE: Each activity has two versions.



indicates that the activity is for younger children.



indicates that the activity is for older children.

## Words to Discuss as They Relate to This Story

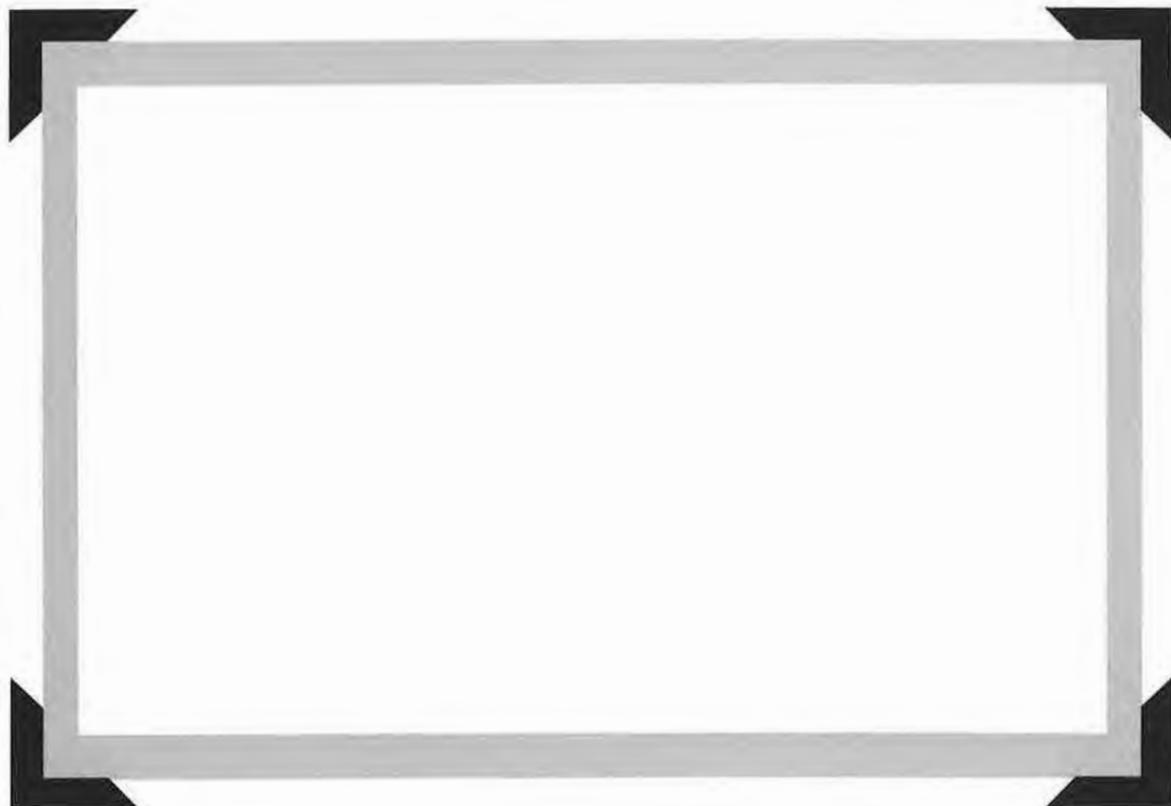
*These words are listed in alphabetical order. The definitions are context-related, rather than traditional dictionary definitions.*

<b>Attack</b>	To harm someone with or without weapons.
<b>Beliefs</b>	Strong personal ideas or opinions that people hold, even if others don't agree.
<b>Confusion</b>	The feeling you have when something doesn't make sense or you are mixed up about something.
<b>Counselor</b>	A person who has special training in listening and giving advice and information to others.
<b>Courage</b>	Bravery and the willingness to do something because you believe it's the right thing to do.
<b>Emergency</b>	A sudden situation that people respond right away to with help.
<b>Experience</b>	Something you've gone through that affected you in a personal, meaningful, or powerful way.
<b>Faith</b>	A way to deeply trust and believe in something even if it can't be seen or heard.
<b>Freedom</b>	Having choices about the way you live and what you believe.
<b>Frightening</b>	Something that scares you and makes you feel afraid.
<b>Hate</b>	Extreme dislike of someone or something.
<b>Hero</b>	Someone who cares enough to help others.
<b>Hope</b>	To trust and expect a happy, positive, and good outcome.
<b>Language</b>	The words people use to talk and communicate with.



### What We Can Do

Attach a photo of yourself and describe your personality, beliefs, and values. Write about the changes you think would help the world be a better place, and what needs to happen for those changes to occur. If you need more room, use another sheet of paper.



Horizontal lines for writing a response to the 'What We Can Do' prompt.

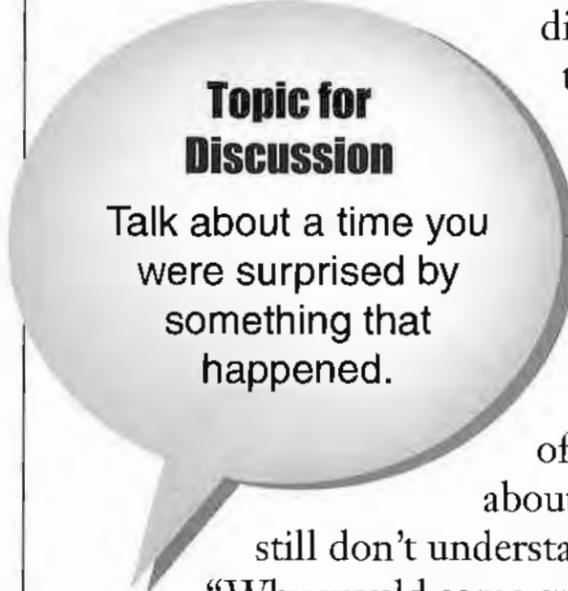
## It Started Out Like Any Other Day

The sky was blue and the sun was shining. It was a day in September, just like most days in September. It started out fine. I didn't think anything would go wrong, and it's hard to understand why it did. Everyone knows that from the minute our country was attacked, there was nothing normal about that day again. On a day that started like any regular day, the course of history changed.

When I found out, I felt like the world began spinning out of control. I said to myself, "This can't be happening!" But it was. I couldn't believe my ears. What the television and grownups around me were saying confused



me, and I didn't understand it all. But I could tell this was probably more serious than anything that had ever happened to our country before.



### Topic for Discussion

Talk about a time you were surprised by something that happened.

Since that day, from one end of our nation to the other, kids like me have been thinking and feeling some of the same ways. Some of us talk about it and some of us don't. Most of us still don't understand a lot. We have questions like, "Why would some grownups want to hurt so many people?" and "Why were so many people hurt so badly that they couldn't get better?" and just, "WHY?"

My feelings are still all mixed up. I just want yesterday, and today, and tomorrow to be like they used to be. I wish that day had never happened, and all of us could go back to living our normal lives.

Some kids saw what happened, some heard what happened, and some kids were right there when it happened. All across our country, families knew and loved someone who didn't make it to safety in time.

Some of my friends say they still see what happened in their minds. Others hear sounds that make them jump. Some kids say their parents seem different. They don't smile or laugh as much, and sometimes they have tears in their eyes. My little brother cries more too. Sometimes I feel homesick and dread being away from my family. And I'm not the only one.

**Topic for Discussion**

What did you notice about yourself or other people when something else sad or frightening happened?

A counselor at my school gave my class ideas about things we could do. She said everything we were going to talk about could help us cope with any scary or sad times in our lives.

The counselor said one of the first things we could do was to figure out as much as we could about what really happened, with the help of the grownups around us. She said that sometimes what we hear are only rumors, and that it's important to know if something is true before you believe it.

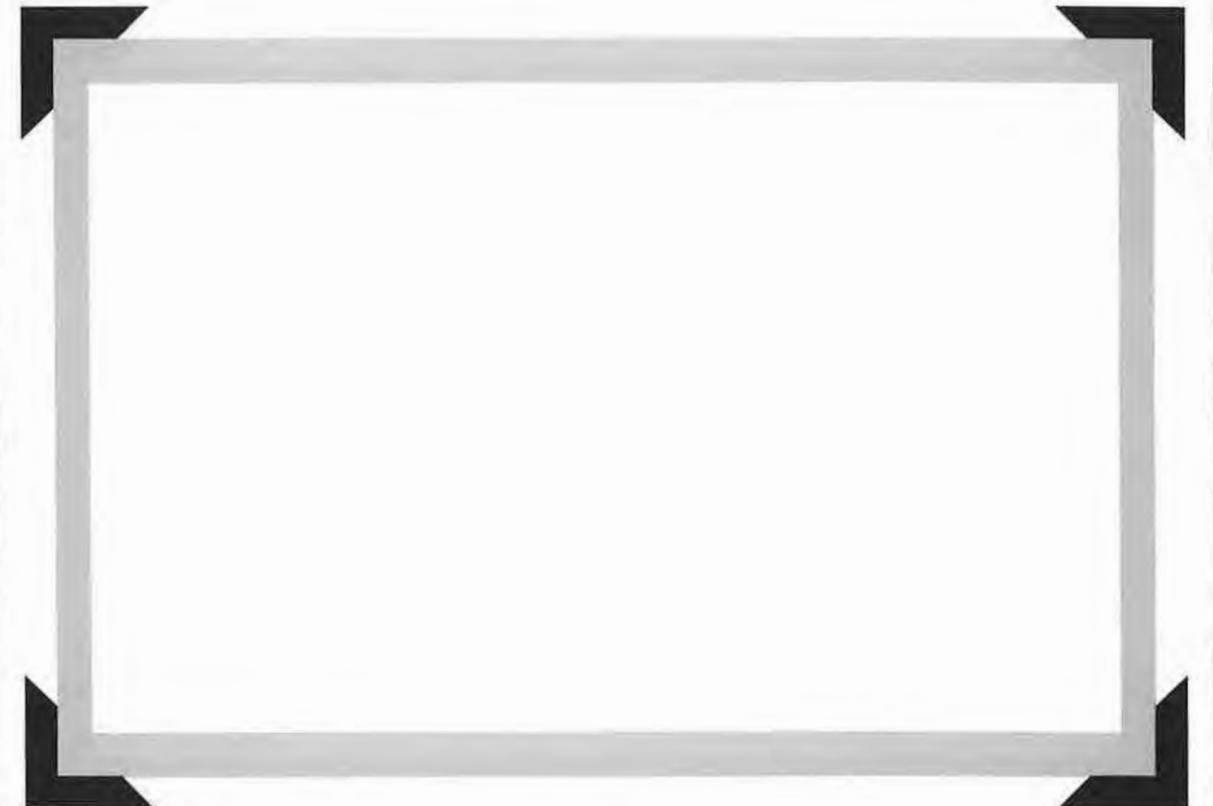


OKAY TO COPY



**What We Can Do**

Draw a picture or attach a photo of yourself. Then, list the ways you can make the world a better place and why you think your ideas will help.



Horizontal lines for writing a list of ideas.

## We Can Help the World Become a Better Place

I heard someone say that love is stronger than hate. Even though pain is a part of life, it's not all of life. And even though there will always be sadness in life and days that may be hard to get through, love stays strong and constant through it all. If we can remember that, I believe kids like me can make the world a better place.



No matter what tomorrow may bring, kids like me will see to it.

OKAY  
TO  
COPY



## Understanding What Really Happened

Draw a picture or write a story about what happened or what you think happened. Share it with a grownup who can help you understand more about it. If you need more space, use another sheet of paper.



### Understanding What Really Happened

Express your thoughts and feelings in a poem or story, or write an article for a newspaper, reporting the facts as you know them. Share your article with an adult who can help verify your information. If you need more space, use another sheet of paper.

Lined writing area for the 'Understanding What Really Happened' activity.



I've heard a lot of stories about heroes who have helped people in different ways. Some people I know are heroes too. When I think about all these heroes, it helps me feel better.

### The Heroes I Know About

The heroes I know are \_\_\_\_\_

Lined writing area for 'The heroes I know are'.

The heroes I've seen are \_\_\_\_\_

Lined writing area for 'The heroes I've seen are'.

The heroes I've heard about are \_\_\_\_\_

Lined writing area for 'The heroes I've heard about are'.

The heroes in my own life are \_\_\_\_\_

Lined writing area for 'The heroes in my own life are'.

I can be a hero wherever I am by \_\_\_\_\_

Lined writing area for 'I can be a hero wherever I am by'.

There are a lot of kids like me who care about our freedom to be different and to be safe. We understand that it's important to show respect for others in every situation we face. It's the right thing to do, and it's the caring way to live.

All across our country, kids have been heroes, helping others touched by personal tragedies. Whether it was the attack on our country, a hurricane, or any other unexpected problem, kids can find ways to help. Heroes come in all shapes and sizes, skin colors, religions, languages, and ages. They can even be someone like me.



## Understanding the Feelings Inside Me

The counselor told us that when something so sudden and frightening happens, most of us will feel different for a while. She told us we didn't have to feel afraid of the weird things we might be thinking and feeling. We learned that the ways we feel different are natural after such a shock. A lot of people feel different—even parents and other adults. She explained that most people feel, think, and act differently after something sad or frightening happens. And

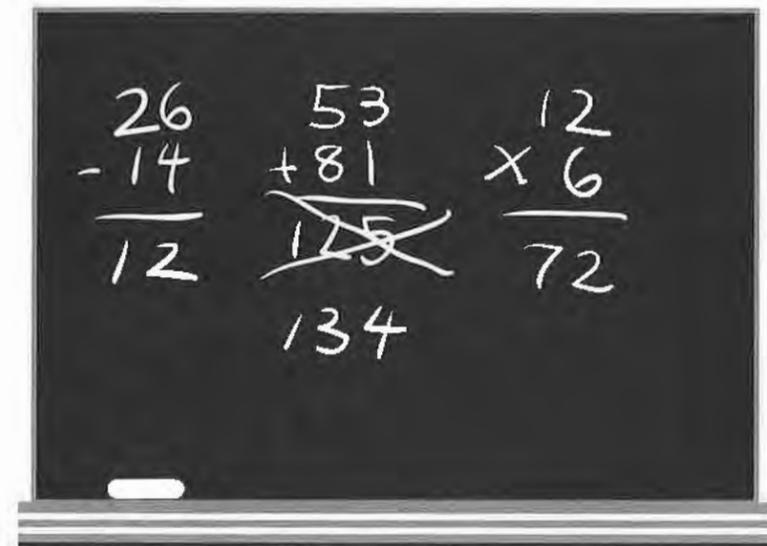
most people are afraid that more terrible things will happen. That's because sometimes they do. But usually they don't. Either way, it's hard when you feel like your whole world has changed.

### Topic for Discussion

Think about a time when you felt like your whole world changed. What was that like for you?

Something happened in my country that no one can forget. It can't be erased like a messed-up math problem, or thrown out like an old pair of shoes, or turned off like a noisy radio, or washed away with soap. And even though I close my eyes, it never goes away.

So what do you do with something you can't forget? That's a question lots of kids like me are asking.



### Learning How to Feel Better

The counselor told my class that all of our questions are very important to ask. She said some of the answers we would hear might help us make sense of what happened. Other answers might confuse us more, but we still need to keep asking. She said we need the grownups around us to keep listening to our questions.

#### My Own Questions

What I do understand is \_\_\_\_\_

Handwriting practice lines with large question marks scattered throughout.

What I don't understand is \_\_\_\_\_

Handwriting practice lines with large question marks scattered throughout.

### Heroes Can Rise Above Hate

Someone said the attack on our country happened out of hate.

My class decided hate can hurt people in a lot of ways. We agreed that just because our beliefs, language, choices, faith, skin color, clothes, or the way we practice our religion might be different, we should never stop caring for one another in respectful ways.

#### Topic for Discussion

Who do you know that is different from you in some way? In what ways are you alike? How can differences between people benefit everyone?





The adults who listen to me know how to answer a lot of questions, but they can't answer them all. They told me that's because I have such good questions. But they said it comes down to a few things that I could understand. They told me that pain is a part of life. And right now we are living through a painful part.

The counselor explained to us that she cared about all the different ways this attack had changed our lives. She said it might have changed us a little or a lot. And that it was a smart idea to talk about all the ways we felt different. Lots of different kinds of experiences can change your life for a while. Whether something bad happens to a country, city, neighborhood, family, or even one person, it takes time to feel like life will ever be normal again.

I also found out that lots of parents, teachers, counselors, and grownups all across our nation care about how children feel since this happened. They want to help us learn how to feel better again.



OKAY  
TO  
COPY



### Lots of People Can Help

Draw a picture of someone you know (or heard about) who helped a person in need. Talk about what they did and why.

I have learned that even though no one can know everything that will happen from one day to the next, most of life is predictable, and most days we do know what to expect.

**Topic for Discussion**

What can you usually count on happening every day?

When something happens that is out of the ordinary, there are lots of adults who are trained to help if anyone needs it. There are people everywhere who care about each other. Even total strangers! Like firefighters, ambulance drivers, police officers, doctors, nurses, counselors, and people in every community who have jobs to help out in any kind of emergency.

Seeing so many people helping those in need makes me feel proud and thankful!



My grandmother told me she's lived so long that she's been through a lot more than I have. She said she's seen the world change in ways she never thought possible, but that part of life is learning how to change with whatever happens. She said, "No matter what tomorrow may bring, you need to have faith, hope, determination, and a willingness to help others." "Even then," she said, "life doesn't always go the way you want, but it will be easier."

I learned that when something like this happens, there are many ways we can get through it, even though we can never forget and even though we might still feel afraid.

The counselor said it was important to talk about what you remember. She said it was a smart idea to share all our thoughts and feelings before, during, and after something upsetting happens to us. She told me it was a way to help slow down the world still spinning in my stomach right now.





### How to Begin Talking About It

See how many of these sentences you can finish by writing down or talking about what you remember.

I remember where I was when I found out. I was \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I remember what I was doing too. I was \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

My first thought when I found out was \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

My first feeling when I found out was \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

When I heard, I felt different in my body \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

My strongest feeling now is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

My strongest memory now is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### When Worries Come Back

I learned that when I'm upset, I can tell someone about it. I can say, "It makes me mad!" or "It makes me sad," or "It makes me scared." I can let my tears out because I know crying about something sad is not the same thing as acting like a baby. And I have learned to ask people who love me to stay close by if I need them to.

I can tell someone when I'm worried about what will happen next. I heard a grownup say there are a lot of different opinions about what we should do about the problems in our world, but I'm glad those are decisions for the grownups to make.

#### Topic for Discussion

Let's talk about another time in your life when you felt worried or afraid. What did you do that helped?

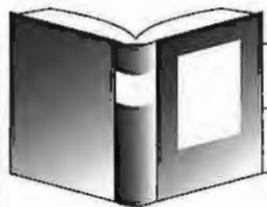
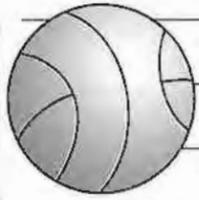
It's hard to predict what will happen in the future. But what I do know is that thousands of grownups across our country and around the world are doing everything in their power to protect us in the best way they know how. That helps me feel better!





### My Favorite Ways to Relax and Have Fun

List and describe your favorite ways to have a good time or relax. If you need more space, use another sheet of paper.



### How to Begin Talking About It

Choose someone to do this with, and together compare your answers.

I remember where I was when I found out. I was \_\_\_\_\_

I remember what I was doing too. I was \_\_\_\_\_

My first thought when I found out was \_\_\_\_\_

My first feeling when I found out was \_\_\_\_\_

When I heard, I felt different in my body \_\_\_\_\_

My strongest feeling now is \_\_\_\_\_

My strongest memory now is \_\_\_\_\_

### When We Lose People We Love

Some kids don't understand why someone they loved won't ever be coming home again. The counselor explained that death is permanent and sad. She said when people die, they don't come home again because they can't come home again. But she told us it doesn't change the love they felt for us. Even though their bodies did not survive, their love will always be alive in our hearts.



OKAY TO COPY



### My Favorite Ways to Relax and Have Fun

Circle the activities below that you like best and then write or talk about your choices.



**Rock in a chair**  
Where?

---

---

---



**Play with clay**  
What do you like to make?

---

---

---



**Take a nap**  
Where?

---

---

---



**Watch cartoons or funny movies**  
List your favorites.

---

---

---

**I also like to** \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---



**My Favorite Ways to Relax and Have Fun**

Circle the activities below that you like best and then write or talk about your choices.



**Play a sport**

List the sports you enjoy the most.

---



---



---



**Hold someone I love**

Who can you hold when you want to?

---



---



---



**Give a hug and kiss**

Who would you like to give it to?

---



---



---



**Ask for a hug and kiss**

Whose hugs and kisses do you like?

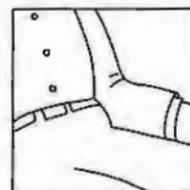
---



---



---



**Sit in someone's lap**

Who has a comfortable lap?

---



---



---

CONTINUED

But it's not the same. We want their love to be alive in their bodies again, not just in our hearts. The counselor told us it wouldn't always feel as sad as it does right now. It feels really hard now because we are still living through the pain of what happened. She said we would go through many different feelings as we learn to feel happier again. We might have sad days, happy days, mad days, quiet days, scared days, silly days, and tearful days. And for some reason—or no reason at all—we might feel like it just happened all over again. She said there are no wrong

ways to feel and that it was smart to listen to our feelings, whatever they may be.

**Topic for Discussion**

Describe a sad day, happy day, mad day, quiet day, afraid day, silly day, tearful day. What kind of day are you having today?

In the meantime, our counselor told us it's okay to find safe ways to help ourselves feel better, even if it's just for a while. I'm glad because sometimes I just want to get back to the business of being a kid.



OKAY TO COPY



### My Favorite Ways to Relax and Have Fun

Circle the activities below that you like best and then write or talk about your choices.



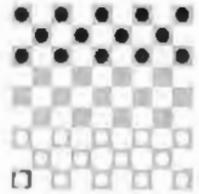
#### Listen to music

What are your favorite songs, bands or music groups?

---

---

---



#### Play games

List your favorites and who you like to play them with.

---

---

---



#### Pray

What do you want to say and ask for?

---

---

---



#### Dance

Why do you love to dance?

---

---

---



#### Sing

List your favorite songs.

---

---

---

CONTINUED

OKAY TO COPY



### My Favorite Ways to Relax and Have Fun

Circle the activities below that you like best and then write or talk about your choices.



#### Paint

What are your favorite colors?

---

---

---



#### Color

What do you like to color?

---

---

---



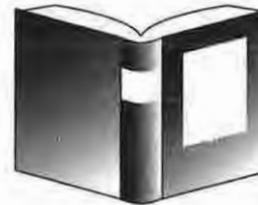
#### Write

What do you enjoy writing about?

---

---

---



#### Read

What's your favorite book or story and why?

---

---

---



#### Bake

What is your favorite recipe?

---

---

---

CONTINUED