



Managing “Scared” During COVID-19

As we continue to grapple with COVID-19, it’s natural for children (and adults) to feel scared. Both the virus itself and the resulting disruption to routine are frightening. Use this printable activity to help children get in touch with their fears and choose helpful calming activities.

To regulate our emotions, we must be able to recognize our triggers and identify what we are feeling. Using this two-page printable, children begin by drawing or writing about things that trigger fear. For instance, children may feel scared when they hear about COVID-19 on the news, when they see people wearing masks, or when they aren’t able to go to favorite places or see favorite people.

The second page of this printable features activities that children can choose to calm their fear. Options include Conscious Discipline’s four core breathing rituals (S.T.A.R., Drain, Pretzel and Balloon), connecting with a loved one, talking with an adult, and reading/journaling. Feel free to add additional options that are helpful for your child. Once your child selects one of the provided options, engage in that activity to help the child regain his or her composure.

With the “When I Feel Scared...” printable, children will get in touch with their fears and learn that when they feel scared, there are actionable steps they can take to calm.

Conscious Discipline Glossary:

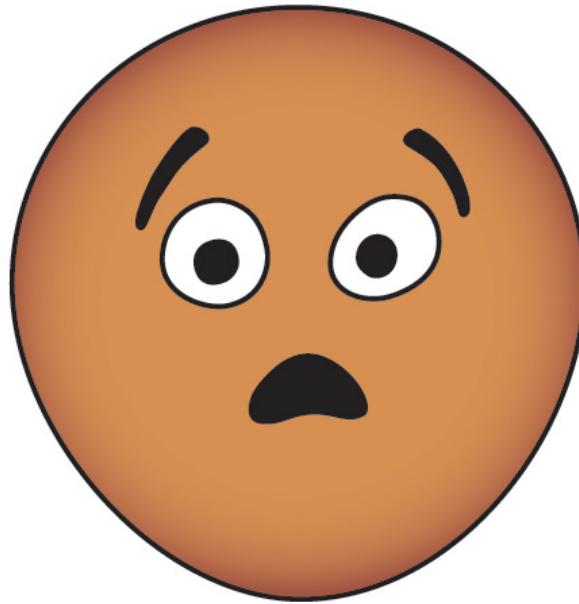
- **S.T.A.R.:** **S**mile, **T**ake a deep breath, **A**nd **R**elax. Breathe in through the nose with the belly going out, then out through the mouth with the belly going in. Help children learn to exhale longer than they inhale.

- **Drain:** Extend arms out, pretending your arms are faucets. Tighten arm, shoulder and face muscles. Exhale slowly, making a “ssshhhh” sound, and release all your muscles, draining out the stress.
- **Balloon:** Place your hands on top of your head and interlace your fingers. Breathe in through your nose as you raise your arms, inflating an imaginary balloon. Release the air in the balloon by pursing your lips, exhaling slowly, lowering your arms, and making a “pbbpbbp” sound (like a balloon releasing air).
- **Pretzel:** Standing up, cross your ankles. Now cross your right wrist over your left, turn your hands so your thumbs are facing the floor, put palms together and interlace fingers. Bend your elbows out and gently turn your hands down and toward your body until they rest on the center of your chest. Put your tongue on the roof of your mouth. Relax and breathe.

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Write and draw pictures about feeling scared.

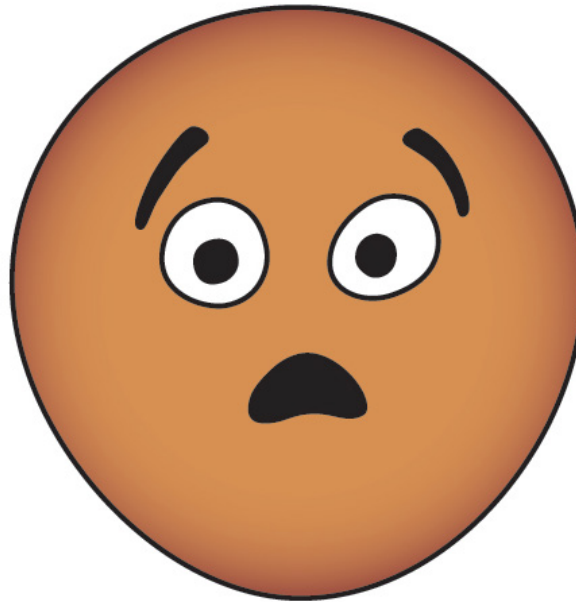
I feel scared when _____.



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Choose a calming activity.

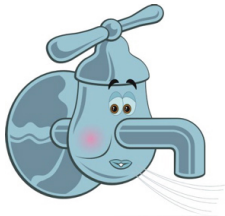
When I feel scared, I can calm by:



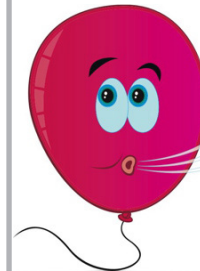
S.T.A.R.



Pretzel



Drain



Balloon



**Connecting
with a
loved one**



**Talking
with an
adult**



**Reading/
Journaling**