

KINSHIP ACTIVITY BOOK
STRENGTHENING FAMILIES
ACROSS NEW HAMPSHIRE



DEAR CAREGIVER,

No matter where in New Hampshire you live, the sound of children is never far away. Whether it's a family gathering, young friends sharing an afternoon snack, or something as simple as a caregiver and child getting ready for the day—it's also the sound of family strength and resilience.

And because every family is unique, we each have our own way of creating nurturing environments for ourselves and the children in our care. For some it's attending a kinship caregiver group to build social connections and share new parenting strategies. For others it's checking in on a neighbor, preparing a meal, or just saying hello.

Whatever the case may be, a robust network of support helps the entire family navigate the waters of everyday life so all their members can thrive.

I invite you and your child to dive into the Strengthening Kinship Families Across NH Activity Book. In the pages that follow, you can read about real Granite State families, color in illustrations from their lives, and play fun games that foster positive connection.

So pick up a pen, pencil, or crayon! And on the way, see if you can spot the many compasses scattered throughout. All families need support here and there, and navigating through life is easier with something—or someone—to guide the way.

Joelyn Drennan
Senior Programs Director
New Hampshire Children's Trust



CAN YOU SPOT
THE COMPASS IN
EVERY DRAWING?

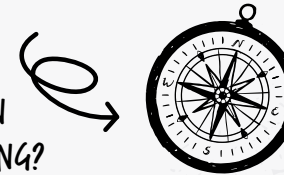


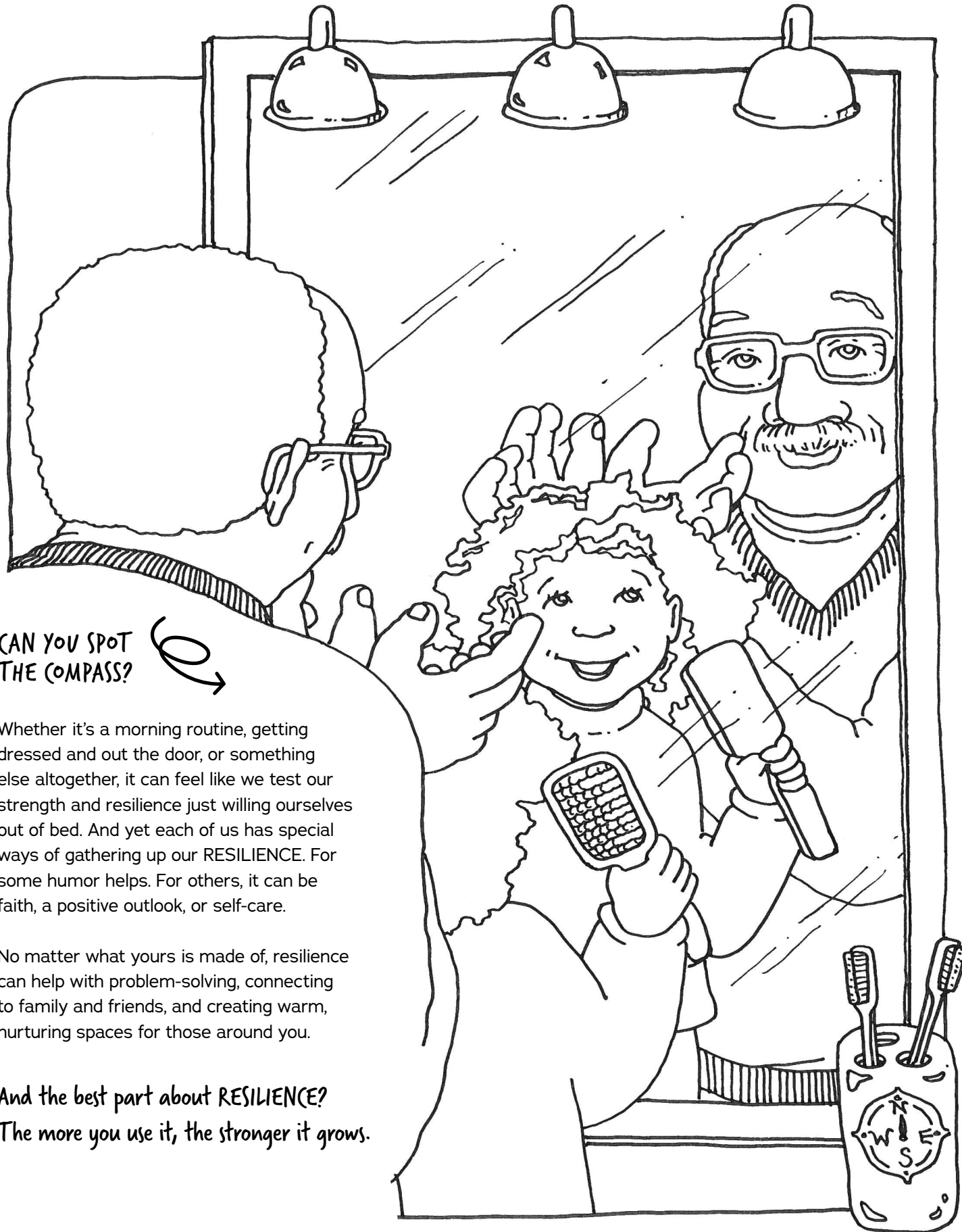
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Parental Resilience	4
Concrete Supports	6
Drawing Pages	8
Social Connections	10
Knowledge of Parenting & Child Development	12
Drawing Pages	14
Social & Emotional Competence in Children	16
Nurturing & Attachment	18
Drawing Pages	20
Resources for Parents & Caregivers	22
About the Artist & Contributors	23
Answer Key	23

THIS BOOK BELONGS TO:

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PARENTAL RESILIENCE



CAN YOU SPOT THE COMPASS?



Whether it's a morning routine, getting dressed and out the door, or something else altogether, it can feel like we test our strength and resilience just willing ourselves out of bed. And yet each of us has special ways of gathering up our RESILIENCE. For some humor helps. For others, it can be faith, a positive outlook, or self-care.

No matter what yours is made of, resilience can help with problem-solving, connecting to family and friends, and creating warm, nurturing spaces for those around you.

And the best part about RESILIENCE?
The more you use it, the stronger it grows.

A-MAZE-ING RESILIENT YOU!

See if you can help the birds navigate back to the nest.
Be nimble and keep your wings moving! Remember, it may take a few tries. YOU CAN do this!



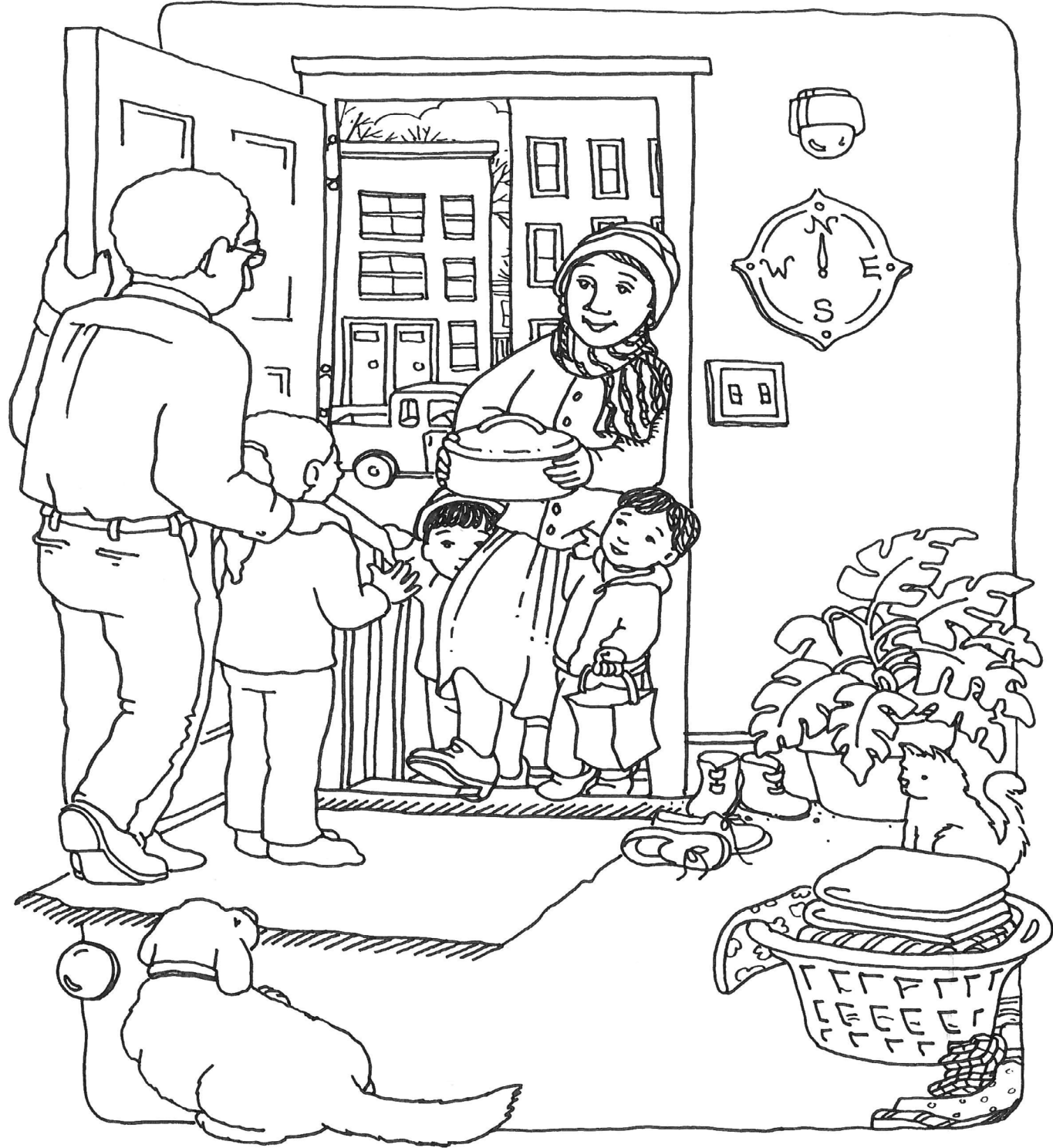
Friend's Corner

On a piece of paper make a list of things that make your family resilient. Is there something new you'd like to try?



CONCRETE SUPPORTS

The great thing about family is that it comes in all shapes and sizes. Grandparents caring for grandchildren, aunts and uncles caring for nieces and nephews, community members and family-friends – no matter what your family looks like, we all need support from time to time. And even though it may feel hard to ask for help or assistance, it is nearby.



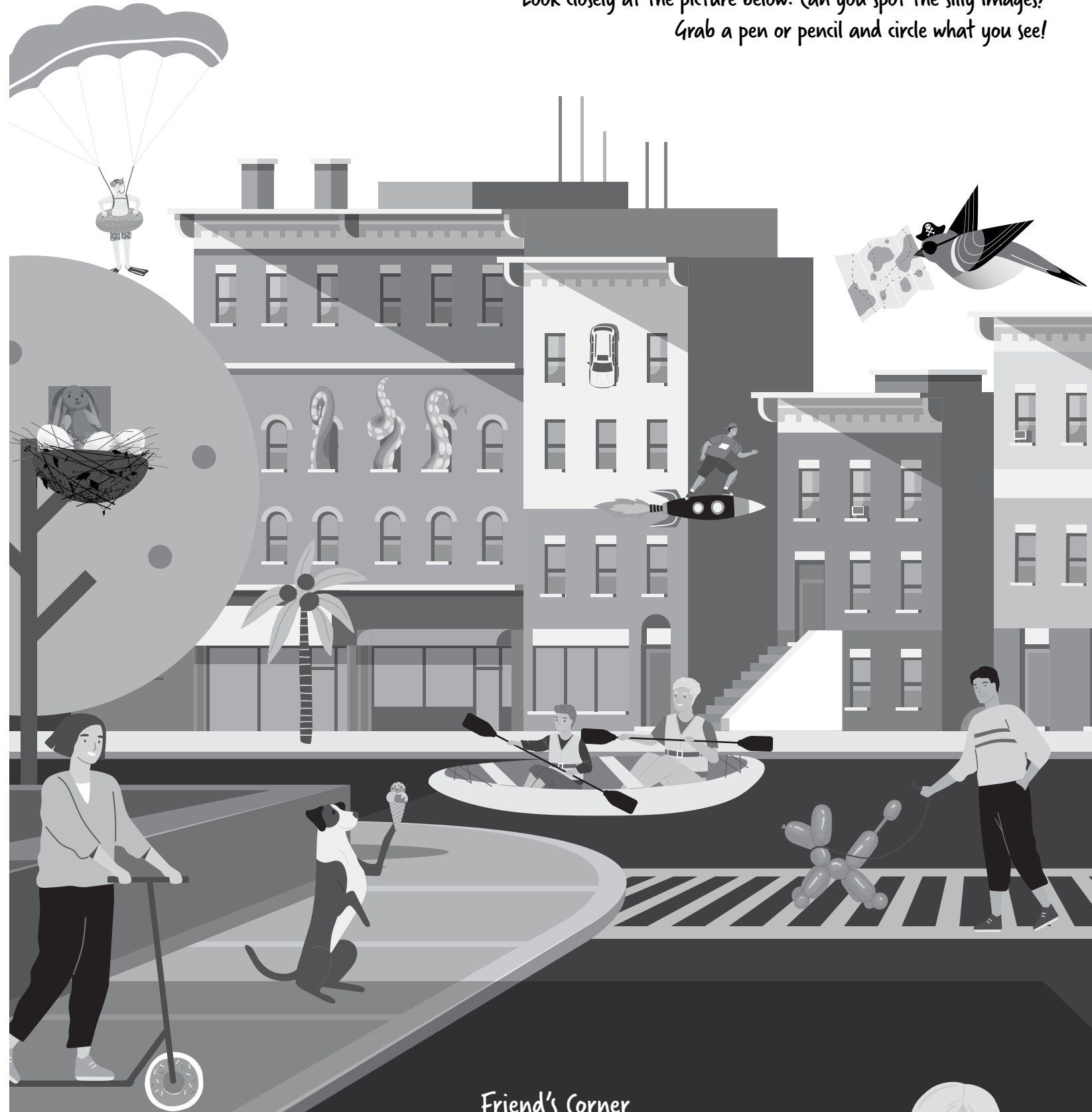
Another great thing? Each family's needs are as unique as they are!

CONCRETE SUPPORTs like food assistance, gas to get to appointments, school supplies, respite care, financial assistance, and more help Granite State families grow strong and self-sufficient.

CAN YOU SPOT THE COMPASS?

OUR SILLY SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

Look closely at the picture below. Can you spot the silly images?
Grab a pen or pencil and circle what you see!



Friend's Corner

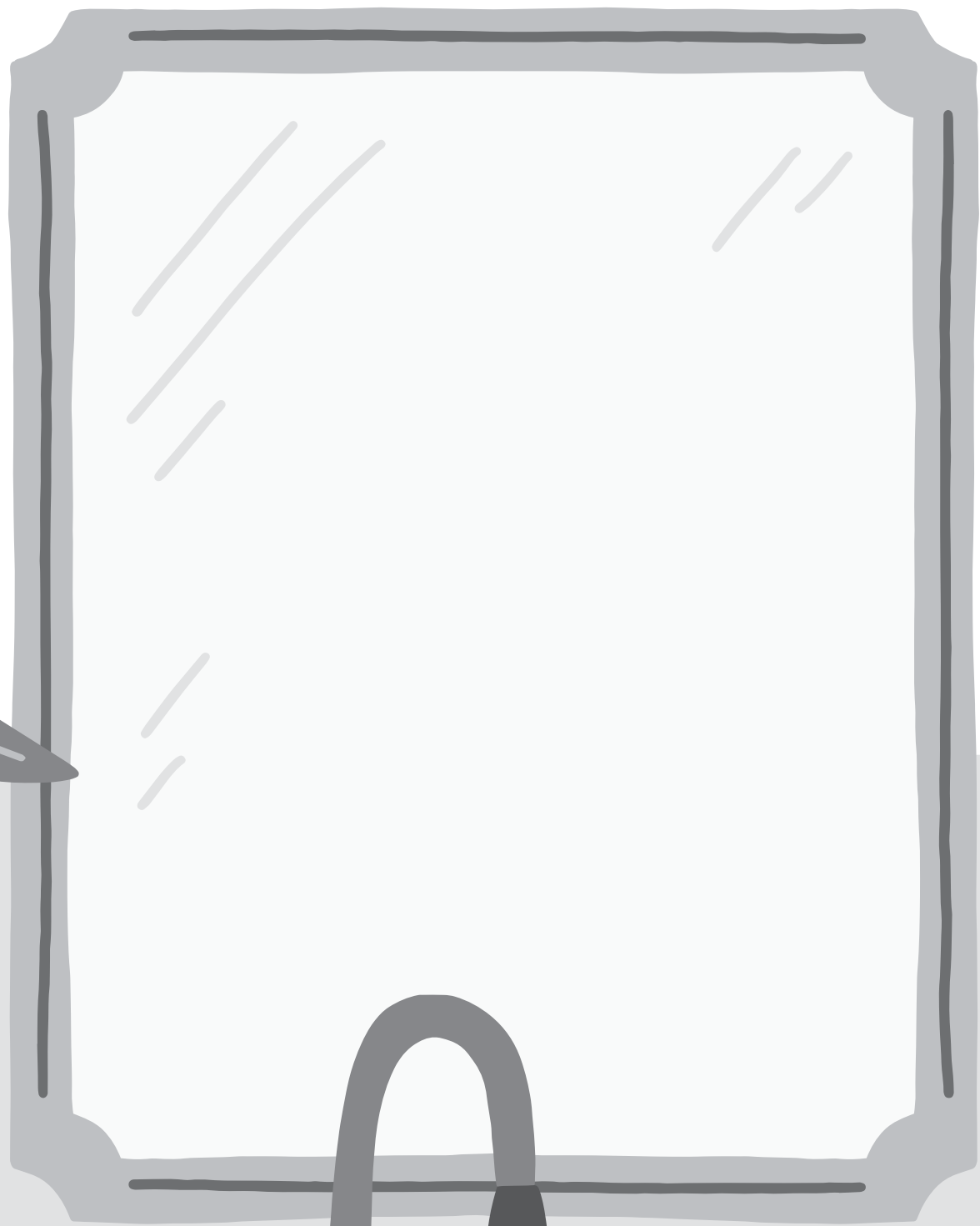
FAMILY ART NIGHT! Can you draw your own silly picture? What makes it silly? See if someone in your family can spot your silliness!



Now YOU try!

PARENTAL RESILIENCE

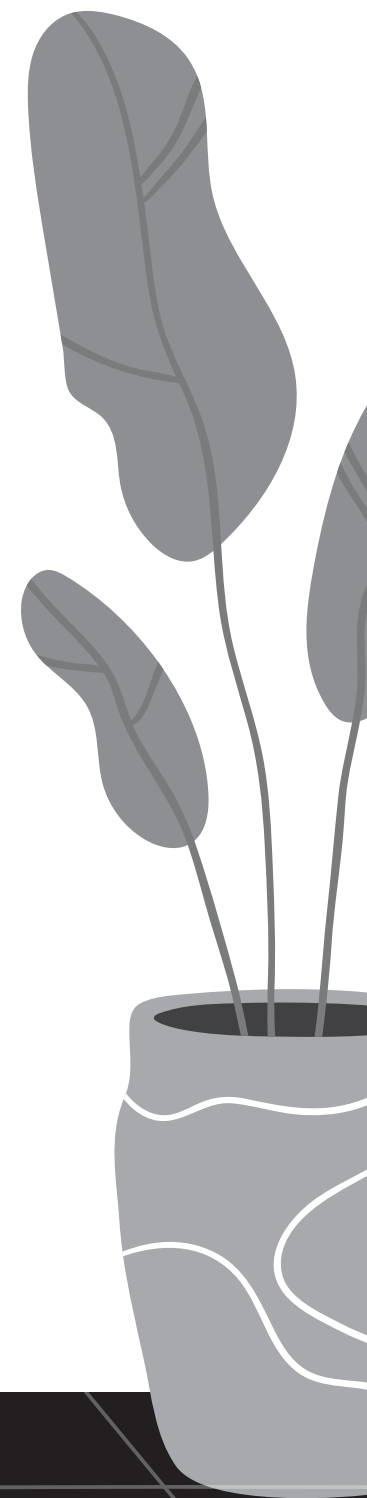
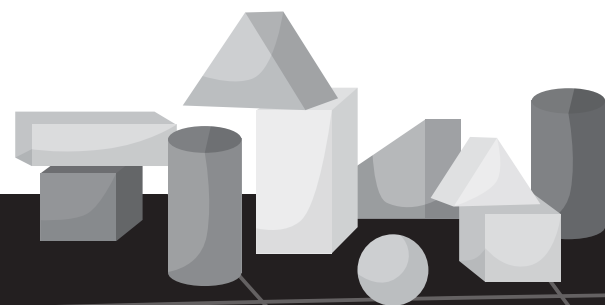
What does family strength look like? In the mirror, draw a picture of you and your family, and the many ways that together you are strong and resilient.



CONCRETE SUPPORTS

Like a home, families are strengthened by many connections and supports. In the space below, can you draw a picture of your home? What is your favorite place in it and why?

Now YOU try!



SOCIAL CONNECTIONS



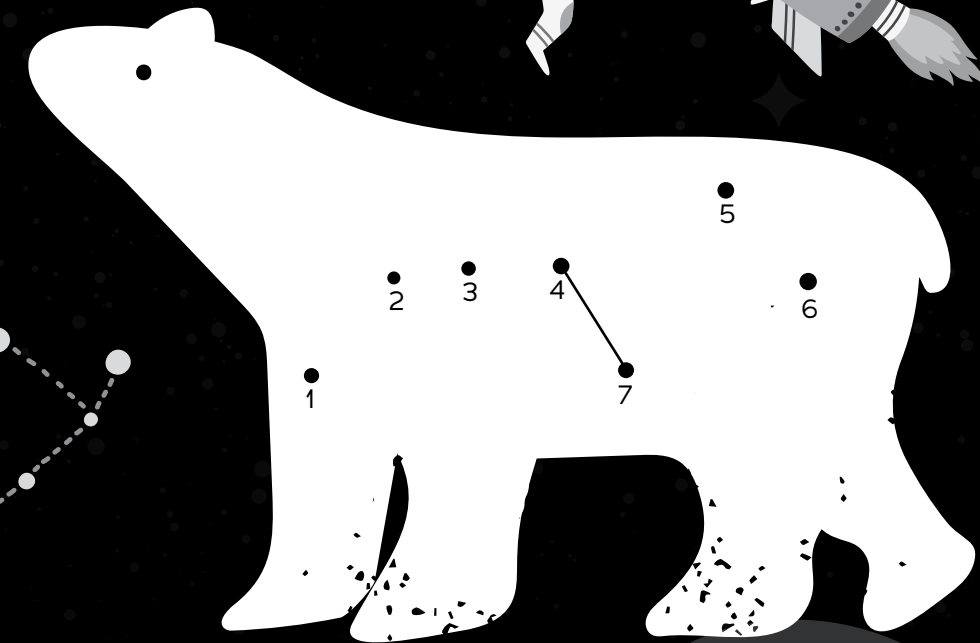
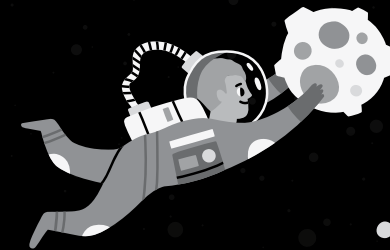
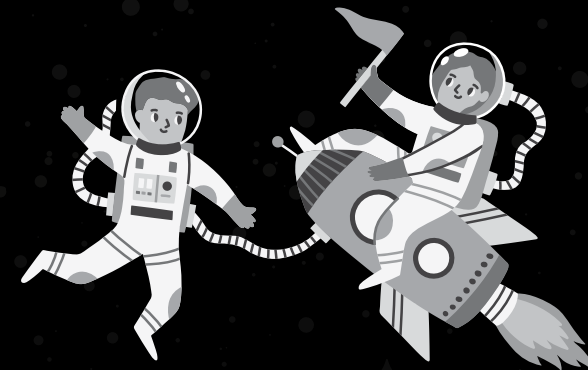
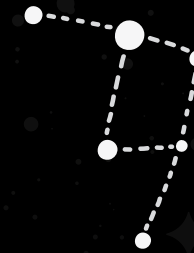
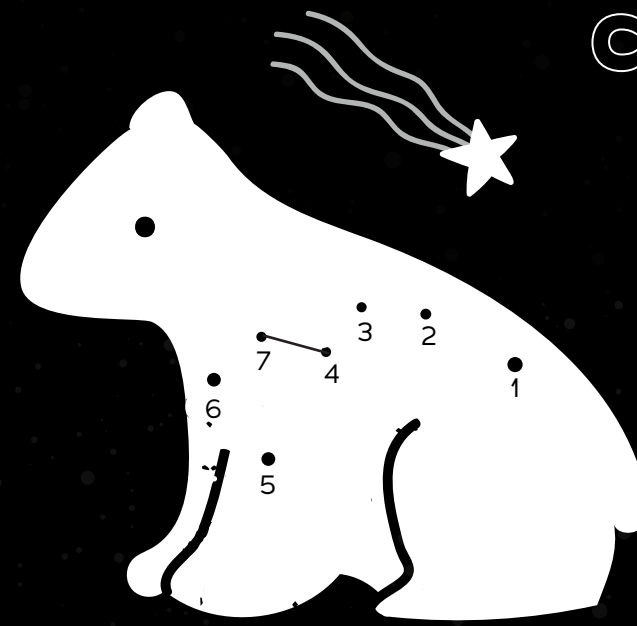
CAN YOU SPOT THE COMPASS?

Simple as it may sound, SOCIAL CONNECTION with those around you can make all the difference. Friends, family, neighbors (or even someone new!) can lend an ear to listen, a shoulder to lean on, or a joke to brighten your day. And a strong social network can provide more than emotional support! It can also help with problem-solving, a new parenting outlook, and finding other important community connections for the family.

In fact, social connections are a lot like stars in the night sky. The more you look for them, the more you find!

CONSTELLATIONS OF CONNECTION

Long ago people used to connect stars into patterns, shapes, and figures. Can you follow the numbers to create the Little Bear (Ursa Minor)? Now try the Big Bear (Ursa Major)!



Friend's Corner

Can you make your own constellation? Poke holes in a piece of paper with a pencil, and then hold it in front of a light. What do you see? Can you create something magical?





While every child's DEVELOPMENT is unique, understanding growth milestones can help caregivers adjust activities and PARENTING STRATEGIES to meet a child's needs.

Milestones include physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and communication skills that build on each other over time. By looking at milestones, caregivers, doctors, teachers, friends and family can support the unique growth needs of the child. This helps drive our expectations for our children, and helps them build confidence and self-esteem.

CAN YOU SPOT THE COMPASS?

Remember, we grow at our own pace. A little flexibility can make a big difference!

GROWING GREAT KIDS

Positive Interactions with others help mold us into the joyful, enthusiastic, and reflective individuals we are today. Follow the recipe to create your own moldable playdough. What can you create?

Ingredients:

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 4 teaspoons cream of tartar
- 2 Tablespoons of vegetable oil (coconut oil works too)
- 3/4 cup salt
- 2 cups lukewarm water
- Food coloring (optional)
- Quart sized bags

Stir together the flour, salt and cream of tartar in a large pot. Next add the water and oil. If you're only making one color, add in the color now as well. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly. Continue stirring until the dough has thickened and begins to form into a ball. Remove from heat and then place inside a gallon sized bag or onto wax paper. Allow to cool slightly and then knead until smooth. If you're adding colors after, divide the dough into balls (for how many colors you want) and then add the dough into the quart sized bags. Start with about 5 drops of color and add more to brighten it. Knead the dough while inside the bag so it doesn't stain your hands. Once it's all mixed together you're ready to PLAY.



Friend's Corner

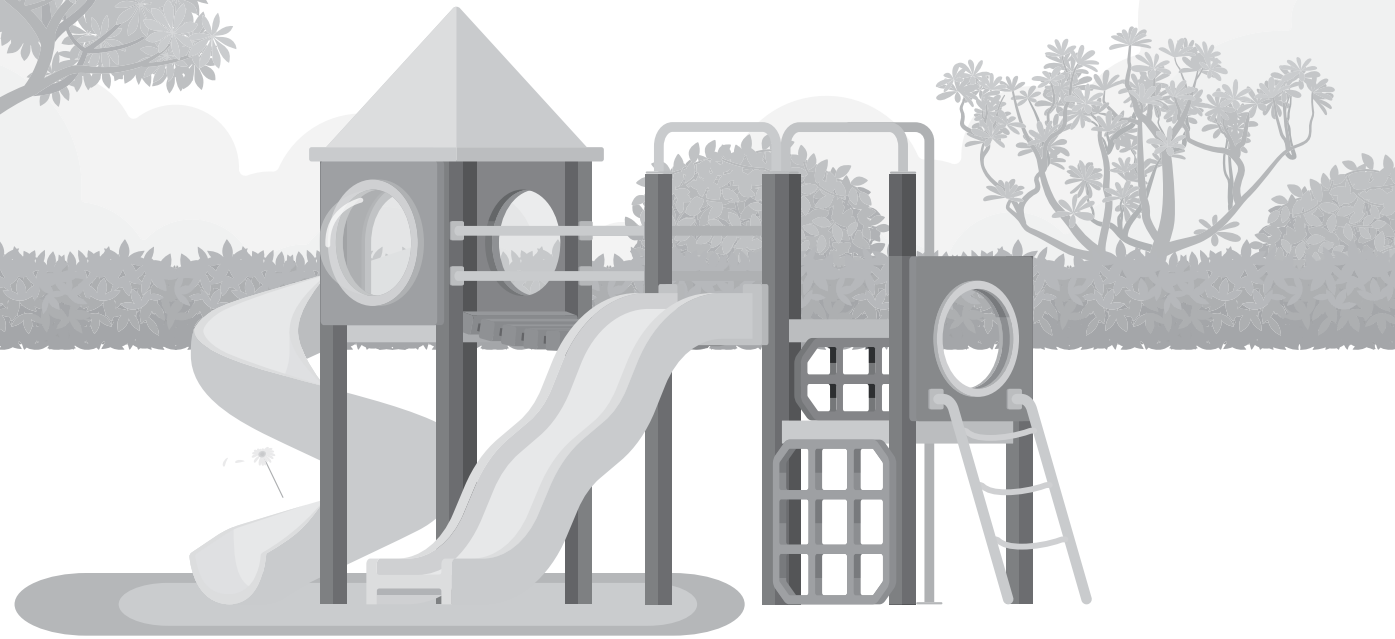
Using your AMAZING playdough, make the members of your family. Which one is you? Can you make yourself stand up? If not, what else might your figure need?



Now YOU try!

SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

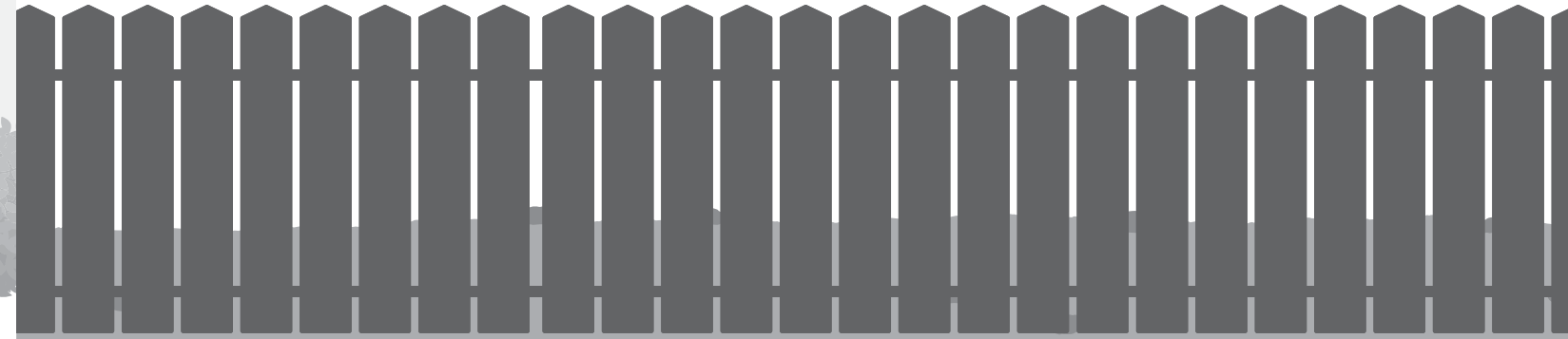
Friends, family, neighbors—our social connections are not only fun but also important. In the park below, can you draw a picture of you and your friends? What is everyone doing?



KNOWLEDGE OF PARENTING & CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Like vegetables in a garden, there are measures and milestones that can help our adults understand what we need along the way. Can you draw your own garden? What's in it?

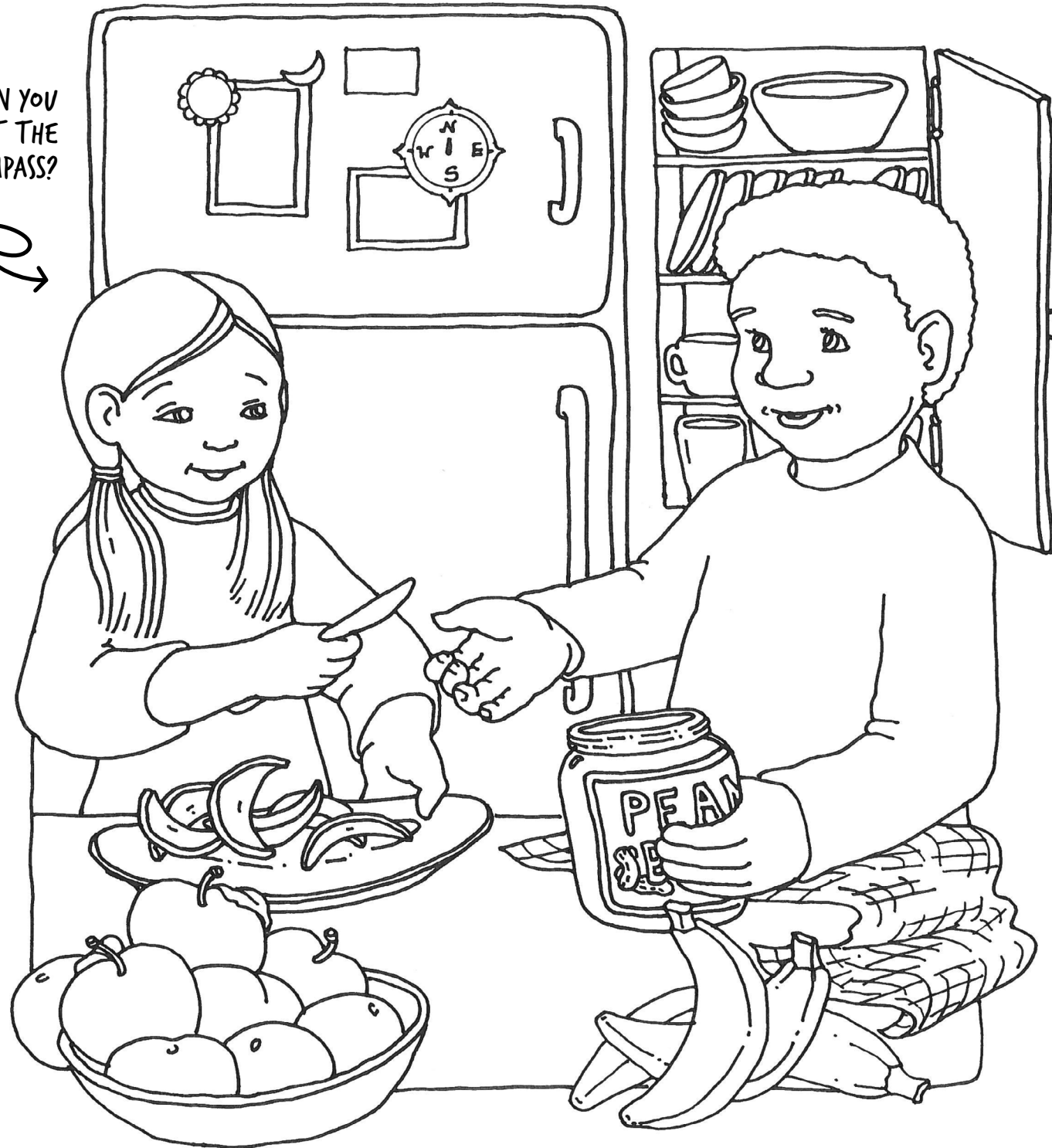
Now YOU try!



SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE IN CHILDREN

A child's ability to communicate emotions effectively, self-regulate, and make friends are skills that help them succeed throughout life. And much like development, every child has a unique personality and way of interpreting the world around them. Providing opportunities for children to practice identifying and expressing feelings, to manage thoughts and behaviors, and to resolve conflict positively ensure that they gain the SOCIAL and EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE for healthy, fulfilling relationships.

CAN YOU SPOT THE COMPASS?



Recognizing emotions in ourselves and others can help us stay balanced!

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

Look closely at the two backpacks pictured below. Can you spot the differences? And how are they alike?



Friend's Corner

Spot differences in REAL LIFE! Compare two similar things in your house and list the ways they are similar and different. Can you find two different bowls? Two different chairs? Two different shoes? What makes them similar? What makes them different?



NURTURING & ATTACHMENT

Our earliest experiences of nurturing and affection set the foundation for positive development and behavior. So when caregivers demonstrate warm and consistent feelings toward children, a child develops trust that their caregiver will provide what they need, including love, acceptance, positive guidance, and protection.

A few ways parents can enhance NURTURING and ATTACHMENT are to schedule family time (such as family game night and eating dinner together), listen to their children, engage in school and activities, and advocate for their children when necessary.



CAN YOU SPOT THE COMPASS?

BRAIN BUILDERS INC.

Brains are built over time, from the bottom up. That means our earliest experiences set the foundation for future growth. So . . . what experiences would you like to have? In the brain below, make a list of things you'd like to do.

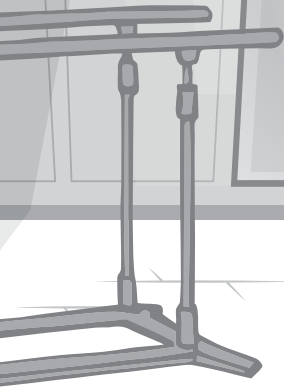


Friend's Corner

With your caregiver, plan your first fun event from the list you made!



Now YOU try!



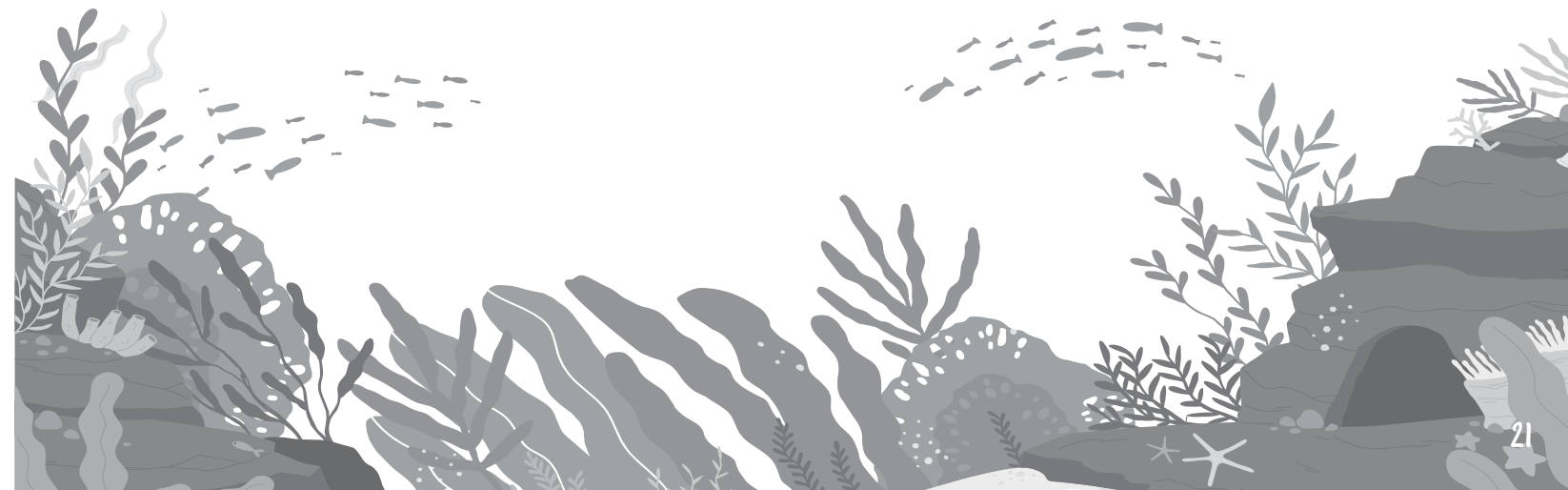
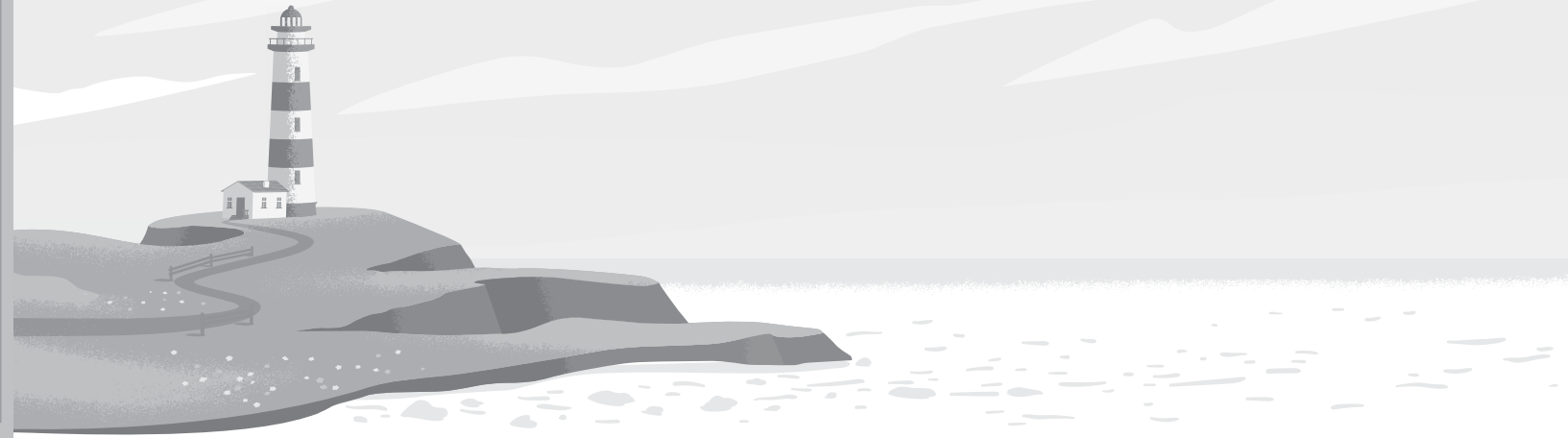
SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE OF CHILDREN

At times, our days can feel full of obstacles and challenges. Good news! Staying balanced can help!
Can you draw yourself on the balance-beam? What are you doing to stay up there?

NURTURING & ATTACHMENT

Though you can't see them, water molecules are stuck together by strong bonds and make rich, nourishing environments for animals. Can you draw a family of aquatic creatures? What holds them together?

Now YOU try!



RESOURCES FOR PARENTS & CAREGIVERS

NH Department of Health and Human Services

The largest agency in New Hampshire state government, responsible for the health, safety and well-being of the citizens of New Hampshire.
www.dhhs.nh.gov

NH Recovery Hub

A reliable source of information and resources at any stage of recovery.
nhrecoveryhub.org

ServiceLink NH

Your link to information and support services within your community.
www.servicelink.nh.gov

New Hampshire Children's Trust

Leads the drive to ensure safe, stable, and nurturing environments for children. NHCT partners with NH's network of Family Resource Centers to support the statewide Kinship Navigation Program.
www.nhchildrenstrust.org/kinship

NAMI NH

Improving the quality of life for all by providing information, education, and support to all families and communities affected by mental illness.
naminh.org

Grandfamilies.org

Serving as a national legal resource in support of grandfamilies within and outside the child welfare system.
www.grandfamilies.org

Family Support New Hampshire

NH's coalition of Family Resource Centers and Family Strengthening Programs that exist to better provide programming and resources for all Granite State families.
www.fsnh.org

Are you Parenting a Second Time Around?

A PASTA group may be right for you! PASTA is a free support group for NH grandparents and other kinship caregivers raising children again. Topics include child development, discipline and guidance, caring for yourself as a caregiver, legal issues, and much more. Visit www.nhchildrenstrust.org/pasta for more information.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS



Sandra



Priscilla



Carol



Robin



Darlene



Patrice



Kelley



Joy



Terry



Ed



Toni



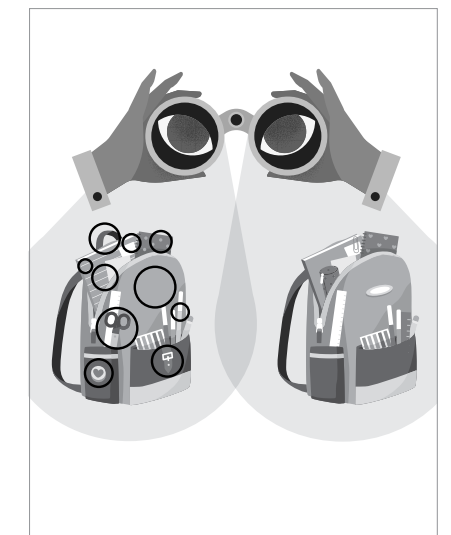
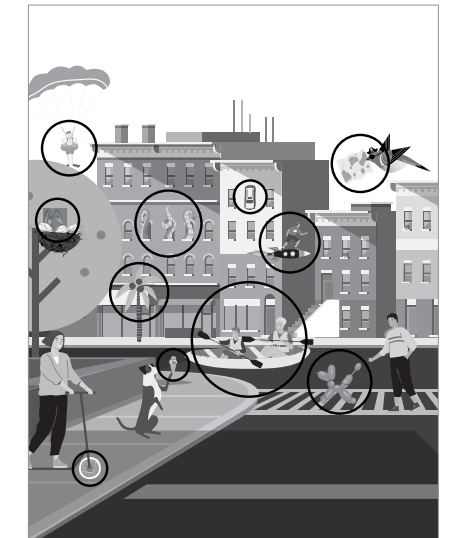
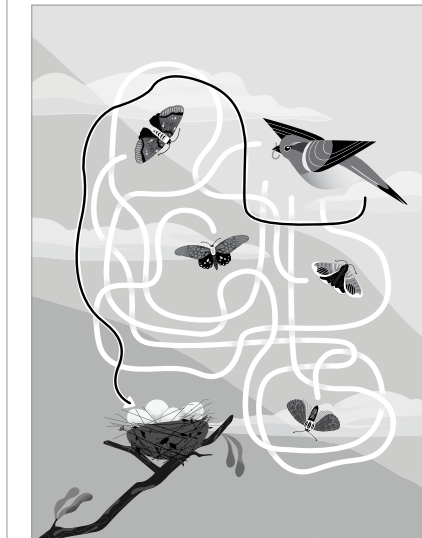
Cara



OUR ARTIST: LESLIE OSSOFF

Leslie is an illustrator, painter and mom of three children. She and her husband live in Concord, NH. Her projects and work include children's book and website illustration, murals and displays at Mt. Kearsarge Indian Museum, scenic design and painting for Concord school theatre programs, RB Productions, and Prescott Park. She studied landscape architecture at Colorado State University. Further arts education includes illustration classes at Mass College of Art and classes at Kimball Jenkins and the Currier Museum. Other interests include almost any endurance sport that takes place in the outdoors.

ANSWER KEY



THANK YOU!



Coös Coalition for Young Children and Families

