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NSW GOVERNMENT

Dear Sector Colleague,

We are excited to share a new resource with you which is aimed at helping children and young people in care capture their experience of the pandemic – an extraordinary period in their life story.

Life story work is an essential practice across the sector; it is an ongoing process, not a one off event, and can have profound benefits for children and families. We all share an important responsibility to support children and young people in care to have a meaningful understanding of their story to help them develop a strong sense of self, family, culture, community and their place in the world.

Developed by SSI in collaboration with My Forever Family NSW and ACWA – the 'Covid-19 and Me 2020' booklet is designed to complement life story work that is already being undertaken and lend support to the sector in this critical area of practice. The resource is being distributed throughout NSW and will also be made available to carers via the My Forever Family network.

This pandemic is a significant event in all of our lives and offers an opportunity for us to elevate our approach to life story work across the sector. The resource isn't seeking to replace materials already being used but instead provides a 'point in time' addition, acknowledging that there may be some skill development and supports that need to sit alongside it to ensure that the process is a positive one for children and young people.

We recommend that caseworkers or carers who would like to use this booklet but lack confidence in their life story work skills, seek out training and advice from within their agency. If external support is needed, further advice and training in relation to life story work is available from SSI, ACWA and My Forever Family NSW at the contacts below:

SSI

Zeina on **0421 134 244**/Ghassan on **0402 138 826** or via **culturallifestorywork@ssi.org.au**

ACWA

Linda Watson on **02 9281 8822** or via **linda@acwa.asn.au**

My Forever Family NSW

Carer Support team on **1300 782 975** or via **enquiries@myforeverfamily.org.au**

The COVID-19 pandemic has introduced new challenges for service providers and carer households. The Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) is committed to working collaboratively with ACWA, My Forever Family, AbSec, carers and non-government partners at this time to provide comprehensive information.

Useful resources, including general information about COVID-19, advice for delivering services, and information about talking to children about COVID-19 can be found at:
www.corona virus.dcj.nsw.gov.au/service-providers/helpful-resources and
www.corona virus.dcj.nsw.gov.au/services/child-and-family-services/talking-with-children-and-young-people

To find out more about how to stay safe during COVID-19 please visit the NSW Government website **www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19/how-to-protect-yourself-and-others**

We would welcome your feedback about your use of the **'Covid-19 and Me 2020'** booklet and will circulate a short survey at a later date.

SSI settlementservices international

ACWA CCWT

My Forever Family NSW

Covid-19 and Me 2020

This booklet belongs to

SSI settlementservices international

ACWA Association of Children's Welfare Agencies CCWT Centre for Community Welfare Training

My Forever Family NSW

Introduction

What do I need to know about this booklet?

This booklet helps me capture the special moments spent during Covid-19 and how I adjusted to the new routine in order to be safe. It captures my voice, my feelings, and helps me reflect on some activities to keep my body and soul active. It is great that it reminds me of the dangers of online chat and who I can contact if I need anything.

What does my carer need to know about this booklet?

My carer needs to know that I own this booklet and my carer will help me fill in special moments, in order to remember them in the future. This book also reminds my carer about the importance of cybersafety and indirect tips to help me maintain my health and wellbeing

What does my caseworker need to know about this booklet?

My caseworker will support me and my carer, if needed, in order to keep my memories alive. My caseworker will follow up on any issues or concerns in this book and will do their best in order for me to reach my “House of Dreams and Hopes”.

About Noah's Ark

Covid-19 and Me 2020 has compared the hard times we are currently facing to Noah’s Ark. You might not be familiar with this story from the **Hebrew Bible,** however there are many similar stories across many cultures like:

- NUH (From the Islamic Quran)
- MANU (From the Hindu Puranas)
- TALE OF THE MERCHANTS AT SEA (From the Buddhist Samudda-Vanija Jataka 454)
- ZIUSUDRA (From a Sumerian tablet)
- ATRAHASIS (From various Akkadian tablets)
- UTNAPISHTIM (From several Babylonian tablets)
- EGYPTIAN FLOOD MYTH (From the Egyptian Book of the Dead, the Book of Going Forth by Day, translated by Raymond Faulkner)
- DEUCALION AND PYRRHA (Greek mythology)
- COXCOX (Aztec myth)
- THE FLOOD OF IFE (Yoruba – Nigerian myth)
- THE FUHI FAMILY (Chinese Flood Myth)
- NUU AND THE FLOOD (Hawaiian myth)

Noah's Ark

A long, long time ago, it rained a lot and it never stopped. Floods covered all the earth.

To be safe, Noah had to stay in his Ark with his family for 40 days and 40 nights.

There was no internet, no phone, and no entertainment; however, Noah had **HOPE**.

Because he stayed home, he was saved from the dangers.

You are living now in a very similar situation:

- Your home is the Ark
- The viruses are the flooding.

These are wild times. For many of us, all we can think about is COVID-19. It is affecting almost every part of our daily lives. Someday, though, this will all be a memory – something that happened in the past that we all got through, together.

This is a great opportunity for you to capture the moment; you will have the opportunity to have faith and hope for the future. You will also revisit all these special memories and occasions when you get older.

This is me

My height is:

My weight is:

I am good at:

The name of my school is:

I'm in grade:

I am currently living with:

My favourite music or song is:

My favourite book is:

Things I like to do are:

My favourite toy or game is:

The sports I like to play are:

People I like to spend time with are:

Things I like about myself are:

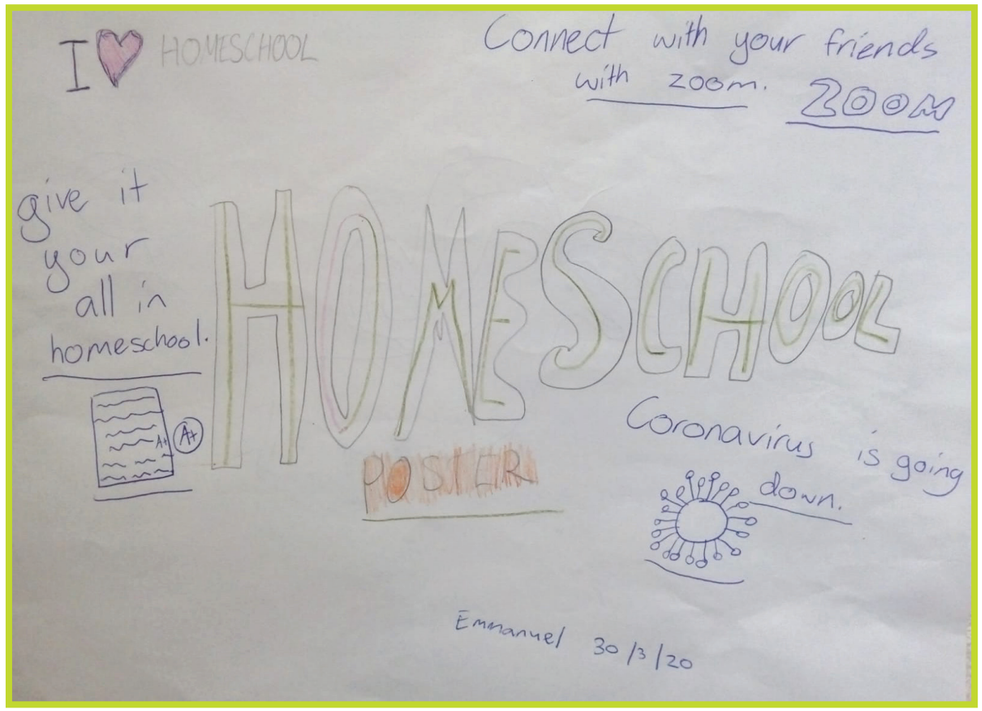
My friends are:

When I grow up, I would like to be :

Online school learning is:

Write, Draw or Capture

Drawing by **Emmanuel**, **9 years old** regarding Home school, Corona virus and connecting with others. Emmanuel has his hopes up because corona virus is going down!!!!



Write, draw or take a selfie of what you need to do during this period to keep you safe from Corona virus. (You can refer to the front cover).

Adjusting to new routines

New routines during this time can be:

Social distancing

At home together

Cannot see my friends

Home schooling

Cannot give anyone a hug

What other new routines do you currently have in place?

What new things or skills have you learnt during this period at home? (Baking, tasting new food, knowing a person more, having fun with family games)

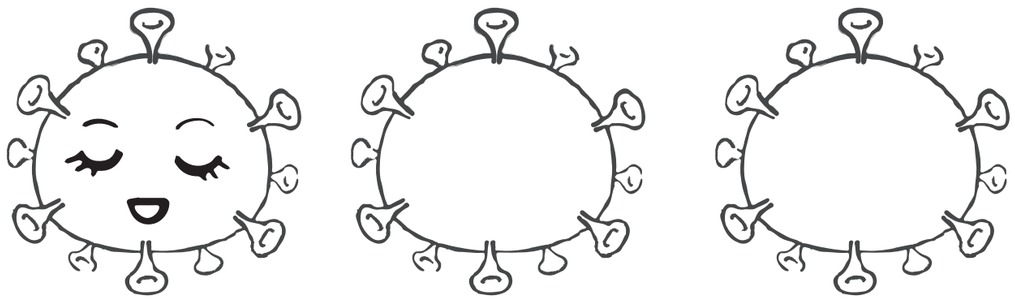
Speak your feelings

How do I feel right now?

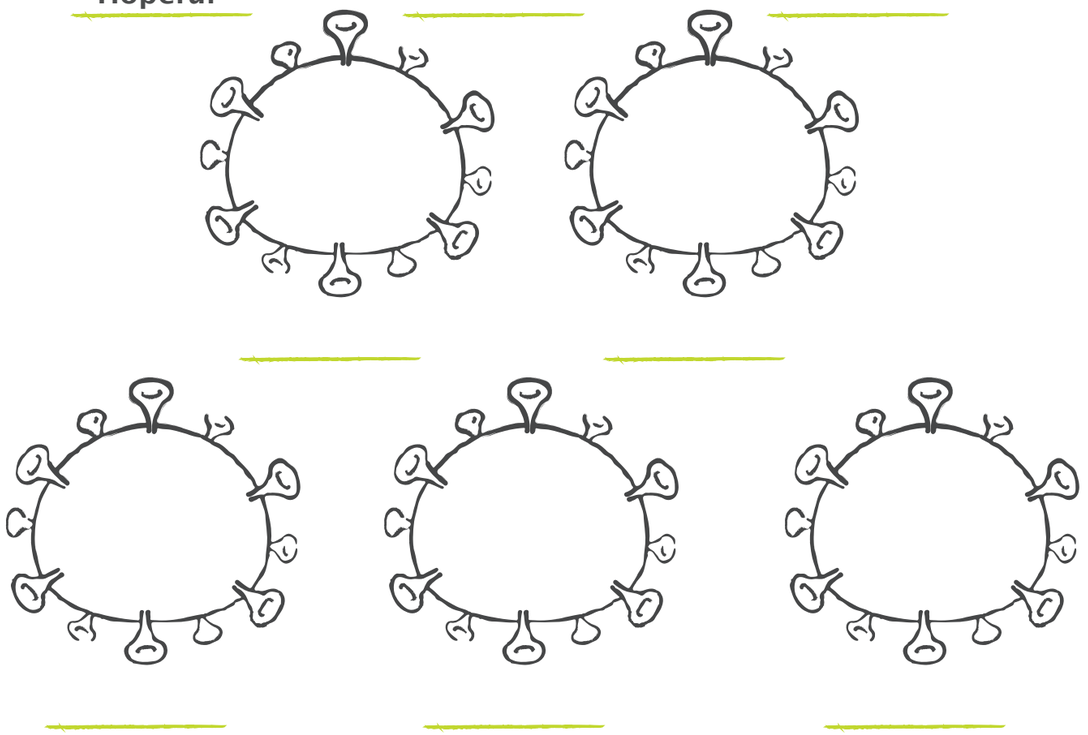
Everyone feels differently about things. We don't have to feel the same all the time. It's okay when our feelings change.

How do you feel right now?

Draw what you feel



Hopeful



How does the Corona virus make you feel?

What are 3 things you can do to make you feel happy?

1.

2.

3.

How do you feel about missing school?

How do you feel about learning from home?

The 3 things I am most grateful for during this time are:

1.

2.

3.

Three things you would like to do when you don't have to stay at home anymore.

1.

2.

3.

Your thoughts

Capture anything you want to highlight about this period of time e.g. write a poem, paste an image, record information from a website.....

My Health

Date: Event:

I know where I keep my health (e.g. asthma) action plan:

I know what to do when I feel unwell (e.g. use my puffer):

I know that things are not good with my health (e.g. my asthma) when:

How to stay Safe and Healthy

While staying at home, it is important to engage our body, mind, and imagination while we continue to connect with others. We can:

- do exercise and be active;
- do something creative (like arts and crafts, cooking etc.);
- to stay connected with families and friends (like calling, messaging or writing letters);
- to take care of our brain (like yoga, listening to music, meditation).

Write or draw 3 things that you are doing to keep active:

1. 2. 3.

Write or draw 3 things you are doing to be creative:

1. 2. 3.

Here are the 3 things I am doing to connect with family and friends:

1.

2.

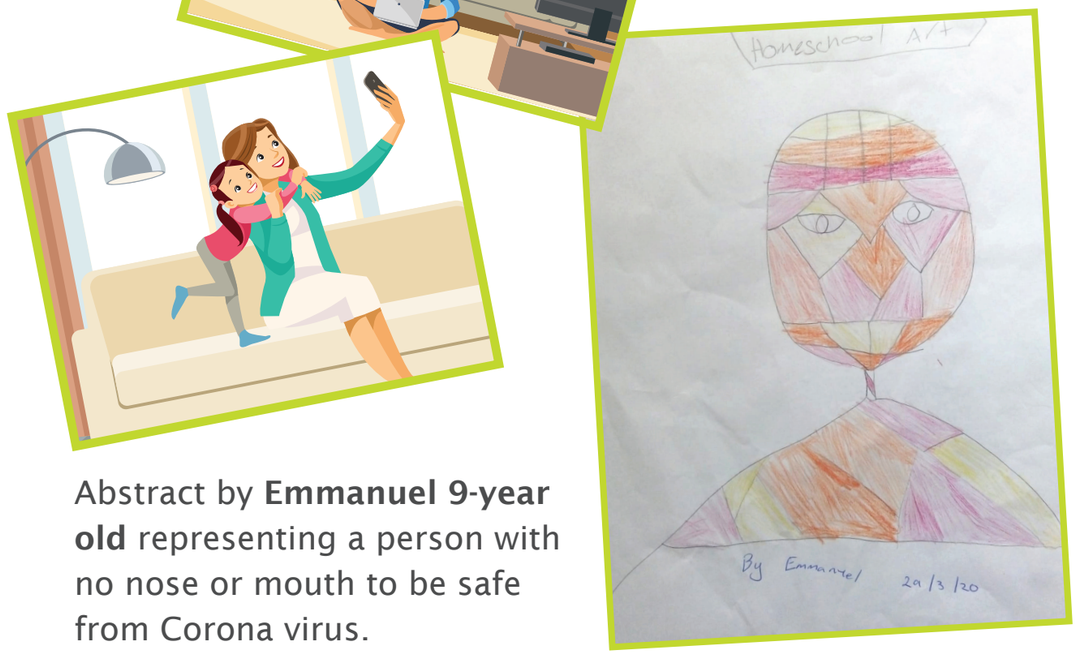
3.

Write or draw 3 things you are doing to help your brain relax:

1. 2. 3.

Making Memories

You can add in a sleeve about all your activities, or take photos of what you are currently doing while staying at home e.g. drawing, painting, baking and others.



Abstract by **Emmanuel 9-year old** representing a person with no nose or mouth to be safe from Corona virus.

Home is where the heart is

Based on what is happening now with Covid-19, write in each house your worries, the good things, and your dreams.

These are the 3 adult people I can talk to when I am worried:

House of Worries

House of Dreams

House of Good Things

Celebrate a special occasion

What did you celebrate during this period? (Birthdays, Religious Days, achievements, others…)

Date:	Event:	How did I celebrate it?	With who?

You can add any photos or memories of these events to a sleeve

Staying safe online

Social networking is a great way to stay connected with family and friends, but it also comes with some risks. Stay safe when socialising online.

To stay safe online, it is important to remember

- I won't share the name of my soccer or netball club
- I won't share the name of my or my carer's address
- I won't share my password
- I won't share my phone number or carer's phone number
- I won't share my bank account details or my carer's details
- I won't share where I go to school or where my carer works
- I won't share rude photos or texts

This is the name of the adult I can tell if someone or something makes me worry while I am online

Kids Helpline is a free, private and confidential telephone and online counselling service specifically for children and young people aged between 5 and 25 years old.

Kids Helpline

Phone: 1800 551 800

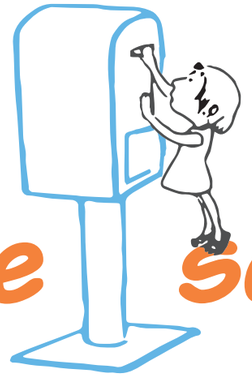
Website: www.kidshelpline.com.au

The 1800 551 800 Number is open any time 24/7.

Below are some important contacts that you should keep with you at all times.

Caseworker (Name) contact	
After hours agency contact	
Community Services Helpline (open all time)	132111
Kids Helpline	1800 551 800
Emergency: Fire brigade, Police, Ambulance	000 anytime

Letter to my future self



Write a letter or email to yourself to read when you are an adult aged 25 years old. Tell your future you about the corona virus, what you are doing, how you are feeling. What new things have you learned during Covid-19, and what will you be doing when this is all over?

Dear

LOVE,

(Your name)

.....

Here comes the sun!!!

(This page to be completed when you don't have to stay at home anymore)

Who told you that children do not need to stay home anymore?

What did they tell you?

What were you doing?

What was your first reaction?

What's the first thing you wanted to do?

Number of days spent at home: _____

From: _____

To: _____

I will keep this booklet in a safe place, to look at it when I am older.

For more information on Covid-19 and how it may impact you, visit the NSW Health website

www.health.nsw.gov.au

For more information on this booklet, please contact Settlement Services International

culturallifestorywork@ssi.org.au

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Covid-19 and Me 2020

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