

# WHAT'S YOUR WORRY (Page 1 of 2)

## Key Learning

Promote self-awareness and healthy coping strategies.

## What You Need

- 📖 *A Huge Bag of Worries* by Virginia Ironside
- Container with lid to hold worries
- Strips of paper
- Tape, glue & scissors
- Assortment of craft supplies (*Play dough, markers, construction and/or foam paper, googly eyes, pipe cleaners, pom poms, yarn, toothpicks, stickers, etc.*)

## No. of Children

- 1 or more

**This activity was provided by Kimberly Blackmore, MC, CPT, RP.** Kimberly is the H.U.U.G. (Help Us Understand Grief) Counsellor at Heart House Hospice in Mississauga, ON. She provides counselling to children, youth and families who have a loved one who is dying or has died as well as education to professionals on how to support and communicate with grieving children.

When a child is experiencing anxiety, whether due to a new situation, a change in a familiar routine, or more recently, worries about COVID-19, it can have an impact on their daily lives. These feelings can cause a change in sleep, eating as well as become overwhelming emotionally. This activity provides an opportunity for the child to share those anxieties and hopefully feel calmer. 'What's Your Worry' can be used with a range of ages.

## Preparation Activities

1. Start by reading the book, ***A Huge Bag of Worries* by Virginia Ironside**. This will allow the child to start thinking about their own worries and what their worry monster might look like.
2. Lay out a variety of craft supplies that the child might use to create their worry monster. Also provide a container (with a lid) to house the worry monster and their worries (*ex: shoe box, tissue box, mason jar with a lid, etc*). These containers can also be decorated by the child.

## How to Play

1. Explain to child that we will be creating worry monsters and a container for it to live in.
2. Once the worry monster and container are complete, support the child to identify their worries and record them on strips of paper:
  - If the child is unable to write their worries down, they can draw their feelings, or an adult could help write out the child's worries as they dictate.
3. Invite the child to fold the strips of paper and place them inside the container they have chosen to house their worries and worry monster.
  - Explain that once the worry has been placed in the container, their feelings should not be pushed away, but rather acknowledge their feelings and practice letting go of those feelings that are causing them fear and anxiety.
  - Remind the child that a worry can be added to the container with the worry monster at any time.
4. Invite the child to share their worry monster and the worries they recorded on the strips of paper if they are comfortable doing so.
  - *Tell me about your worry monster?*
  - *What would you call your worry monster?*
  - *What would you like to say to your worry monster?*
  - *What do you think your worry monster would like to say to you?*
5. Together, brainstorm creative ways to safely cope with each worry.



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## Discussion

### Reflect

How can your worry monster help you to feel calmer?

### Connect

What warning signs do you get in your body that would remind you to use your worry monster/ container?

Do you remember the last time you felt worried? What made you feel that way?

### Apply

What are some ways you can safely cope with worries?

## Variations

1. The container itself can be the worry monster, as opposed to a separate item.
2. Fill the container with a variety of items to use when difficult feelings come up.



## OUR NETWORK



### OUR VISION

Every child and youth has honest information and well-informed support when someone they care about is dying or has died.

### OUR MISSION

To advocate for educational opportunities and support services that will benefit children and youth who are grieving the dying or the death of someone they care about.

[www.childrenandyouthgriefnetwork.com](http://www.childrenandyouthgriefnetwork.com)

## SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



# RIGHT TO PLAY

PROTECT. EDUCATE. EMPOWER.

Right To Play is an international organization that uses the transformative power of sport and play to protect, educate and empower children and youth living in adversity to overcome the effects of poverty, conflict and disease. Partnering with more than 85 First Nation, Métis and Inuit communities and urban organizations across Canada, the PLAY program is led by locally-hired Community Mentors who are trained and supported by Right To Play staff to implement regular weekly play-based programs that build and enhance essential life-skills. We would like to thank Right To Play for sharing the organization's experiential learning methodology (Reflect – Connect – Apply) for the activities included in this resource to support youth through their grief. To learn more, visit Right To Play's website or email [canada@righttoplay.com](mailto:canada@righttoplay.com).



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