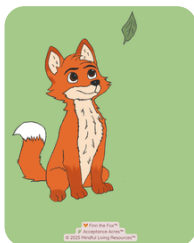


# Big Feelings, Brave Choices: A Story-Based Emotional Skills Pack

Tools for helping children recognize feelings, pause, and choose their next step.



✨ Includes 5 social-emotional story pages, a creative drawing prompt, a calming toolbox, a quick parent guide, and a creative storytelling prompt!

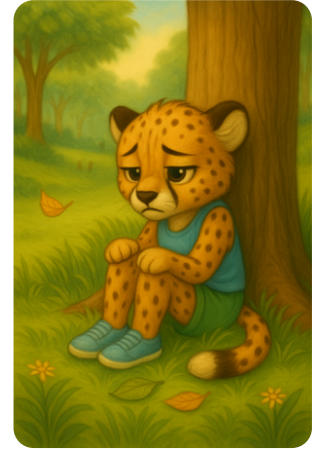
[www.mindfullivingresources.com](http://www.mindfullivingresources.com)

# “What Should Cleo Do?” – A Mini Story With Disappointment and Cheering

Cleo the Cheetah trained for the forest race all week. But when the race began... she tripped. Everyone ran ahead.

Cleo sat by a tree, breathing hard. “I never should’ve tried. I’m terrible at this,” she whispered.

She felt embarrassed, angry, and small.



## What Should Cleo Do Next?

- Option A: Get up and shout, “That wasn’t fair!” at the other racers.
- Option B: Place her paw on her chest, take a breath, and say, “I can feel upset and still choose to cheer someone else on.”
- Option C: Stay behind the tree and replay the moment in her head all day.

## Talk About It:

- What do you think Cleo was feeling?
- What helps you feel better after disappointment?
- What would you say to Cleo if you were her friend?

## Let’s Try Acting It Out!

- Pretend to trip—then stand back up like you’re trying again.
- Practice taking a deep breath with your paw on your chest.
- Act out cheering for a friend while still feeling a little sad.

**Add your own ideas or let your child lead the next scene!**

# “What Should Riley Do?” - A Mini Story For When It's Too Much

Riley the Rhino was in the middle of Forest Fun Day. There were games, music, snacks... and so much noise.

Riley's ears buzzed. His body felt hot.

He stomped his foot and yelled, "It's TOO MUCH!"



## Help Riley! What Should He Do Next?

- Option A: Push past everyone and run into the forest alone.
- Option B: Try to stay and pretend everything is fine while his body gets more upset.
- Option C: Step away to a quiet space, take deep breaths, and splash water on his face.

## Talk About It:

- What helps you calm down when the world feels too loud?
- Can you tell when your body needs a break? If so, how?
- What could Riley do before he yells next time?

## Let's Try Acting It Out!

- Stomp your feet like you're overwhelmed... then pause and breathe.
- Choose a calm space in the room to “reset,” just like Riley.
- Pretend to splash cool water on your face

**Add your own ideas or let your child lead the next scene!**

# **“What Should Sage Do?” - A Mini Story About Self-Doubt and Belonging**

Sage the Squirrel was invited to play a game with older animals. But when they started talking fast and laughing loudly, Sage felt smaller than his actual size.

"Maybe I don't belong here," they thought.

Sage almost turned to leave without saying anything.



## **What Should Sage Do Next?**

- Option A: Pause, take a breath, and say, “I feel a little left out—can I play too?”
- Option B: Pretend to be someone they're not, just to fit in.
- Option C: Say nothing and go home, assuming no one wanted them there anyway.

## **Talk About It:**

- Have you ever felt left out?
- What does being with good friends feel like in your body?
- What's a brave way to ask to join a group?

## **Let's Try Acting It Out!**

- Practice saying, “Can I play too?” in different voices
- Pretend to walk away... then turn back with courage
- Show what “belonging” might look or feel like in your body

**Add your own ideas or let your child lead the next scene!**

# “What Should Vivian Do?” - A Mini Story - Vivian’s Value Choice

Vivian the Vulture was about to join a big game of sky-tag. She flapped up to join when she saw a smaller bird struggling with a tangled kite below.



Vivian paused.

“Should I play... or help?”

## What Should Vivian Do Next?

- Option A: Join the game and pretend not to see the kite..
- Option B: Glide down and ask the smaller bird, “Need a wing?”
- Option C: Worry so much about what to do that she misses both chances.

## Talk About It:

- What would you do if you were Vivian?
- What values are important to you: fun, kindness, bravery?
- How do you decide what matters most in tricky moments?

## Let’s Try Acting It Out!

- Act out choosing to help while still wanting to play.
- Show what “kindness” looks like with your body.
- Take turns pretending to be Vivian and the smaller bird.

**Add your own ideas or let your child lead the next scene!**

# "What Should Finn Do? - A Mini Story - Responding With Care

Finn saw his dad sitting quietly on the log. Usually, he smiled and played—but today, his dad looked tired and a little sad.

Finn's ears perked.

"Something feels different," he thought.



## What Should Finn Do Next?

- Option A: Just tickle his dad.
- Option B: Walk away quietly and say nothing, afraid of doing the wrong thing.
- Option C: Sit beside him and say, "I'm here if you want a hug."

## Talk About It:

- Have you ever noticed someone else feeling sad?
- What's something kind you can do even if you don't know exactly what to say?
- How does it feel to sit with someone when they're having a hard time?

## Let's Try Acting It Out!

- Practice giving a quiet hug or sitting next to someone.
- Try saying "I'm here if you need me" in a soft voice.
- Take turns being Finn and his dad.

**Add your own ideas or let your child lead the next scene!**

# What Happens Next? Draw the Ending!

Pick your favorite story from this pack, and then draw what happens after the character makes their choice. Parents, you can help draw as well!

- What did they do?
- What were they feeling before—and after?
- Did anyone help them? Did they help themselves?
- What helped them feel okay?
- How does the story end?

**Optional caption for your story (see example below):**

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**For example:** “In my story, Cleo felt embarrassed and angry at herself. But, after sitting for awhile, she heard everyone laughing and asked if she could race again.



# What Helps Me Feel Calm?













**Instructions:** Color, circle, or point to the things that help you feel calm. You can even add your own!


 Your choices might help your brain pause.

 Your choices might help your body feel better.

 Your choices might help your heart feel safe.

## Your Calming Code Options:

-  Take a deep breath
-  Go to a quiet space
-  Look at something outside
-  Splash cool water (on their face, hands, feet, neck)
-  Hum or sing softly
-  Hold something soft
-  Talk to someone I trust
-  Move my body (jump, stretch, wiggle)
-  Draw or color
-  Pet an animal or stuffed animal
-  Say something kind to myself
-  ? (Add your own here!) \_\_\_\_\_

 The more you practice your child's preferred Calming Codes during calm moments, the easier it is to use in hard ones.

## Professional Tips:

- Write down each of their choices on an index card. Create a habit of practicing one together most days and “reward” them with special one-on-one time.
- Have them choose one Calming Code. Ask them to draw a picture of it. Then, hang it on the fridge for everyone to see and discuss.



# A Quick Guide for Grown-Ups

## Use This Pack Just a Few Minutes a Day

This printable isn't about perfection. It's about connection.

Kids learn emotional skills through short, consistent, playful moments.

Use one story a day or one per week—or revisit their favorites often!

### Quick Tips:







- Before reading the Options to your child, ask: “What do you think they should do?” If they get stuck or forget parts of the story, provide them with options.
- Let your child choose how to respond—point, circle, or act it out. This is another way to honor choices and model flexibility.
- Use the “Talk About It” questions casually during meals, bathtime, or bedtime.
- Let kids lead when acting out the story. Honor their choices for your parts as best as you can.
- Reinforce calming tools by practicing them outside of big emotions, especially as you first start using this resource.

 **Again, the more you practice in calm moments, the easier it is to use in hard ones.**

# Make Your Own Feeling Story!

**Instructions:** Use this page to create your own story moment. You can draw, circle, or imagine a scene. If you want to draw it out, make sure to ask your mom or dad for an extra piece of paper or two.





## Step 1: Choose a Character

-  Finn
-  Delaney
-  Micah
-  Riley
-  Sage
-  Vivian
- Or create a new one!

## Step 2: What Happened?

- They made a mistake
- They were left out
- They were nervous
- They felt angry or frustrated
- Something changed suddenly
- They saw someone else who was sad
- Choose your own: \_\_\_\_\_

## Step 3: What Could They Do Next?

-  Write, draw, or color some of your ideas!
-  Can you pretend to be the character(s)?
-  What does their voice(s) sound like?
-  What would help him/her/them feel better?

**Note for Parents:** This page builds independent emotional storytelling, roleplay skills, and personal reflection.