

Dear Caregiver,

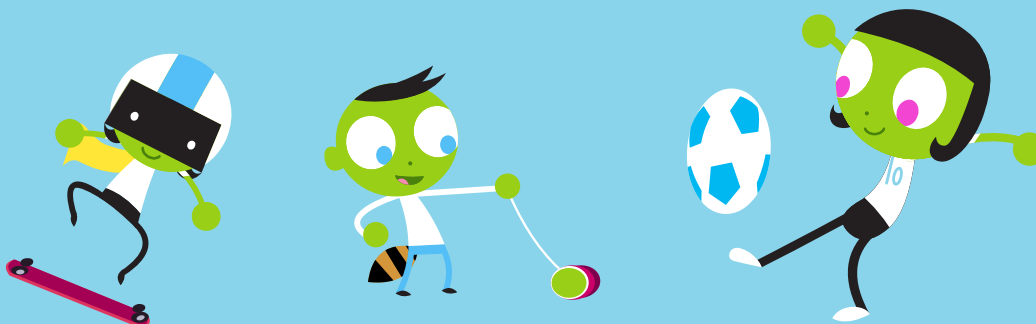
Theme: Perseverance

In your kit:

- Foam sheet
- Craftstick
- Foamies
- Donkey Hodie Encouragement Flag Printable
- Coloring pencils

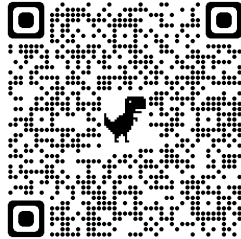
Activity: Encouragement Flags

1. Ask your child: Have you ever felt disappointed when you couldn't do something? Did someone help you learn to do it? What did you do to keep trying or to encourage yourself?
2. Write down your child's ideas. Repeat them back to your child.
3. Ask your child to decorate an encouragement flag they can use as a reminder to themselves to keep trying.
4. With your help, they can cut out and use the Donkey Hodie decorations or make their own.
5. Talk about when you both might want to use the flag as a reminder to keep trying.



Perseverance

Check out these resources at home to help your child practice perseverance.



Watch this clip from Donkey Hodie - Hoof Dancing
Donkey Hodie must practice, practice, and practice some more to learn Grampy Hodie's Hoof Dance—hee-haw!

Games to play at home



Donkey Hodie Speedy Delivery



Donkey Hodie Froyo Stand

Video for Grow-Ups | Expressing Feelings with Kids

Parenting Minutes: Sharing Feelings

Learn the importance of helping children to understand and manage emotions effectively, and how to send a message to your children that their thoughts and feelings are important in this video from WNET.





Donkey Hodie

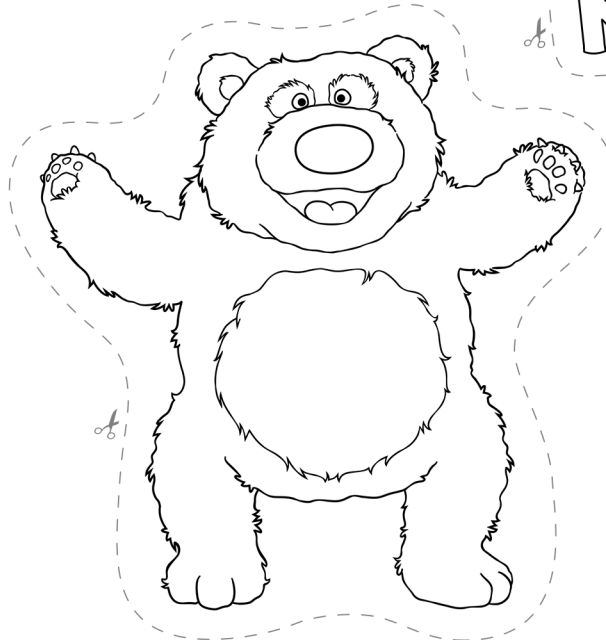
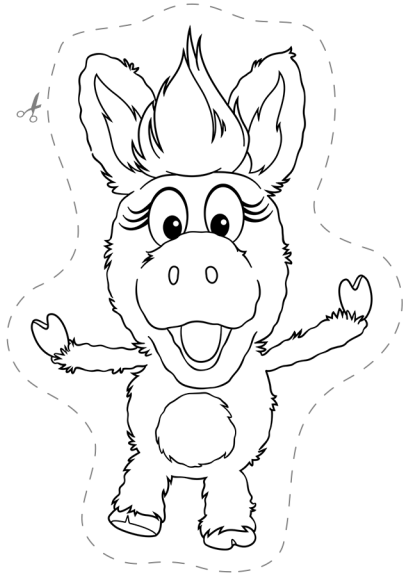
Encouragement Flag Decorations



Hee-hawesome!

Believe it!

Keep trying!



Find more games and activities at pbskids.org/donkeyhodie



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The Conductor's Concentration



Test your memory skills in this game of concentration

The Conductor's Concentration is a version of the classic children's game known as memory or concentration. It can be played by 1 to 4 kids.

MAKE THE GAME:

Print and cut the squares for each set of cards. To make the game pieces sturdier and last longer, glue the paper to a cereal box before cutting. You could also laminate the cards.

HOW TO PLAY:

Shuffle one set of 12 cards and turn them over on a flat surface so that they are face down. Begin the game by turning two cards over at a time to see if they match. If they do, put that pair of cards aside and try to find another pair. If they don't match, turn both cards face down again and let another person take a turn. The player that finds the most matches wins the game. For a real challenge, mix all three sets of cards together and play one big game.



For more interactive fun go to:
pbskids.org/dinosaurtrain

For more printables, go to: pbskidsforparents.org









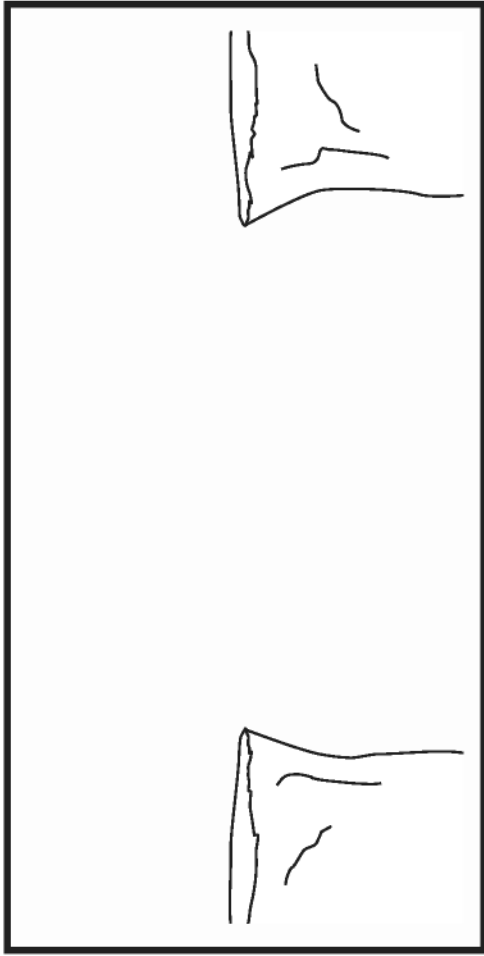
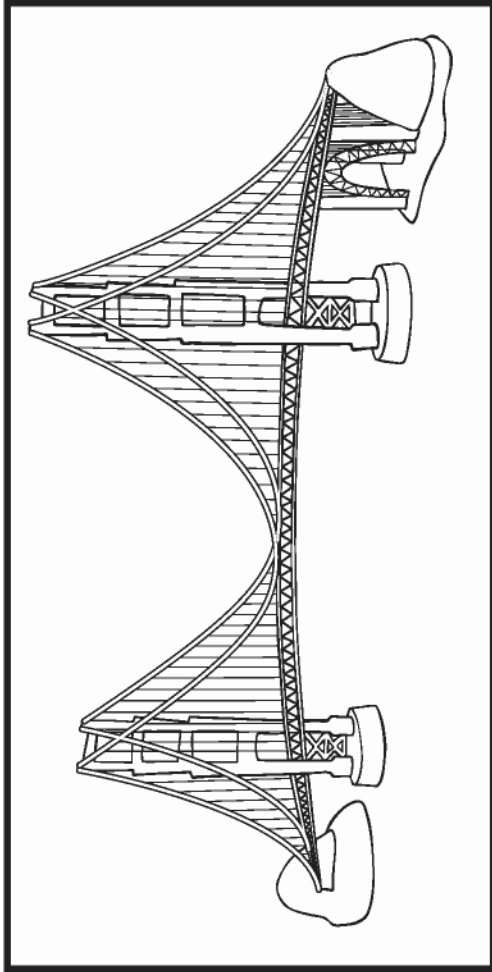
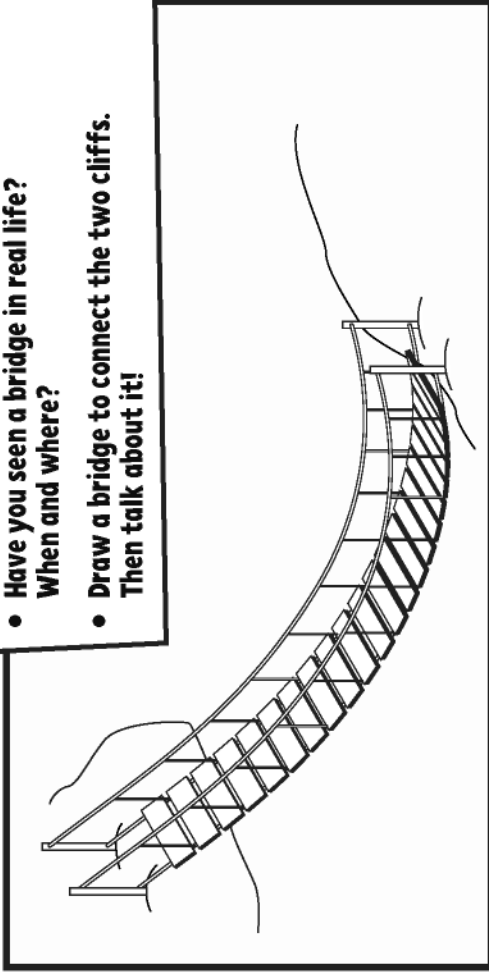
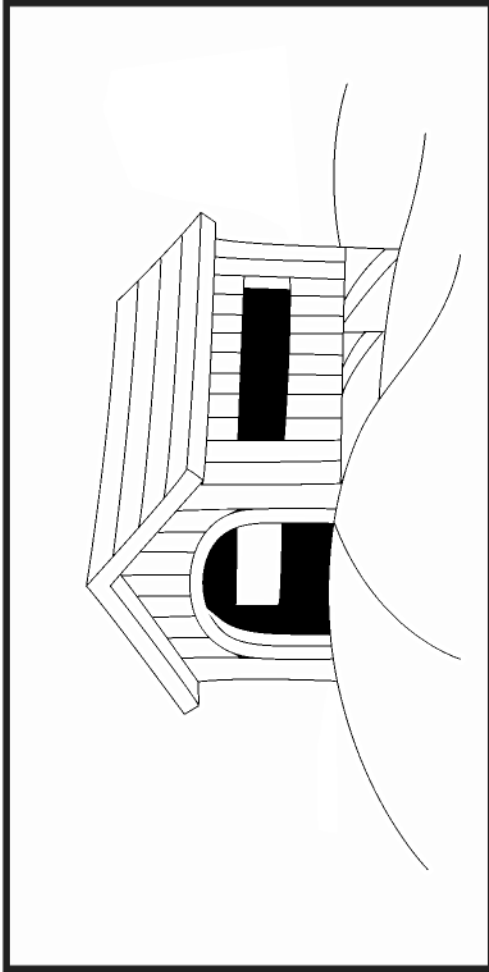
Bridges

Describe the different bridges you see.
Then, draw a bridge of your own design.

Name _____

Family Talk

- What do you notice about the different bridges?
- Have you seen a bridge in real life? When and where?
- Draw a bridge to connect the two cliffs. Then talk about it!



Find more games and activities at pbskidsforparents.org



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Grocery Store Math Bingo



peg+cat

pbskids.org

Can you find these items in the grocery store?

Cross the items off the list as you find them. Can you fill a row or the whole card?

 Three apples	 Cube	Sold by a gallon	 Rectangle	Less than \$1.00
 Circle	Greater than \$1.00	 Dairy	Less than one pound	 Rectangular prism
Sold by a quart	Less than one ounce	Free Space	 One carrot	Sold by a dozen
 Sphere	Less than \$5.00	 Four strawberries	Greater than 1 ounce	 Square
 Two bananas	 Oval	More than one pound	 Cylinder	Greater than \$5.00

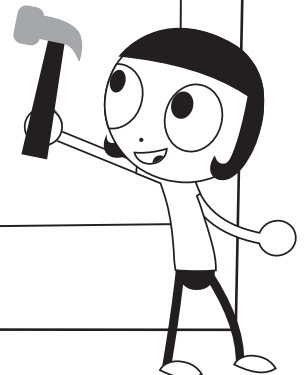
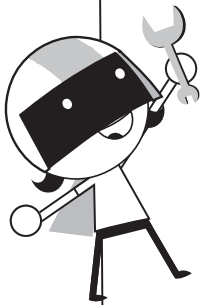
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What Can I Build?

Name _____

Instructions: What can you build with materials like: cardboard boxes, empty paper towel rolls, a spare bed sheet, and tape? Draw and label your structure. Then, build it with recyclable materials you collect. Invite others to help you.



For more games and activities, visit pbskidsforparents.org



Helping Kids Handle Change at School

By Deborah Farmer Kris

Jan 11, 2022

*******Deborah Farmer Kris**

Shortly after moving from Texas to Massachusetts, I took my son to visit his new preschool. I remember how he stared through the fence at 4-year-olds racing around the playground.

“But I don’t know any of them, Mommy!” he said, his eyes wide with worry. “I want my old friends back.”

Here’s the thing about change: it’s inherently stressful. Even good changes! We all like the comfort of routines and familiar people. Young children, especially, crave predictability. It makes them feel secure.

So how do we help them handle changes at school? Perhaps their best friend moved away or they had to change classrooms or they got a new teacher mid-way through the year. For some kids, even changes in seating charts or dismissal procedures can throw them off balance.

Every time we help kids work through their worries, we help them strengthen their confidence and resilience muscles.

Talk through feelings about doing something new

One of the very first episodes of “Daniel Tiger’s Neighborhood” included a strategy song that has become one of my parenting mainstays: “When we do something new, let’s talk about what we’ll do.”

As parents, we sometimes make assumptions. When my daughter started a new school in first grade, I thought she’d be worried about making friends — but it turned out she was most nervous about how to find the bathrooms and how the lunchline worked.

The best thing we can do for kids is to talk openly about upcoming and ongoing changes. If they are starting a new afterschool class, talk about what will happen at the end of the day, how they will get there, what it will look like, and who else will be there. When we don’t talk it through, young kids fill in the gaps with their own imagination — and some children are prone to imagining the worst!

Give them a chance to share their fears and wonderings. Try asking, “What is one thing that you are excited about?” or “What is one thing you are nervous about?” Make their questions your questions: “I want to know how lunch works, too! Let’s ask your teacher together.”

Normalize your child’s emotions

Empathy is pure magic. When we listen to our kids and allow them to have their feelings, we remind them that all of their emotions are normal and valid. It’s okay to feel sad that their friend moved away. It’s okay to be angry that their favorite teacher left mid-year. It’s okay to be nervous about a new lunch routine. All feelings are OK.

We can say things like:

- “That sounds tough.”
- “I can see why you are upset.”
- “Oh, that’s so frustrating!”
- “If that happened to me, I’d be sad, too!”

But we can’t expect our kids to always use words to express how they are feeling. Remember, behavior is communication. When kids cry, yell, withdraw, or regress, they are telling you that something doesn’t feel right and they need help. Our job is to get curious as we help them through.

Just last night, my second grader was all out of sorts, alternating between aggression and tears. At bedtime, I tested an idea. “I know your teacher has been out this week. You’ve had a lot of different substitutes, haven’t you? That must be tough. Do you miss your teacher?”

In the dark, he nodded his head. And even though he didn't want to talk more about it right then, he asked me to stay and rub his back until he fell asleep.

Check-in with your own reactions

We naturally get nervous for our children when they encounter challenges at school: Will they be able to work through a social struggle? Will they make friends? Will their teacher be kind? Will the reading intervention class help?

Dr. Nadine Burke Harris, the Surgeon General of California, told me that when children show signs of distress, she has three pieces of advice: "Number one: check in with yourself. In fact, that's number one, number two, and number three. Our emotional wellbeing is the most important ingredient for our children's emotional wellbeing."

When we regulate our own emotions, we help children regulate theirs. Dr. Burke Harris described it this way: "Our kids are closely tuned-in to our signals: our non-verbal cues, our emotional signals, all of that stuff. If you want to help your child to calm down, one of the most important things you can do is calm yourself down. They will feel, 'Oh, Mom and Dad aren't too freaked out about this. I guess it's probably going to be OK.'"

With her own children, Dr. Burke Harris's go-to strategy is deep breathing. "I sit with them and say, 'Let's take some deep breaths. Let's help calm our bodies down.' And I do it with them, mirroring for them. Just three deep breaths really help them to reset. It's amazing how well it works, even for 2- and 3-year-olds."

When I taught elementary school, I kept this quote from Fred Rogers on my desk: "Often when you think you're at the end of something, you are at the beginning of something." Endings can be sad. Change can be stressful. But with the support of caring adults, our kids' lives are constantly filled with new beginnings.

Deborah Farmer Kris is an education journalist, parent educator and the author of the "All the Time" picture book series. Her bylines include PBS KIDS, NPR's Mindshift, The Washington Post, the Boston Globe Magazine, and Oprah Daily. She also spent 20+ years as a K-12 teacher and administrator. You can also find her at www.parenthood365.org

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<https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/helping-kids-handle-change-at-school>