HANDS LIFTING HEARTS
INITIATIVES SOCIETY
RESOURCE 06

FAMILY SAFETY & EMOTIONAL WELLNESS.

An activity booklet for calm, connection and care

For African, Black and Caribbean families, youth, and caregivers in Alberta

Notice your feelings, practise safer responses, and choose small actions that build safety.

Family Violence Prevention / Breaking Silence, Building Safety

Sponsored by the Ministry of Children and Family Services, Government of Alberta

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Alberta Government

Small steps towards safety

This booklet helps adults, youth and families notice feelings, reduce tension and practise emotional safety at home or in a workshop.

Make this your own

Tick boxes and type in the spaces, or print and write by hand. Use a PDF reader that supports forms. You can skip any question, pause, or return later. There are no scores. Save only if it is safe to keep your answers.

Privacy matters. A completed workbook may contain personal information. Use a device and storage location you trust. If someone monitors your device, consider using a safer device or completing the activities without recording answers.

Choose an activity

How am I feeling?

Stress signals and safety

Pause and reset

Sort the responses

Our values and small actions

Extra support

Use shared activities only when everyone can participate freely and safely. If there is fear, control, threats or violence, choose individual support rather than trying to resolve it through a family exercise. Nobody is responsible for managing another person's abusive behaviour.

How am I feeling?

Tick the emotions you notice today. You can feel more than one emotion at once.

- [ ] Calm
- [ ] Anxious
- [ ] Hopeful
- [ ] Safe
- [ ] Supported
- [ ] Tired
- [ ] Angry
- [ ] Overwhelmed
- [ ] Unsure
- [ ] Stressed

Another feeling I want to name

What is affecting how I feel today?

What helps when my feelings become strong?

Stress signals and safety

Notice what happens in your body without judging yourself. These are observations, not a diagnosis.

- [ ] Tight chest
- [ ] Fast heartbeat
- [ ] Headache
- [ ] Stomach discomfort
- [ ] Shallow breathing
- [ ] Clenched jaw
- [ ] Restlessness

What helps my body feel calmer?

I feel safest when...

People who help me feel supported...

Emotional and physical safety both matter. Feeling calmer does not make an unsafe situation safe. Seek support if you feel afraid or at risk.

Pause and reset

Try this only when taking a pause is safe. You can stop or adapt the exercise at any time.

01 Stop speaking for a few moments.

02 Take three gentle breaths, if comfortable.

03 Feel your feet resting on the ground.

04 Ask yourself: What do I need right now?

A phrase I can use to ask for a break

A safer place or support I can turn to

What I notice after trying a pause

A planned break is different from using silence to punish or control someone. If it is safe, explain that you need a break and agree when to check in again.

Sort the responses

Choose Healthy or Unhealthy for each behaviour. Then turn to the reflection below to compare your answers.

	Healthy	Unhealthy
Listening without interrupting	○	○
Threatening someone	○	○
Taking a break when overwhelmed	○	○
Using silence to punish or control	○	○
Using calm words	○	○
Blaming someone for your behaviour	○	○
Asking for help	○	○
Shouting at someone	○	○

Which healthy response do I want to practise?

Compare: Healthy responses are listening, taking a break, using calm words and asking for help. Threats, punishment through silence, blame and shouting at someone are unhealthy. Context matters: a quiet pause for safety is not the same as punishment.

Our values and small actions

Complete this alone or with willing participants. No one needs to sign or agree under pressure. Revisit it when needs change.

In our family or group, we value...

We want to practise

- ☐ Speaking respectfully
- ☐ Taking breaks when emotions rise
- ☐ Asking for help early
- ☐ Protecting everyone's safety

Small actions for this week

- ☐ Checking in with each other
- ☐ Apologising when wrong
- ☐ Respecting boundaries
- ☐ Listening fully
- ☐ Asking for support
- ☐ Taking time to calm down

One action I choose and when I can try it

How we can check in again safely

An agreement does not guarantee safety or replace support when someone is being harmed.

Support you can choose

You do not have to complete this workbook alone. Choose a service that fits your needs. In immediate danger, call 911.

Hands Lifting Hearts Initiatives Society

Youth and family programs and information.

Kids Help Phone

Support and resources for young people across Canada.

ShelterSafe

Find women's shelters and their support services in Canada.

Government of Canada

Family violence information and support resources.

Plan for your safety

Practical safety planning information.

One support option I may want to explore

Links above are clickable. Support information checked October 15, 2026. Sources: the official service pages linked above. This workbook offers reflection and planning activities; it is not a substitute for individual safety planning or professional support.

Prepared as part of the Hands Lifting Hearts Initiatives Society Family Violence Prevention: Breaking Silence, Building Safety Toolkit.