

For additional information on family violence  
and how to support families and their  
children struggling with domestic violence:

**Family Violence and Sexual Assault Hotline**

**1-800-838-8238 (V/tty)**

**Free, confidential, 24 hours a day**

**National Domestic Violence Hotline**

**1-800-799 -SAFE (7233)**

**1-800-787-3224 (TTY)**

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For information on how to obtain additional copies of this  
booklet send an e-mail request to  
Loudoun Citizens for Social Justice, Inc.  
**laws@lcsj.org**

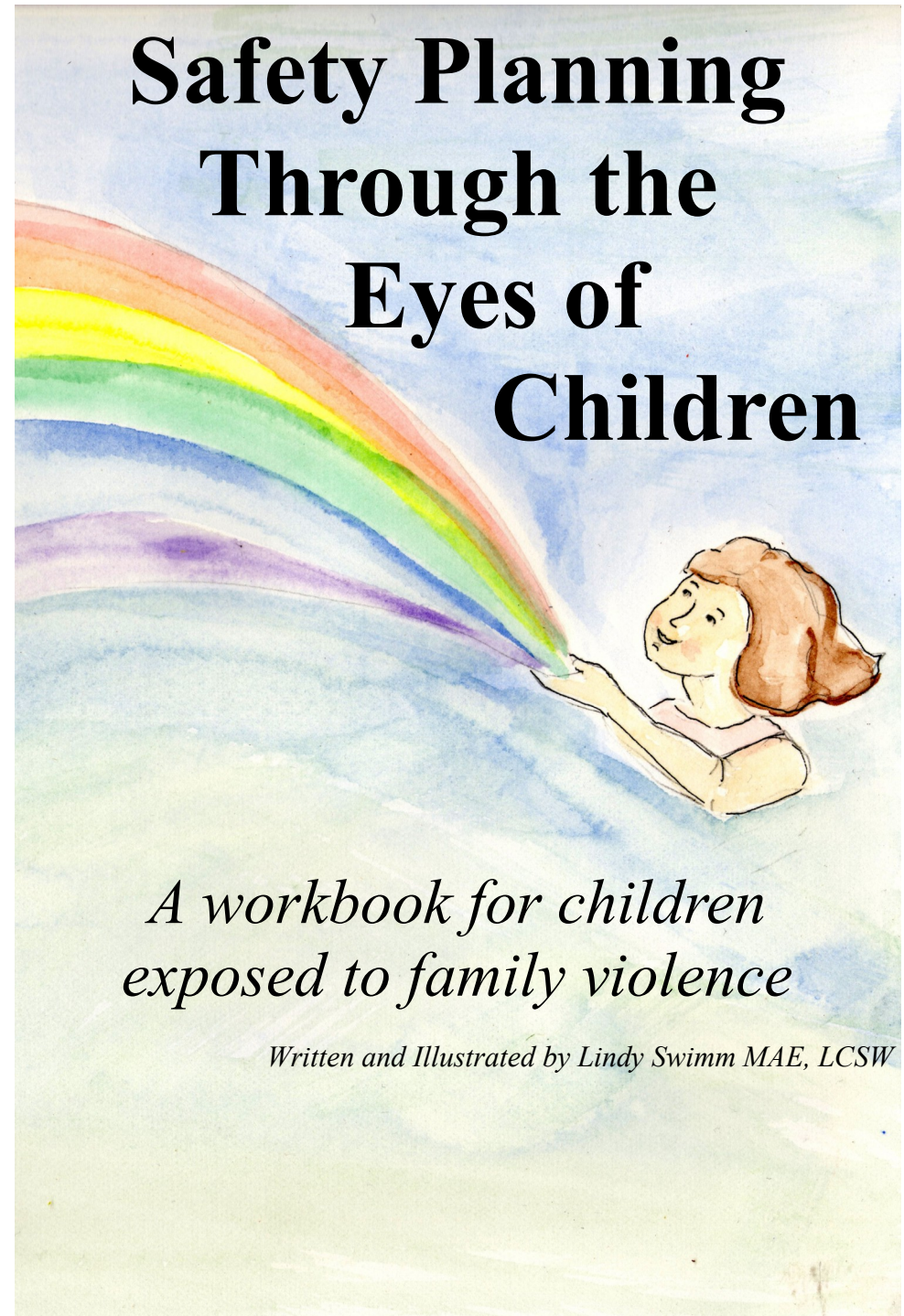


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# Safety Planning Through the Eyes of Children

*A workbook for children  
exposed to family violence*

*Written and Illustrated by Lindy Swimm MAE, LCSW*



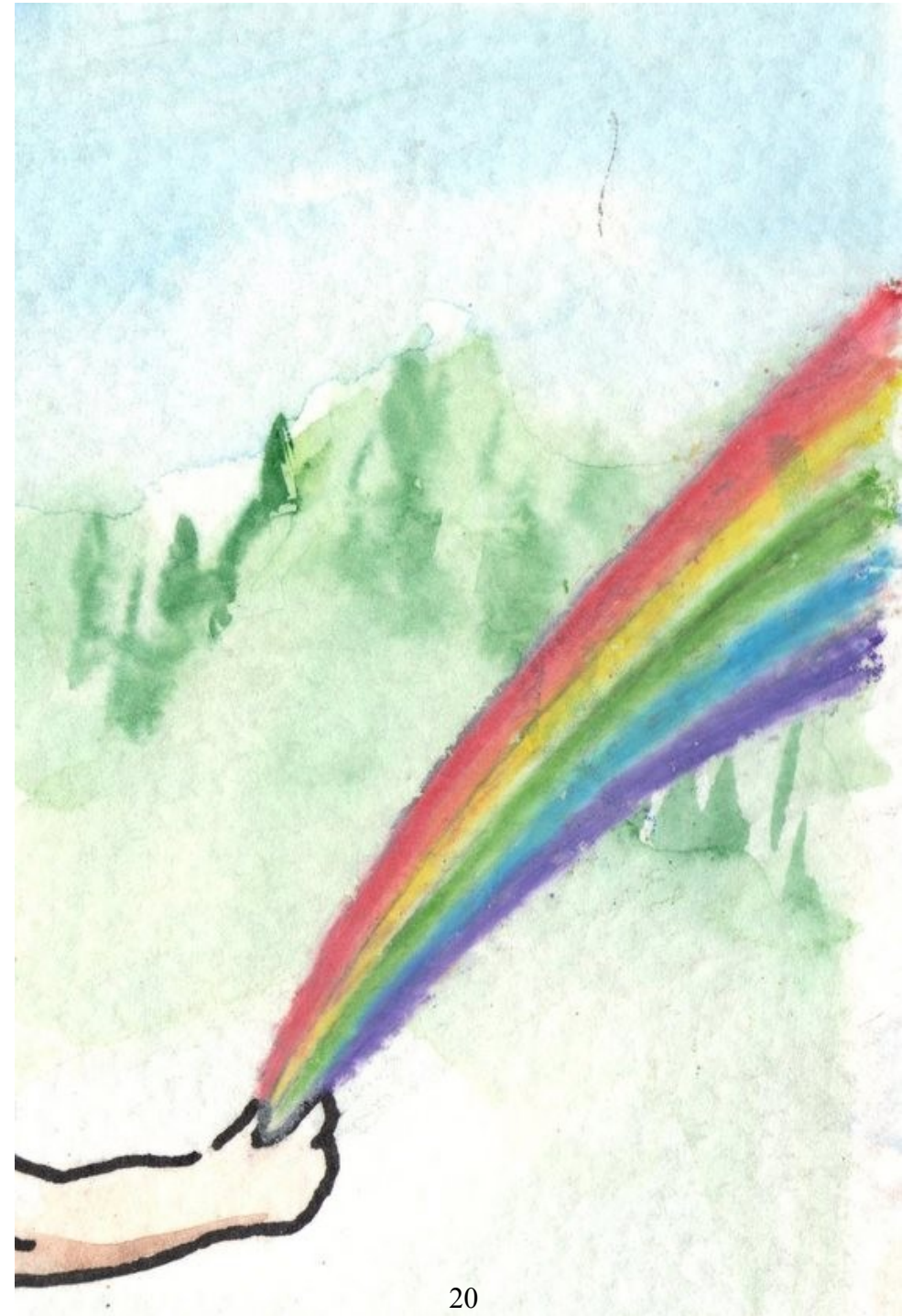


## **Author's Note**

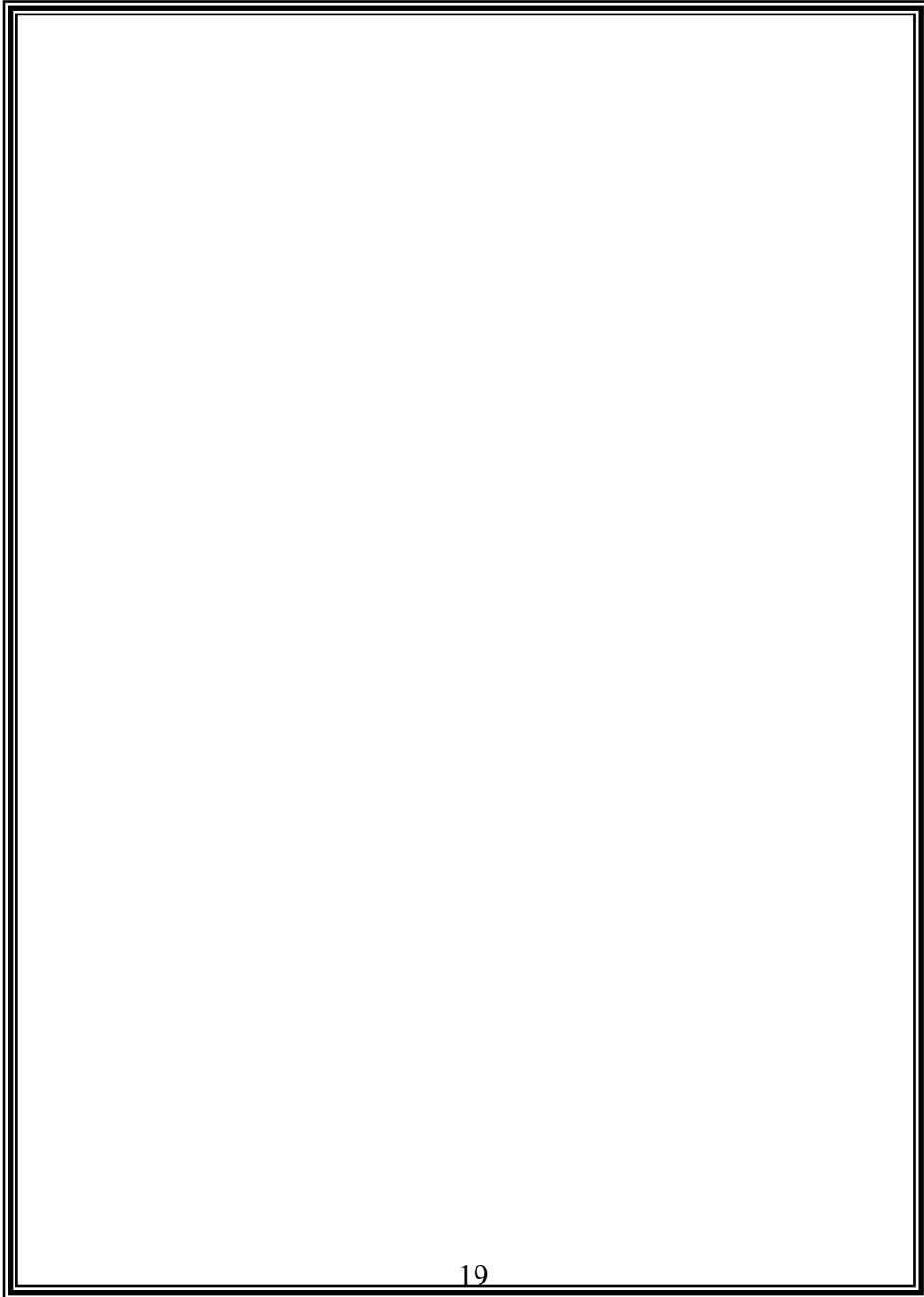
Assisting children who have been exposed to family violence is key to their healing and developmental growth.

Providing basic information, safe options when fighting occurs, and support for all family members can be some of the most effective interventions to assist a family struggling with domestic violence issues.

The story of Jenna is a compilation of true life stories about real children from homes where violence has occurred. The strategies presented in this booklet are drawn from the creative survival adaptations of actual children and families, as well as successful interventions used with children and families attempting to change violent interaction patterns in their homes.



Draw your family feeling safe:



**Safety Planning Through the Eyes of Children**

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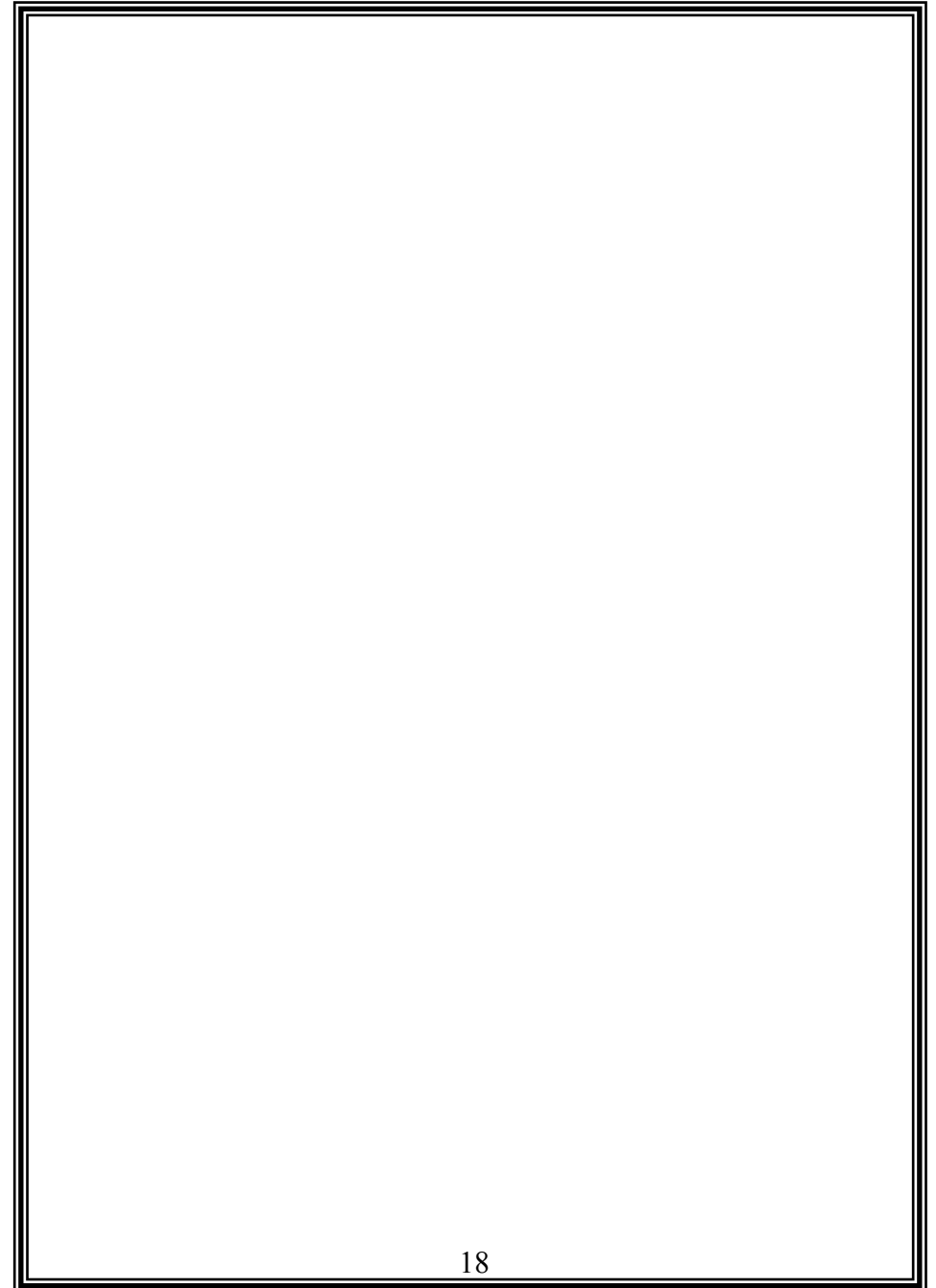
by LINDY SWIMM, MAE, LCSW

Jenna is five years old.

She likes to play with her friends, draw pictures and go to school.



Draw yourself feeling safe:







Jenna wishes her parents would stop fighting. She needs to learn from them how to do her own **MAD** in a safe way. Jenna needs her parents to show her how to act more loving by not fighting with each other.

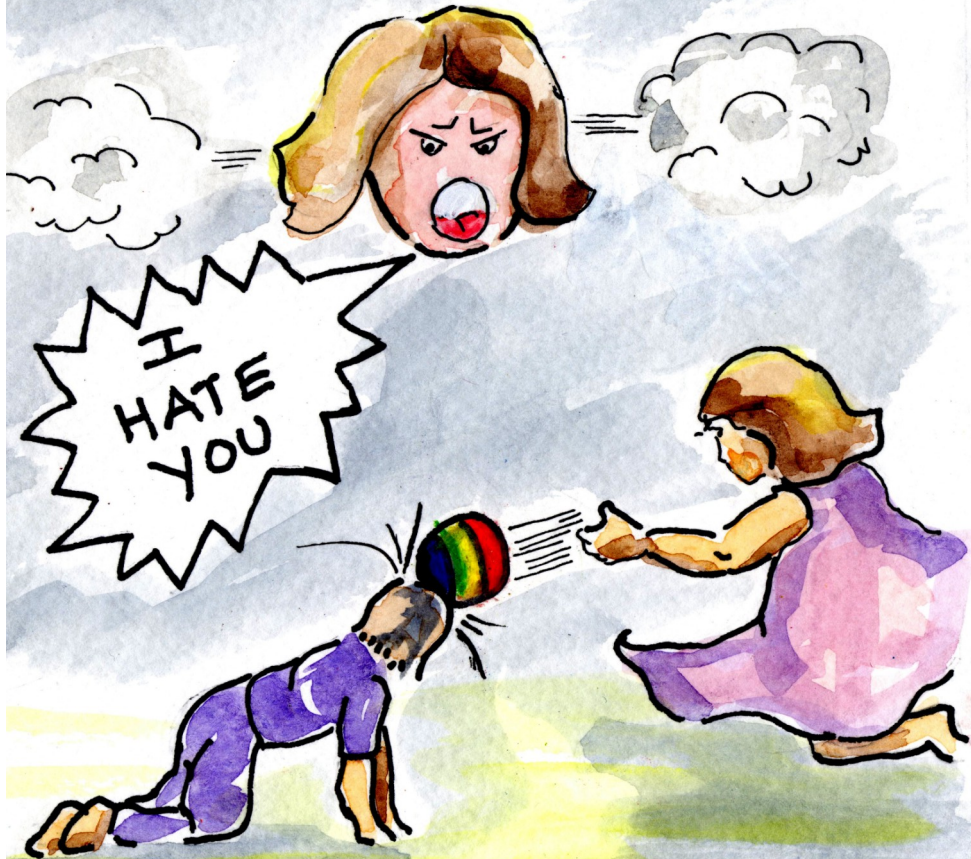


Jenna does a lot of things really well, like riding a bike, singing a song, doing her homework, playing nicely with her friends and much more.





One thing Jenna does not know how to do in a safe way is feel her **MAD** feelings.



Jenna hopes that her family will stop fighting. Until then, she knows she cannot stop the fighting. She will use her safety plan to create a safe place for herself.

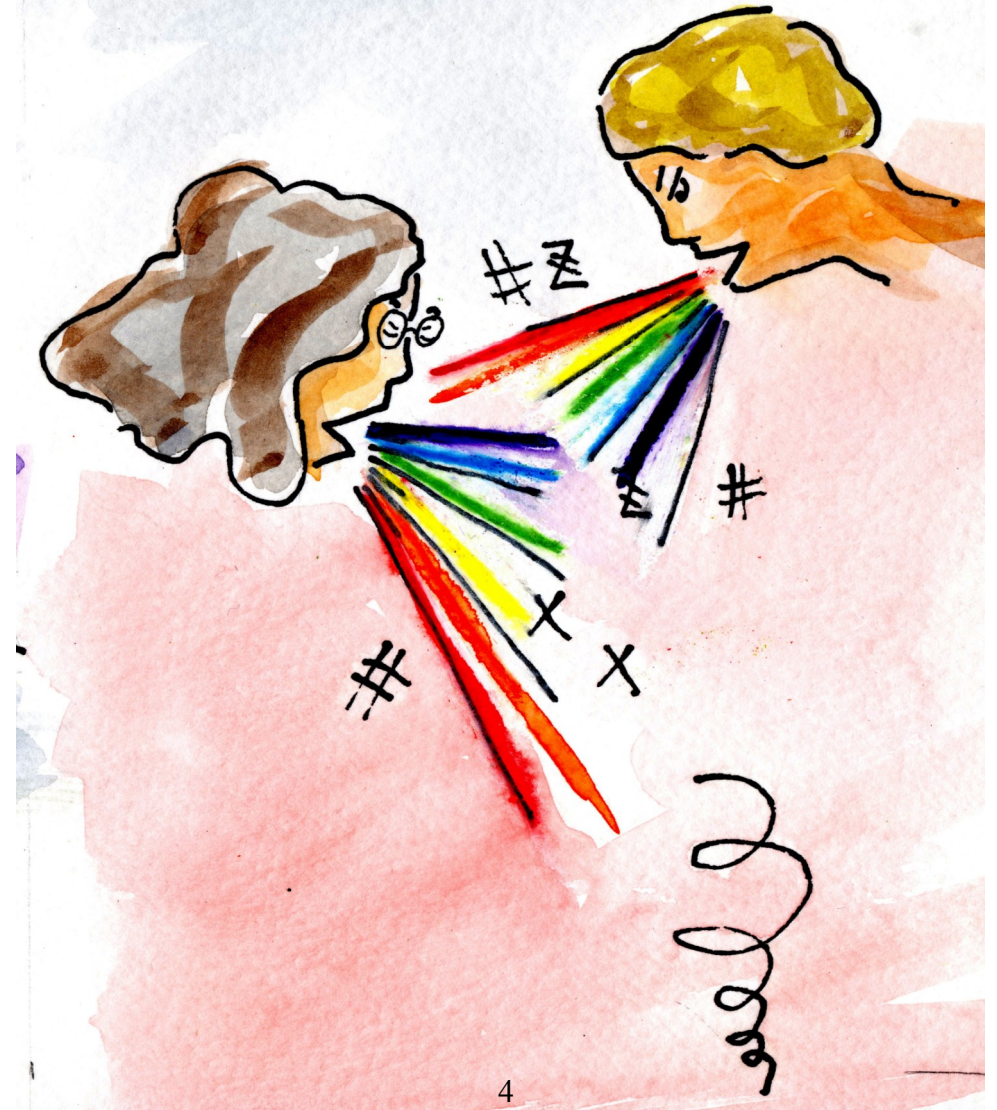




Check off the things that you can do to feel better when grown ups fight in your house.

- I can think about my safe, calm and happy place.
- I can go to my safe place.
- I can hold my doll or stuffed animal really tight.
- I can sing a song.
- I can tell my doll or stuffed animal how I feel.
- I can breathe calm feelings into my belly.

Jenna learned in her family that when you are **MAD** sometimes you yell, hit or break something.



Jenna feels scared when this happens in her family.

She feels mad and sad because she never knows when the grownups will do their **MAD** in scary, unsafe ways.



Here are some things Jenna can do when she feels sad, scared or mad and there is no one to help her:

- ◆ Think about a place where she feels safe and happy.
- ◆ Draw her safe place.
- ◆ Think about a person she feels safe with.
- ◆ Think about a time when she felt really happy.
- ◆ Hold her favorite stuffed animal or doll really tight.
- ◆ Tell her stuffed animal or doll what she feels.



Jenna is scared sometimes to tell her parents about the bad feelings and how scared she feels.

Jenna feels better when she thinks about her safety plan and her safe place.



One time, the police came when her parents' **MAD** feelings became scary and unsafe. Jenna did not know what to do and was afraid someone would be hurt.



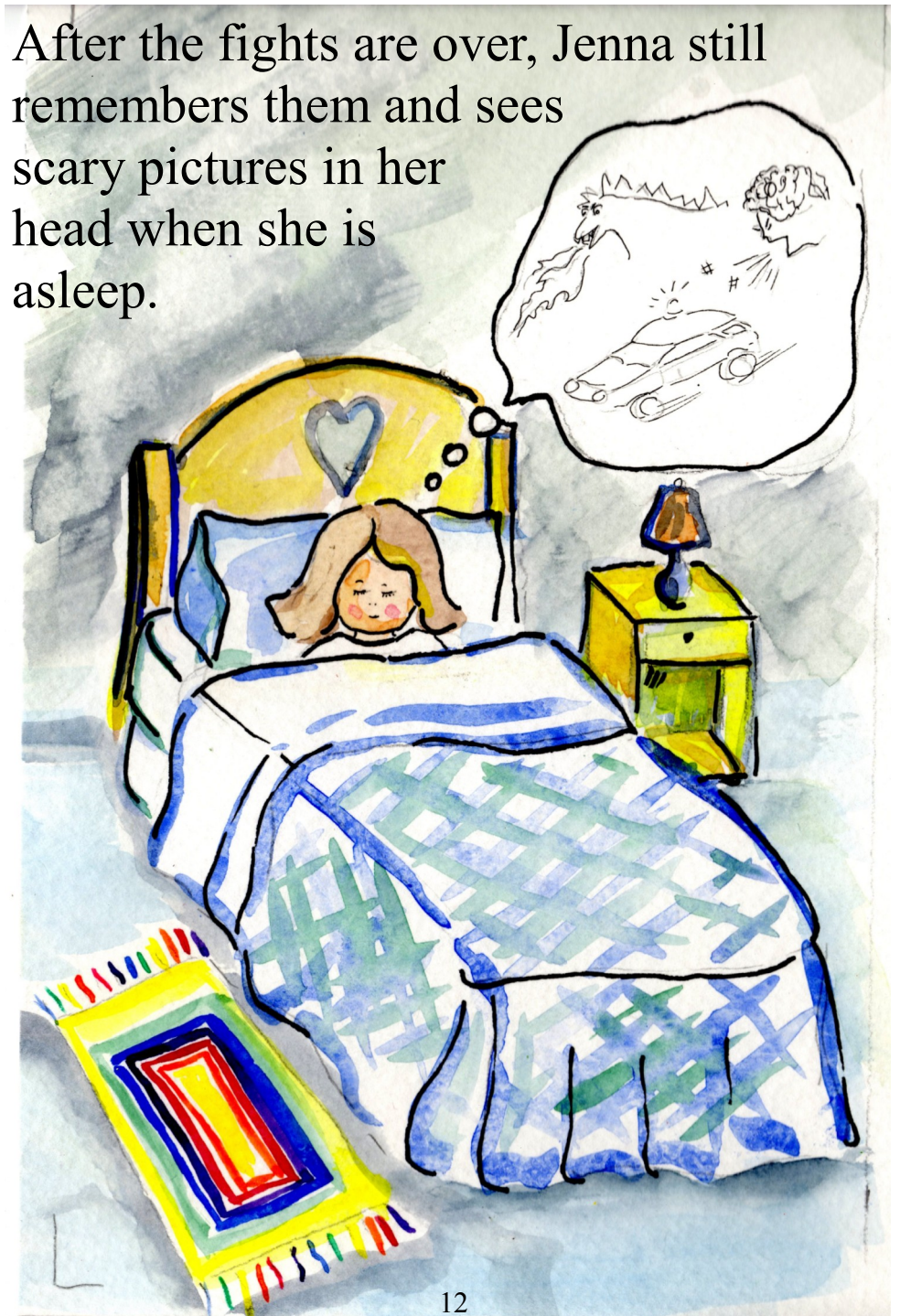


Jenna did not know that her family needed a

# SAFETY PLAN!

She had not heard these words before and did not know what they meant. A safety plan helps children to know what to do when grownups fight.

After the fights are over, Jenna still remembers them and sees scary pictures in her head when she is asleep.





Practice writing your phone  
number and address here:

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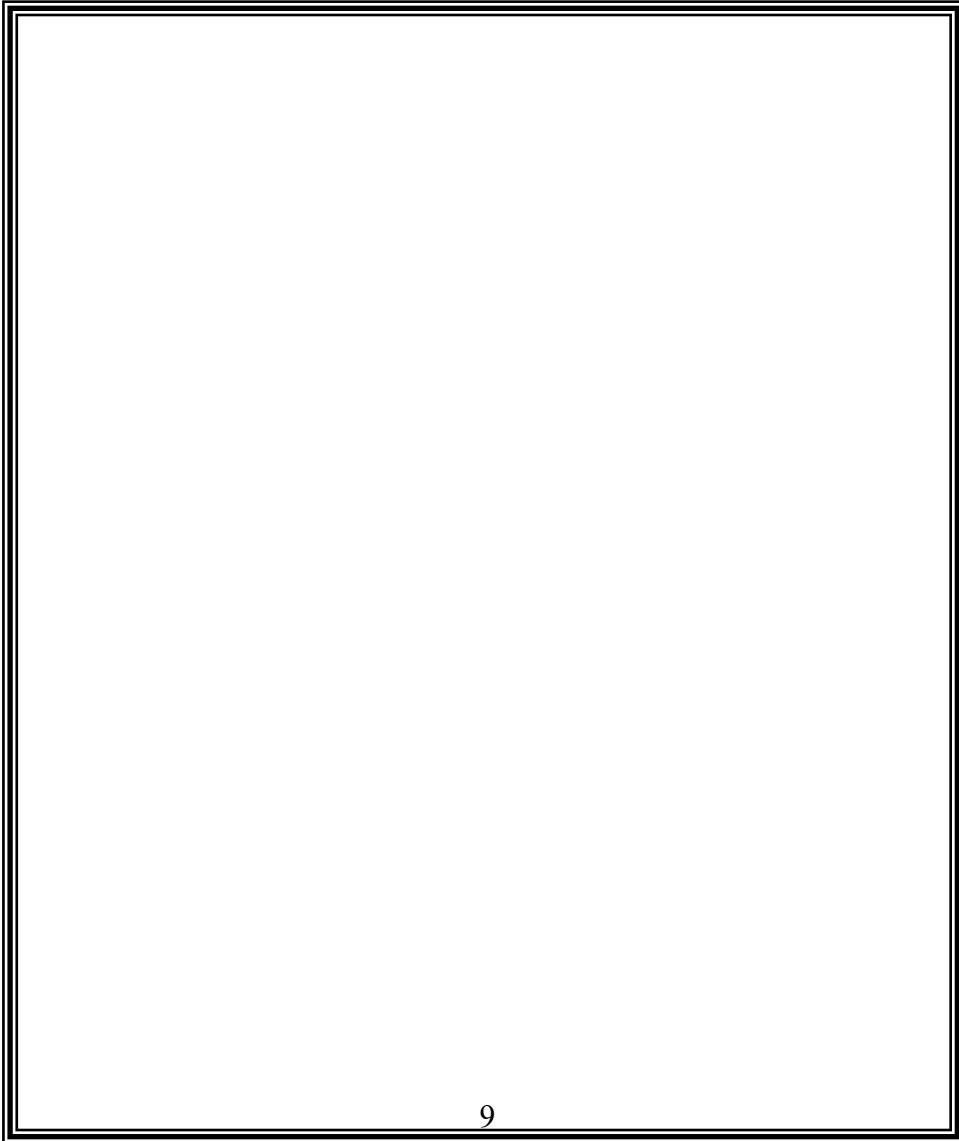
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## **SAFETY PLAN**

- ◆ Stay out of the fight.
- ◆ Do not hide in a small place where you could get hurt.
- ◆ Know how to call the police.
- ◆ Know your address.
- ◆ Know a safe place to go if you need to leave the house.

What are your ideas about how Jenna and her family can make a safety plan?

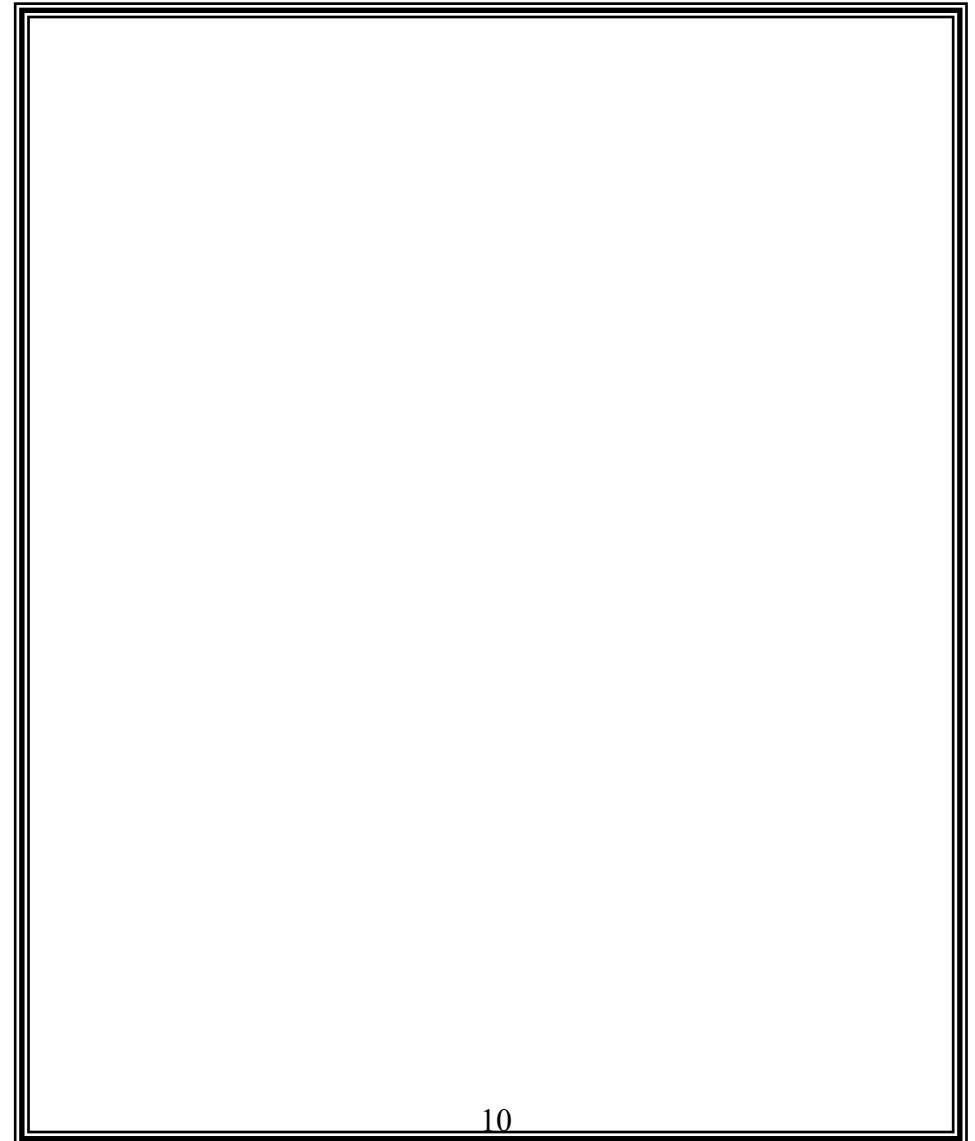
Draw or write them here:



9

What are your ideas about how you can feel safe when your family fights?

Draw or write them here:



10