

As kids grow older, they face new stressors and challenges. By helping your child develop healthy **coping skills** (tools to help them manage their feelings and reduce stress), you're helping them become more **resilient** (better able to handle life's ups and downs).

## Why journal?

Sometimes we aren't ready to talk about our thoughts and feelings out loud, and that's OK. Journaling can help us become more aware of our thoughts, feelings and behaviors, and it can help us explore solutions for solving problems. Use the ideas provided to encourage your child to write or draw in a journal or notebook.



Journaling should be a safe way for your child to privately explore their feelings.

It may be tempting to try to find out what they are writing about, but it's important not to look at their journal unless they share it with you. Instead of looking at your child's journal, have regular conversations with your child about their feelings, especially if you have any concerns about their safety or well-being.

## Journaling ideas

### All ages



When you feel sad or angry, what things or what people make you feel better?



If you were granted 3 wishes, what would you ask for?



List or draw 3 things you are grateful for.



Close your eyes and think about your favorite smell. What is it? Where is it coming from? Why do you like it?



Think about a sound that makes you happy. What is it? Where are you when you're listening to it? Why do you like it?

### Younger kids



List 3 things you are really good at (or 3 things you are proud of).



Draw a picture or write about a happy time.



Draw a picture of an animal most like you and write about why it represents you.



Draw a picture of who or what makes you laugh the hardest.



Draw a picture or write about a time you were very kind to someone.



Think about a time you and a friend got upset with one another. How did you resolve the conflict?

## Older kids and teens



List 3 of your best traits, and then list 3 traits you hope to develop as you grow older.

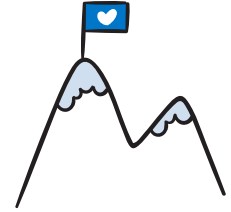


How would you describe yourself to someone new?

What advice would you give to a younger sibling or friend?



Think about a challenge you faced and what you did to overcome it. How did the challenge make you better or stronger?



Pause and think about a problem you are having. How will you resolve the problem? Who or what can help you figure it out?



If you could have any superpower, what would it be and why?

Close your eyes and think about your ideal future. Draw a picture or write about it.



If you could enjoy a meal with anyone in the world, who would it be with and why?



**Coping strategies**, like journaling, are also helpful for adults. Practicing coping strategies is a great way to take care of yourself, be more present and model healthy ways to manage stress.

For more coping skills ideas, visit [Strong4Life.com/coping](https://Strong4Life.com/coping)