

KIDS SAY THE DARNDDEST THINGS

COMMUNICATING WITH YOUNG CHILDREN



Sarah Harvan

Ohio CASA Celebrate Kids! Conference
CASA/GAL Program of Summit County

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

01

Recognize barriers to communication with young children and how to overcome those challenges

02

Learn practical tools and interview techniques to use during visits

03

Build confidence with interviewing young children

***Disclaimer**

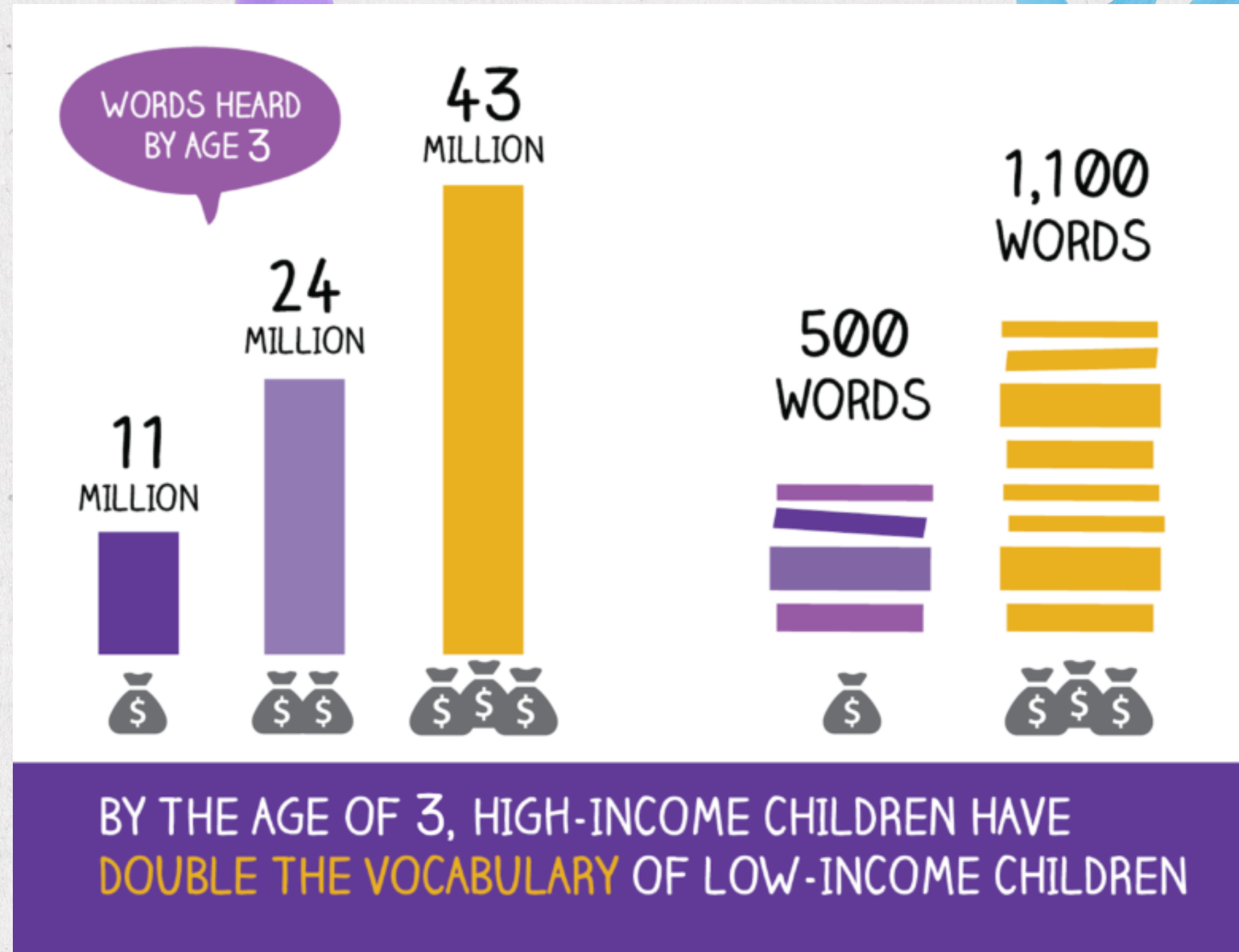
JIMMY KIMMEL LIE DETECTIVE



BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION

SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS & THE 30 MILLION WORD GAP

[Betty Hart and Todd Risley](#) found families with higher incomes and education tend to talk more with their children than do those from lower SES levels.



BARRIERS TO COMMUNICATION

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

- Read!
- Identify emotions
- Sing songs
- Receptive vs. Expressive
- Familial influences
 - fear, self blame, confusion
 - history of concealing emotions, thoughts, feelings, etc.
- Why are you here?

THE MILLION WORD GAP

New research shows the different numbers of words kids will have heard by age 5 based on how often parents read to them:

Never read to: 4,662 words

1-2 times per week: 63,570 words

3-5 times per week: 169,520 words

Daily: 296,660 words

Five books a day: 1,483,300 words



CAT



PRACTICAL TOOLS

BEFORE YOU START TALKING

- Nonverbal cues & poker face
- Tone of voice
- Tips to Remember
 - age & ability
 - simple phrases
 - one idea at a time
 - use names, not pronouns
 - avoid leading or coaching questions
 - Listen! Allow them to process questions and respond

EMOTION CHECK IN



PRACTICAL TOOLS

BEFORE YOU START TALKING

- Observe
 - be objective
 - body movements & motor skills
 - response to activity
 - boundaries
 - energy level and interest level
 - do your homework





**7 year old
draws picture
of her
foster home**

**Same 7 year old
draws picture
of her family
home**





PRACTICAL TOOLS

ON OUR SLEEVES[®]
The Movement for Children's Mental Health



PRACTICAL TOOLS

WHAT TO ACTUALLY SAY

- Introduction & expectations
 - ask permission, validate, and thank
- Open ended questions
 - build trust, create safe environment, explore, clarify, and gain understanding of the child's world
 - gather information
- Affirmations
 - build rapport, build self efficacy
- Reflective listening
 - clarify, avoid guessing

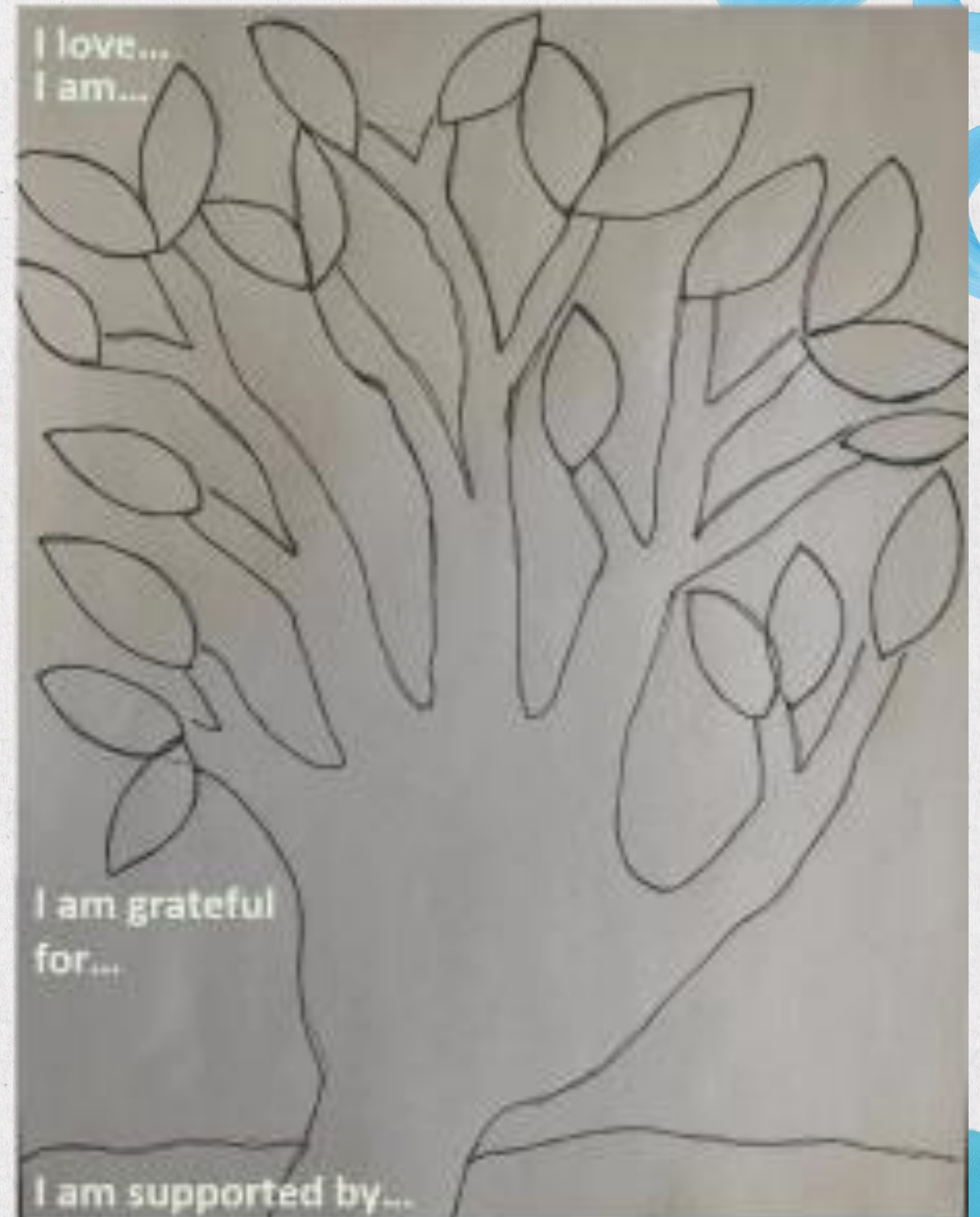





CONVERSATION STARTERS FOR KIDS


PRACTICAL TOOLS

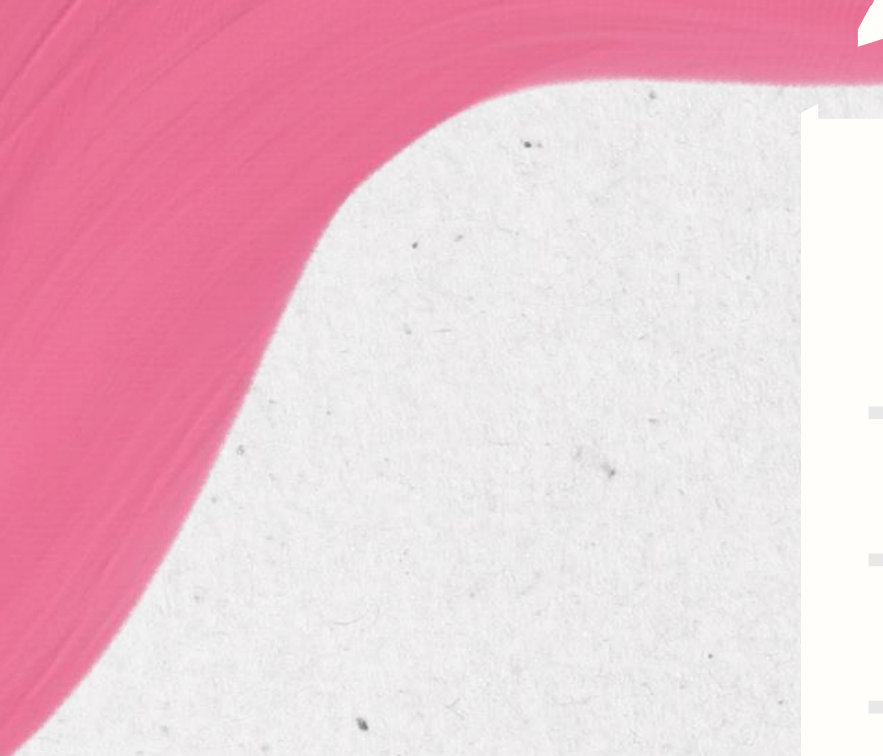

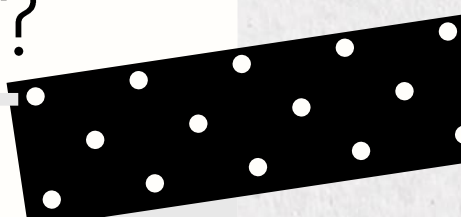



MANAGING EMOTIONS

- Responding to anger
 - model calmness, listen and reflect, provide outlet
- Responding to high energy



- 
- 
- 
- That was brave of you to share. Thank you. That may have been hard to tell me, but you still did.
 - What animal is most like you?
 - Who do you go to when you want to cheer up?

- 
- Why didn't you tell me sooner? Were you lying before?
 - What is your favorite animal?
 - Does seeing your mom/dad make you happy?

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- How often do you visit your siblings?
 - What is it like living with your grandparents?
 - It makes sense you would feel that way.
 - What else do you want me to know about ____.
 - Tell me more about that.
 - What else is on your mind?
 - What made you decide to _____?
 - If you had a magic wand, what would you wish for?

BUILDING CONFIDENCE

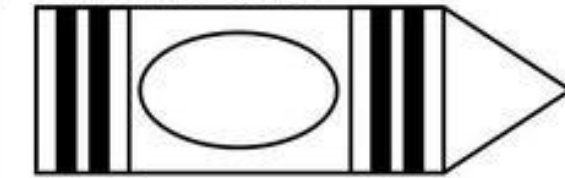
- Be playful! These are Kids - not mini adults
- Use what you have and use your own skills
- Let them teach you something new
- Be realistic & have a plan
- Prepare for silence
- Prep your bag
 - crayons, paper, playdough, dolls, trucks, dry erase, etc...

ALL ABOUT ME

Name:

Drawing of me:

Favorite color:



Favorite animal:

Favorite food:

Favorite book:

I am good at:



Drawing of
my family:



CONCLUSION

USE YOUR RESOURCES

- [Ohio CASA](#)
- [National CASA](#)
- [On Our Sleeves](#)
- Local Library
- Dollar Store
- Volunteer Coordinator





SARAH HARVAN
SHARVAN@CPCOURT.SUMMITOH.NET

Thank you!