

# MY GOODBYE BOOK



A Booklet About Military Separation for Children Aged From Three Through Five

# MY GOODBYE BOOK

A Booklet about Military Separations  
for Three through Five Year Olds.



This edition of MY GOODBYE BOOK has been edited and altered for use in New Zealand following the feedback provided by New Zealand Military families who trialed the booklets. Thank you to those who provided us with your valuable comments and ideas.

MY GOODBYE BOOK is one of a series of four booklets about military separations for children and young people. These booklets were written as a part of Operation R.E.A.D.Y., under an agreement between the Extension Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the United States Army Community and Family Support Centre, Department of Army.

All four booklets were developed with the help of active Army, Army National Guard and Army Reserve families and Family Support Personnel. We sincerely thank all those who helped produce these publications.

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A message to parents:

This booklet about military separations is a child's activity book. We hope it will help you to help your children cope with separation. Making plans for a separation from a loved one is hard for everyone. Your children know when a major family event, such as a separation, is happening, even if they don't have the words to tell you. Children need to be included when you talk about military separations. Explain in simple words why their parent will be leaving. Tell them what will happen during separation. Help them be involved with preparations for homecoming and reunion adjustment. You may be surprised how much your little one can understand.

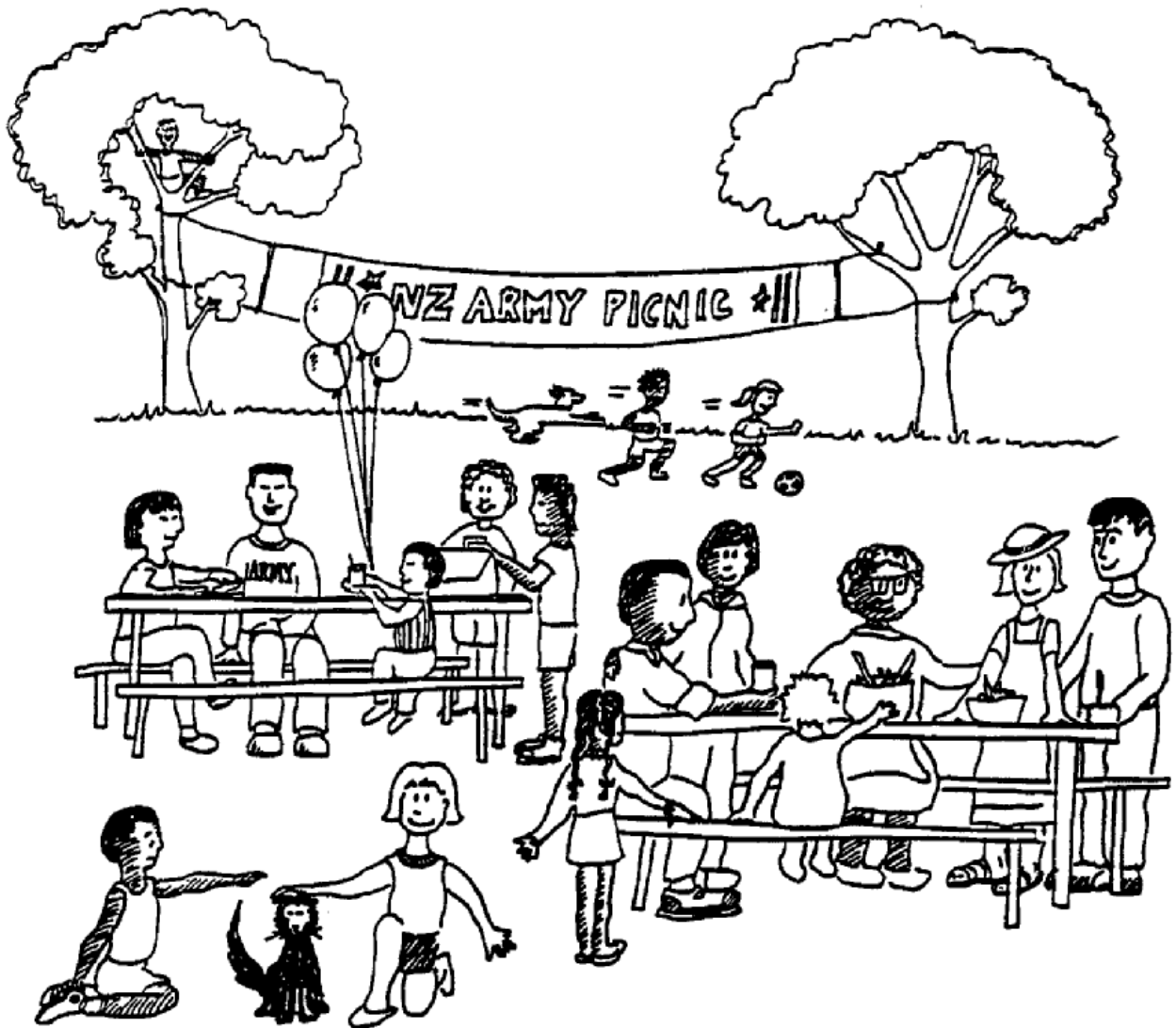
The story and activities in this booklet were created to help you prepare your children for a military separation. Unfortunately, no one book could fit all families, so we urge you to alter the stories and activities to fit your family needs or situation.

We wish you and your family a smooth separation and a happy reunion.



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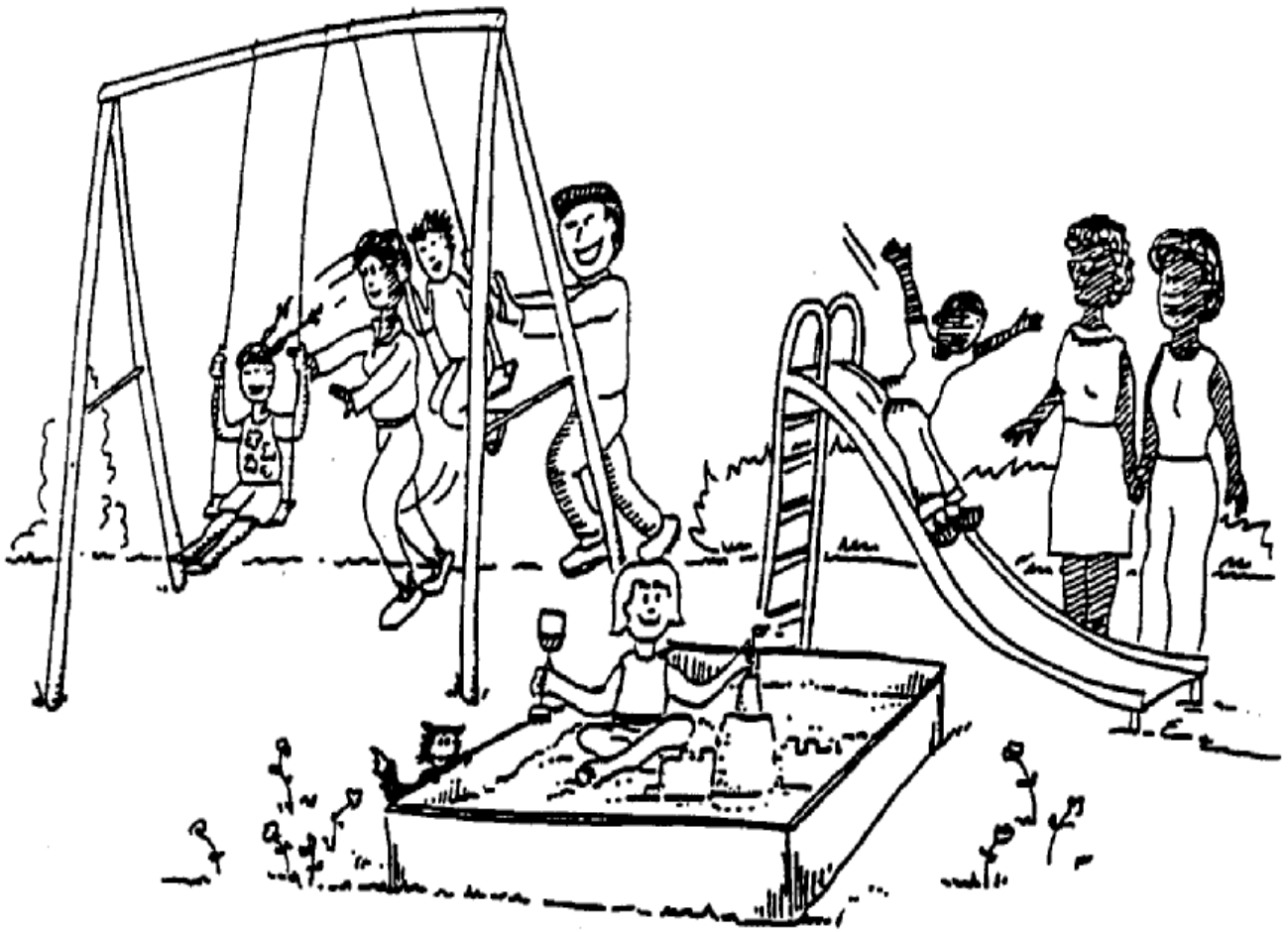
# We Are A Military Family



Hi, my name is Sally. I'm almost five. I have a baby brother named Ben and a black cat named Sam. My Daddy is in the Army. That means we are very special. Sometimes my Daddy has to go away because he is a soldier. My Mummy takes care of us when Daddy is away. She has help from our family and friends.

What are these families doing?

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I have two friends, Jesse and Maria. Jesse likes to play on the slide. Jesse's Mummy is in the Airforce. Jesse stays with his Grandma when his Mummy has to go away. He really likes that. Maria is swinging. Maria's Daddy and Mummy are both soldiers. Sometimes they both have to go away. Maria likes staying with her Auntie when her parents are gone. We love our parents and we miss them a lot when they go away.

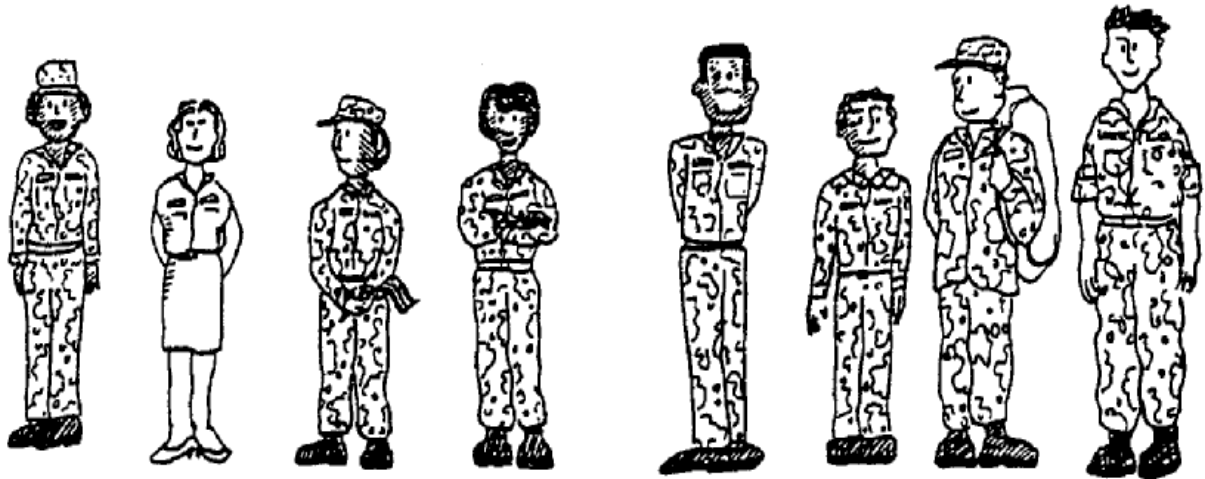
Can you find Jesse and Maria?  
Can you find Sam?

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# Do You See Someone You Know In This Picture?

Is your Mummy or Daddy in the Military too?



PASTE A PICTURE OF YOUR PARENTS HERE

TELL ME ABOUT YOUR PICTURE

When my Daddy goes on military trips, I like the special time I have with Mummy. Maria says when her Daddy and Mummy go to special training, she has fun with her Auntie. Jesse says he likes to stay with his grandma when his Mum goes away.

Here is a picture of our families



DRAW OR PASTE A PICTURE OF YOUR FAMILY HERE

TELL ME ABOUT YOUR PICTURE

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# We Talk About Being Apart



What are Sally and her family doing?

In my family we talk about why Daddy has to go away. Sometimes Daddy just has to go away to do his job. Sometimes I get mad at Daddy for leaving. I don't like it when he goes away. Daddy tells me that he thinks about me when he is away from home. I like it when he tells me that. Daddy loves me.

Sometimes I feel scared when my Daddy is going away. Once I thought Daddy left because I was naughty. But Mummy and Daddy told me that it was because of Daddy's job that he had to go away. I feel better when my Mummy tells me she can take care of me and Ben and Sam.

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## We plan for Being Apart on Special Days or Holidays

We also talk about what will happen if Daddy is away for a special day like my birthday or Christmas. Daddy was gone on my last birthday. I didn't like that at all. But Jesse and Maria came over, and we took this picture of my birthday party and sent it to Daddy. Daddy had left a birthday present for me when he went away so I knew he cared about my birthday. When Daddy came home he told me that he showed my picture to his friends because he was proud of me.



Who is in the picture? What are they doing?

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## We Spend Special Times Together

Before Daddy goes away he spends some special time just with me. I like that a lot. He usually makes something special to leave with me while he is away. Sometimes we take family pictures that I can look at when I miss him. Daddy also reads our favourite stories into our tape recorder so I can listen to them when he is gone.



Jesse and his Mummy spend special time together too. They made a videotape of a whole day they spent together, and Jesse watches it a lot. He likes looking at the video when his Mum is away. Once, Maria and I stayed at his house and watched the video with his Grandma.

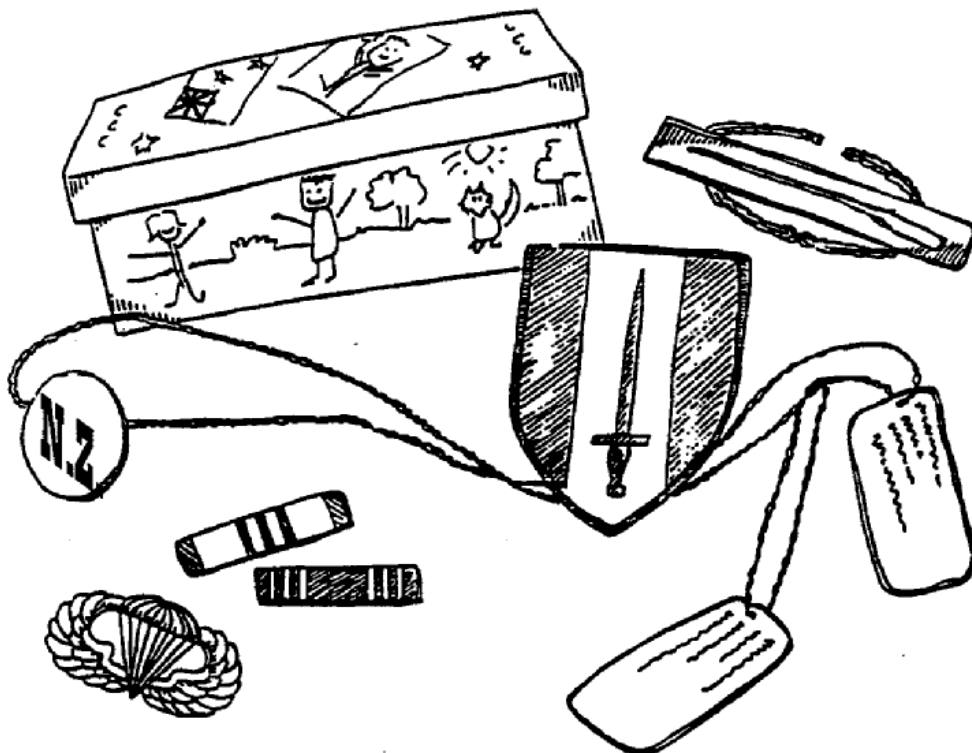


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## Making A Treasure Box

Jesse, Maria and I made special boxes with our parents before they went away. I took my box and covered it with a paper bag. Then I coloured it and drew pictures of Daddy on the box. Daddy drew some pictures on it too. Daddy and I put special things in the box, like my favourite photo of him and me, some patches and badges from his old uniform and his hat badge. We also made some dog tags, just like Daddy's. Daddy told me some stories about his patches and badges. I like those stories.

Daddy told me to hold onto my box until he comes home. He said he would try to send me some more things to put into my box. I like to show people my box. Jesse and Maria like their boxes too.



Who can help you make a treasure box?

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## We Say "Goodbye" For Now

When Daddy has to leave, we all say "goodbye" to him. We are sad when he leaves and sometimes we all cry. But I'm Happy too, that I'm grown up enough to get to say "goodbye" just like Mummy. Ben can't say "goodbye", but he waves to Daddy. Sam doesn't do anything, but I think she misses Daddy too. Jesse and Maria say "goodbye for now" to their parents. Other military families say "goodbye" too.



Who is saying "Goodbye" in these pictures?

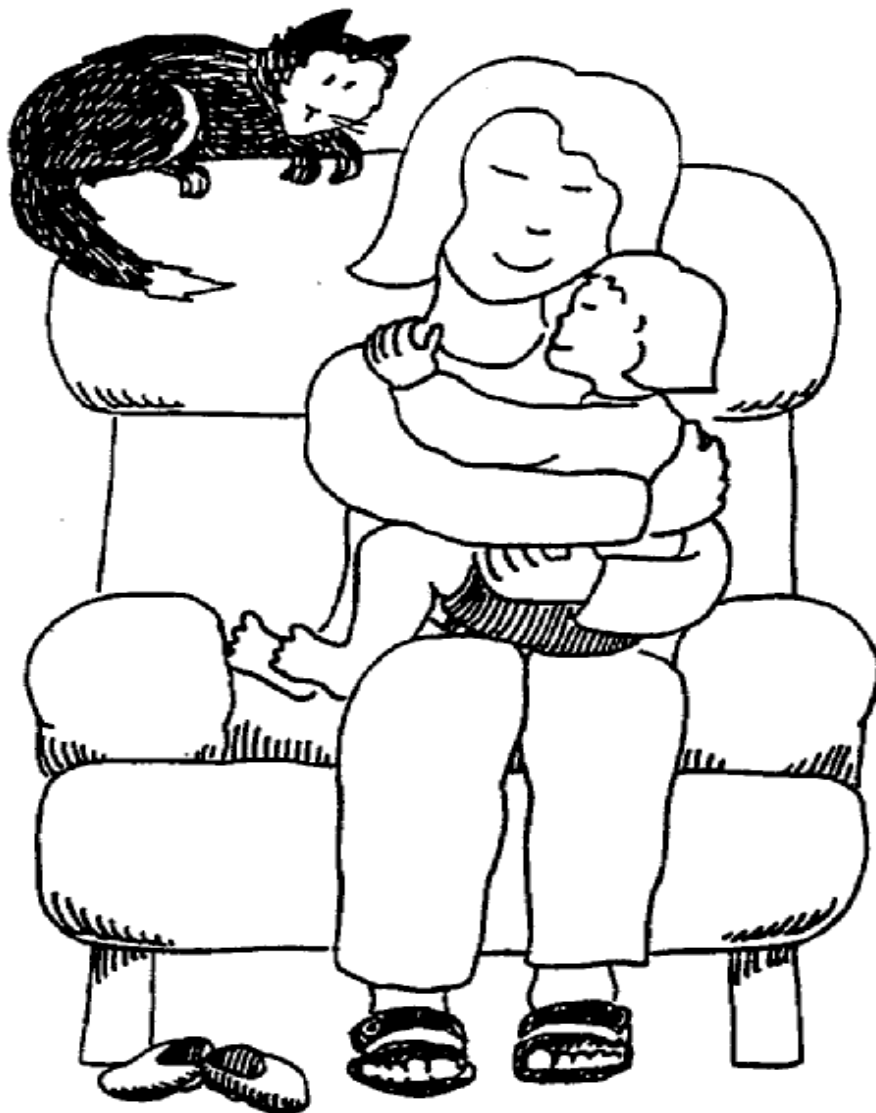
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## When Our Parents Go Away We Feel Sad

When Daddy is away, I feel sad. Sometimes I cry. So does my baby brother, Ben. Sometimes Mummy is sad when Daddy is gone. When Mummy is sad, I feel sad too. We hug each other a lot.

When I am sad, my Mummy holds me and talks to me and I feel so much better. When we feel sad it helps us to hug each other.



Who is in this picture? What are they doing?

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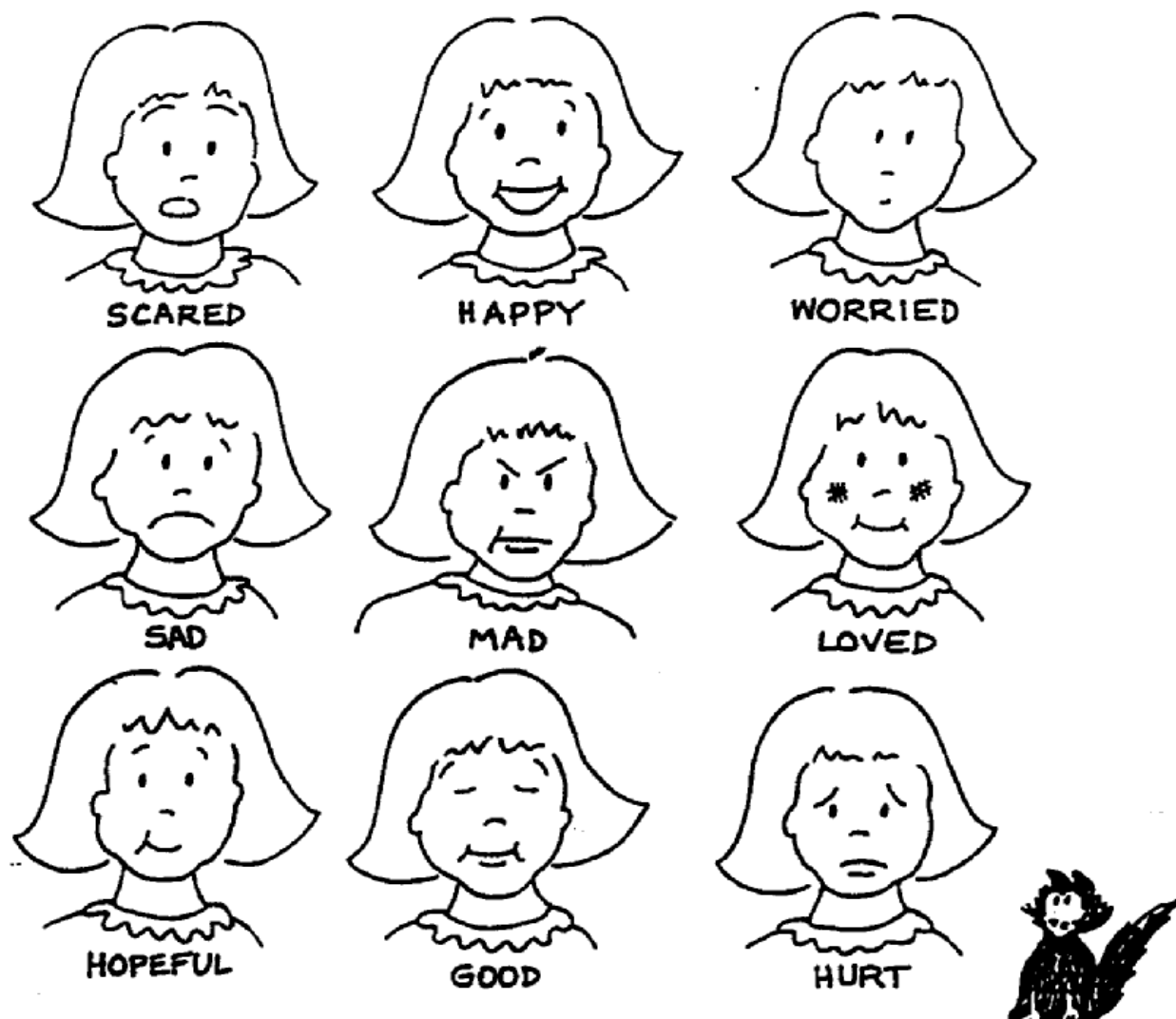
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## How Do You Feel Today?

When Daddy is away, Mummy and I talk about how we feel. I like it when Mummy tells me how she feels too. Mummy said that we can have all kinds of feelings. Some times we have two feelings at one time. We can feel sad and angry and that feels really strange. Mummy helps me understand my feelings.

Here are some of the ways I feel when Daddy is gone. Today I feel sad.

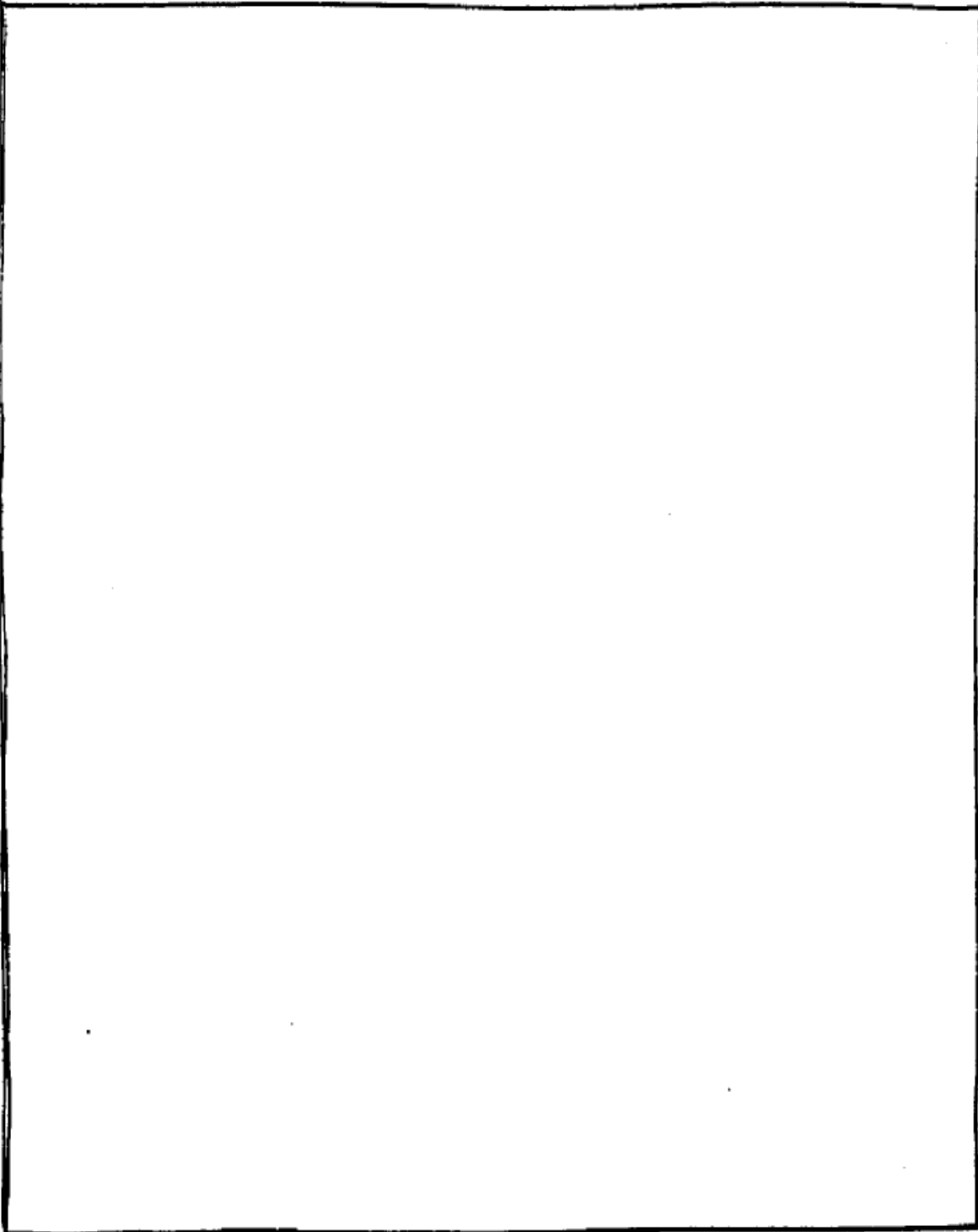
### FIND THE SAD PICTURE



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Showing How I Feel.....

DRAW A PICTURE ABOUT HOW YOU FEEL WHEN YOUR FAMILY IS APART



TELL ME ABOUT YOUR PICTURE

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## We Stay Close When We Are Apart

### Pictures For My Wall

When Daddy is gone there are lots of ways we stay close. Mummy and I put up lots of pictures of my Daddy. We tape up pictures of Daddy by my bed where I can see them. Sometimes I talk to Daddy's picture and sometimes I kiss Daddy's picture. Daddy sends us pictures to put up on the wall. I even keep a picture of Daddy under my pillow. Jesse and Maria have pictures like me. Their parents sent them pictures too.

### We Like These Pictures!



How Many Pictures do Sally and Ben have?

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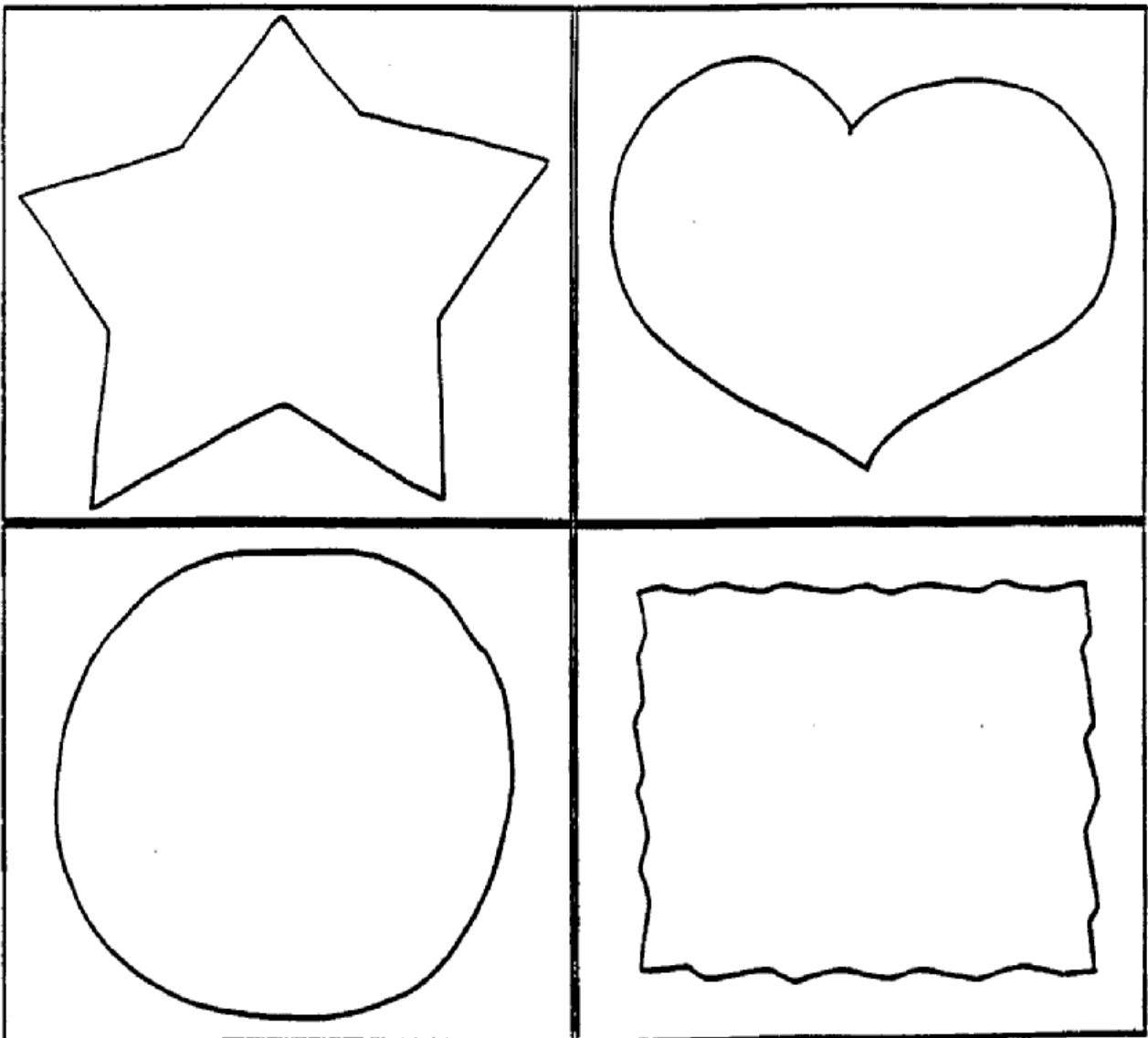


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## A Picture To Wear

I have a picture of my Daddy that I can wear. My Mummy pasted the picture on cardboard then glued a frame on it. She then taped it to a clothes peg. I wear it on my shirt. Jesse wears his Mummy's picture. So does Maria.

Your Mummy or Daddy Can Help You Make A Picture To Wear

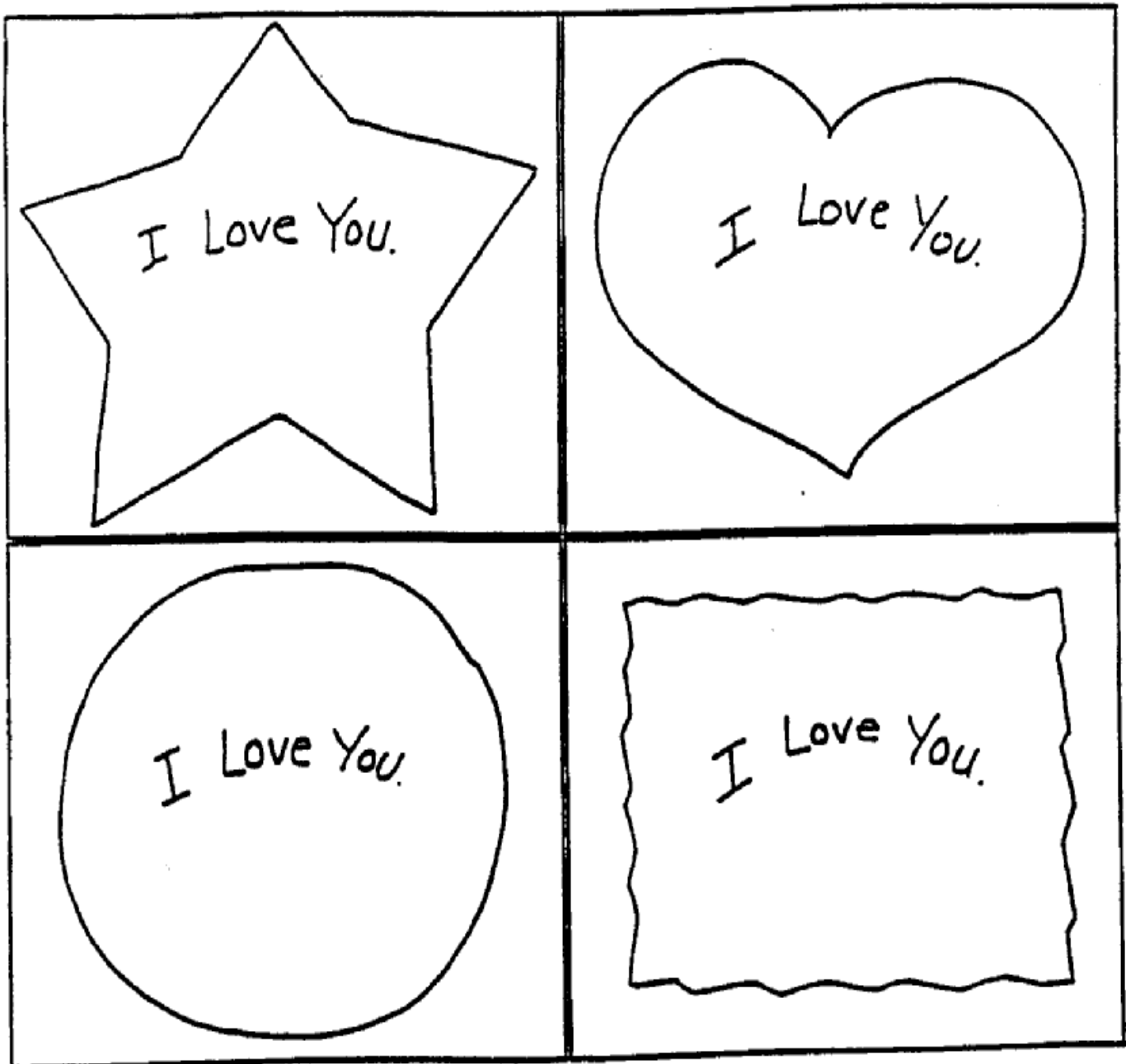


Pick the frame you want for your picture. A grown-up can help you cut it out and paste it all together. They can then tape it onto a clothes peg or safety pin for you, so you can wear it

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Cut these out and paste them to the back of your picture frame.



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## Listening To Our Parents While They Are Away

I like the story tapes and videos Daddy made for me before he left. I especially like the videotape of Daddy, Ben and me playing together. Jesse and Maria have tapes that their parents made. Maria's Mummy sang some songs for her on the tape. We like these tapes very much. These are some of the times that we listen to these tapes and watch the videos.

When I am eating breakfast,



During the day when we play,

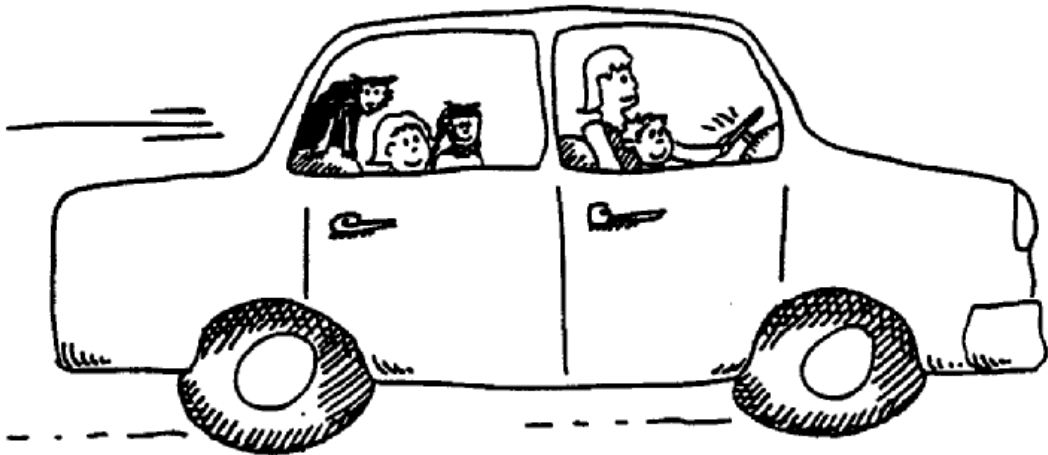


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When I go to sleep at night,



In the car when we go on trips,



Can you find Sam in these pictures?

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# Things To Send Our Parents When They Are Away

## Letters

Maria, Jesse and I also send letters to our parents. We like to tell them that we love them. I tell Mummy what I want her to write in the letter. The letters go in the mail. Daddy likes to read these letters. They make him feel good.

Here is an example of a letter your parent can help you write.

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

Today we \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

We miss you because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

When you come home we will \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

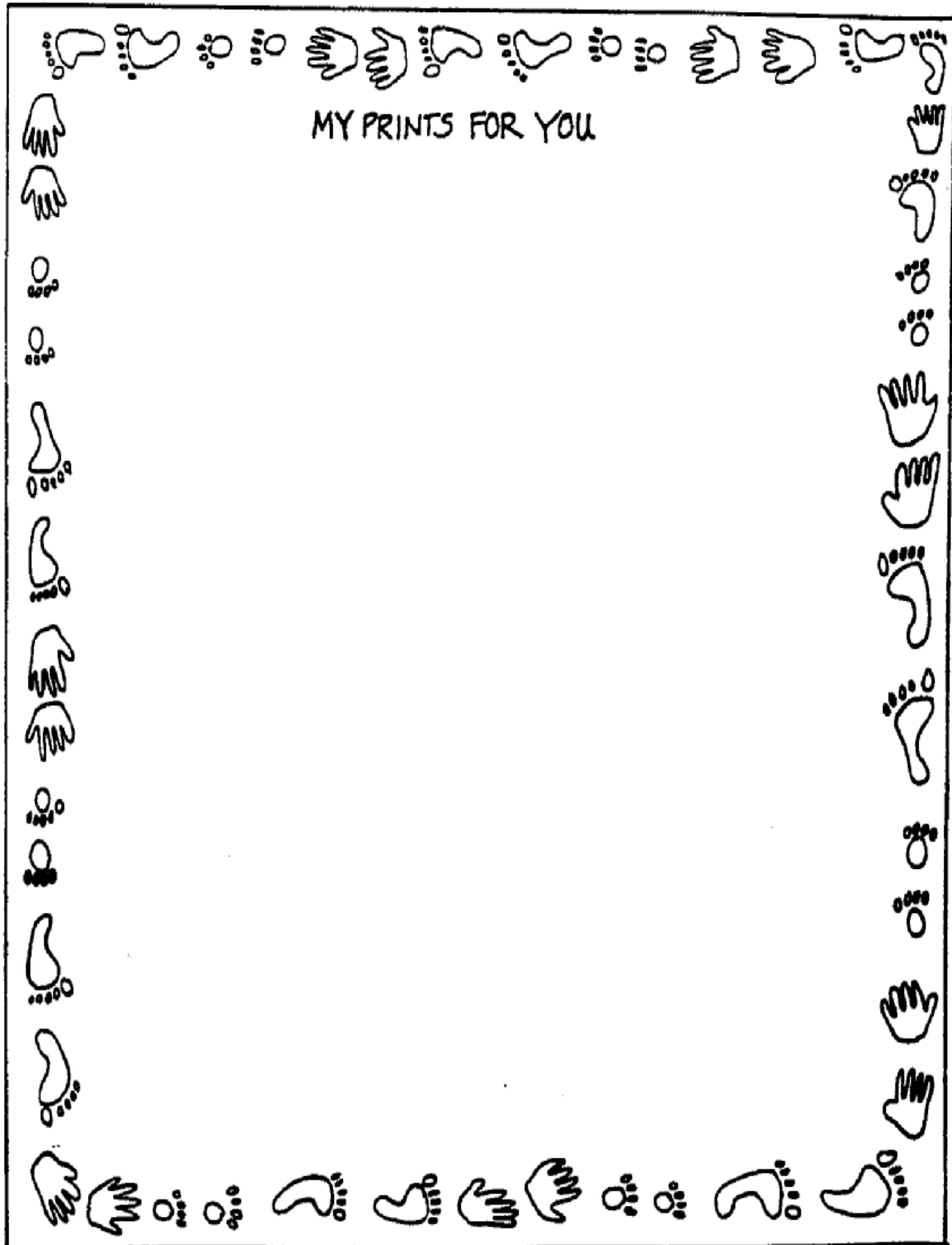
\_\_\_\_\_

I Love You very, very, very much \_\_\_\_\_

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## Prints to Send With Your Letter

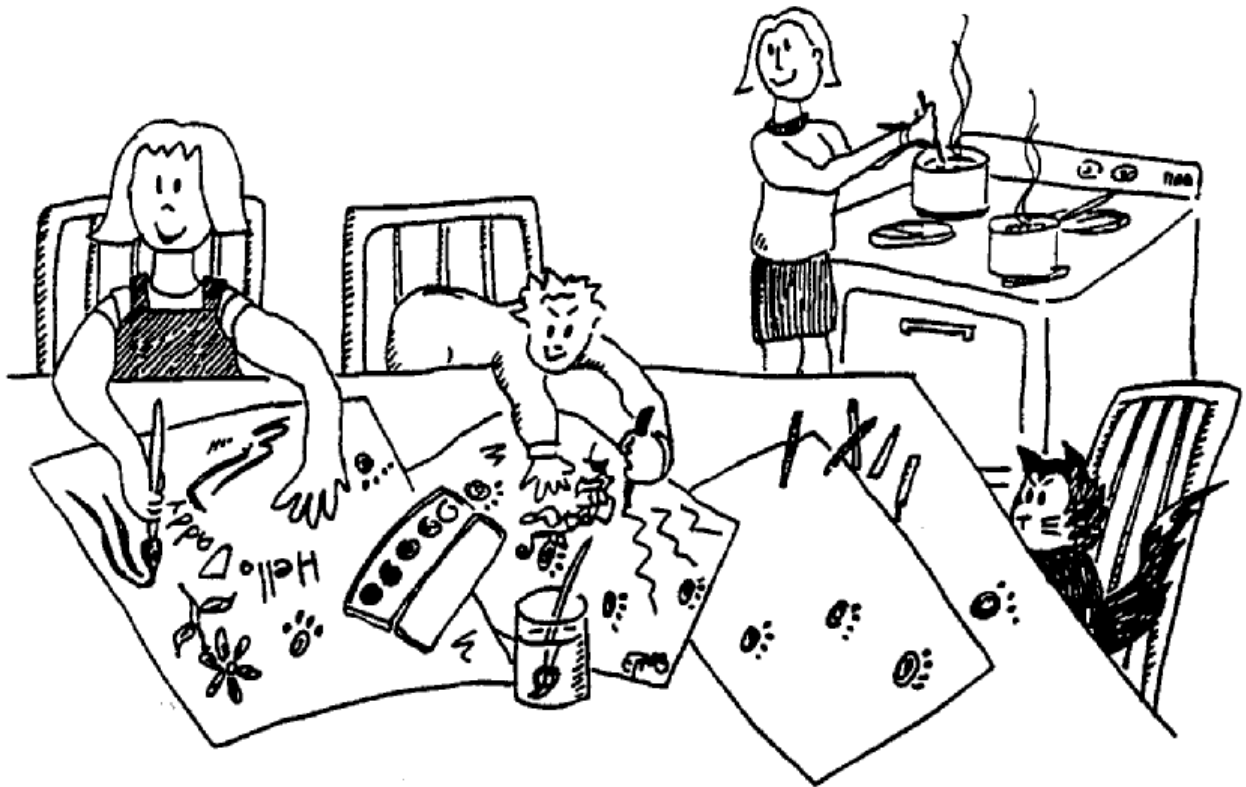
Make a print here by drawing around your foot or hand



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## Big Pictures

Sometimes we make big pictures for our parents. Mummy covers the table with big paper bags. Ben and I get to draw all over the paper. It's lots of fun. We use crayons, big markers, stickers and stamps. Sometimes we put Sam's paw print in the picture. Mummy writes a letter to Daddy on the back of our pictures. Mummy sends the picture to Daddy. We tell Mummy to say that we love him and we miss him. He likes to get these pictures. Jesse and Maria make big pictures for their parents too.



What are Sally and Ben Doing?

What is Sam doing?

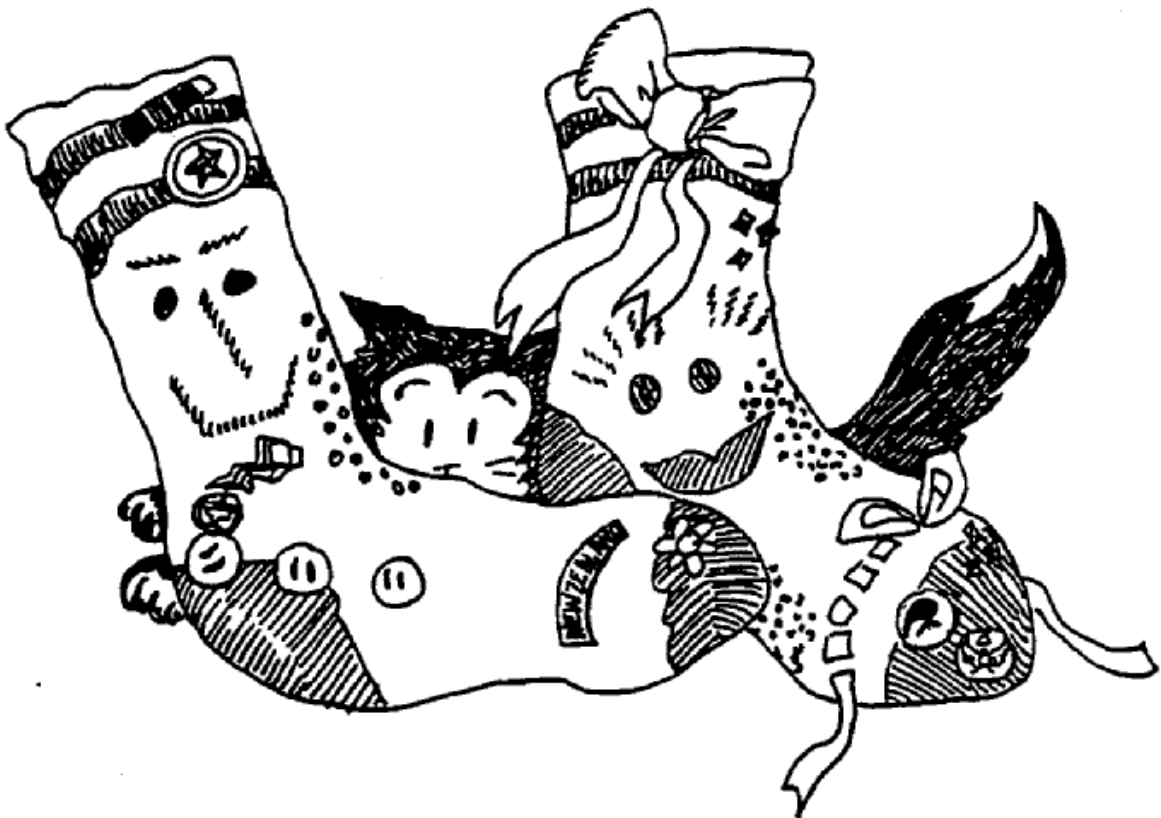
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## Silly Socks

When Jesse's Mummy was away, he made her some silly socks. He and his Grandma took a pair of his Mummy's socks and decorated them. They glued on buttons, bows and sparkly things and a sticker, which says N.Z. ARMY, and mailed them to her. She will think of him every time she wears them. They were really funny looking. I am going to make some silly socks for my Daddy.

You can make your Mummy and Daddy some silly socks



Where is Sam?

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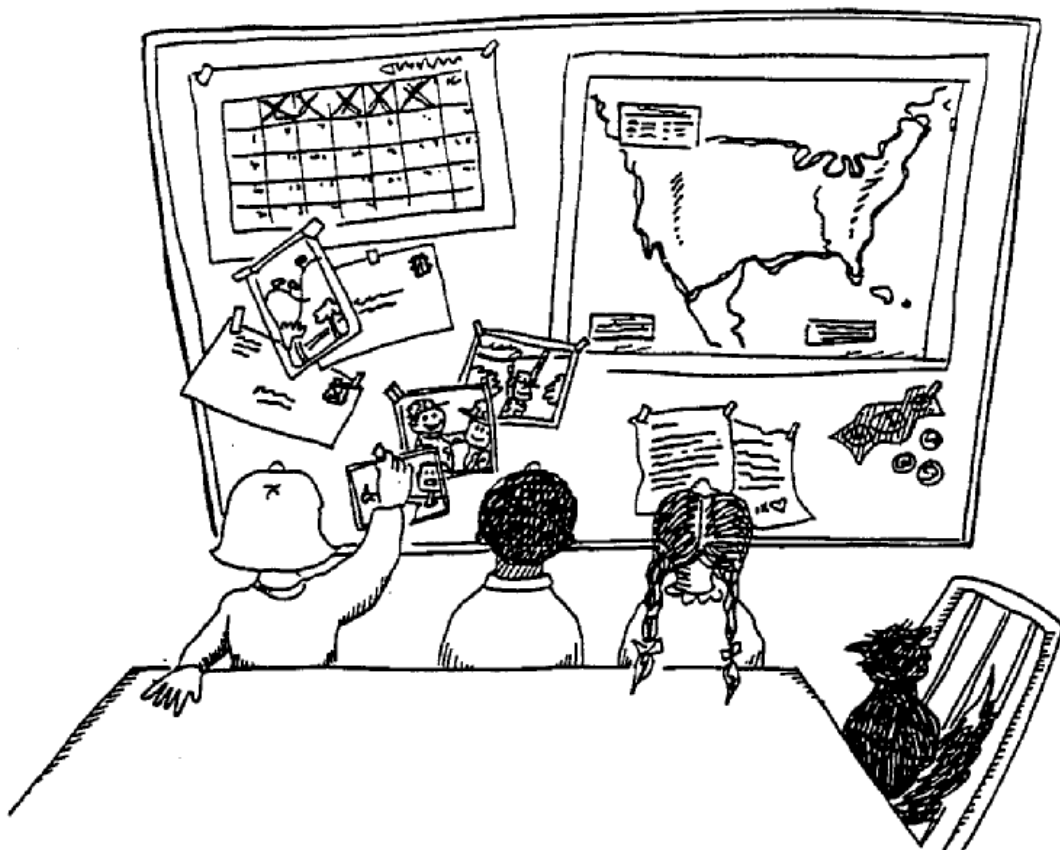


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## Our Family Poster

Jesse, Maria and I all have special posters in our homes for when our parents are gone. Our parents send us postcards, letters and stamps. They also send us pictures that their friends take of them doing their job or having fun. We stick these things on our posters. Mummy put a map of the place where Daddy was working on the poster. She put an "X" on the spot where he is. We like this poster.

You can make a separation poster too



No matter where Mummy or Daddy are in the world,  
we are a family!

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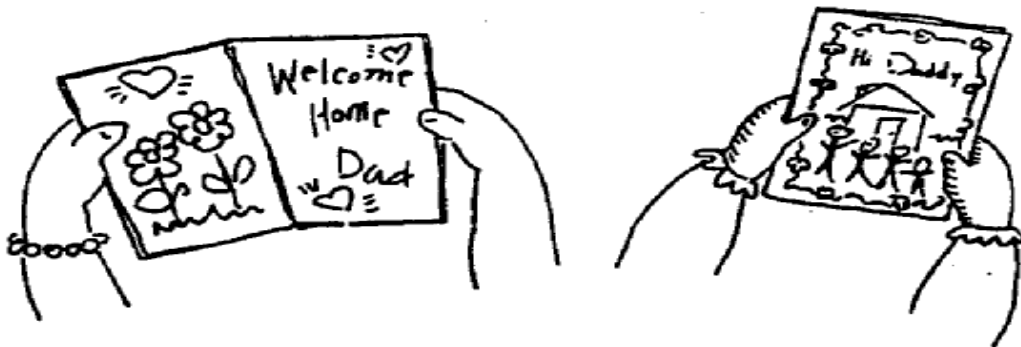
## Homecoming

### Getting ready for homecoming

The best time is when we get ready for our parents to come home. We were so sad when they left. We will be SO glad to see them when they come home. And, they will be SO glad to see us, because they love us.

Once Maria and I made special cards to give our parents, they were beautiful. Our parents really liked these cards.

#### Special Cards to Make



Jesse and his Grandma made a banner that said:

"Welcome Home"



What could you do to welcome home your  
Daddy or Mummy?

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## Special times when our parents come home



Sometimes Daddy needs time alone when he comes home



Sometimes Daddy needs to spend time alone with Mummy



Sometimes Daddy spends special time just with me



Sometimes we spend time all together as a family

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## Our parents come home

I am happy that my Daddy is coming home but sometimes I worry that my Daddy may not remember me and Ben and Sam. He has been away for a long time. Sometime's I'm not sure I want Daddy to come home. I still feel kinda mad that he left us. I also feel a little shy about seeing him. Mummy says it's okay to have different kinds of feelings about seeing Daddy. She says we can take our time becoming friends again. Last time Ben didn't even want to look at Daddy when he came home, but after a while, Ben got better.

We are so glad our parents are home!



Can you find Sally, Ben, Maria and Sam? How do they feel now?  
It is good to be together again! Our families are really special!

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