

Dr. PlayWell's Don't Stress Game™

Instructions

Ages 6–12
For 2–4 Players

Introduction

Dr. PlayWell's Don't Stress Game is designed to help children reduce stress when possible and cope better with stress when it is unavoidable. The four decks of cards teach the following resiliency skills:

- Recognizing and reducing unnecessary stress in a child's environment
- Relaxing and following a healthy lifestyle
- "Talking back" to irrational anxieties and worries
- Coping with difficult feelings

Before You Play

Note: The game board and card backs should be printed in color.

1. Print out the game board.
2. Print out the four decks of cards.
3. Paste or tape the backs of the cards to the fronts, and cut them apart.
4. Print out the Numbers Wheel.

In addition you will need:

- 1 quarter
- Game pawns (or you can use buttons, small figures, etc.)
- 50 chips (e.g., poker chips, pennies, etc.)

If this is the first time children have played, read this letter from Dr. PlayWell:

All kids have stress, but not all kids are affected by it in the same way. Some are better at coping with stress and they know how to reduce the stress in their lives, too. Stress can come from the outside, and it can come from the inside, too, if you worry about things that you don't have to. This game will help you deal with both kinds of stress, so that you can be a happier and healthier kid. It isn't easy to change the things that cause you stress, but I hope that this game will help.

*Your friend,
Dr. PlayWell*

Using the Blank Cards

Each deck has six cards that are intentionally blank for you to fill in. After children have played once or twice, they can fill in cards themselves to add interest to the game. Children are typically excited to participate in constructing a game, and they often make thoughtful and insightful contributions.

How to Play

1. The first player tosses the quarter at the Numbers Wheel from about 12 inches away. He moves his pawn the number of spaces corresponding to the number on the wheel. If the quarter lands on a line, the player should use the higher number. If the player's quarter misses the wheel, he should move a little closer and try again.
2. The player then chooses the color card corresponding to the footprint where he has landed. He gets one chip for responding to the card.
3. A player who lands on a purple footprint pointing in the opposite direction tosses the quarter again and goes back the number of spaces indicated.
4. The player on the first player's right goes next, and play continues to the right.
5. The first player to get to the end of the path is declared the winner and gets three bonus chips.
6. At the adult's discretion, players can win small rewards for playing the game.
7. The game should end with a short discussion of what children learned while playing, and players should tell what they will do differently as a result of playing the game.

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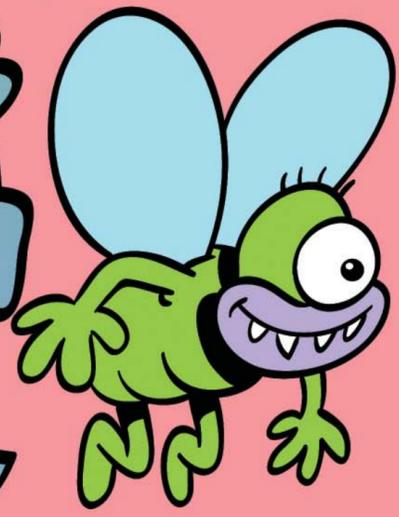
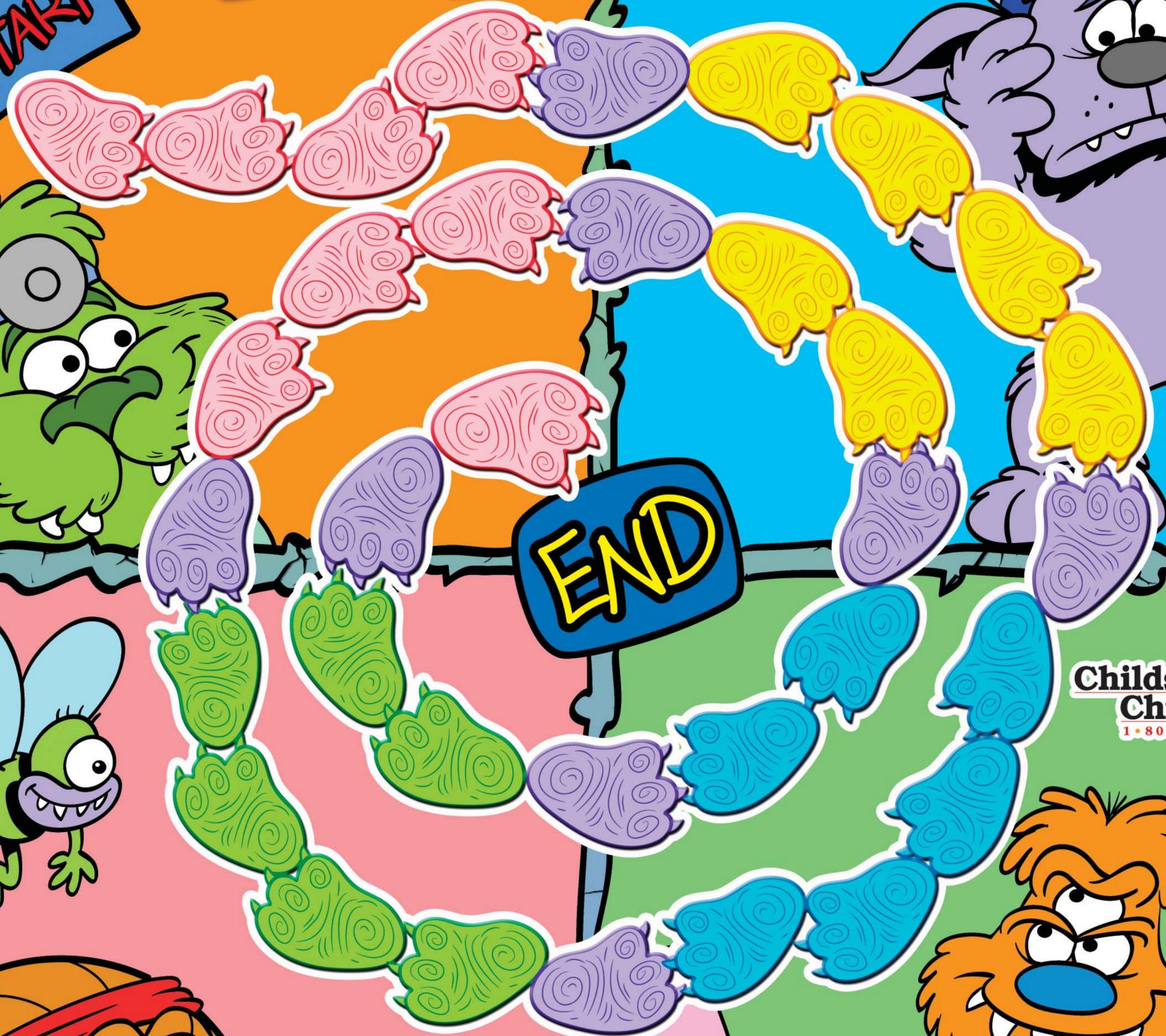
Production Director: Jennifer Brady

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DON'T STRESS GAME™

START

END



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Loud noise is a stress. Name one thing in your home that could be less noisy.

Rushing around to too many activities is stressful. Do you feel that your schedule is too hectic? How would you change it?

Putting things off can make your life stressful. Is this something you do? How could you solve this problem?

When you don't get enough sleep, your body doesn't work as well, and you may be more affected by emotions like fear and anxiety. Do you need to get more sleep? What time should you be in bed?

Think about a time when you felt very stressed. What made you feel this way?

What about school makes you stressed? Is there anything you can do to change this?

What time of day do you usually feel most stressed?

What time of day do you usually feel most relaxed?

Is there something you are afraid of that you have never talked about? What is it? How can you deal with this fear?

Is there something you worry about, even though you know you don't have to? What is it? What can you say to yourself that would help you worry less?

Do you think it's more stressful to be a kid or an adult? Explain your choice.

Have you ever tried to do schoolwork when you were hungry? Tell what happened.

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What do you think makes
your mom feel stressed?
Can you do anything to help?

What do you think makes
your dad feel stressed?
Can you do anything to help?

Describe one thing you can do to
make your life less stressful.

How do you feel when your
room is a mess? How do you
feel when it is neat?

Who do you know that deals with
stress very well? What is one thing
you have noticed that this person
does when he or she is stressed?

How do you feel when you
play video games? How is it
different from the way you feel
when you read a book?

Learn to Relax and Be Healthy

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Think about a peaceful place.
Describe what you see.

Relax the muscles in your neck by
massaging your neck while you turn
your head.

Make fists with both your hands.
Now slowly unfold your fingers and
relax your hands. Do this three times.

Stand up and pose your body like you
are scared. Now take a deep breath,
sit down, and relax.

Stand up and pose your body like you
don't have a care in the world.

Did you know that certain smells can
make you feel relaxed? What smells
make you feel happy or relaxed?

Some people like to take a bath to
relax. Does this relax you?

Running or bicycling or
swimming usually helps people
feel more relaxed. What kind
of exercise do you do?

Lots of exercise will help you deal
with stress. What is your favorite
way to exercise?

How many times do you
eat at a fast-food restaurant
each week? Why is this
kind of food unhealthy?

Smile while you count to 20.

Name three things that
make you happy.

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Think of something that makes you angry. Can you change this thing?

Why is it a good idea to look on the bright side of things?

How do you feel when you don't get enough sleep? How do you feel when you get a good night's sleep?

What kind of music do you listen to when you want to feel calm?

Name three types of foods you should try to eat every day.

What is your favorite healthy snack?

Talk Back to Your Worries

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Sharon thought, “I know I’m not going to do well on my social studies report.” What could Sharon say to herself that would be more helpful?

Tyrone was afraid of thunderstorms, because he thought that lightning might hit his home. What could he say to himself to be less afraid?

Jake didn’t like to use the bathroom at school because he was worried about germs. What could he say to himself so that he would worry less?

Rachel’s teacher gave a spelling test every Friday. Every Thursday night, Rachel had trouble falling asleep. What could she say to help her relax?

Jill was shy about meeting new people. She had finally made a lot of friends at school, but now her family was moving and she would be going to a new school. What could Jill remind herself about making friends?

Every time his parents argued, Ryan worried that they would get divorced. What could Ryan say to himself so that he would worry less?

Whenever Brittany had to go for a checkup, she worried that the doctor would find something wrong with her. How can she help herself feel less worried?

There was a fire in Ben’s neighborhood. After that, every time Ben heard a fire truck go by, he thought his house might be on fire. What could Ben tell himself?

Michael’s grandfather was in the hospital. Even though Michael’s mom had said he was getting better, Michael was afraid his grandfather was going to die. What could Michael say to himself?

Each time she passed a dog, Samantha worried that it would bite her. What can Samantha say to herself to help her feel less scared of dogs?

Janelle thought, “I wish my dad didn’t have to fly so often. I’m afraid something will happen to him.” What could Janelle tell herself so that she would worry less?

Justin’s mom looked angry, and Justin was worried that he might have done something to make her mad. What could he say to himself?

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Amanda had a hard time getting ready for school because she always worried that the girls in her class would pick on her outfit. What could Amanda tell herself as she gets dressed in the morning?

At basketball practice, Nicholas always thought, "I bet I'll miss this shot." What would be a better thing for Nicholas to think?

Alexis was afraid that no one would ask her to dance at the school dance. What can she say to herself about this worry?

Stephanie felt like her parents loved her younger sister more than they did her. What could she tell herself to help her remember that this wasn't so?

Ashley always worried that she wouldn't know the answer if her teacher called on her in class. What could Ashley tell herself?

Whenever Victoria saw two of her friends talking, she worried that they might be talking about her. What could she say to herself about this?

Coping with Difficult Feelings

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Kevin felt angry every time he tried something new and had trouble with it. What could he do to feel less angry?

Have you ever felt lonely even though you were in a group of people? What could you have done to feel less lonely?

How does it feel to apologize when you have done something you are sorry for?

What is one thing that always makes you irritable? What can you do about it?

Jenna was disappointed when her plans for a sleepover had to be canceled. What would you say to help Jenna feel better?

Tell about a time when you felt jealous of another person. What could you have done to help yourself feel better?

What are two things you can do to help yourself when you feel sad?

Lesley's older sister always got A's on her report card, and Lesley felt like she had to do the same. What would you say to Lesley?

James was embarrassed whenever his mom hugged him in public. What could James do about this?

Kristin was always afraid that she would forget her homework. What would you tell Kristin to do?

What is the best way you know to calm yourself when you are angry?

When Noah felt scared, he often tried to cover it up. What do you think of this idea?

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Ben and Matt are twins who each act very differently when they feel shy. Ben makes himself start talking to someone in the group, while Matt waits quietly and hopes someone will talk to him. Which one do you think will have an easier time joining in?

Loren's mom was often tired when she got home from work, and Loren felt like her mom didn't care about her. What could she do?

Jessie had borrowed her sister's favorite T-shirt and it got stained. Jessie was worried about what her sister would say, so she carefully folded the shirt to hide the stain and put it back in her sister's drawer. What do you think of this plan?

Tell about a time when you felt afraid and handled your fear well.

Paul was very excited when he got past the first round of tryouts for the school baseball team. When he didn't make the final cut, he was very disappointed. What would you say to Paul?

Their dad always told Marissa and Daniel not to cry. What do you think about this advice?

Dr. PlayWell's
Numbers Wheel

