COMFORT KIT

Mental Health Professional Implementation Guide

What Is A Mental Health Comfort Kit?

Comfort kits are small collections of items and resources designed to help in difficult situations. Kits are easy to carry and include instructions about how each item can be used. **This kit is intended to be distributed by a mental health counselor or someone trained in traumatic response.** Youth receive a kit based upon their personal experience and need. After the initial intervention, these are meant to be take-home kits for the recipient to use throughout their recovery.

We offer 2 ways to learn how to use Comfort Kits. Read this guide or watch our video.

Watch Time: 5:48 mins

Scan to watch video

Email **info@catchiscommunity.org** with questions, if you need a restock or if you find a situation where a community can use these kits for their healing.

Kit Use:

1. In-the-moment of crisis by a counselor

- Youth feels safe
- Tools to support the counselor's initial assessment

2. Take home tool

- Youth uses as they practice skills and continue to heal

Important Information:

Kit Content and Explanations

The kit items and their purpose are defined on the "Kit Content" side of the **Comfort Kit postcard** found in the plastic sleeve stored in the cinch bag.

- Version of this side is found on the back of this guide for your reference.
- Postcard is written for caregivers so they can continue to support their loved one.
- Candy mint ingredients are listed on the postcard for allergy concerns.

Multilingual Support

There are QR codes on each of these printed materials which provide a translation of the material as follows:

- **National Institute of Mental Health** (NIMH) Flyer: (front side) Spanish
- **Comfort Kit postcard**: ("Kit Content" side) Several languages are available online

Unsafe Environment

If the youth fears sharing the NIMH flyer and Comfort kit postcard content with an unpredictable caregiver;

- Collateral is in a separate plastic sleeve AND offered virtually through the QR code so it can be physically removed.
- If you remove the plastic sleeve from the kit, make sure the healing notebook, identifying feelings poster, mints and colored pencil stay with the kit.

COMFORT KIT
Implementation Guide Cont'd

KIT CONTENTS

Plush
Providing comfort and feeling of safety, promotes self-soothing and empowers younger children as caregivers.

NOTE: Some kits **may contain** a fleece lap blanket donated by the *Northbrook Woman's Club* in addition to or in place of the plush.

Identify/Manage Feelings Poster
Building awareness by connecting body sensations to emotions. (Side 1) Identifying tools available in kit and environment to ease scary body sensations. (Side 2)

Candy Mints
Activating the sense of taste or smell focuses the brain on the present moment.

Ingredients: Sugar, Corn Syrup, Artificial Flavor, Stearic Acid

Healing Notebook
Coloring calms the mind and reduces its reaction to fear and anxiety. Responding to healing journal prompts helps the body regulate emotions and the mind process unwanted thoughts.

Disposable Ice Pack
Holding ice jolts your system out of a stress response. Hold it until your panic starts to come down.

NIMH Caregiver Guide
Helping children and teens cope with difficult events.

Focusing on ***tactile and visual patterns*** if someone is suffering from flashbacks, a panic attack or a 'loop' of negative thoughts, can calm the body.

Squishy and Fidget
Creating a soothing pattern through repeated ***tactile*** action.

Liquid Motion Bubbler
Creating a soothing ***visual pattern*** through movement & color.

Here are the QR codes for each caregiver item so you can can experience the information for yourself.

Kit Postcard

Caregiver Trauma Resources

NIMH Flyer

Why CATCH?
CATCH knows how to build kits that support our youth. We have had tremendous success with our proactive coping kits which provide tools to ***teach*** children and adolescents how to identify and manage their feelings. Comfort kits are responsive support for youth in crisis.

How are the kits funded?
This project has been made possible through a generous grant from the *Northfield Township and the Northbrook Rotary Club.* Comfort Kits can be supplied free of charge to schools, emergency services and not-for-profit agencies within township boundaries. For those outside the township, please reach out to CATCH to discuss comfort kit funding. (info@catchiscommunity.org)

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