



Think, Talk and Do to Help You Shine: Learn Better, Become Happier and Healthier

(For Ages 5 to 7 Years)

Authors: Professor Valsa Koshy and Dr Elizabeth Koshy



This book contains 35 activities for parents and carers to work with their children. The activities have been carefully chosen to help children to become better learners and, at the same time, to become healthier and happier. All parents want their children to be happy, healthy and successful and as our own research and experience show, parents have an important role to make this happen.

The activities in the book takes into account the latest research and government policy documents which tells us:

- Finding children's special interests, passions and gifts and letting them know what their particular strengths are encourage children to make more effort and want to succeed. As well as finding children's individual interests and passions, we must provide opportunities to develop them.

- Working with adults and being guided by them, children enjoy learning more and achieve better results.
- We must encourage children to think about their future plans and aspirations as early as possible.
- Talking and discussion help children to make stronger connections in their brain and can make them more effective learners.
- Eating the right foods contributes to children's good health, energy levels and overall wellbeing.



- Physical activity helps children's general wellbeing. A fit and healthy body can boost a child's concentration and alertness which helps her or him to learn better.
- Emotional wellbeing is a key contributor to success in life. Being happier and having higher self-esteem and self-belief are known to raise school results.
- Parents can help children to deal with anxiety, excessive worry and stress so that they can achieve better mental health.

2. When I am Older

Do you think about what you want to do when you are older? Here are some examples of jobs people do when they are older:

most office workers, vet, engineer, builder, artist, scientist, author, poet, teacher, musician, dancer, cook, politician, business person, accountant, working in a bank, inventor, fire fighter, police officer, computer work, working in an office, nurse, doctor and community worker.

(Please add if something you're interested in is not on this list.)

Now, with your parents, look at the interests below. Tick (✓) the ones you think you would most like to do when you are older.

Interests	Tick (✓) if you are interested
Help animals when they are sick (vet)	
Write books or poems (author)	
Discover new plants, animals or planets. Find out about what scientists help care people when they are ill (doctor)	
Draw or paint and have your work displayed in an exhibition (artist)	
Work in a restaurant and plan new meals and menus (chef)	
Help to improve people's lives by working in hospitals (nurse)	
Play an instrument and be part of an orchestra (musician)	
Help people who are sick (doctor) or nurse	
Build things or take things apart (builder or mechanic)	
Computer (computer programmer or technician)	
Design something new that people could use (designer or inventor)	
Help others to learn (teacher)	

If your interests are not on this list, do add them to the table.

4. Sugars

Most children enjoy having sweet things.

Did you know?

- Sugars are in many of the foods we eat and drink.
- You must sugar can make our teeth decay. Too much sugar can also make us put on extra weight that we don't need and this may lead to health problems later in life.
- Sugars are in biscuits, cakes, buns, sweets, chocolates, ice cream, lollies and jams. They are also in some drinks. Sugar is added to some drinks, like many fizzy drinks.
- There are natural sugars, which are naturally found in fruits, but fruits are healthy for our bodies.
- Sugars are added to many foods and drinks and these are the ones we should try to avoid and eat and drink less of.

Sugar, sugar, sugar everywhere!

Write down the names of as many food and drinks as you can which have sugars in them. Make a list here.

Food and drinks with added sugars	Food and drinks with natural sugars

8. Make Water Your Friend

Did you know?

- People who study about how we keep healthy tell us:
 - Drinking water is important for your body to be able to work properly.
 - Drinking helps you to learn better and concentrate more.
 - Many children don't drink enough during the day.
 - If the air temperature is warm, you need to drink more.
 - You also need to drink more if you are doing lots of physical activity (exercise).
 - Many children like fruit juices, smoothies and fizzy drinks. But we need to be careful about these drinks as many contain a lot of sugar. This is not good for your teeth and can cause tooth decay. It can also make you put on extra weight that you don't need.
 - Water is the best drink to have during the day.

Information	True	False	Not sure
Water contains lots of sugar			
Drinking enough water can help you to concentrate and remember more in class			
If you don't drink enough you could be ill			
Drinking enough water helps all the cells in your body to work properly			
If you don't have enough to drink you can feel thirsty, tired, slow and weak			
It is better to drink water than fizzy drinks because water doesn't cause tooth decay			
Drinking plenty of water makes it easier to get to the toilet and helps to prevent you getting urine 'tree' infections			

10. My Talents

Read each item below carefully with an adult, then tick (✓) the ones you think describe you. Talk about each box you have ticked and why you ticked them with an adult. Do you both agree with what you've ticked?

Learn when quickly	<input type="checkbox"/>
Very nervous	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friend some of my friends and can make people laugh	<input type="checkbox"/>
Good memory	<input type="checkbox"/>
Good knowledge of facts	<input type="checkbox"/>
Find it easy to do work	<input type="checkbox"/>
Good at problem-solving	<input type="checkbox"/>
Able to work independently (without help)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Good at working with a team	<input type="checkbox"/>
Love reading	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enjoy hobbies	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enjoy making up complex difficult rules for games	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can you concentrate for a long time and keep busy with an activity for a long time, if something is it	<input type="checkbox"/>
Show persistence. Do not give up easily	<input type="checkbox"/>
Show interest in unusual topics which may be difficult	<input type="checkbox"/>
Show imagination, creativity and good ideas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enjoy being a leader	<input type="checkbox"/>
A good organiser	<input type="checkbox"/>
Choose unusual methods of working things out	<input type="checkbox"/>
A very good vocabulary	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. Sleepy Jack

Jack feels very sleepy every morning in the class. Read about his bedtime routine below and think about some advice you could give Jack to help him get a better night's sleep and so feel more awake in the morning.

Look at the 'Did you know?' about sleep page in the previous activity.

Jack's routine

Jack comes home from school and plays computer games for about 2 hours. He has had tea, followed by lots of sweets. He watches television for an hour and then he plays games on a tablet, before he goes to bed. While playing on his tablet he has a bowl of his favourite sweets and chocolate. He also has a hot chocolate drink with marshmallows. Then he goes straight to bed at about 9pm in the evening. He finds that the room is very hot and a lot of light comes in through the curtains.

What advice could you give Jack?

18. My Passion Project

In some schools, children do a passion project. Passion means something you are very interested in and like spending a lot of time on. Some people call it a hobby.

- If you could choose a passion project, what would it be?
- Would you like to collect things for your passion project? If so, what would they be?
- Are there any places you would like to visit to find out more about your project?
- If it was possible, would you like to meet people who are good at what your project is about? Can you think of any such people?
- If you were allowed to organise a group to work on this project as an after school activity, what activities would you do?

You may wish to make up a special book for your passion project. You can have pictures and write in it. Use the internet or books to find out more about your passion. Ask someone at home if they can help you with your project. Make it an interesting book so that other people will enjoy seeing it and you feel proud of it.

My Book of _____

By _____

32. Your Worry List - How to Make it Shorter

We all worry about things. But you can make your worry list shorter by thinking and talking about it.

Samantha worries about lots of things. Samantha's aunty talked about things that made Samantha anxious by asking her to look at the following list and put a number (1 to 3) next to it.

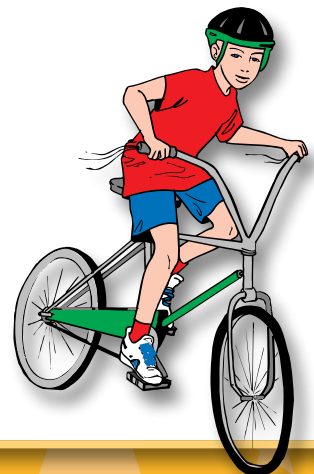
Write:

- 1: if it's not something to worry about
- 2: if it's something you would worry about a little
- 3: if it's something you worry about quite a lot
- 3: if it's something you would worry about a lot and it needs to be taken seriously

- Imagine you are Samantha and put a number in each box.
- Left your water bottle at home
 - Forgot to bring your homework to school
 - Had a fight with your brother or sister
 - Lost your favourite pencil
 - Someone hit you in the playground
 - You got only 4 out of 10 for your spelling test
 - Your best friend calls you 'stupid'
 - A stranger offers to buy you sweets if you go to the shop with him



Continued on next page





How to use this pack

The activities provide parents with the knowledge they need to guide the children. They give them the tools to think and talk with.

Ideally, parents, grandparents or other adults should introduce each of the activities and discuss what is expected of them. Each activity is free-standing and can be used over many sessions. Many of the activities could be repeated both inside and outside the home. It is very useful to re-visit activities to make sure that children understand and practise what they have been introduced to previously.

Children should be encouraged to share their thoughts orally and their written comments about what they have learnt from an activity and other thoughts can be recorded in the pages provided at the back of the pack. **Promoting active discussions is an important part of using the activities.**

While working through the activities parents will be able to find out very useful information about your children's special interests, gifts, knowledge, understanding of issues and attitudes. There will also be opportunities for noticing aspects of your children's lives which may be causing them anxiety, stress, fear or lack of motivation. Prompt action can be taken where necessary. Share your findings with the child's class teacher.

You don't need expensive equipment to do these activities. Talking and enjoying working together is the most important aim of this book. All you need are: pencils, paper, colour pencils or/felt tips and dice, most of which can be bought from shops quite cheaply.

The Authors

Professor Valsa Koshy MBE, PhD is a professor of education. She founded the first University-based Talent Development Centre in the UK, at Brunel University. Her interests include: the enhancement of the quality of children's learning, the search and fulfilment of talents of children who live in challenging circumstances and mathematics education.

Dr Elizabeth Koshy, MRCGP (Distinction), PhD has worked as a general practitioner, a course leader (teaching undergraduate medical students) and as a medical researcher at Imperial College London. She has a passion for supporting parents on aspects of children's physical health and wellbeing and helping to create the right foundations to boost children's wellbeing and potential.

