

My Creative Window

Guidance for parents and caregivers

This undated journal gives children aged 7 to 12 space to draw, tell stories, explore feelings and make small plans. It is intended to support creative self expression and connection. Your role is to offer time, materials and a listening presence while allowing your child to make choices.

Begin gently

Let your child choose a page. A few minutes may be enough; there is no daily requirement. A pencil is sufficient, with colouring pencils optional. An adult can read a prompt aloud or write the child's own words if asked. Offer drawing or spoken storytelling whenever writing feels like a barrier.

Protect ownership and choice

Ask before looking through or sharing pages. Do not require your child to explain a picture, complete an activity or show you every entry. Agree together how the journal will be kept. Respect their wishes while explaining that if you become concerned about their safety, you will help them get support.

Respond with curiosity

Try asking “Would you like to tell me about this?” or “Would you like me to listen, help or give you space?” Accept a no. Avoid grading artwork, correcting imaginative choices or interpreting colours and symbols as evidence of a particular feeling. Let the child tell you what their work means, if they want to.

Support at different ages

For children around 7 to 9, read together when helpful and use one invitation at a time. They can dictate, draw or make marks. For children around 10 to 12, offer more independence and let them adapt prompts. These are flexible suggestions: follow the child's interests and access needs rather than their age alone.

Create together when invited

Make your own picture alongside theirs rather than taking over. Ask what part they want you to play. Shared activities are optional, and choosing to work alone is equally welcome. Use familiar materials and help with any activity that needs adult supervision.

When a page feels difficult

Pause, listen calmly and help the child choose what they need next. Do not push for a detailed account. If they tell you about harm or you are concerned about their wellbeing, take it seriously and seek appropriate professional support. This journal is not a diagnostic tool or a replacement for care.

The research behind the idea

The journal is inspired by Dr. Reem Kassem's Creative Resilience Framework, developed through her doctoral work on hybrid cultural engagement in the context of crisis. Recovery, sustainability and growth are the framework dimensions guiding the journal. Creative expression, relational support and meaning making inform the invitations. Children can return to any activity; the dimensions are not presented as steps they must complete. The child journal is a new adaptation; outcomes from the original research should not be assumed to apply to it.

A gentle question to return to

“Is this giving my child space to express something in their own way?” If the activity feels like a demand, simplify it, offer a choice or leave it for another day.