



Gizmo's PAWESOME

Guide to Mental Health



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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United Way of Connecticut, Inc./2-1-1
Vanguard Direct



Hi, I'm Gizmo

I'm a therapy dog. I visit people in schools and other places to comfort them when they are feeling sad, mad, or worried. There are things that you can do to help yourself when you feel sad, mad, or worried. **THAT'S WHAT THIS BOOK IS ALL ABOUT!**





**You know how you need
to take care of your body to
keep it healthy? You need to
take care of your **FEELINGS,
THOUGHTS, AND ACTIONS**
to keep them healthy, too!**



**This is called
mental health.**

**Mental health
is your**

**FEELINGS,
THOUGHTS,
AND ACTIONS...**





...and I have some
GOOD NEWS!

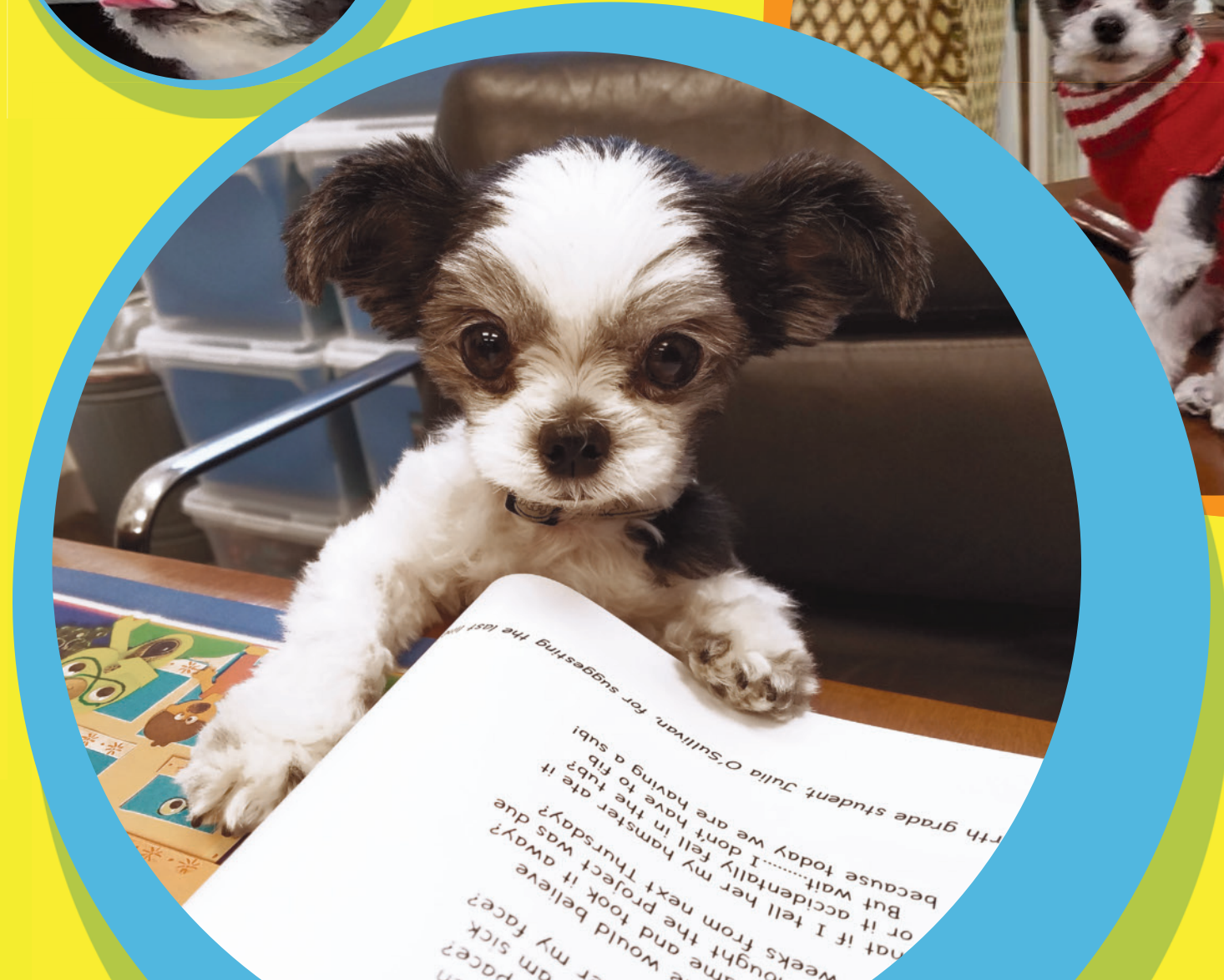
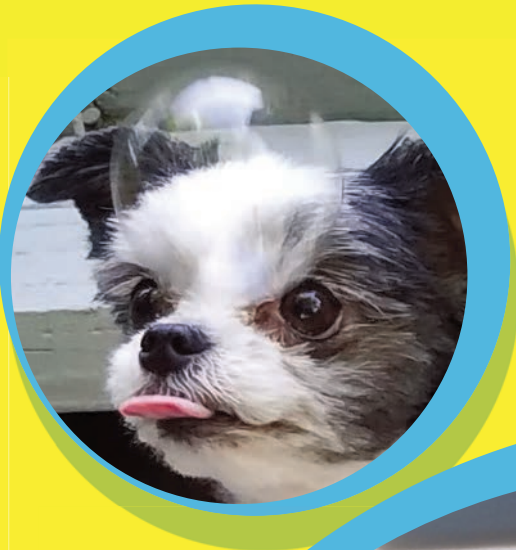
**There are things we can do to take care of our
mental health every day.**



Here are
some things
you can do
every day to
take care of
your mental
health —

YOUR
FEELINGS,
THOUGHTS,
AND
ACTIONS.






HERE ARE SOME
MORE THINGS YOU
CAN DO TO TAKE
CARE OF YOUR
MENTAL HEALTH!



 **Play dress-up**

 **Play outside**

 **Take a nap**

 **Write a story**

 **Do a puzzle**

 **Smile or laugh**

 **Ride a bike**

 **Play with toys**

 **Draw or paint**







We all feel

SAD, MAD, OR WORRIED

sometimes, but how do we know when we are feeling this way?

I can tell you. You may see changes in how you usually

FEEL, THINK, OR ACT:

- Eat less or more
- Hard to get to sleep or stay asleep
- Argue more
- Cry easily
- Feel bored with things I like
- Want to be alone a lot
- Act before thinking
- Have less energy
- Feel very nervous/stressed



WHEN YOU FEEL SAD, MAD, OR WORRIED
sometimes you can do things on your own to take your
mind off of these feelings.

DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT YOU CAN DO
TO KEEP YOUR FEELINGS, THOUGHTS,
and **ACTIONS** healthy? ? ? ? ?

Turn back to pages 6 through 9 and
READ THE LISTS AGAIN.



See? Those are the things you can
do on your own to help yourself
**WHEN YOU FEEL
SAD, MAD, OR WORRIED,
TOO!**

BUT...

...if you try these things on your own and they do not seem to help, try doing them with other people.

People I can Do Things With

- 🌸 **Parents**
- 🌸 **Grandparents**
- 🌸 **Aunt or Uncle**
- 🌸 **Brother, Sister, Cousin**
- 🌸 **Friends**



ANY OTHERS?







Family member's or friend's house



Faith Community



Community or youth center



Park



Library

Any Others?





THINGS TO DO WITH OTHERS
TO HELP YOU FEEL BETTER



-  **Play a game**
-  **Tell jokes**
-  **Go for a bike ride**
-  **Go for a hike**
-  **Go to the store**
-  **Go to the library**
-  **Watch a movie**
-  **Play a sport**
-  **Go to lunch**
-  **Give and get hugs**
-  **Dance and sing**



After you try
to do things
on your own
and with other
people,

**YOU MAY
STILL FEEL**

- **SAD**
- **MAD**
- **OR WORRIED**





Talking about your mental health
— **FEELINGS, THOUGHTS, AND ACTIONS** —
with a trusted adult as soon as possible
is your next step.

You might be wondering,
"What is a trusted adult, anyway?"
Turn the page and find out.





A Trusted Adult is someone Who

- Helps YOU
- Makes YOU feel safe
- Is patient with YOU
- Listens to YOU
- Cares about YOU
- Spends time with YOU



EXAMPLES OF TRUSTED ADULTS

- Parents
 - Grandparents
 - Uncles/Aunts
 - Older Brothers/Sisters
 - Teachers
 - Coaches
 - Religious Leaders
 - Scout Leaders
 - School Counselors
 - School Social Workers
 - School Nurses
 - Doctors
 - Camp Counselors
 - Any Others?
-
-





PRACTICE TIME

HOW TO TALK WITH A TRUSTED ADULT

Before you talk with a trusted adult, sometimes it helps to practice what you will say first. You can...

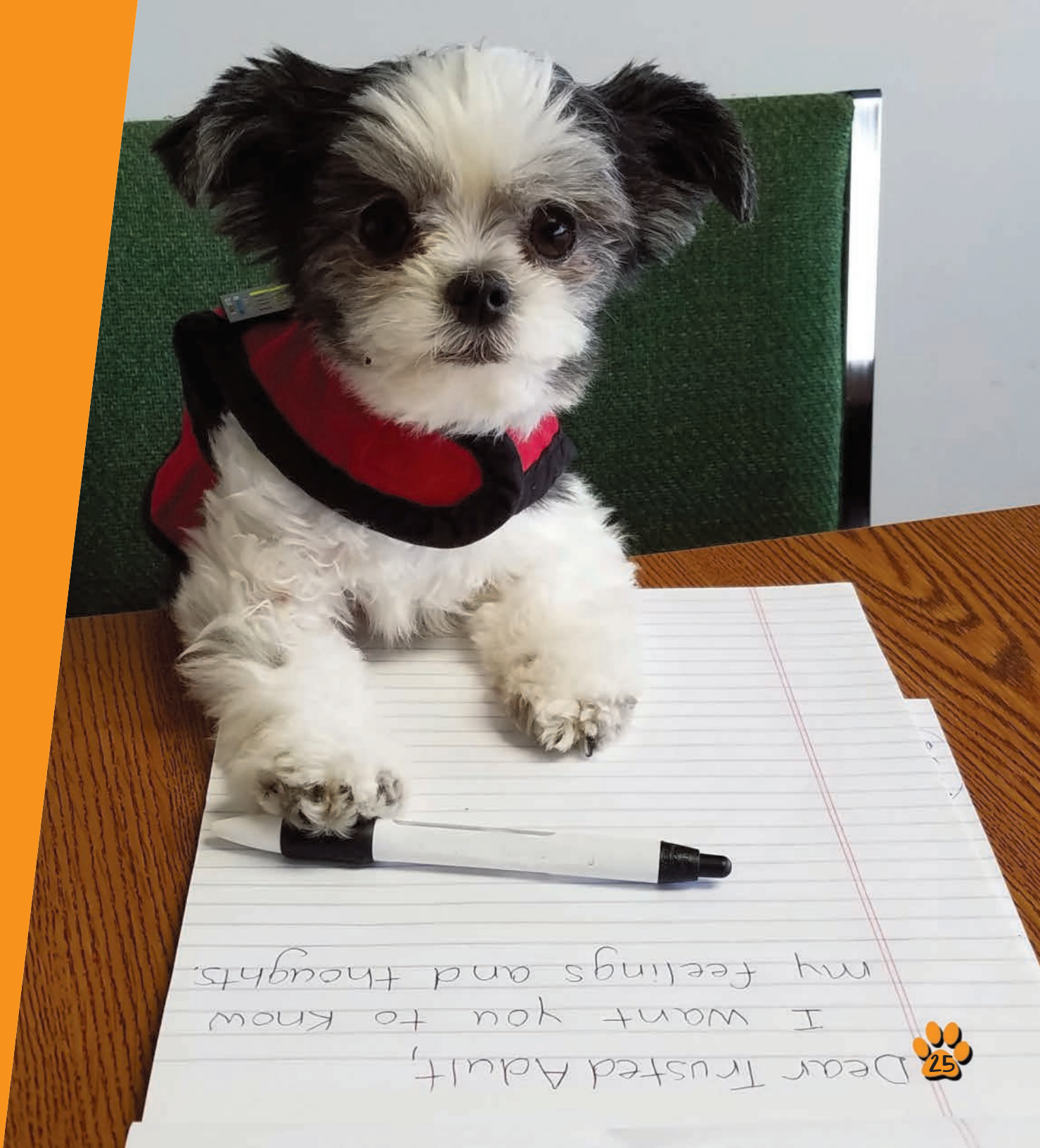


- 🦷 Say it in a mirror
- 🦷 Talk to a pet, toy, or stuffed animal
- 🦷 Write in a diary or journal

If you do not
want to say
out loud
how you are

FEELING,
THINKING,
OR ACTING

you can write
a note instead
and give it to
a trusted adult.



Dear Trusted Adult,
I want you to know
my feelings and thoughts.





SO THAT'S IT!



NOW YOU KNOW HOW TO
TAKE CARE OF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH...

Gizmo's

House






...FEELINGS,
THOUGHTS,
AND ACTIONS

Are you ready to
make your own

MENTAL
HEALTH PLAN?

GREAT!

-  by yourself
-  with others
-  by talking with a
trusted adult

JUST TURN
THE PAGE
to get
started!



HAPPY Birthday Gizmo



MY MENTAL HEALTH PLAN

Name: _____

1. Things I can do to take care of my mental health: feelings, thoughts, and actions

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Breathe slowly | <input type="checkbox"/> Ride a bike |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Listen to music | <input type="checkbox"/> Play outside |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play an instrument | <input type="checkbox"/> Read |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Draw or paint | <input type="checkbox"/> Play with toys |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take a nap | <input type="checkbox"/> Do a puzzle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blow bubbles | <input type="checkbox"/> Sew or knit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play with a pinwheel | <input type="checkbox"/> Smile or laugh |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play dress-up | <input type="checkbox"/> Take a walk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Write a story | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play with pets | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

2. How to know if I feel mad, sad, or worried

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eat less or more | <input type="checkbox"/> Want to be alone a lot |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hard to get to sleep or stay asleep | <input type="checkbox"/> Act before thinking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Argue more | <input type="checkbox"/> Have less energy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cry easily | <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling very nervous/stressed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feel bored with things you like | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

3. People and places that can help me think of other things

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parents | <input type="checkbox"/> Friends house |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grandparents | <input type="checkbox"/> Family member's house |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aunt or Uncle | <input type="checkbox"/> Faith Community |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brother, Sister, Cousin | <input type="checkbox"/> Community center or youth center |
| <input type="checkbox"/> My friends | <input type="checkbox"/> Park |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

4. Things I can do with Others to Help Me Feel Better

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play a game | <input type="checkbox"/> Go to lunch |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tell jokes | <input type="checkbox"/> Play outside |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go for a bike ride | <input type="checkbox"/> Give and get hugs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go for a hike | <input type="checkbox"/> Dance and sing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go to the store | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go to the library | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Watch a movie | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Play a sport | |

5. My trusted adults

- | |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grandparents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Uncles/Aunts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Older Brothers/Sisters |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coaches |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Religious Leaders |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scout Leaders |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School Counselors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School Social Workers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School Nurses |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Doctors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Camp Counselors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Any Others? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

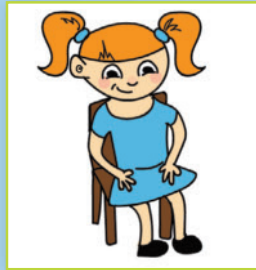
PAWS UP
for mental health



GIZMO CAN HELP YOU with Mindfulness Exercises too!

Meditation is doing nothing **AND** listening to your own thoughts at the same time. It can help you with your feelings, thoughts and actions. Sometimes, meditation is hard at first, but once you get the hang of it, you will **LOVE** it!

HERE'S HOW YOU DO IT



1. Sit comfortably in a chair or cross-legged on the floor. Keep your back straight, and let your shoulders relax. Take a deep breath, and close your eyes, if you want.



2. Focus on how the air feels as it moves in and out of your nose.



3. Sometimes thoughts will come into your mind and distract you from paying attention to your breathing. That's ok - just refocus on how the air feels as it moves in and out of your nose, and how it fills your chest and then leaves with every breath.



4. Try to meditate for 5 to 10 minutes every day, just like brushing your teeth. If you meditate every day you will find it easier and easier to do and it will help your feelings, thoughts and actions.



MY MENTAL HEALTH PLAN

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- | | |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> School Nurses |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Doctors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Camp Counselors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Any Others? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

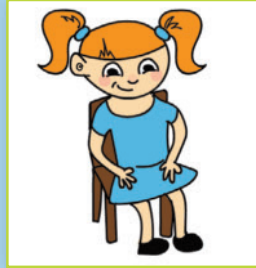
PAWS UP
for mental health



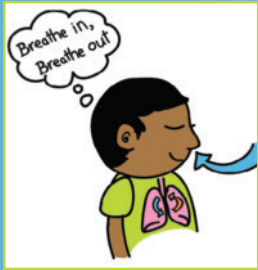
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COLOR GIZMO





Draw a picture of yourself doing something from your plan

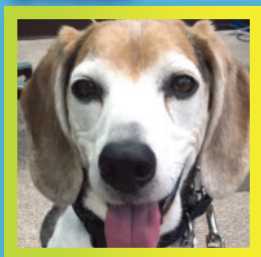
Therapy Dog Bios

Benjamin Franklin



Benjamin Franklin is a super-fluffy, 130 pound, Landseer Newfoundland. He is a registered therapy dog and K9 First Responder. Benjamin loves cuddles, eating ice cubes and playing in the snow. Most of all, he loves meeting people!

Bennie



Bennie (aka Bennie Boo Beags and Little B) is a 12 year old therapy dog and K9 First Responder. His favorite activities are cuddling and waiting for treats, and when it comes to the beagle howl, he's a champion. Find him on Facebook: Bennie Boo Beags

Big Charlie



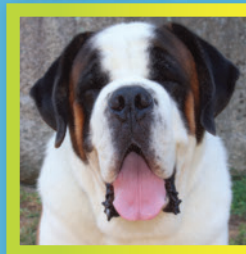
Big Charlie is a 13" beagle who is a happy 13 year old. He loves finding a comfy spot and spreading out. He often walks and barks at the same time, well, because he can.

Charlie Bo Barlie



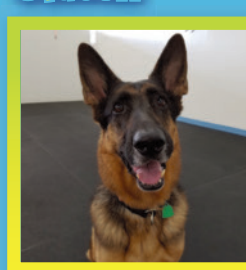
Charlie Bo Barlie (aka Charlie One Eye and CBB) is a 13" beagle who is 15 (or maybe a little more) years old. He lost an eye to glaucoma, but that hasn't slowed him down a bit. He keeps up with everyone and doesn't miss a thing because of, well, that beagle nose.

Clarence



Clarence was born in June 2011, he was honored for NYAMC as the 2013 Top Dog for his crisis work after the Sandy Hook tragedy. He currently works as a K9 First Responder, for Tails of Hope Foundation, and for several NY Animal Talent agencies for commercials, TV and movies. He resides in Greenfield, Massachusetts.

Gideon



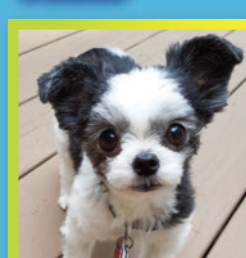
Gideon came to Connecticut when he was rescued from Maine. He is now a therapy dog, hospice dog, and he is working toward becoming a K9 First Responder. He loves to sit with people with his head in their laps and play ball and chase with his little brother.

Ginger



Ginger is a 9 year old, 13" beagle. She loves to run laps in the yard, go on walks, and eat. Although she looks very serious, she is very silly most of the time.

Gizmo



Gizmo, Connecticut's Suicide Prevention Official Mascot, is a registeted therapy dog, hospice dog, and the world's tiniest K9 First Responder. He has travelled nationwide in his work and was even invited to the State Capital and the United States Congress to raise awareness of the benefits of therapy dogs. Gizmo is famous for doing his trademark "happy dance." He also enjoys hanging out with his sister, Mini Cooper. Join his 170,000+ followers on FB and IG: Gizmo's Frens.

Lacey



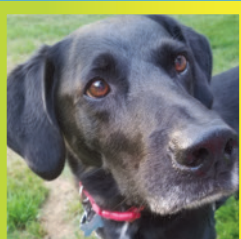
Lacey, a Pomawahwah, is a therapy dog who hopes to someday be a K9 First Responder. She loves to listen to kids read their favorite books. Lacey is always ready to play with her sister Nina and eat snacks.

Maggi



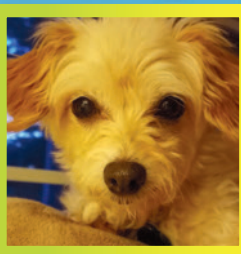
Maggi is a therapy dog that loves belly rubs and snuggling. She aspires to one day be a K9 First Responder. She enjoys hiking, sniffing out squirrels and snacking on banana chips with her sister Sara Jane.

Max



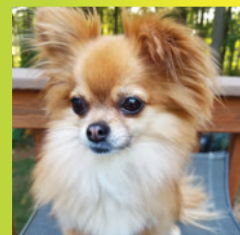
Max is an 8-1/2 year old Lab mix who loves to go for walks, play ball, and eat Dairy Queen pup cups!

Mini Cooper



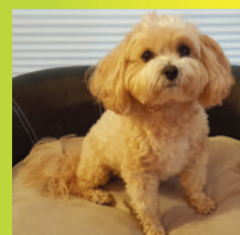
Mini Cooper is a rescued 15 year old poodle/dachshund. She is a retired therapy dog who spends her days relaxing, eating yummy snacks and watching over her little brother, K9 First Responder Gizmo.

Nina



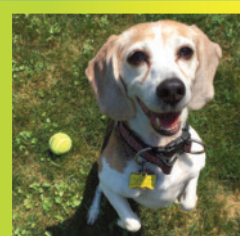
Nina, a Pomawahwah, is a therapy dog whose dream is to become a K9 First Responder. She loves to snuggle and makes everyone feel happy. Running and chasing her sister Lacey is her favorite way to play.

Pipsqueak



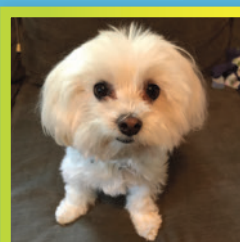
Pipsqueak is a mini poodle mix who was rescued as a puppy and his love for people and other animals was evident right away. Pipsqueak became a registered therapy dog in 2014 and a K9 First Responder in 2016, and he cherishes every minute he is able to help someone in need.

Roxie



Roxie is 10 years old and is a 13" beagle. She has a sassy personality and likes to be the boss. She is also very good at giving kisses.

Sara Jane

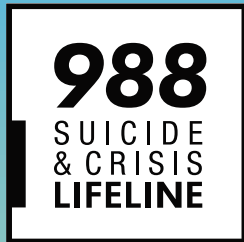


Sara Jane is a rescue pup and therapy dog who enjoys spreading love. Someday she wants to be a K9 First Responder. Her favorite activities include visiting schools, assisted living facilities and reading with kids. She loves going on car rides with her sister Maggi.

NATIONAL RESOURCES FOR TRUSTED ADULTS

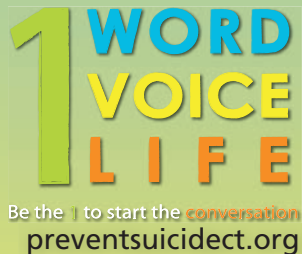
In a crisis contact:

- Crisis Line:
 - Call/Text: 988
 - Chat: 988Lifeline.org



In an emergency call 9-1-1. Text 9-1-1 if you cannot call.
Other resources for mental health services:

- School counselors, social workers, psychologists
- Community-based counselors
- Pediatricians



<https://www.mobilecrisisempst.org> • www.gizmo4mentalhealth.org • <https://988lifeline.org>

This guide is not a substitute for treatment.





If you want your copy of "**Gizmo's Guide to Mental Health**"
pawtographed by Gizmo, he can
do that!

GO TO:

www.Gizmo4MentalHealth.org
to find out how you can
meet Gizmo and have him
pawtograph your book.

- CT Department of Public Health (2015). CT School Health Survey. http://www.ct.gov/dph/lib/dph/hisr/pdf/cshs_ycb2015_report.pdf
- Stanley, B. & Brown, G. K. (2012). Safety Planning Intervention: A Brief Intervention to Mitigate Suicide Risk. *Cognitive and Behavioral Practice*, 19, 256-264. http://suicidesafetyplan.com/uploads/Safety_Planning_-_Cog____Beh_Practice.pdf

The views, opinions, and content expressed in this book do not necessarily reflect the views, opinions, or policies of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration/U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

This guide was developed by the CT Suicide Advisory Board in partnership with the CT Networks of Care for Suicide Prevention Initiative, administered by the CT Departments of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Children and Families and Public Health, and the United Way of Connecticut/2-1-1. Funding was provided by the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration via the State Youth Suicide Prevention Cooperative Agreement Grant (SM 062916), and the Children's Mental Health Block Grant.

The United Way of Connecticut/2-1-1 (www.211ct.org) manages the Gizmo Initiative, by providing technical assistance for Gizmo activities, curriculum implementation, and coordination of activities and materials distribution. It partners with the CT Departments of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) and Children and Families (DCF) on this Initiative.



GIZMO'S PAWESOME GUIDE TO MENTAL HEALTH takes an upstream approach to support the mental health and wellness of youth. It is data-driven and evidence-informed. It seeks to introduce mental health and wellness, and how to care for one's mental health in a non-threatening way that encourages the self-identification of warning signs and when to apply the use of internal and external healthy coping strategies to help reduce risk. It introduces the characteristics of trusted adults, who may be one, how to practice talking with a trusted adult, and promotes proactive communication. The book ends with an opportunity for youth to create a personal mental health plan (of action) that they can use daily, and in a time of need that can help them avert crisis. The book also provides a resource section for trusted adults.

The message is child-friendly and is presented by Gizmo, a 3.5 lb Miki dog who lives in Manchester, CT. He is a K9 First Responder and Therapy Dog who is the mascot for the CT Suicide Prevention Campaign: 1 Word, 1 Voice 1 Life...Be the 1 to start the conversation. Their website is www.preventsuicidect.org.

PAWS UP
for mental health



TESTIMONIALS

"Gizmo provides each of us with a dash of hope on every page of this book. Gizmo shows us the way to care for ourselves and to find trusted people to support and help us when we're sad. Sometimes we need someone to hold our hand and guide us, find that someone and tell them how you are feeling. There is always hope."

Faith Vos Winkel, MSW, Assistant Child Advocate, CT Office of the Child Advocate

"This book is a delightful new resource that can be used by kids to help themselves, and by parents or providers to help kids. Not only is the portrayal of Gizmo the therapy dog as mental health coach a cute concept, it sets up potentially productive dialogues. The doggies model practical steps even little people can use to cope with emotional challenges. Elements of an evidence-based approach to handling distress with adults have been thoughtfully transferred to this kid-friendly format. I enthusiastically recommend Gizmo's Pawesome Guide to Mental Health as it is both engaging and helpful."

DeQuincy A. Lezine, Ph.D, CEO, Prevention Communities; Father of Benji (age 7) and Nina (age 5)

"Gizmo's a great pup! He taught me about mental health and what to do when I'm sad or stressed. Everyone's gonna love this book!"

Caleb, 9, Elementary Student



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