



Comfort Kits are designed to help children in disasters and traumatic situations. The kits are easy to assemble and include small items and toys, plus guidance on six skills to practice to “feel better.” **Comfort Kits** help children feel better and cope with problems, ranging from dealing with pain or illness to coping with trauma, loss, and displacement.

Using the items and practicing with the guidance in the kits is a healing intervention, appropriate for initial disaster-care of children. **Comfort Kits** (initially used in pediatric oncology care) have helped children cope with war and disasters for decades (e.g., in Haiti, Lao, Thailand, and Hurricane Katrina). Since 2022 we have sent nearly 1500 to children experiencing the war in Ukraine, earthquakes in Turkey, wildfires in Maui, and Chicago community violence. These simple kits contain toys and items that help children re-regulate their feelings and offer calm moments during chaotic times. We provide expert behavioral health guidance (printed pamphlet and online YouTube video, plus virtual training when needed) for caregivers, relief workers, parents, and teachers to “coach” children and connect with them, as they explore and play with the items in the **Comfort Kit**. This allows a child to easily transition from the experience of extreme tension to a natural place of imagination, creativity, and fun. Once the child engages with the toys in the Comfort Kit, they usually continue to play with them, having discovered how to create comfort for themselves. In many ways **Comfort Kits** are one component of a “Psychological First Aid Kit” for children.

Comfort Kits are as simple as a few items in a backpack or tote bag. Here is a list of typical items in a comfort kit (the smaller items are placed in a colorful organza gift sack in the tote):

Animal finger puppet(s)	Biodots and explanation
Bottle of bubbles	Stickers
Mini squeeze “stress” ball	Blank, empty box to assemble and decorate.
Pre-sharpened pencil or colored pencils with sharpener	Crayons
Small notebook	

Comfort Kits are designed to help children feel calmer and regulate their feelings in situations that are stressful and traumatic. The kits can simply be given to children to play with on their own, but they are most effective when adult caregivers use them with children. We provide ideas for activities that adults and children can do together with **Comfort Kits**:

Feel Better Skills - These skills and instructions to use the items in the **Comfort Kits** (full guidance in 6 languages can be found on <https://comfortkitsforchildren.org/comfort-kits>)

- Feel Better Skill #1: Breathe to Relax (Good for worries, trouble sleeping, pain)
- Feel Better Skill #2: Catch the Relaxation Wave (good for worries, trouble sleeping, pain)
- Feel Better Skill #3: Talk to yourself! (Good for trouble sleeping and worries)
- Feel Better Skill #4: Imagination Fun! (Good for worries, fatigue, pain, trouble sleeping)
- Feel Better Skill #5: Write it Down or Draw it Out (good for everything)
- Feel Better Skill #6: Get Moving! (Good for mood, sleep, low energy)