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Tips and Activities for kids ages 12-18

Going back to school, what will it be like?

You have control over your attitude about going back to school. If you make up your mind that it will be a good thing, you can make that happen! If you decide it is going to be awful, you can also make that happen.

Focus on what you like about school, things you miss and things you enjoyed before you had your injury. Remind yourself how it feels to do those things you enjoy.

- **Activity:** Close your eyes and picture yourself at school doing one of your favorite activities. Think about what it looks like, how it smells, how it sounds, and how it makes you feel. Pretend you are there and participating. *For example, Art may be your favorite class. Picture your classroom in your mind, does it smell like paint or clay? Is there artwork posted around the room? Can you hear your art teacher's voice? Think of yourself drawing or sculpting and what it feels like when you are creating the art.* You can repeat this for as many things as you like to help you relax and remember that you will be able to do those things and be at those places again soon.

How will I face my friends?

It may be worrisome to think of what your friends will say when they see your changed looks. You have control of how you handle those first visits together. You can welcome your friends, share your stories about being in the hospital and be open about your changed appearance. If you talk about these things with your friends, you can help them feel more relaxed. You will find that soon you will be off the topic of you, and onto other subjects and interests that made you friends in the first place.

- **Activity:** Write down how you will describe your injury to your friends. Is there a way to make a joke about it? Is there a way to describe what you have been feeling?
- **Activity:** Make a story of your injury and healing. You can use photos and scrapbook your process. You could do a video journal of what you've been through, interviewing medical staff, showing your friends around the burn center, and giving them a glimpse of your stay. You could draw a picture about the experience...use your imagination! *Sometimes it is easier to talk about tough subjects when you have some things other than words to help you describe it. Have your family get involved, it could be fun for all of you.*

What will they say?

Your friends may be nervous about seeing you for the first time. They probably don't know anybody with a burn injury. They may not know what to say. You can help them in a few ways to talk about your burns so you both feel comfortable.

An effective method of answering questions is called **Rehearse Your Responses** or **RYR**. The student, with the help of a parent and/or a burn care professional, writes a 3-sentence response. People do not need to receive all of the details unless you choose to share the whole story with them.

1. The first sentence of Rehearse Your Response briefly describes the injury and/or how it happened.

Examples:

- I was burned.
- I was accidentally burned when I spilled hot soup.
- I had a burn injury when our family had a house fire.

If an injury is caused by abuse, through misjudgment such as fire play, or by neglect, the answer may be brief such as “I was burned in a home accident.”

2. The second sentence of Rehearse Your Response

briefly gives information about how the child is progressing after his injury.

Examples:

- I’m doing a lot better.
- I have had a lot of operations, and I’m doing better every day.
- I have to wear these garments for a while longer to help me heal,
- My wounds have healed, and I’m already back to school, playing basketball etc.

3. The third sentence of Rehearse Your Responses

politely and clearly ends the conversation.

Examples:

- I appreciate your concern.
- Thanks for asking.
- Thanks for taking the time to ask.

An example of a complete three part response could be: I was burned, I’m doing a lot better, thanks for asking.

Some people may want to know more information and will ask additional questions which you may or may not want to answer. If they do not want to give more information, **it is a burn survivor’s right to set boundaries** whether the age is 5, 15, or 55.

Examples:

“That’s all I care to discuss today. I hope you’ll understand” usually stops additional questions. A smile and walking on politely ends the conversation in a kind and respectful manner.

How will I catch up with all my school-work?

There are lots of people that care for you and want to help you return to school. Your teacher or tutor will help you with your school assignments so you can catch up with your class. You need to make up your mind that you will do your work and not use excuses or manipulation to get out of it. You have to make the effort if you want to keep up with your classmates. If you need more help or feel like it is just too much, ask your teacher, parent, or hospital friend to help you.

- **Activity:** Get organized! Have someone help you get a large calendar or draw one on paper. (Make sure the boxes are big enough to write several things in) First write in times that are scheduled for therapies, doctor visits, etc. Then, on a separate piece of paper, make a list of all the homework and other things that you need to get done. (It helps to do this one day at a time, or a week at a time.) Each day, write in a few things you can do until you have your whole list on the calendar. Daily, you can look at your calendar and work on the assignment you gave yourself for that day and when it is done, you can cross it out.

Don't forget to give yourself a little free time! This will help you to plan your school-work so you don't feel like you have to do it all at once. For example:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	Stretching exercises	Outpatient appointment	Stretching exercises	Stretching exercises
	Video games at friends		Basketball Game	House chores
Band practice		Spelling		Friends coming over
Math	Science		Art project	



What about my sports and activities?

Your activities are probably one of your favorite parts of school since they are things you choose to do instead of things teachers make you do. Keep up with your team or club by following their record or meetings. Make up your mind that you can still be involved when you are ready to leave the hospital. In some cases, you may not be able to physically do what you used to on your team. Talk to the coach or leader and see if there is some way to still help the team and keep involved.

- Activity:** Watch from anywhere. Ask someone to videotape practice, a game, or one of the recent meetings so you can see how your team is doing. Write a note or email to one of your friends about their performance. "Great shot at the end of the quarter Mike". Make a poster to cheer on your team that your parents can take to the coach so they know you are cheering for them. Your team will know that you still are a part of the team even if you cannot be there.
- Activity:** Make it work in the hospital. You can modify your favorite activities to be done while you are still in the hospital. For instance, if you are part of the school play or drama club, work on a script for a short skit on the burn unit. Gather some of the staff and other students to fill the parts and put on your own mini play. If you are into sports, make a soccer field on your tray table and use your fingers to play mini soccer or make paper footballs to flick over home-made goal posts. Again, challenge the staff and other kids to a game with you. If you are into music, write your own words to a song and see if you can get help recording it on tape or make your own lip-sync video.

I'd rather stay home than go to school

Sometimes it may feel easier to avoid going back to school because it seems like it will be too hard. Most kids find that going to school and being with their friends feels really great compared to being home alone. Staying home can be lonely and the more you avoid going out, the harder it is to go out. When an adult gets burned it is important to go back to work and when kids get burned, it is equally important for them to go back to school. School is your “job” in life and being with others your age. With the help of your school reentry program, you can get back to YOUR life again. After the first week back at school, it may feel to you as if you have never been away from your classmates and friends because it feels so normal again. It will not be the perfect fairy tale, but you will find that the more you are around your classmates and teachers, the more comfortable you will all be.

- **Activity:** Practice going out. The first few times you go out, you can go somewhere small or a place that makes you feel really comfortable. You might want to plan time with some friends so you feel you have supporters with you. Make a point to find one person to make eye contact with and smile. The next time you go out, find someone to say hello to. Eventually, you can practice talking about your injury and how you are doing so much better. Reward yourself for a job well done! The more you practice going out and talking to people, the less you will worry about it every time you go out. Review the Rehearse Your Response information listed above. Practice steps.

S-T-E-P-S

To Social Comfort & Confidence

STEPS can be a beneficial coaching tool to aid the family and student before discharge from the burn center. It makes the experience of reentering the community less frightening and more comfortable.

1. Self-Talk
 - I love and accept myself the way I am and the way I am not.
 - I meet people easily and feel comfortable with them
 - I Ca Do It!
2. Tone of Voice
 - Friendly, warm
 - Enthusiastic
3. Eye Contact
 - LOOK people in the eye---even if it's only for 3 seconds
4. Posture
 - Head Raised
 - Rib cage lifted, shoulders back
5. Smile
 - Confidence, Approachable

STEPS © Barbara Kammerer Quayle, M.A.

The Journey Back Word Matching Game



Draw a line to connect each word with the correct definition.

Pressure Garment	Something to wear on the skin to help prevent sunburn.
Physical Therapy	Skin that looks different from regular skin. May be pink or red, bumpy or shiny.
Skin Graft	A place at the hospital that has special training to take care of people who are burned.
Sunscreen	Something to wear that is tight and helps keep scars smooth and flat.
Burn Center	Special exercises and stretches to help keep skin and muscles stretched and working the way they need to.
Scar	Healthy skin that is taken from part of the body to help areas that were burned.

EXTRA



Word Matching Game Key

Draw a line to connect each word with the correct definition.

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| Pressure Garment | Something to wear on the skin to help prevent sunburn. |
| Physical Therapy | Skin that looks different from regular skin. May be pink or red, bumpy or shiny. |
| Skin Graft | A place at the hospital that has special training to take care of people who are burned. |
| Sunscreen | Something to wear that is tight and helps keep scars smooth and flat. |
| Burn Center | Special exercises and stretches to help keep skin and muscles stretched and working the way they need to. |
| Scar | Healthy skin that is taken from part of the body to help areas that were burned. |

The Journey Back Burn Recovery Word Search

B	U	R	N	O	P	S	I	K	W	E
F	X	T	U	U	C	A	B	M	Y	P
A	S	D	R	I	E	F	A	C	Z	H
M	C	J	S	K	F	E	P	S	I	O
I	A	L	E	W	I	C	O	O	L	S
L	R	S	S	U	R	G	E	R	Y	P
Y	S	K	P	X	E	J	L	A	W	I
Q	R	P	S	H	E	A	T	F	E	T
C	B	A	N	D	A	G	E	R	E	A
L	T	I	G	O	S	H	E	I	S	L
I	K	N	L	C	K	U	A	E	C	Z
N	A	G	E	T	C	R	P	N	A	R
I	H	E	R	O	P	T	W	D	P	X
C	Y	I	K	R	L	S	Q	S	E	M

Please circle the below words

Bandage
Burn
Clinic
Doctor
Family

Fire
Friends
Hero
Hospital

Nurses
Pain
Safe
Scars
Surgery

Bonus Words

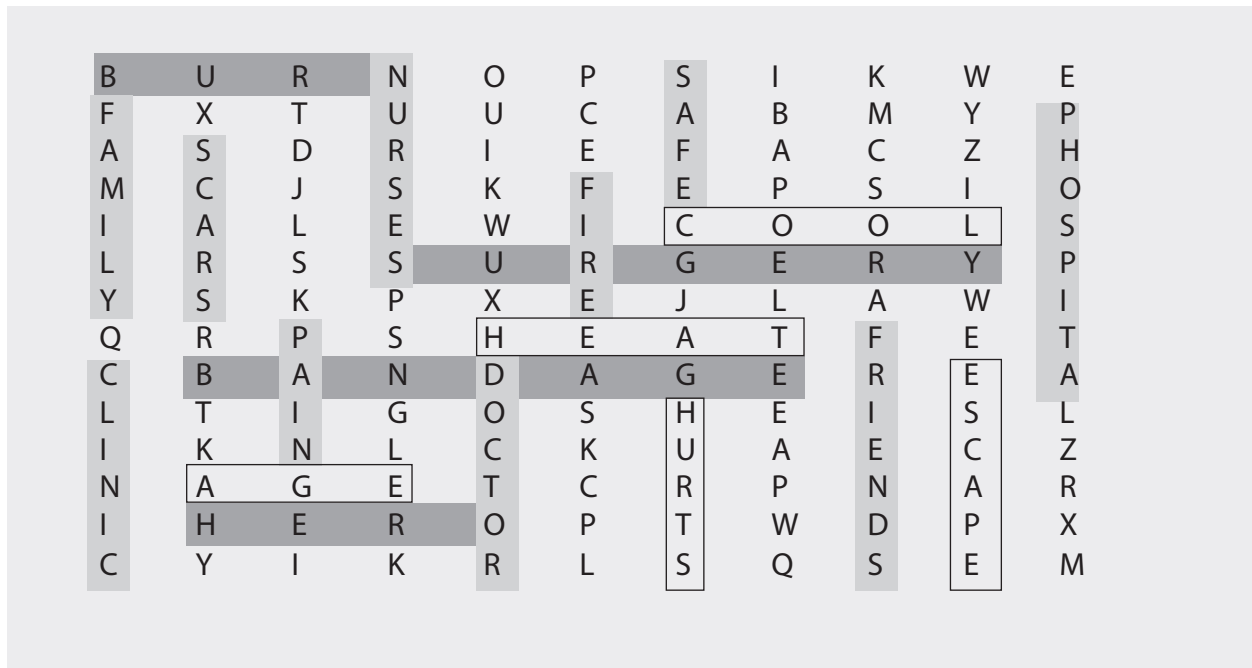
Age
Cool

Escape
Heat

Hurts



The Journey Back Burn Recovery Word Search Answers



Find and circle the following words. Words may be vertical, horizontal or diagonal.

Bandage
Burn
Clinic
Doctor
Family

Fire
Friends
Hero
Hospital
Itch

Nurses
Pain
Safe
Scars
Surgery

Bonus Words

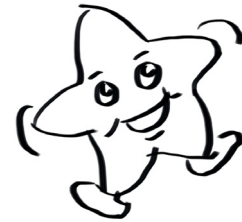
Age
Cool

Escape
Heat

Hurts



The Journey Back Burn Recovery Word Search



Find and circle the following words

Vertical, Horizontal and Diagonal

Bandage
Burn Camp
Burn Center
Burns
Clinic
Doctors
Donor site
Dressing
Family
Fire

Firefighter
Friends
Hardwork
Hero
Hospital
Itch
Nurses
Pain
Pressure Garments
Recovery

Rehabilitation
Scars
Skin
Skingraft
Splint
Strong
Support
Surgery
Therapy
Tubroom

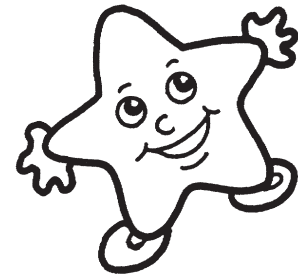
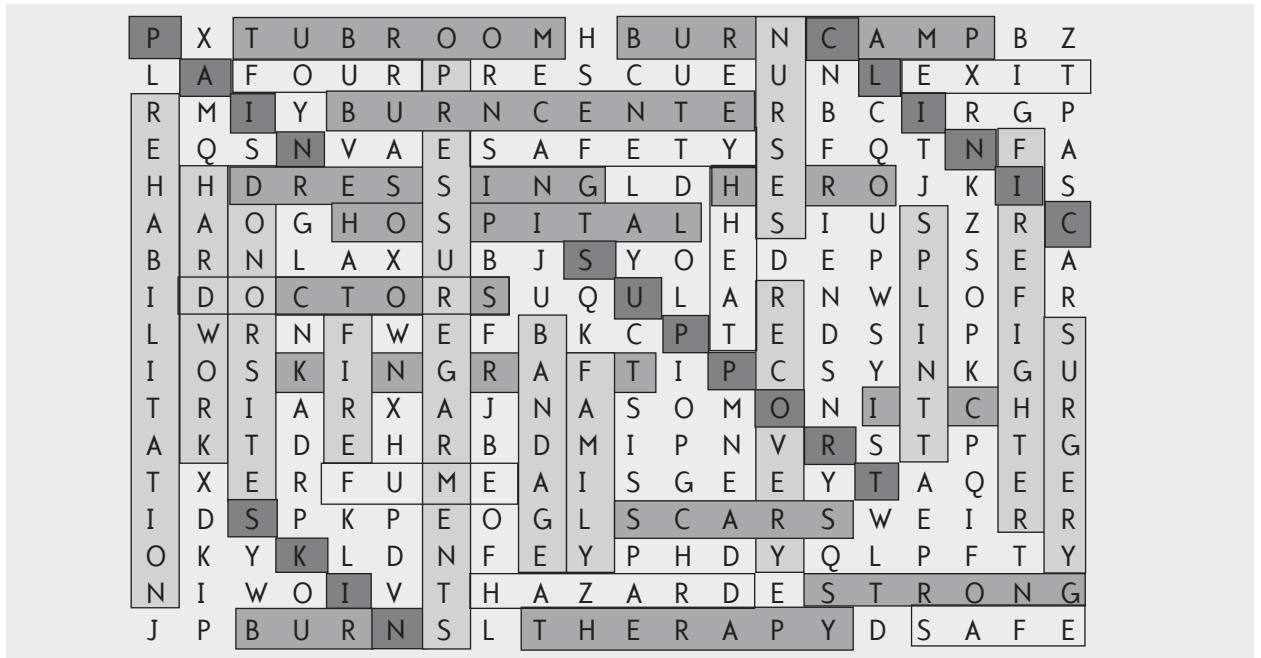
Bonus Words

Exit
Four
Fume

Hazard
Heat
Rescue

Safe
Safety

The Journey Back Burn Recovery Word Search Answers



Find and circle the following words

Vertical, Horizontal and Diagonal

Bandage
Burn Camp
Burn Center
Burns
Clinic
Doctors
Donor site
Dressing
Family
Fire

Firefighter
Friends
Hardwork
Hero
Hospital
Itch
Nurses
Pain
Pressure Garments
Recovery

Rehabilitation
Scars
Skin
Skin graft
Splint
Strong
Support
Surgery
Therapy
Tubroom

Bonus Words

Exit
Four
Fume

Hazard
Heat
Rescue

Safe
Safety

The Journey Back Burn Recovery Word Scramble

Don't Miss This!



1. SNBUR

2. OPISALTH

3. VEBAR

4. DGEBAAGN

5. SRACS

6. DAHR KROW

Unscramble the words key

1. SNBUR

B U R N S

2. OPISALTH

H O S P I T A L

3. VEBAR

B R A V E

4. DGEBAAN

B A N D A G E

5. SRACS

S C A R S

6. DAHR KROW

H A R D W O R K

The Journey Back Burn Recovery Classroom Activities

Follow the clue and you'll learn too

1. This game is similar to a scavenger hunt.
2. Divide the class into six groups.
3. Each group will get a set of note cards with descriptions on them. Each card describes some sort of burn-injury related topic.
4. Six stations will be around the room with the Item that matches the descriptions.
5. The kids will follow the description to find the Item that fits the description on their card.
6. Each station has a sheet of paper that asks a question and instructs the kids to discuss then write their answer on the back of their note card and place it in the manila envelope on the table.
7. Once they have answered the question, they can take a puzzle piece from the table.
8. The first group to get all the puzzle pieces and put them together wins.
9. Wrap up: The teacher can gather all the manila envelopes and pull out the cards to foster a discussion.

Preparation:

1. Copy six sets of cards and cut apart. Gather one full set for each group of kids.
2. Copy six sets of puzzle templates and cut apart. Sort by number.
3. Copy the "For Discussion" topics, cut apart and place at corresponding stations.
4. Set up six stations around the room. Each station should have some type of descriptor of the "Item", a manilla envelope, and a stack of six puzzle pieces for each number station. (contact your local burn center for assistance with supplies)
 - (1) Pressure garments can be at the table or a picture of them on a sign.
 - (2) Splints can be at the table or a picture of them on a sign
 - (3) Physical Therapy, set up a bouncy ball or picture of exercise machine
 - (4) Bandages, set up several different types of bandages, kerlex, ace, etc.
 - (5) Teasing, Picture of two kids teasing on a sign.
 - (6) Staring, Picture of someone staring on a sign.
5. Divide up the class and set an expected time of 5 minutes for each station. You can use a timer to keep kids on track or announce when their time starts and stops.
6. Instruct them to read the clue, find the matching table, read the discussion and write notes on their card. When they are finished, place the card in the manila envelope and take a puzzle piece.
7. The first team to have all six puzzle pieces wins.

<p>1) This is something that helps to keep burn scars smooth and flat. It is made special to fit very tight. It has to be worn 23 hours a day.</p>	<p>4) Burns hurt a lot before they are healed. They need to be covered up so they don't get infected. What is used to cover up burns while they are healing?</p>
<p>2) Scars like to get tight and this is something that helps "train" the scars to stretch. It is usually hard and stays on with Velcro straps. People often wear them on parts of the body that bend like hands, under arms, and necks.</p>	<p>5) Sometimes people don't know what to say when they see things they don't understand. People may use made up names or react by being mean to someone because they don't know what else to do.</p>
<p>3) Exercise can be fun but it also can be hard work and part of getting better when you have skin with burn scars. If scars aren't stretched that can get tight and make it hard to move some body parts. Exercises and stretches to help keep skin and muscles stretched and working the way they need to are called what?</p>	<p>6) Look at that! Wow, she looks so different that I can't stop looking at her. (He continues to look, points and gathers more friends to see this girl who walked in with scars on her face) What is it called when you look at someone for a long time with looks of fear, dislike, or amazement on your face?</p>

<p>Item: Bandages</p>	<p>Item: Pressure Garment</p>
<p>Item: Teasing</p>	<p>Item: Splint</p>
<p>Item: Staring</p>	<p>Item: Physical Therapy</p>

Follow the Clue Discussion Topics

- 1) **This is something that helps to keep burn scars smooth and flat. It is made special to fit very tight. It has to be worn 23 hours a day.**

Item: Pressure Garment

For Discussion: What do you think would be the hardest part about having to wear a pressure garment that covered your arms and legs?



- 2) **Scars like to get tight and this is something that helps “train” the scars to stretch. It is usually hard and stays on with Velcro straps. People often wear them on parts of the body that bend like hands, under arms, and necks.**

Item: Splint

For Discussion: Suppose you had to wear a splint around your neck to keep the skin from pulling tight. How would that affect your day at school?



- 3) **Exercise can be fun but it also can be hard work and part of getting better when you have skin with burn scars. If scars aren’t stretched that can get tight and make it hard to move some body parts. Exercises and stretches to help keep skin and muscles stretched and working the way they need to are called what?**

Item: Physical Therapy

For Discussion: How would you feel if you had to do stretches and exercises every day that didn’t feel so great? What would you do to help yourself keep doing them?



- 4) **Burns hurt a lot before they are healed. They need to be covered up so they don’t get infected. What is used to cover up burns while they are healing?**

Item: Bandages

For Discussion: Bandages usually have to be changed daily and the burn has to be cleaned. This can be very painful. Write down a sentence telling your classmate how proud you are of him for going through all the bandage changes.



- 5) **Sometimes people don’t know what to say when they see things they don’t understand. People may use made up names or react by being mean to someone because they don’t know what else to do.**

Item: Teasing

For Discussion: How would you feel if people snickered, whispered, or called you names every time you walked into the room? Write down 2 ways to be nice to a classmate with a difference.



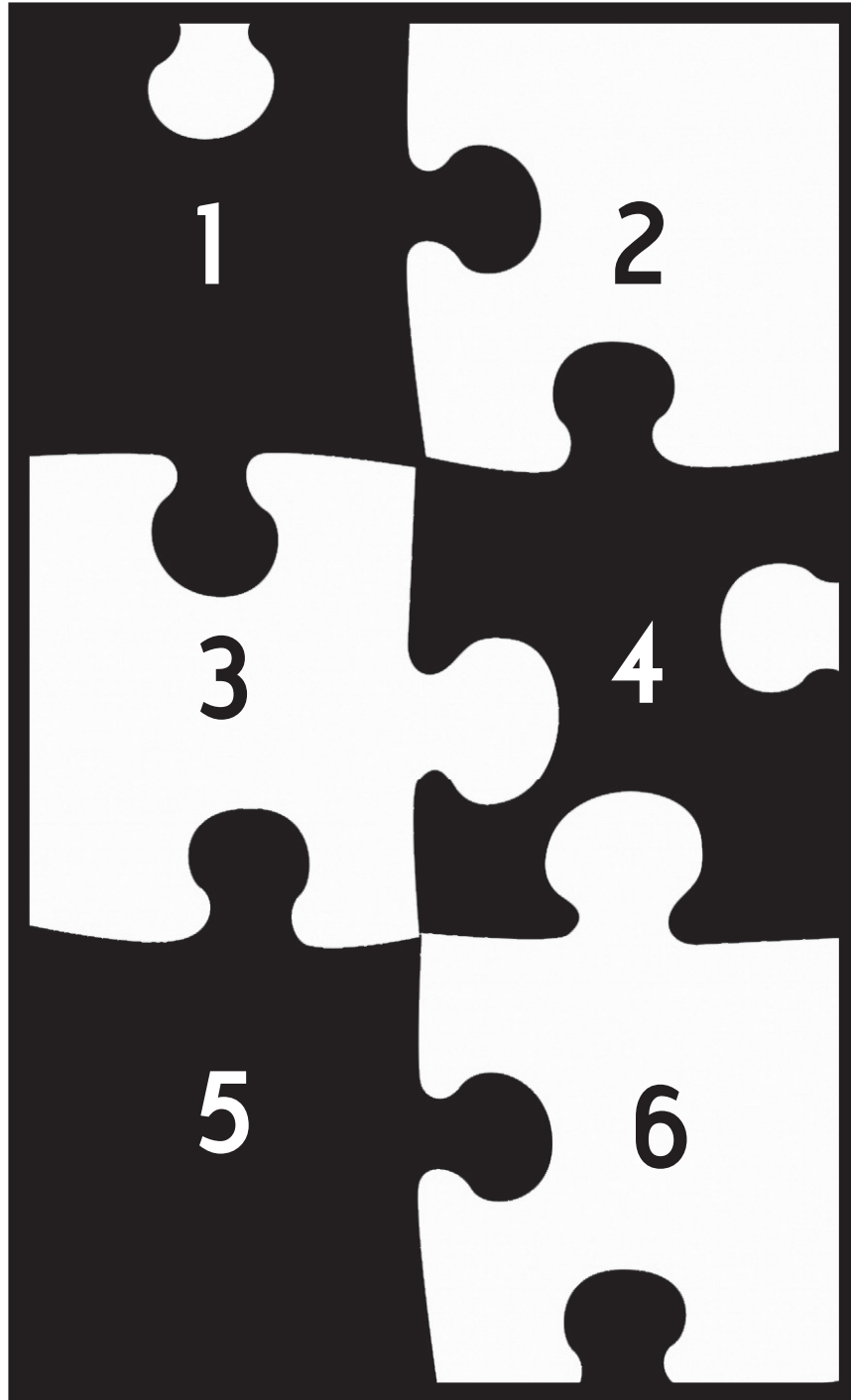
- 6) **Look at that! Wow, she looks so different that I can’t stop looking at her. (He continues to look, points and gathers more friends to see this girl who walked in with scars on her face) What is it called when you look at someone for a long time with looks of fear, dislike, or amazement on your face?**

Item: Staring

For Discussion: Staring can hurt someone’s feelings and make them feel bad about themselves. It takes a lot of courage for people with burn scars to do things that normally would be no big deal because people sometimes do stare and say mean things. List two things you could do to welcome your classmate when she walks into a room or a public place.



The Journey Back Burn Recovery Puzzle





Car Wash

A feel good game for the elementary classroom

Have all the students line up in two rows facing each other. The children should be far enough apart for them to stretch their arms forward and allow enough room for someone to walk down the center without being touched.

Instruct the children to reach their arms forward and move them like a carwash. Each child can have a chance to go through the carwash (walk down the center) and the classmates shout out positive things about him or her. “You are great at math”, “You’re smart”, “you’re a fast runner”, etc.

Have fun with the activity and add streamers for the kids to wave around. This activity is intended to teach children how to find the positives in others and how to be a friend to their classmates.

The Journey Back Burn Recovery Puzzle

