How to Help your Child Deal with a Hurricane through Art

This information focuses on using art after experiencing a hurricane. You can sort through the activities and adjust them to fit your need, i.e., make a collage of items that your child picks out of magazines or draws. Use your judgment on how much emotional exploration your child is able to deal with at one time. Begin small, talk to him about the art and then maybe spring off into deeper feelings only when he/she is ready. Be prepared for him/her to not be able to express sadness, anger at first. Be open to what they want to discuss, not what you think is important. It might be one or two things they talk about, it could all just spew out or maybe just drawing the picture will be enough. Be sure to display their art work so they know you are proud of what they are doing.

Activities to Acknowledge, Validate Children’s Feelings
1. Draw a protest poster against hurricanes.
2. Draw the scariest event that occurs during a hurricane.
3. Draw the worst event that occurs during a hurricane.
4. Draw a picture or make a collage of what your anger looks like during a hurricane.
5. Illustrate and complete the following statements:
   I feel out of control during a hurricane when: ____________
   I feel in control during a hurricane when: ____________
   I feel angry during a hurricane when: ____________
6. Draw a picture or make a collage of what your sadness looks like during a hurricane.
7. Choose from the following list of feelings and illustrate them: guilt, grief, denial, hopelessness, confusion, hope, growth, anger or nervous.
   (Appropriate for older children and teenagers)
8. Draw or paint a picture of anything that makes you feel happy after a hurricane.
9. When you are tired of thinking about hurricanes, illustrate what you do or think about that makes you happy.
10. When you are feeling okay inside, draw or paint a picture of how you could help others who experience going through a hurricane.
11. Make a magazine collage of items of necessity and luxury.
Activities to Help Promote Feelings of Trust and Safety

1. Design a medal of honor for your parents or guardians in your life, indicating a positive action they perform before, during or after a hurricane.
2. When you cannot sleep at night, draw or paint a picture of what you would like your mom or dad to do to help you.
3. When you cannot concentrate at school, draw or paint a picture of what you would like your teacher to do to help you.
4. If you are angry with God because of hurricanes draw or paint a picture and illustrate why.
5. Draw or paint a picture of the person and/or place you think about that helps you feel calm and safe when you are upset.
6. Draw or paint a picture of the people and/or pets you need. Illustrate how you help and support them.
7. When adults fight, illustrate what you do to make yourself feel safe.

Activities to Promote Problem Solving

1. Draw or paint a picture of what you know about yourself as a result of your hurricane experiences.
2. Draw or paint a picture of the advice you would give to someone on how to survive a hurricane.
3. Design a 3-D trophy for yourself illustrating a positive behavior you exhibit during a hurricane.
4. Draw the action or behavior you exhibit during a hurricane that makes you feel responsible.
5. If you could teach the world one thing about your experience during a hurricane what would it be? (Examples: an idea, a skill, an attitude)
6. Draw or paint a picture of a challenge or difficulty you are facing in your life right now. Next, draw or paint a picture showing how you would like your life to be.
7. Construct a 3-D survival kit for your life that includes your needs and wants. Recall an unhappy dream (as the result of a hurricane experience) and draw a satisfactory ending to your dream.
Activities to Help Children Live in the Here and Now

1. Draw an important possession of yours that was lost in a hurricane. Draw an important possession of yours that survived in a hurricane.
2. Fold a piece of drawing paper in two parts. Draw items you need now and items you would like to have in the future.
3. Draw a picture of when you feel safe now. Include a place in your picture.