There's another kid at after-school care whose mom has MS!

Really? I didn't know there were any other moms in our neighborhood with MS!

I guess you can't always tell by looking. Did you talk to her, Crystal?

Yeah! It was cool. I didn't have to explain MS to her because her mom has it too. It felt really good to talk to her!
If you just found out that your mom or dad or someone else you know has multiple sclerosis (MS), or even if they’ve had it for a while, you probably have lots of questions. You’re not alone! Lots of kids have questions about MS. Multiple sclerosis is hard to say and spell, and really hard to totally understand!

This activity book is for you. It will help answer some of your questions. It may also help you to talk with your family and friends about the changes multiple sclerosis can bring.
When a family member has MS it is important to remember that each person in the family is special. Sometimes it may be hard for you to remember that you are special, too!

My name is __________________________
I am ___________________ years old
I am special because __________________________

MY FAVORITE THINGS

What are some of your favorite things?

Food __________________________
TV show __________________________
Game __________________________
What I like to do __________________________
Animal __________________________
Story __________________________
What makes you the same as your mom or dad? __________________________
MS is a sickness that affects the central nervous system (the brain and the spinal cord). The brain is like a computer that sends messages to the body telling it what to do. The spinal cord is like a thick cable of wires attached to the computer. Messages travel from the brain, along the spinal cord, to the muscles and other parts of the body. If the brain wants the fingers to wiggle, it sends a message along the spinal cord out to the arm and down to the fingers, and they wiggle.

When a person has MS, the covering or coating (called myelin) that protects the nerves in the brain and spinal cord gets damaged. Myelin works like the rubbery coating around electrical or phone wires. When wires on a telephone lose their coating, the sound gets crackly.

As messages travel from the brain, they sometimes get stuck or slowed because the myelin is damaged. When this happens, muscles or other parts of the body can’t always do what the brain is telling them to do.

MULTIPLE means many.
SCLEROSIS means scars.
Multiple sclerosis means many scars.
This is HOW I imagine MS might look...

Q. Can I catch MS?

A. No, you can't catch MS from your mom, dad or anyone. MS is not like a cold. You can give lots of hugs without worrying about catching it.
What are MS symptoms?

Your mom or dad with MS may be having trouble doing everyday things...putting on socks, making a sandwich, or walking the dog. Your parent’s body may feel “funny” or different. These are called “symptoms.” It’s hard for a person with MS to know from one day to the next how he or she will feel. That is why we say that MS is unpredictable.

MS symptoms can be very mild, very serious, or somewhere in-between. They can come and go. Sometimes the symptoms disappear for a few days, weeks or months, and then come back again. There are many different symptoms.

**What are MS symptoms?**

Every person with MS is different. MS symptoms can be very mild, very serious, or somewhere in-between. They can come and go. Sometimes the symptoms disappear for a few days, weeks or months, and then come back again. There are many different symptoms.

**Symptoms of MS**

- Balance
- Clumsy
- Dizzy
- Moodiness
- Numbness
- Pins and Needles
- Seeing
- Trembling
- Walking
- Weakness

See if you can find the magic solution to this puzzle!

What do we know about symptoms and people with MS?

**Answer:** Every person with MS is different.
Imagine sitting in school. Suddenly the blackboard goes fuzzy and you can’t read anything. Or imagine it’s your turn to bat and suddenly you don’t have the energy to take a swing or even walk off the plate. That is how it might feel to get an MS exacerbation (egg-zas-sir-BAY-shun).

Exacerbation is a very big word that means a time when new MS symptoms appear or old symptoms become worse. Exacerbations are also called relapses or attacks.

No one knows what causes a person to get MS in the first place. And no one knows what causes a person with MS, who has been feeling fine, to have an exacerbation.

But we do know that there’s nothing a kid can do that can cause a parent to have an MS attack. Forgetting your home work, skipping chores, or fighting with your sister might annoy your parents, but it can’t cause an MS attack!
Let's meet the people who take care of people with MS

**WORD SEARCH**

**FIND THE SPECIALISTS**

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

N U R S E  R A D I O L O G I S T
U R O L O G I S T  S O C I A L W O R K E R
S P E E C H T H E R A P I S T
P H Y S I C A L T H E R A P I S T
P H Y S I C A L T H E R A P I S T
P H Y S I C A L T H E R A P I S T
N E U R O L O G I S T
O C C U P A T I O N A L T H E R A P I S T
1. I like coming with you for your physical therapy appointment!
   Well, you are a big help to me!

2. ...and 8. Other arm now mom!

3. We can both stay fit by doing exercises together!
**MS** affects everyone’s feelings in the family, not just the person who has MS. Sometimes MS might make you feel mad, or you might feel sad or scared if your parent isn’t feeling well. You will also feel glad because you love your mom or dad and get to do fun things together.

**S**ometimes the hardest thing about feelings is **sharing** them with others, but talking about feelings can be helpful. It can make you feel better and bring you closer to people you care about and let them know what some of your worries might be.

**M**aking a list of your feelings can help. You can do this in your head, on a piece of paper, or in a poem or drawing. Then you can share your list with someone you trust—like your mom or dad. This will help you feel better.

**Find someone:**
- Who is easy to talk to
- Whom you like and trust
- Who listens to your feelings

**I would say:** “Let out your feelings! And exercise!”
**TR, New Jersey, USA**

**I would tell them that I deal with the same feelings.**
**TS, Toronto, Canada**

**I would tell them to try to forget it’s there most of the time. But don’t put it totally out of your mind at all times, because your mom or dad still needs your help!**
**SM, Vancouver, Canada**

**I would say they should not worry. It will be OK. Well, they can worry a little bit, but not too much!**
**SA, Ghana**
1. Draw a picture of each person in your family (including yourself).

2. Color the pictures using these colors to show how each person feels.

   - Mad
   - Happy
   - Embarrassed
   - Bored
   - Sad
   - Scared

3. Show your drawing to the people in your family and talk to them about the feeling colors you used.

   Having a mom or a dad with MS can sometimes be tough. Talking about feelings can help everyone feel a little better!
Living with MS brings changes to every member of a family. Some changes may be big, others can be small. Here are some of the changes that kids sometimes see:

Your mom or dad may feel different from one day to the next—for example, having a lot of energy one day and feeling very tired the next. It’s a good idea to have a back-up plan for days when your parent doesn’t feel well.

Your mom and dad may also seem more worried than usual. This can happen when someone in the family is diagnosed with MS and no one is sure exactly what to expect. If you start to get worried too, be sure to let them know. Worries feel better when you talk about them.

When someone in a family gets MS, everyone else may need to help. Sometimes moms and dads trade jobs and responsibilities because the parent with MS can’t do the things that he or she used to do. Kids may be asked to do more chores. While kids tell us that they don’t always like the extra chores, they also say that helping their parent with MS makes them feel proud.

Q: Is it the MS that makes my mom cranky?

A: Moms and dads with MS can sometimes be cranky. They may feel tired, sad or frustrated by things they cannot do, or just plain grumpy. The important thing to remember is that everyone feels cranky sometimes, even moms and dads who don’t have MS. Maybe you and your parents could talk about the kinds of things that make each of you feel cranky and the things that make you each feel better.
MICHAEL, WANT TO GO TO THE PARK WITH US TO PLAY FRISBEE?

CAN'T NOW. I HAVE TO FINISH CLEANING THE YARD AND THEN DO SOME LAUNDRY. I HATE HAVING ALL THESE EXTRA CHORES BECAUSE MY MOM HAS OTHER KIDS DON'T HAVE TO DO THIS STUFF...

MICHAEL, WHY DON'T WE HELP YOU? THEN WE CAN ALL GO TO THE PARK.

MICHAEL, YOU MAY NOT LIKE IT MUCH, BUT I BET YOUR MOM FEELS REAL PROUD AND HAPPY THAT YOU HELP OUT. SHE DOESN'T FEEL WELL.

I GUESS IT'S NOT SO BAD. ANYWAY, THIS IS GOOD PRACTICE FOR TOSING THAT FRISBEE!
Many people with MS use different types of tools or gadgets to help them move about, have fun, and do everyday activities. For example, someone you know may use a cane, a wheelchair or scooter, grab bars in the bathroom, or a computer that works by talking to it!

In fact, we all use tools to help us with everyday activities: a backpack to help carry things, glasses to help see more clearly, a shopping cart at the supermarket to hold groceries. Can you think of any other tools we use?

Perhaps your mom or dad has made changes to your house to make it easier and safer to get around, like building a ramp or adding a grab bar in the bathroom.

Can you think of a tool that might make life easier for someone with MS?
All kinds of things CAN make our lives easier. Glasses CAN help us see. A calculator CAN help us add numbers more quickly. A list CAN help us remember what we need to buy at the grocery store.

We all use tools everyday that CAN really make a difference.

1. Sweet treats made with sugar that children especially enjoy at Halloween. CAN __ __
2. A light, narrow boat with pointed ends. You use paddles to move it forward. CAN __ __
3. A small, yellow songbird often kept in a cage. CAN __ __ __
4. A fun dance involving high kicks. CAN __ __ __
5. A tall, narrow tube object made of wax with a wick inside. It can be used to help us see in the dark. CAN __ __ __
6. A stick used as an aid in walking can help people keep their balance when they walk. CAN __
7. A container for drinking water, often carried by campers. CAN __ __ __ __

ANSWERS
Here’s a great idea for your box of pictures! You will need scissors and old photos that have doubles or that you don’t keep. Cut the pictures into several different shapes and sizes. The fun starts when you try to put the pieces back together! To make the pieces easier to handle, mount them on cardboard. You can store them in a box or zipper bag to play with again.

**Jokes/Riddles**

- What dog loves to take bubble baths? **A Shampoo-doodle!**
- Doctor, Doctor I feel like a pack of cards. **I’ll deal with you later.**
- If athletes get athlete’s foot, what do astronauts get? **Missile-toe.**
- How do you fix a broken pizza? **With tomato paste!**
- Michelle’s mother has four children. The first is April, the second is May, and the third is June. What is the name of the fourth child? **A Michelle.**
- What do you call cheese that is not yours? **NA-CHO cheese.**
- Why did the football coach go to the bank? **To get his quarterback!**

**PICTURE PUZZLES!**
Here is a great gift idea for someone you love who has MS. Make a “coupon”!
Here are some ideas for coupons you can give your mom or dad.

Your mom or dad will love this kind of present because it tells them you love them and want to help!

COUPON
GOOD FOR AN AFTERNOON OF CUDDLING AND READING TOGETHER

COUPON
GOOD FOR CLEANING OUT THE GARAGE

COUPON
GOOD FOR HUGS AND KISSES, ANYTIME

COUPON
GOOD FOR BRINGING OUT THE TRASH EVERY WEEK

COUPON
GOOD FOR MAKING BREAKFAST FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

COUPON
GOOD FOR MAKING BREAKFAST FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY
This girl and her mom want to get into the library, but there are too many stairs. **What would you do?**

It’s very hot out and this dad with MS has been out in the yard for a very long time. **What would you do?**

This girl just found out that her dad has MS. **What would you do?**

Talk to your mom and dad about what you would do.
WHAT’S SILLY WITH THIS PICTURE?
Grownups are always saying, “Be patient!” But it’s hard to be patient waiting for the cure for MS. MS research is moving faster than ever before. Every day scientists are getting closer to the answers we need to important questions: What causes MS? What can cure MS? What can prevent MS from happening to someone else?

We don’t have a cure for MS yet, but scientists from all over the world are working together to find the answers. Computers help them talk to one another about their ideas and the results from their experiments. They can give each other help without having to be in the same place! Just like the teamwork it takes to score a goal in soccer or build a skyscraper or send a man to the moon, it takes teamwork to find the answers to MS.

What would a cure for MS look like?
Maybe it will be a vaccine to keep people from ever getting MS. This would be like the shot you get from your doctor so you won’t ever get the measles or mumps. Or, maybe it will be a medicine that makes MS go away once a person has it. Or, maybe it will be a cure that helps the cells in the immune system do what they are supposed to do. Scientists are exploring all these possibilities, and more. And maybe, the cure will turn out to be something that no one has even thought about yet.

What do you think the cure for MS will be?

Q. Do people die from MS?
A. No, people almost never die from MS. Once in a great while MS causes other problems that can make a person very sick or even die, but this does not happen very often.
Bonjour, Monsieur le Docteur! *

*Hello, Doctor! What are you doing Michael?

I’m writing to a doctor who is doing MS research in France!

I didn’t know they had MS in France!

About one million people around the world have MS! And I’m writing to tell him hurry up and good luck! *Dépêchez-vous et bonne chance!
If you wanted to say hello to everybody in the world, how many people would that be? And how many languages would you have to learn?

You would have to say hello to almost 6,000,000,000 people and learn at least 2,796 languages! Here are some examples:

**English**

HELLO MY NAME IS

**Czech**

NAZDAR JMENUJÍ SE

**Russian**

ZDRAVSTVUITE MIA ZOVUT

**Swedish**

GOD DAG MITT NAMN ÄR

**Japanese**

KONICHIWA WATAKUSHI-WA (your name), DESU

Pronunciation: NAH-zdar ihmeh-noo-EE seh

Pronunciation: koh-NEE-cheewah Wah-TAHK-sheewah (your name)-DEHSS-ew

Pronunciation: ZzDRAST-vet-yah Men-YAH zoh-VOOT

Pronunciation: goo dahg meet nahmn air

Visit this website to learn more: http://www.ipl.org/youth/hello/
MS Quiz

1. Myelin
2. Symptoms
3. Unpredictable
4. Central nervous system
5. Spinal cord
6. Computer
7. Many scars

Pick your answers from the scrambled words below:

- nylime
- ispahn droc
- otrpucme
- nmay crras
- iplreudtcabe
- tspmyosm
- tcnelra rvnosue yssmte

Answers:
1. Myelin
2. Symptoms
3. Unpredictable
4. Central nervous system
5. Spinal cord
6. Computer
7. Many scars

The covering around the nerves is called ________________
The physical problems caused by MS are called ________________
MS can change from one day to the next—that's why
we say it’s ____________________________
MS affects the brain and spinal cord, which together
make up the ____________________________
Messages going from the brain to other parts of the body
travel along the ____________________________
The brain acts like a ____________________________
The words multiple sclerosis mean ____________________________
The Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada and the National Multiple Sclerosis Society are proud to be a source of information about multiple sclerosis. Our comments are based on professional advice, published experience and expert opinion, but do not represent therapeutic recommendations or prescriptions. For specific information, consult a qualified physician.

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The mission of the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada is to be a leader in finding a cure for multiple sclerosis and enabling people affected by MS to enhance their quality of life.

The mission of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society is to end the devastating effects of MS.

Funding for Keep S’myelin provided by:

Support also from J.P. Bickell Foundation

This activity book is based on the National Multiple Sclerosis Society’s award-winning publication, Keep S’myelin, a newsletter for children with a parent or loved one with MS. For more information on the newsletter please call 1-800-FIGHTMS (1-800-344-4567). Interactive versions of the newsletter are available at www.nationalmssociety.org and click on Keep S’myelin.

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