

Educator & Caregiver Guide

for Sleepover, Stomachache, Super-Surprise!

Jaden's Big Feelings Adventures



Purpose of this guide

A practical supplement for adults who want to help children talk about sleepover worry, body clues, brave help-seeking, and small-step practice.



Best for

Families, classroom teachers, counselors, social workers, librarians, small groups, and read-aloud circles. Adapt the language for the child's age, communication style, culture, and support needs.

Key message

Brave does not mean never feeling nervous.
Brave can mean noticing, naming, breathing,
asking for help, and trying again when ready.

Core tool

Pause, check in, tell a trusted grown-up, and
take one small brave step.

Created as a companion resource for educators and caregivers.

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How to Use This Guide



A gentle, skill-building approach

This guide turns the story into conversations and activities. You can use one page at a time, choose only what fits your child or group, or build a short lesson series.

For caregivers

- Read the story slowly and pause when Jaden notices body feelings, worry thoughts, or a need for support.
- Use the scripts in this guide to validate feelings without feeding the worry spiral.
- Practice the skills during calm moments so they feel familiar during big feelings.

For educators and counselors

- Use the read-aloud prompts for whole class, small group, or individual support.
- Choose a printable activity as a follow-up: body clues, worry thoughts, helper plan, or practice ladder.
- Invite children to share only what feels comfortable. Private feelings can stay private.

Safety and support note

This guide is educational and supportive, not medical or mental-health treatment. When a child reports pain, illness, or distress, take it seriously. If symptoms are sharp, severe, new, worsening, or concerning, contact a healthcare professional or emergency services. For ongoing anxiety, school refusal, panic, sleep difficulties, or frequent stomachaches, consider support from a pediatrician or licensed mental-health professional.

Book at a Glance

Story focus

Jaden is excited for a sleepover, but nighttime changes the feeling. His body feels strange, his worry grows, and he learns that asking for help is brave.

Adult role

Grown-ups stay calm, check body clues, validate feelings, and help Jaden make a plan that honors both safety and bravery.

Social-emotional learning goals

- 1 Notice body clues. Children learn that big feelings can show up in the belly, chest, shoulders, throat, or thoughts.
- 2 Name worry thoughts. Children practice separating a worry story from what is known right now.
- 3 Ask for help. The story frames calling or telling a grown-up as a brave choice, not a failure.
- 4 Use a calming tool. Breath, check-ins, and comfort items help the body settle.
- 5 Try again in steps. A sleepover can become dinner first, movie night then home, bedtime practice, or another small plan.

Helpful vocabulary

Body clue	A sensation that tells us something is happening inside the body.
Worry thought	A thought that warns us about a possible problem, even when we do not know it is true.
Trusted grown-up	An adult who listens, helps, and keeps a child safe.
Brave try	A small action that moves us toward something important, even with nervous feelings nearby.

The Adult Message Under the Story



Validate both excitement and worry

Children can be excited all day and then feel worried at bedtime. Both feelings can be true. Name the mix: "Your excited part wanted the sleepover, and your worried part wants help."



Check body clues without dismissing them

The story does not tell children to ignore stomach pain. It teaches them to tell a grown-up, describe what they feel, and check what is real.



Make help-seeking heroic

Jaden calls his mom. The adult response is steady, practical, and warm. This teaches that asking for help is a brave tool, not a weakness.



Plans can change and still count

Going home early, trying a half-night plan, or practicing again another day can all be part of bravery. The goal is not perfection; the goal is learning.



Read-Aloud Plan

Before reading: 5 minutes

- Show the cover and ask: "What do you notice? What might be fun? What might feel tricky?"
- Preview the skill: "Today we will notice how Jaden checks in with his body and asks for help."
- Set a sharing boundary: "You can answer out loud, think quietly, or draw your answer."

During reading: pause at big-feeling moments

- When Jaden packs: "What helps him feel ready?"
- When the house grows still: "What changed around him?"
- When his worry grows: "What is his worry saying? What does his body feel?"
- When he calls Mom: "What made that a brave choice?"
- When he decides to go home: "Did bravery disappear, or did it choose another plan?"

After reading: 8–12 minutes

- Invite children to choose one brave word from the story: try, breathe, ask, check, home, ready, next time.
- Complete one printable page from this guide.
- Practice one calm breath together: breathe in "I am here," breathe out "I can ask for help."



Adult stance

Warm. Curious. Slow. Children regulate best when adults sound steady and kind.

During-Reading Prompts: Part 1

Story moment	Adult question	Skill to highlight
Getting ready Jaden packs Bear, snacks, pajamas, and games.	"What helps Jaden feel prepared? What would you pack to feel safe?"	Comfort items and planning can support brave practice.
Bedtime shift The house grows quiet and his body feels strange.	"What changed? What did Jaden notice in his body?"	Big feelings can show up as body clues.
Worry thoughts His mind jumps to scary conclusions.	"Is this a fact, a maybe, or a worry thought?"	Thoughts are not always instructions.
Calling Mom Jaden tells a trusted adult what is happening.	"How did Jaden use help instead of hiding his worry?"	Asking for help is a brave choice.

During-Reading Prompts: Part 2

Story moment	Adult question	Skill to highlight
Checking what is real Mom asks about pain and what his body can do.	"How did Mom listen without making the worry bigger?"	Check body clues calmly and take symptoms seriously.
Breathing through the call Mom guides a slow breath.	"Where could your hand go when you breathe? Belly? Heart? Lap?"	Breathing is a portable calming tool.
Friend's mom helps Another grown-up brings water and care.	"Who are helpers in this story?"	Children can have more than one safe helper.
Changing the plan Jaden chooses to go home and try again later.	"What brave thing did Jaden still do?"	Plan B can still be brave.



No forced sharing

If a child has strong sleepover fears, medical worries, separation anxiety, or past hard experiences, let them pass, draw, or respond privately.

Mini-Lesson 1: Body Clues

Goal: Children learn to notice sensations without immediately turning them into scary conclusions.

Teach

A body clue is something we feel in the body. It might be a tight throat, wiggly legs, a fast heart, a tummy rumble, heavy eyes, or warm cheeks. Body clues give information, but they do not always tell the whole story.

Model language



Adult script

"Let's check what your body is saying. Is it sharp or strong? Is it new? Is it getting worse? What else could your body need: water, bathroom, rest, comfort, or a grown-up check?"

Activity: Body clue map

- 1 Ask children to point to or draw where worry shows up in the body.
- 2 Offer neutral choices: belly, chest, shoulders, hands, head, throat, legs, or "somewhere else."
- 3 Add a helper action beside each clue: drink water, tell a grown-up, slow breath, comfort item, rest, or take space.

Discussion question

"How can we listen to our body without letting worry be the boss?"

Mini-Lesson 2: Worry Thoughts vs. What We Know

Goal: Children learn that a worry thought can feel loud even when it is only a maybe.

Teach

A worry thought often begins with "What if..." or "Maybe..." It tries to protect us, but sometimes it jumps too far. A helpful thought is not fake happy. It is a steady sentence that helps us check what is true.

Worry thought	Helpful thought
"What if I get sick?" "What if I cannot stay?" "What if I need my grown-up?"	"I can tell an adult." "We can check my body." "I can try one small plan."

Activity: Thought detective

- Say a worry sentence from the story or invite children to invent a pretend one.
- Ask: "Is this a fact, a maybe, or a worry thought?"
- Write a helpful thought that includes a safe action.



Remember

Helpful thoughts should not dismiss the feeling. Pair truth with care: "I feel worried, and I can ask for help."

Mini-Lesson 3: Asking for Help Is Brave

Goal: Children identify trusted adults and practice words for asking for help.

Teach

Some children worry that asking for help means they failed. Jaden shows another way: asking for help is how brave gets support.

Practice phrases

Feeling words	"I feel nervous." "My tummy feels strange." "I miss home."
Help words	"Can you check on me?" "Can I call my grown-up?" "Can we make a plan?"
Plan words	"Can I try for ten more minutes?" "Can I go home and try again another day?"

Role-play

- 1 Child says a body clue or worry thought.
- 2 Adult responds with calm validation.
- 3 Together, choose a next small action.



Caregiver line to repeat

"You did the right thing by telling me. We can check it together."

Mini-Lesson 4: Slow Breath, Steady Body

Goal: Children practice a short breath pattern before they need it.

Teach

Breathing does not make all feelings disappear. It gives the body a steady rhythm so the thinking part of the brain has more room.



Try this together

Hand on belly or heart. Breathe in and say, "I am here." Breathe out and say, "I can ask for help." Repeat three times.

Make it playful

- Smell the warm pizza. Blow a cloud across the sky.
- Breathe in for two. Breathe out for three.
- Trace a star, moon, blanket fold, or pillow edge while breathing.

Adult reminder

Do not demand calm. Invite practice. "Let's help your body feel a little less alone."

Mini-Lesson 5: Plan B Is Still Brave

Goal: Children learn flexible planning and graduated practice.

Teach

A child may not be ready for a full sleepover. A smaller step can be the right next brave try. The goal is to build confidence through practice, not to prove bravery by enduring distress.

Sleepover practice ladder

- 1 Visit the friend's house for dinner and go home.
- 2 Try movie night, then home.
- 3 Stay until bedtime routine, then home.
- 4 Try a half-night plan with a pickup option.
- 5 Try a full sleepover when ready.



Adult script

"Changing the plan does not erase your brave. It tells us what your next step can be."

Reflection

Ask: "What did you learn about your body, your worry, and your helpers?"

Educator Lesson Plan

Time

30-45 minutes, or split into two 20-minute lessons.

Materials

Book, chart paper, crayons, sticky notes, and one printable page from this guide.

Learning targets

- I can name a body clue.
- I can tell the difference between a worry thought and a helpful thought.
- I can name a trusted grown-up or helper.
- I can choose one calming or help-seeking step.

Lesson flow

- 1 Warm-up: Show a moon or star image. Ask: "What helps you feel steady at night?"
- 2 Read: Pause at 3-4 key moments. Keep discussion brief and safe.
- 3 Teach: Draw two columns: Body Clue / Helpful Action.
- 4 Practice: Students complete a printable page independently, in partners, or with adult support.
- 5 Close: Everyone says or draws one brave word: try, breathe, ask, check, rest, home, ready.

Exit ticket

"One way I can ask for help is _____."

Inclusive and Sensitive Practice



Children experience sleepovers differently

A sleepover may feel fun, impossible, unsafe, overwhelming, culturally unfamiliar, medically complicated, or simply not allowed in a family. The lesson is not that every child should sleep over. The lesson is that children can notice feelings, ask for help, and practice brave choices.

Adapt for different needs

- Separation anxiety: use shorter practice steps, planned check-ins, and clear pickup options.
- Sensory sensitivity: plan for noise, lighting, textures, foods, bathroom comfort, and a quiet space.
- Medical needs: create a concrete care plan with adults before the event.
- Neurodivergent learners: preview the routine visually; use scripts, schedules, and choice cards.
- Trauma-informed support: avoid pressure, teasing, public disclosure, or "prove you are brave" language.

Words to avoid

Less helpful	More helpful
"You are fine." "Don't be dramatic." "Everyone else can do it." "You have to stay."	"I believe you." "Let's check together." "You can feel nervous and still have options." "A small step counts."

Caregiver Scripts

When the child is excited but unsure



Script

"Your excited part is ready, and your worried part wants a plan. We can listen to both."

When the child reports a body feeling



Script

"Thank you for telling me. Let's check your body calmly. What do you feel? Is it sharp, strong, new, or changing? What might help right now?"

When the child asks to come home



Script

"I am proud you asked for help. We can make a safe plan. This brave try still counts."

When the child wants to try again



Script

"Let's choose one tiny step for next time. Brave grows with practice, not pressure."

My Body Clues Check-In

When my body feels strange, I can slow down and notice.



My body feels this in my belly:



My body feels this in my chest or heart:



My body feels this in my head, throat, or shoulders:



One safe thing I can do is:



Brave reminder

I can tell a grown-up. I do not have to figure it out alone.

Worry Thought, Helpful Thought

A worry thought may be loud. A helpful thought can be steady.



My worry thought says:

Three horizontal dashed lines for writing a worry thought.



What I know right now is:

Three horizontal dashed lines for writing what is known right now.



A helpful thought I can try is:

Three horizontal dashed lines for writing a helpful thought to try.



A grown-up can help me by:

Three horizontal dashed lines for writing how a grown-up can help.

My Sleepover Practice Ladder

I can build brave one step at a time.

- ☐ Dinner and pajamas
- ☐ Movie night, then home
- ☐ Stay until bedtime
- ☐ Bring a comfort item
- ☐ Call or text my grown-up
- ☐ Try again another day



My comfort item is:



My calm plan is:



Color a star each time you practice a brave step.

My Helper Plan

Trusted people can help me check, breathe, and choose.



A grown-up I can tell is:



Words I can use when I need help:



If I need to go home or change the plan, I can say:



Practice sentence

"I feel _____. Can you help me check what my body needs?"

After My Brave Try

I can notice what I learned, not just what happened.



Today I tried:



Before I tried, I felt:



A helper or comfort item I used was:



Next time, one tiny brave step could be:



Brave words

I can try. I can breathe. I can ask for help. I can try again when I am ready.