

# Ronan Is Confused



## A Social Story about school closing because of COVID 19

By Amy Bamforth  
Illustrated by Janet Lane  
©2020

With thanks to the Children's Commonwealth Fund

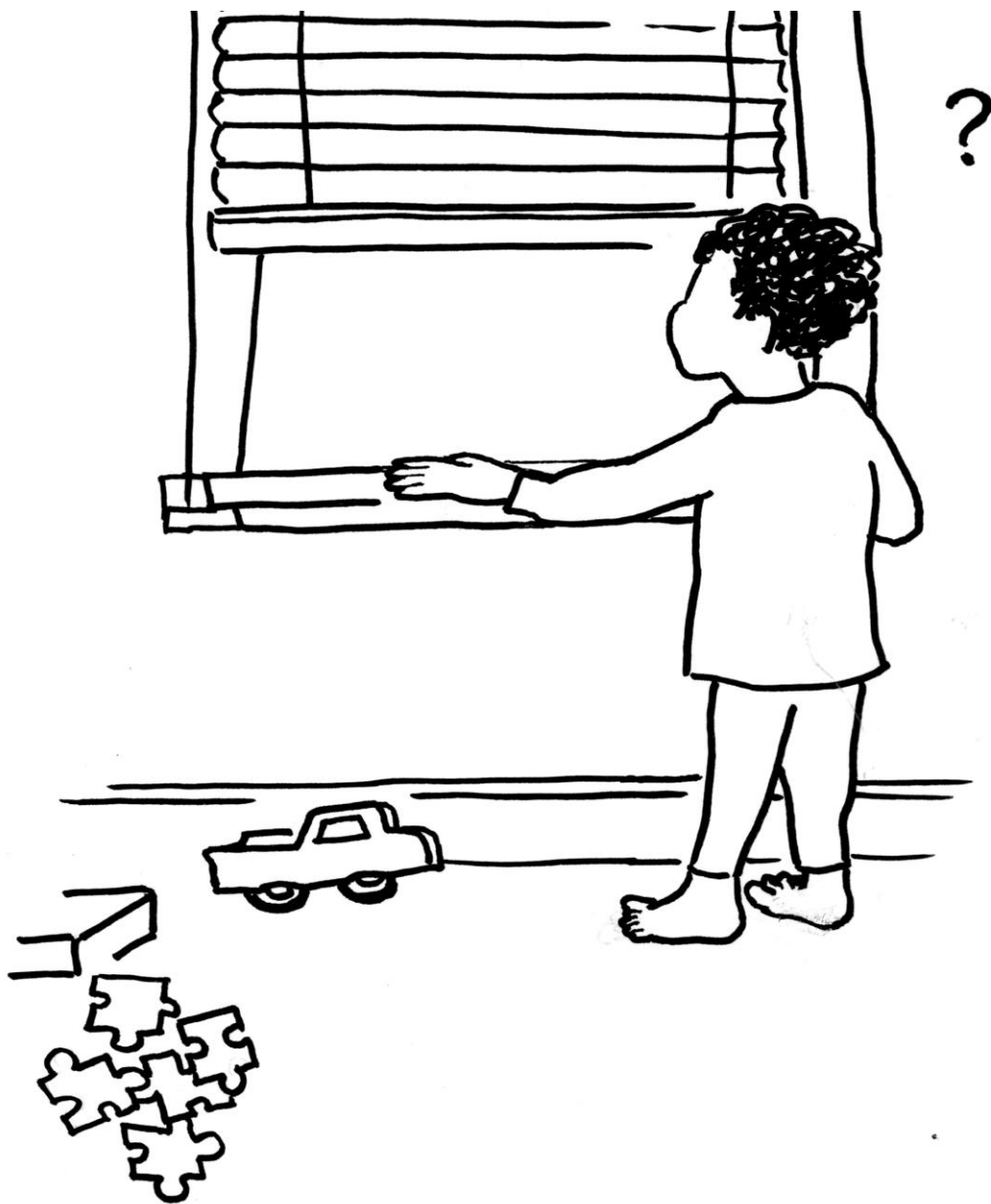
Permission is given to freely share at  
no cost if reproduced in its entirety



Somerville Promise

**SOMERVILLE**   
**PUBLIC SCHOOLS**





Ronan is feeling so confused! He usually goes to school when his Mom goes to work. But last week, with no warning, his school closed down. Now he is home and he cannot see his school friends or even go to the playground. He does not know what to expect when he wakes up.



Teachers and his mom say that they did not have a choice, that all the schools are closing because of a new virus. Staying home from school is supposed to help people stay healthy.

Ronan knows that children sometimes get sick and stay home from school. Then, in a couple of days, they go back and things are fine. This is SO different. No one was sick at school, but they still closed it. Every day, his Mom says, "Today is a home day. I'm not sure yet when school will be open again." Ronan does not like that!

Ronan is frustrated and mad. Big feelings can happen when you don't know what to expect. His school is closed. He wants to see his friends. He misses his teachers and the classroom. He has toys at his house but with only him and his Mom there, it is hard.



Ronan's mom has to do some work while they are home even though her work is closed. She says she is not ignoring him on purpose. That makes Ronan mad too! He wants to play. She says, "Not now, I have to use the computer for ten more minutes, then we can play." But Ronan does not want to wait even 1 minute!

Mommy says that since life is so different right now with no school, Ronan can watch some videos and explore some websites on the computer with her for a little while. That feels special and makes Ronan happy. But then Ronan notices that his Mom goes back to her computer when he wants her to watch an alligator video with him! That does not feel good. He yells at her.

Ronan is really surprised. His Mom yells back! She says, "It is not my fault! I have to do some work!" She usually doesn't yell like that. Being home instead of school or work makes everyone grumpy and frustrated sometimes.



Being grumpy and yelling reminds Mommy that it is hard to be little and to have no school and to not feel happy. She takes a deep breath and then blows it out. It helps her remember how much she loves spending time with Ronan and that they can do lots of things together that are both fun and useful.

She tells Ronan, "Let's go take a walk outside, then you can help me make a salad for dinner." Ronan says, "Can I ride my scooter??" Mommy smiles and says, "Of course!" They decide to have a special-going-outside-just-the-2-of-us time every day. Mommy promises not to answer her phone if it rings during that time.



What else can Ronan do that is an inside activity? Mommy says, “You can play with anything in our recycle bin.” He finds a box that he can sit in. It needs a steering wheel and he finds a lid. Mommy gives him some tape to stick it on, and now he has a race car! Making the car makes Ronan feel proud.

Ronan has a boat collection in the bathroom. Mommy pours some bubble bath in and fills the tub. Ronan makes bubble islands and the boats visit each one. His skin gets kind of wrinkly because he stays in for a long time. Playing in the tub feels good.

Talking on the phone with special people is another thing to do inside. Ronan sometimes talks on face time and sometimes on the regular phone with just voices. His Auntie says that she is stuck in her house too. His Grandpa says he is frustrated that he cannot go out and visit his friends and family. Lots of people are having big feelings about this virus.



When big feelings happen, and Ronan’s body wants to scream or throw things, his Mommy helps him to feel calmer. She says, “Sometimes we need to be patient. Being patient means we count to ten, then do it again. 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10. 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10.” Sometimes they put each finger up to count. Once Ronan finishes counting, he feels better.



Some of the changes while school is closed and Ronan and Mommy have to stay in the house most of the day are fun. Some of them are hard. Figuring out things to do like sailing boats in the tub, cooking together and making things from recyclables can help the days feel good.

We are not sure when exactly, but Ronan's school will open again. He will get to play with his school friends and teachers. He will know what to expect when he wakes up in the morning. Life will feel calm and good. It really will.