

Talk About Feelings



What You Do

Background: Discussing emotions with children will help them learn to recognize their feelings, understand why they are feeling that way, and find ways to express their feelings appropriately.

1. Gather several pictures of people expressing a variety of emotions. You may use photos of children in your class or their family members. You may also cut out pictures from magazines and glue them to card stock.
2. Talk with the children about the different emotions everyone experiences sometimes, e.g., happy, sad, angry, scared, and surprised. Look at the pictures together, and discuss how the people in them might be feeling.

“What do we see in this picture? Yes, the boy is crying while his mommy puts a bandage on his knee. How do you think he’s feeling?”

3. Invite the children to describe how to tell if a person is happy, sad, or angry.

“I can tell you are angry when you wrinkle your forehead like this, your mouth is turned down like this, and you squint your eyes like this. How can you tell that the girl in the picture is angry?”

4. Practice making sad, happy, surprised, and angry faces. Ask the children to label the emotions you are expressing and invite them to make their own expressions.

“Show me how you make a happy face. You look so happy! Now, show me how you make a sad face.”

5. Talk about recent classroom and playground activities. Lead a discussion to help the children express their own feelings.

“I saw that you got a chance to go on the swings today. How did that make you feel?”

“I saw that Rebecca took the bucket that you were using. How did that make you feel?”

SE06

All Interest Areas

Objective 2

Establishes and sustains positive relationships

b. Responds to emotional cues

Related Objectives: 1a, 3b, 8a, 9a, 10a, 11a, 12b

Additional Ideas

Refer back to these discussions when children display emotions throughout the day, e.g., “Jamie, your forehead is crinkled like the boy’s forehead in the picture we saw yesterday. You said he was worried. Are you feeling worried?”

Including All Children

- Maintain eye contact, and ask the child questions she can respond to with either a yes or no answer. Make sure to give the child enough time to understand the question and answer it.**
- Use social stories, or provide dramatic play activities, to increase the child’s understanding of different situations and suggest some appropriate responses.
- Record appropriate responses on a child’s communication device.
- If children are beginning to speak in sentences, give them plenty of opportunities to talk. Be sure to model the correct use of English, but do not correct their grammar.**

Teaching Sequence

YELLOW	When discussing the children’s experiences, ask them to describe what they do when they feel happy, sad, or angry. Invite them to come up with strategies to cope with some of these feelings. Offer suggestions as needed.
GREEN	“You said that it made you angry when Rebecca took the bucket away from you. What could you do to help yourself feel better when you feel like that?” “Bizzy explained that she feels better when she can tell someone how she feels.”
GREEN	Discuss in more detail the feelings of the people in the photos. Encourage the children to think about the causes of those feelings.
BLUE	“Persis, you noticed the brother laughing. Why do you think he’s so happy?” Use the photos to talk about the different feelings people could have about the same situation.
PURPLE	“In this picture, the little boy looks excited because he scored a goal in soccer. I wonder how the children on the other team feel about that.”

Questions to Guide Your Observations

- How did the child identify and name feelings? How did the child demonstrate an understanding of the feelings of others? (2b)
- What strategies did the child describe for dealing with feelings? (1a)
- How long was the child able to attend to the discussion? (11a)

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