

Emotional Expression- Activities for Children



Why is it important for children to express their emotions?

Showing children how to identify and express emotions helps them gain a sense of control, share experiences, and build healthy relationships.

- ☺ When you acknowledge my feelings, I do too.
- ☺ When we talk about my feelings, it helps us both understand why I feel the way I do and what I can do about it.
- ☺ I feel good about who I am when you respect my feelings.
- ☺ When I practice expressing my feelings, this helps me develop relationships with others.

Emotion Activities

Emotion Cube- Role the cube and talk about the emotion that comes up.

- What is the emotion?
- What does your body feel like when you experience this emotion?
- Name a time you felt this way?

This activity offers a great opportunity to discuss strategies to manage big feelings (i.e. When I'm angry, I can stomp my feet. When I'm sad, I can hug my teddy.) *Hint: use emotion cube cards. These offer great suggestions for supporting children of different ages through their emotions!

Feelings Wheel- Using the template, make a group wheel, or each child can construct their own. This can be used as a discussion topic during circle time.

Breathing Exercises- Using the handout for reference (or develop your own), practice different methods for slow and deep breathing. Consider using cotton balls, feathers, bubbles, pinwheels, etc. and make a game out of it.

Breathing exercises are a great cool-down strategy when a child is experiencing a big emotion.

Reading books, song, and dance - Story time, as well as song and dance are favourite activities for many children. In a pinch, grab a children's book about feelings, sing a song ("If you're happy and you know it..."), or dance to a variety of music thinking about a particular emotion represented in the sound and rhythm. Movement can be a great way to release big feelings!

Adapted from *Handle with Care – Promoting the Mental Health in Young Children*



