

Feelings Are Fantastic

Young children are learning to manage their feelings and behavior. They are learning the words to express their feelings and how to show feelings in appropriate ways. Here are some ways you can help them to be successful as they learn these important skills.

Happy, sad, or mad?

Help children learn their feelings have names. Use words such as *happy*, *sad*, *angry*, *frustrated*, *jealous*, *embarrassed*, or *lonely*. For example, say, “You look like you feel sad that you don’t have a toy dinosaur like Sarah’s. People call the feeling being jealous. Is that how you feel?”

ANGRY



SAD



HAPPY



LONELY



Show how to share feelings

Young children learn appropriate ways to share feelings from those around them. Encourage children to use words to name their feelings. Let them hear you use words to talk about your feelings. “I was so frustrated this morning when I couldn’t find my keys.”

Describe behavior you want to see

Try to describe things children can do rather than telling them what they cannot do. For example, you can talk about using “gentle hands” when touching pets. Point out appropriate behavior. Say, “I see you are being careful not to knock things off the shelves as we walk through the store.”



We all have feelings

Let children know that all feelings are OK to have and talk about. Remind them that it is not OK to hurt others’ bodies or feelings or to destroy property. Use what you see in books or videos to teach about emotions. “Look at that little boy’s smile! He is so happy to see his new puppy.”

Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this tip sheet are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Illinois State Board of Education.



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