



Encouraging Emotional Intelligence in Early Childhood - Part 1

Course Objective: Identify strategies and tools to encourage emotional intelligence in young children



A different way of being smart

- Recognize how I am feeling
- Understand causes and consequences
- Label feelings in myself and others
- Express feelings appropriately
- Regulate to maintain or shift my feelings

"Let's not forget that the little emotions are the great captains of our lives and we obey them without realizing it."
-Vincent van Gogh

"If your emotional abilities aren't in hand, if you don't have self-awareness, if you are not able to manage your distressing emotions, if you can't have empathy and have effective relationships, then *no matter how smart you are, you are not going to get very far.*" -Daniel Goleman



Children need to be able to discern:

- What am I feeling? What can I do about it!? (Part 1)
- What are they feeling and what can I do about it? (Part 2)



Children need to learn:

- PART 1:** *Everyone has feelings *There are words for feelings *Feelings are neither good nor bad
*Feelings can give you information, like other senses



Social scientists have identified a typical trajectory for emotional development.

To help identify what you can expect at different ages, Minnesota has outlined what to expect from birth to Kindergarten (page 57+) in their [Early Childhood Indicators of Progress Document](#).



What you do matters - You can promote emotional skills!

*You can teach skills directly or indirectly, during everyday moments and structured teaching times.



What are some things you currently do to foster children's EQ Skills?

(The ability to recognize how they are feeling, label feelings in themselves and others, identify what led to the feeling, express feelings appropriately, and be able to maintain or shift feelings, as needed/desired?)

Direct Teaching – Using intentional books, songs, and activities

Indirect Teaching – In the moment, as you go through your day



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Teach Children About Emotions

“When we talk about feelings, even with toddlers, children learn how to control their emotions more readily. We are giving our children a set of important tools they’ll use for the rest of their lives.”
Dr. Susanne Denham

✓ Use emotion words during everyday moments

- Model listening and validating emotions (yours and those around you)
- Role model with “parallel talk”, describing your feelings and your actions while expressing an intense emotion

✓ Use a “Feelings Wheel” to show the range, the Mood Meter, and other activities that label emotion words

- Use a morning greeting as a way to connect, acknowledge mood, identify feelings, and/or label what the child may be needing
- Do spontaneous mood-meter during the day, especially when intensity is elevated
- Learn and use words that describe the range of emotions
 - Content-happy-joyful
 - Antsy-perky-exuberant
 - Annoyed-angry-furious
 - Unsure-nervous-overwhelmed
 - Mopey-lonely-mournful
 - Anxious-fearful-terrified

✓ Do many activities that intentionally teach emotional skills



- Make faces together - “Make a _____ face.”
- Q and A: How does your face look when you feel proud?” “What makes you feel proud?”
- Activity: “Sad me.”
 - Ask, “Do you ever feel sad (or other emotion words)?” List why as the child/children share out.
 - Have brainstorm: “What do you usually do when you are sad?” and “What are ideas of what you can do when you feel sad?”
 - Add ideas as appropriate for your group and practice (include verbal/auditory, physical, mental/visual, self-nurturing, creative). Examples:
 - Cry
 - Tell a pet
 - Talk to someone you trust
 - Take a walk
 - Be alone
 - Call a friend
 - Ask for a hug
 - Give a hug
 - Talk to your teddy bear
 - Listen to music
 - Write about it
 - Draw your sadness.
- “Mirror mirror - What do I see?” Use a hand or wall mirror.
 - Look in the mirror and say - “Mirror, mirror, what do I see?”
 - Then make an emotion face - “I see a sad mommy looking at me.”
 - Then give your child a turn.
 - Help the child say, “I see a happy *Mattie* looking at me!”
- Sing Songs
If you are happy and you know it...add new verses to teach feelings
If you’re sad and you know it, cry a tear..”boo hoo”
If you’re mad and you know it, use your words “I’m mad”
If you’re scared and you know it ask for help, “help me”
If you’re happy and you know it, shout hurray! - HURRAY!
If you’re tired and you know it, give a yawn.

Other variations: <https://www.songsforteaching.com/jackhartmann/ifyoureangryandyouknowit.htm>

The Hokey Pokey and other emotions songs: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZHS7vCdBeus>



Video
Analysis

What did the adult do?

Which EQ skills were impacted?



What is one takeaway? What is one adult teaching strategy, activity, or tool you can use to encourage emotional intelligence in young children?

