



EXPRESSING FEELINGS

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<p>What is it?</p>	<p>The ability to communicate feelings through verbal or non-verbal behaviors to effectively share your emotional state with others</p>
<p>Why is it important</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressing emotions creates a well-balanced individual • Emotions are a big experience & children often do not know how to handle them • If adults do not express their emotions, children will have a harder time expressing emotions
<p>Encourage expressing feelings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children need to be educated to understand the “why” so they can better understand themselves (why they had a thought/feeling/emotion/reaction) <p>How to encourage expressing feelings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feelings chart with faces • List of feelings words (words beyond sad, mad, happy) • Listen to the child fully • Model healthy emotional expressions (talk through situations out loud & state real emotions, address options you could take, say your internal thoughts out loud, state your desire to react with a specific behavior (yelling), state a healthier response (deep breaths))
<p>Questions to ask self</p>	<p>As children express themselves, it may be in a way that is overwhelming, exhausting or insulting to you.</p> <p>Ask yourself:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are they truly saying to me by acting the way they are? • What do they really need? • Combine behavior with emotion and body movements & reflect to child • Example: “I see you are sad that you didn’t get that toy. You want me to know how you’re feeling by crying. I see you and I hear you. I wonder if we can find a different toy to play with”
<p>How it relates to social emotional learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases self-awareness • Increases communication skills • Helps individuals identify and understand own emotions

References

Lockhart, A. (2021, January 29). *Helping Kids Express their Emotions*. PBS.
<https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/helping-kids-express-their-emotions#:~:text=Refrain%20from%20labeling%20emotions%20as,Model%20healthy%20emotional%20expressions.>