



Fun Feelings Activities

Recognizing your own feelings and identifying the feelings of others are foundation skills for developing more involved social skills such as learning to cope with feelings and responding appropriately to the feelings of others.

- 1. Provide Multiple Examples:** Feelings can be difficult to teach because they are expressed in a variety of settings, have many synonyms, and involve understanding subtle clues. In order to teach identification of emotions, provide examples in different settings through stories, pictures, videos, real-life experiences, and role play.
- 2. Show Feelings are Important:** Children need to understand that it is okay to talk about and express feelings. Demonstrate this by asking children how they feel, sharing your feelings, and discussing how you cope with your feelings and respond to the feelings of others.
- 3. Use Natural Opportunities:** When reading, watching movies, or in real-world situations, look for opportunities to discuss feelings. If the child is upset, use this as an opportunity to teach appropriate responses and coping strategies. For example, "Josh, I know you are angry that you have to leave the playground. Take 3 deep breaths to calm your body then join the class in line." If another child is upset demonstrate how to handle the situation. For example, "Alex is upset. Let's see if we can help him."
- 4. Set Time Aside to Practice:** Just as math and reading require practice so do social skills. Take a few minutes during the day to work on social skills. Since children may be overwhelmed by feelings it is important to practice expressing and responding to feelings when they are calm.

Role Play: Below are a few games that include role play of emotions.

- Have children select a feelings word or emotions card and act out the feeling on the card.
- Have children select a feelings word or card and role play when they felt this way.
- Put children in pairs. Have one child pick a feeling and act it out. The other child responds to the first child's feelings.

Discuss Feelings: Show children pictures or drawings of facial expressions or scenes demonstrating feelings. Ask the following questions:

- How does the character feel?
- How do you know how the character feels? For example, they are smiling/frowning.
- When have you felt this way?
- What would you do if a friend felt this way?
- What do you do when you feel this way?

Use Art and Literacy: The arts provide a different way to think about feelings. They allow children to see the details of specific emotions and experience the look and feel of the emotion through a different medium. Art activities include:

- Have children draw a facial expression or scene showing a feeling.
- Have children write a story about a time they felt a certain way and what they did about it.
- Create a feelings book. On each page have a drawing of a feeling and a short sentence, "I feel sad/happy/scared when..." Keep each child's book in the literacy center.
- Focus on a feeling by having a book specifically about the feeling that includes when the child feels this way and what coping strategies to use for managing the emotion.

To receive a **free customized children's book** on waiting, please visit our website: