

TIPS FOR HELPING KIDS UNDERSTAND THEIR EMOTIONS

Why It Matters

We all experience many different emotions each day. Being able to recognize and identify these emotions make it easier to:

- Control and manage our emotions
- Identify the emotions of others
- Tell others how we feel
- Be compassionate to others
- Remember that emotions don't last forever
- Understand what you like and don't like
- Feel comfortable with the different emotions you have

Activity Ideas

- Choose a "feeling of the day/week." During that time period, talk about what might cause someone to feel that way and when you've felt that way. Then, have each person in the family try to really pay attention to when they feel that way during the week. You can also try to notice when the people around you are feeling that way.
- Make a feelings chart with your child. Together, think of different feelings and draw, or have your child draw, pictures of each one. You could also make a feelings chart with photos of your child acting out each emotion.
- Make it a habit to do a feelings check-in as a family. You can do this any time, or during regular routines like before bed, during dinner, or while you're in the car.
- Look at characters in books, movies, and shows and talk about how you think they are feeling. Talk about why you think they are feeling that way.



Talk About It

Here are some discussion questions to help your child grow in this area:

- "It seems like you might be feeling _____. Is that right?"
- "How are you feeling right now?"
- "Why do you think it's important to know how you're feeling?"
- "Is it easy or hard for you to talk about how you're feeling?"

Other Tips

- Model this skill for your child. When appropriate, share how you're feeling and why.
- The best time to work on helping your child understand their emotions is when they are calm. This makes it easier to practice and become more comfortable with the skill.