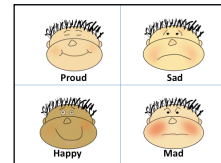


Strategies for Fostering Emotional Literacy in Young Children

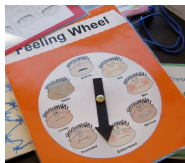
Emotional literacy is the ability to 'read emotions' in oneself and others...to be able to identify, understand and respond to emotions in a healthy manner. As a teacher you can help the children in your classroom learn to label emotions and develop this valuable social-emotional skill. The CSEFEL website contains many resources available for use in your classroom to help build children's emotional literacy. For example, the Emotion Faces cards, labeled in English or Spanish, show facial expressions associated with 12 different emotions and can be used in a variety of ways. These cards can be found at <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/strategies/html> . Some examples of ways to incorporate Emotion Faces into your classroom include:

Feelings Hunt: Display the CSEFEL feeling face pictures around the room. Encourage the children to go on a 'feelings treasure hunt.' As children find the faces, ask them to tell you how that child might be feeling and about a time they felt that way. It's best to start with the basic emotions of happy, sad and mad before moving on to the emotions that are harder to define and express like frustration and pride.



Feelings Cube Toss: Glue one feeling face on each side of a small square box and cover the sides with contact paper for durability. Use this at group time to generate discussion about feelings. Roll the cube to a child who identifies the emotion on the top of the cube before rolling it to another child. Don't forget to allow time for the children to share their stories of when they have felt that emotion.

Feelings Sign-in Classroom Chart: When children arrive in the mornings they can "sign in" by selecting a feeling face that best represents their morning mood. One way to make a sign-in chart is to mount the chart on something metal (like a baking sheet or a file cabinet) along with a picture of each child backed with a magnet. Another option is to use velcro to attach the children's pictures to the chart. Either way, children can move their picture as their feelings change during the day.



Feelings Wheel: Instead of a group chart, you can make individual Feeling Wheels for each child to keep in his/her cubby. They can align the point of the arrow with the face that best represents how they are feeling throughout the day. The Feeling Wheel can also be turned into an interactive game with a pair of children taking turns spinning and identifying the emotions represented.

Book Nooks: Teachers can also use children's books as a way to promote emotional literacy. CSEFEL has created guides, called Book Nooks, to provide hands-on ways to embed emotional literacy activities into everyday classroom and/or home routines. For example, the *Glad Monster Sad Monster* Book Nook is filled with ideas that support children's recognition of feelings in themselves and others, including ideas for music/movement, art and literacy activities. There are 22 different Book Nooks on the CSEFEL website.

Other books that help children learn to recognize and label feelings are:

- *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*, by Judith Viorst
- *I'm Mad*, by Elizabeth Crary
- *Words are not for Hurting*, by Elizabeth Verdick
- *Sometimes I Feel Like a Storm Cloud*, by Lezlie Evans

Compiled by *Promoting Healthy Social Behaviors in Child Care Centers*, 2011

Additional strategies can be found at <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/>