

## You are the Experts of your Family!

Help children identify and understand emotions to help them prepare to react to strong feelings.

### **Emotional Recognition:**

Children often need support to identify the emotions they are experiencing. Being able to recognize emotions will support children's sense of self-awareness and increase positive interactions with others.

Emotional awareness involves the ability to identify emotions that may trigger strong reactions. Identifying and naming emotions will help a child consider healthy ways to react to stress or conflict.

Talk with children about feelings to help them learn coping strategies for dealing with negative emotions.

### **Healthy Responses to Stress:**

Stress is a normal part of everyday life. However, prolonged stress without adult support can negatively impact a child's relationships and emotional wellness.

Many studies reveal that children who have the support of warm, trusting relationships in their family are less impacted by negative factors of stress and are better able to cope with new challenges.

Empathy means considering the perspectives of other people and thinking about what others may be feeling.

### **Perspective Taking:**

When conflict occurs, we may have strong emotional reactions based on a false perception of hostility. This is why communication and listening are important for solving conflict.

Listening and validating your child's feelings shows that you care. Feeling heard helps a child deal with his or her emotional reactions and consider perspectives of others for effective problem solving.

*Children develop reasoning and problem solving skills to prepare for challenges. This ability is learned through practice as children become better able to independently consider the effects of their future behaviours and choices.*

🔗 Learning to make choices is an important part of growing up. With practice, children feel better prepared to make good choices for themselves. Talking about fears and planning for safety will help keep your child safe. Help your child practice planning ahead and considering consequences.

“What will it feel like after if you.....?”

“What would happen if you .... (made ‘this’ choice?)

”Would anyone be hurt if you.... how would they feel?”

*Critical thinking and problem solving skills are essential to emotion self-regulation. Conflict recognition and resolution can be approached with these steps:*

1. Identify the problem or issue. Consider perspectives to determine the level of conflict.
2. Determine the goal. What will the end result look like?
3. Consider the solution. Self-awareness and perspective taking can help evaluate the pros and cons.
4. Try out different solutions. Discuss what is and isn't working as you consider the perspectives of everyone involved.

*Use this as a guide to consider how conflicts can be opportunities to strengthen relationships and build conflict resolution skills.*

*Feeling unconditionally accepted leads to acceptance of others.*

*Consider yours and others' feelings before reacting.*

*Role model self-control by naming your emotions: "I'm frustrated!"*

*Perspective taking helps children develop thoughtful solutions.*

*Feelings cause reactions, which leads to consequences. Children need practice to recognize their own emotions and consider the effects of their behaviour and the consequences that follow.*

Reaction

Explanation

Action

**Recognize**



Parents can often recognize their child's emotions. Name these emotions to help children learn how feelings connect to real life situations.

- "You look sad."
- "You're screaming. You must be angry!"
- "You're not talking. Are you afraid?"

**Empathize**



Parents and caring adults can provide comfort and help children feel better about negative experiences by empathizing with children's emotions.

- "If I got hurt, I'd be sad too."
- "It's frustrating when you don't feel like you understand."
- "Meeting new people can be hard."

**Energize**



Solutions can always be found. Help a child feel better prepared. Boost energy levels with ideas and possible solutions for success.

- "How could we make this better?"
- "Let's do some research on this."
- "How can we work on this together to get it done?"

**Compromise**



Adjust plans to meet the needs of everyone involved. You may need to negotiate solutions to come up with a resolution for everyone.

- "How do you think others would feel about this?"
- "Does this make sense now?"
- "Will everyone be ok with this?"