



IES Grant #
R324A160086

Universal Strategy Validating Feelings

Talking about and supporting your child's feelings, big & small, promotes healthy social-emotional development, builds trust, and allows for learning to take place!



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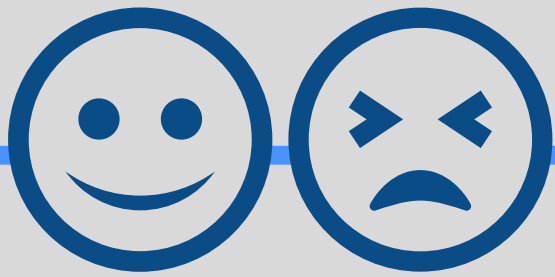
When your child has BIG feelings...

1

Label how your child is feeling

Examples:

"I see you are feeling sad."
"Your smile tells me you feel happy."
"It is so frustrating when things don't go the way you plan."



2

Let them know that what they are feeling is okay

Examples:

"It is okay to be disappointed that you can't see your friend today."
"It is okay to feel however you are feeling!"



3

Share when you have felt the same feeling

Examples:

"When something I am looking forward to is canceled, I feel sad too."
"When I spend time with you, I feel really happy and loved."



4

Thank them for being open and vulnerable

Examples:

"I really appreciate when you share how you are feeling with me."
"It can be hard to talk about feelings. Thank you for trusting me!"
"Thanks for telling me how you're feeling. Now I can try to help!"



When your child is calm...

Talk about the difference between feelings and actions

Examples:

"I know you were mad at your brother. When you feel that way, you can walk away and find another toy."
"It's okay to be sad, but it's not okay to hurt other people when you're sad. What's something else you can do instead?"
"Something that makes me feel better when I'm sad is to listen to my favorite song. What is something that might make you feel better?"

Helpful Hints!

- Embrace all emotions. If you only talk about emotions that feel positive, your child might have a harder time recognizing and understanding what to do when they feel other emotions (like sadness or anger).
- Try to see the world from your child's perspective. For you, a tower being knocked over may not be a big deal. Try to see the hard work they put in and say, "I feel frustrated when something I worked hard on is messed up too."
- Model what you want your child to do. Your child is more likely to do what they see you do than what you say. Remember to take care of yourself and respond to your feelings.



For more information on promoting your child's social-emotional development, click [here](#).

