

EMOTIONS in MOTION

Activities for 4-6 year olds

Reading the book out loud

Using the book pages as a prompt, go through each emotion, stopping one at a time to say all together – ‘when we are sad we can . . .’ Then children can put up their hands if they have a suggestion eg. ask someone you know for a hug, do something you enjoy eg. have a swing, play in the sandpit with a friend, read a book, draw a picture, listen to some music, have a nap. The whole group together can pick pages out of magazines and make a collage of all the things they can do if they’re upset. Keep it on the wall and refer to it together regularly to remind children of things they can choose to do. Remind them that we all have different things that help us when we are upset.

Paper plate faces

Hand out a paper plate to each child and let them draw a happy face on one side, and a sad/angry face on the other. Encourage each child to say ‘I am happy when. . .’ ‘I am sad when. . .’ Have some pictures cut out from magazines of different scenarios to help kick this activity off eg. Child eating an ice-cream, at the beach, kicking a ball, picking a flower, having a hug, walking a dog – and alternatively, someone in bed sick, someone who has fallen over and hurt themselves etc. Or, teacher/parent could act out a scenario for the children to guess what is happening, and then choose what feeling they think would go with it. Note: We have not used the term ‘I feel. . . when. . .’ as for young children it can be easier to say ‘I am happy when’ or ‘I would have a happy face on when...’ in preference to ‘I feel happy when. . .’



Faces game

Take turns at guessing different facial expressions, first the teacher does it a few times to give kids the idea and then let them try different expressions. Those guessing say 'I think you look . . . Grumpy'. Then the child who was making the expression can either nod 'yes' or shake their head 'no', in which case everyone keeps guessing until they guess correctly. Talk about how sometimes we think someone looks sad, but actually they are lonely, or tired or bored or disappointed. Encourage children to play this at home with their family.

Matching colours with emotions

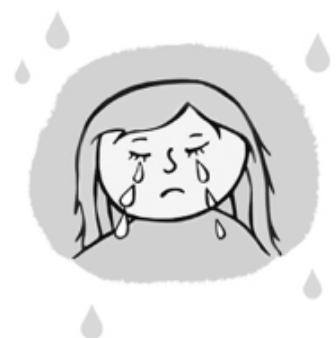
Let kids choose crayons in the colour they connect with an emotion eg. 'Choose an angry colour, choose a sad colour', 'What colour do you choose for sadness?'

Draw a happy picture, or a sad picture. Make sure that children know there is no right or wrong – what may be an angry colour to one child may be a happy colour for another. That is ok.

Choice activity

Draw a big blank face on the board. Then open the book up to a page which has a more difficult emotion on it eg. Lonely, disappointed, worried etc. Get a child to draw the face onto the board which matches the emotion. Talk together about looking after our friends when they feel these things. What can we do that would help?

Children could draw a picture of themselves helping a friend who is feeling one of these things. During the day, notice the small things children do for each other and at mat time at the end of the day, thank the children for the care they have shown one another.



Special person lollipop

On one side of the lollipop, each child draws a picture of an adult they like to talk to when they are upset, a person who listens to them and helps them eg. Mum, Dad, sister, aunty, grandma, teacher etc. They could then write a card or draw a picture for that person to thank them for being so special and caring about them.

Emotions in Motion game

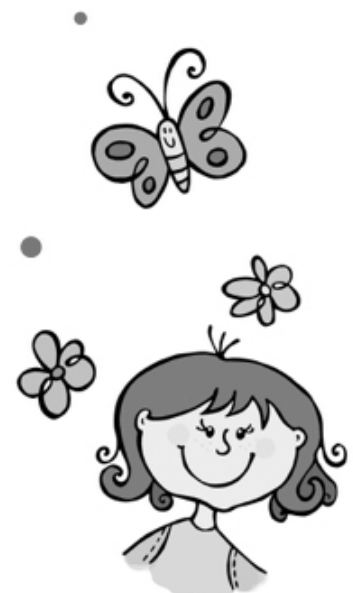
Like musical statues, except when the music stops you call out an emotion and the children have to stand still and make the face to match the emotion. Do this to a drum beat instead of music to vary.

Using rhythm & music

Use a bongo drum to communicate emotions whilst the children are guessing what the emotion is eg. very light, slow pattering on the drum might be peace, and fast, loud drumming might be angry or grumpy. Can also do this using different homemade instruments, as a group exercise.

If everyone decides that the fast drumming is happy, they could skip/dance around in a circle, and when the drumming is slow it might signify sadness, with them hanging their heads and walking very solemnly.

Alternatively, music can be used. Teacher compiles a playlist of instrumental music that the children put a feeling to.



Showing manaakitanga . . . generosity, caring for others and compassion.

Play the faces game and this time encourage children to show caring for each other eg. 'If you have a sad face because you are feeling lonely, what could we do to care for you?'

Choose a different child/staff member every week that the children make a picture or poster for, decorate together and present to the person.

They could sit in the centre of a circle and everyone says something nice about them in one word eg. smiley, funny, kind, etc. Staff can help children with ideas.