

Further support or information

If you are having trouble supporting your child with their emotions and would like any further support then please ask and we can put you in touch with our Family Support Advisor.

Useful Websites include:

www.netmums.com

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/parents

www.kidshealth.org

www.parentchannel.tv



This leaflet has been put together by the White Horse Federation's Family Support Team.

We can provide support and assistance with a number of issues including:

- * Support with your child's behaviour
- * Links to other professionals who may be able to support your family
- * Links between home and school
- * A listening ear and support at the times when family life gets tough
- * Support with financial or housing issues

If you would like to arrange to meet with a Family Support Advisor, please ask your school for more details.

Helping your child manage their emotions.



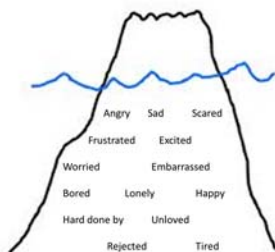
Why Focus on this?

During a typical day we are all flooded with lots of different emotions. Happy when we see someone we love, sad when something is taken away from us, frustrated that something didn't work as well as we'd like, proud when it finally goes well, excited at the prospect of something happening, angry when we feel wronged in some way... As adults this is not a big deal, these emotions are happening below the surface and we understand how to manage them.

For children this is much more challenging, these feelings are strong, confusing and often feel like a physical reaction that can be quite scary. Adults are often reluctant to talk about feelings 'Don't cry, be brave' is a phrase I'm sure we've all used!

These feelings have to come out in some way and often come out as tantrums, unwanted behaviour or even violence.

Imagine an iceberg; the feelings are happening below the surface, what we see is the behaviour that results.



The steps to Emotion Coaching

Recognise emotions in your child. The higher intensity ones like anger or happiness are easy to spot, but try to also recognize lower intensity emotions such as embarrassment, frustration, nervousness, etc.

Help your child to label them. 'I can see you are excited', 'Does that make you feel angry?', 'Are you frustrated that you can't fix that together?' Just having a word for how they are feeling can be very powerful for children.



Understand and validate their feelings. 'I know that you felt cross when Alice took your toy, I would have felt cross too.'

Link to behaviour. Children need to understand that while all feelings are equally ok, it is how they deal with those feelings that is the important thing. 'I know you were angry with Alice but you mustn't hit, you hurt her and made her cry.'



Problem solve. 'Next time you feel that cross with someone, what different choice could you make to deal with it?' You could suggest telling an adult, moving away and spending a moment calming down, saying 'No thank you' in a firm voice.



Using this in practice...

These techniques don't have to be used instead of your usual discipline techniques, they can work very well alongside what you would do when your child displays an outburst of emotion.

For example.....

Fred and Bob are playing trains, Bob starts to get a bit excited and breaks up the track, Fred gets angry and throws his train, hitting Bob on the head.

You might decide Fred needs a time out.

Put him into time out and briefly say, 'I'm putting you in time out because you hurt Bob.'

Allow him time to calm down and think.

Go back and ask what happened and how he was feeling at the time. (you may need to help him to tell you his feelings at first.)

Explain that you can understand why he was angry and frustrated with Bob, 'I know you spent a long time building the track and you are angry that Bob spoilt it'

Explain why the choice of behaviour wasn't right, 'Even though you were angry, it is never right to throw toys, you really hurt Bob and made his head bleed'

Ask how he could deal with that situation if it happened again.

Ask him to go and apologise to Bob and help them rebuild the track together.

You could also have a similar talk with Bob about controlling his excitement.