

Turkish Maarif Foundation
Maarif Family Bulletin
March 2026 | Issue: 20

MAARİF family



8

Can we escape from emotions?

12

Emotion regulation skills for children and adolescents

**Understanding
Emotions**



presentation

Mahmut M. ÖZDİL
Turkish Maarif Foundation President

Dear Parents,

Established on June 17, 2016, with Law No. 6721, Turkish Maarif Foundation is our country's gateway to the world in international education. Our Foundation, which has the mission of raising virtuous people based on the ancient wisdom tradition of Anatolia and the common accumulation and values of humanity, is a public foundation established to carry out formal and non-formal education activities all over the world. The Foundation has the right to open and operate international educational institutions abroad at all levels of education, from pre-school to higher education, within the framework of the principles set by its founding law. In addition to formal education, one of the founding purposes of Turkish Maarif Foundation is to publish periodicals and non-periodical publications in the field of education besides offering scholarships and accommodation opportunities to students, carrying out R&D activities in education and supporting the activities carried out, developing curricula, supporting the promotion of Turkey in higher education through the international education fairs it organizes. The Foundation aims to raise its students as qualified people who are connected to their culture, with an understanding that builds the future by nourishing from tradition, combines yesterday and today, and shapes tomorrow, and it attaches importance to parent cooperation.

The family has an important role in the child's physical, cognitive, psychological, affective, and social development. Parents, whom we see as the most valuable beings who guide, support, and inspire children and children, the apple of their eyes, are the basic elements of this valuable structure. A sustainable healthy relationship between parents and child directly affects the child's life. As Turkish Maarif Foundation, we attach importance to the quality education we offer in our schools in a warm family environment, as well as the support they receive at home, in order to raise children, who are very valuable to parents, in the best possible way. We are aware of how important cooperation with the family is in the social, emotional, and academic development processes of our students.

With the "Maarif Family Bulletin", we aim to inform you, our valued parents, with the topics we have carefully selected to contribute to the development of our children and to touch the hearts of our students by strengthening the school-parent cooperation.

We believe that this study, prepared with great dedication and effort, will contribute to the development of our students and raise consciousness and awareness among all stakeholders of education, and we present "Maarif Family Bulletin" for your use.



IN THIS Issue

Dear parents, we have touched on the topic of “Understanding Emotions” in this issue because a person’s journey to know themselves and others begins with first realizing and understanding their own emotions. We aimed to guide parents to become more resilient adults in their journey of life by contacting their children’s emotions.

In this context, we tried to get to know the emotional world of children more closely with content on the importance of emotions, understanding emotions, regulating emotions, emotion and body relationship, coping with anger, and the differences between fear and anxiety. In addition, we have prepared a variety of activities that parents and children can do together and a parent-child event calendar, as in every issue. Finally, we made various suggestions to parents by addressing the approaches that may guide them in this process and tried to provide simple and understandable answers to questions that may confuse you.

I hope you can be a guide who understands your child’s feelings, holds space for them and guides them without forgetting that it is not possible to be a perfect parent.

**Guidance and Psychological Counseling Coordinatorship
Department of Educational and Instructional Practices**

Publisher:

On behalf of
Turkish Maarif Foundation
Mahmut M. ÖZDİL

Editorial Board:

Ahmet TÜRK BEN
Şule TOYRAN

Editor:

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Muhammet
Ü. ÖZTABAK

Writers:

Tuba ÇETİN
Ayşe Reyhan NAS
Melike KARADENİZ
Sarenur AK
Şeyda ŞİMŞEK

Graphic Design:

Ahmet Said ÇELİK

Translator:

Karel BARBUR

CONTENTS



WHY ARE EMOTIONS IMPORTANT?	4
GOOD AND BAD FEELINGS?	6
CAN WE ESCAPE FROM EMOTIONS?	8
EMOTION REGULATION SKILLS.....	10
EMOTION REGULATION SKILLS FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS	12
EMOTION REGULATION SUGGESTIONS FOR PARENTS.....	13
EMOTION REGULATION EXERCISES.....	14
MIRROR NEURONS: DOES MY CHILD FEEL MY EMOTIONS?	16
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FEAR AND ANXIETY	17
WHAT WILL I DO WITH MY CHILD 'S ANGER?	18
APPROACHES THAT MAY ADVERSELY AFFECT CHILDREN'S EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT	20
ADVICE FOR THE PARENTS	22
STORY TIME: THE FOREST OF EMOTIONS.....	26
ACTIVITY: SIGNS OF OUR EMOTIONS IN OUR BODY.....	28
ACTIVITY: THE COLOR OF MY EMOTIONS.....	32
ACTIVITY: EMOTIONS IN MY BODY	34
ACTIVITY: EMOTION DETECTIVE	36
GAME: HOW STRANGE!.....	38
PARENT-CHILD ACTIVITY CALENDAR.....	40
QUESTION AND ANSWER CORNER.....	42
RESOURCES.....	44

WHY ARE EMOTIONS IMPORTANT?



Emotions, help us find our way, recognize our limits, and form healthy bonds.



People who exist in social life establish relationships with their environment by feeling, connecting and finding direction with their emotions. The most common examples of this are when a parent understands what their child is feeling from their facial expression, and when a teacher senses how that day shall pass from the attitude of the students in the classroom. Emotions, therefore, are like the compass of one's relationship with both oneself and others; they help us find our way, recognize our limits, and form healthy bonds. As a matter of fact, psychologist Daniel Goleman defines the concept of 'emotion' as a situation that includes psychological and biological processes that lead individuals to act in accordance with what they feel. Expressed emotions are reflected in body language, and these expressions can convey the same feelings regardless of where one is in the world.¹ In this sense, emotions have a decisive influence on our social relationships.

From the beginning to the end of human life, emotions play a central role in every stage of development. These emotions both affect those around the person and are shaped by interactions from the environment. Children, especially at the age of development, understand how to manage their emotions by observing their surroundings. Social relations of family members, who are the biggest role models in this process, their attitude towards life and the constructive or destructive methods they use in times of crisis are the basic guidelines for the child to gain emotional experience. In this context, the relationship that children establish with their families is of great importance in recognizing, acknowledging and effectively reflecting their emotions as of early developmental period. Many activities such as interactive conversations in the family, breakfasts, dinners, and games invest in emotional development.

The role of the family in this process is not limited to being supportive; parents are also a living model for children in emotional regulation. Research indicates that parental approaches that ignore, suppress, or punish emotions can weaken children's emotion regulation skills.² In contrast, approaches that recognize, label, and guide emotions support healthy child development. Therefore, when a parent manages a stressful moment calmly, the child internalizes this pattern of behavior. On the contrary, children who grow up in a family environment where emotions are repressed or overreacted may have difficulty making sense of their inner world and adapting in social relationships. Therefore, to have a healthy personality development, it is vital for families to show love to their children as well as provide a home and family environment where emotions are accepted and discussed. Thus, children and young people can become more successful individuals in social life.



GOOD AND BAD Feelings?



Emotion is a notion that gives news and information. It does not carry a value of being good or bad. Instead of classifying emotions as good or bad, it is necessary to name them as positive and compelling emotions.



A long-awaited relative of yours showed up at the airport's exit. You are waiting in your colleague's room with a cake to make a birthday surprise. A presentation or interview that you worked so hard on did not go as you expected. You were late for work due to reasons beyond your control. While walking in a dark and quiet place, you hear an unfamiliar sound... How did you feel while reading these sentences? Happiness, excitement, disappointment, anger, fear... ..

Emotions are the sensations our brain perceives toward the place, time, or situations we encounter. The limbic system in our brain evaluates emotions and decides on one of the fight-flight-freeze re-actions. Emotions are sent to the frontal cortex, the brain's center for analyzing, thinking, making decisions, transforming into behavior. Here, information from emotions is analyzed and directed to appropriate behavior. In some cases, the activation in the limbic system is very intense and the fight-flight-freeze system acts according to its own decision without transmitting the information to the anterior cortex. For example, when you encounter a wild animal in a forest, your brain will ask you to either run or fight depending on your current situation and experience. The system will choose the fastest and easiest way for you to survive. While emotions sometimes increase your energy and encourage you to take action, sometimes they can lower your energy and cause you to turn inward. Sometimes you may think that your emotions are harming your environment.

Is it really like that?

In order to answer this question, it is necessary to look at the phenomenon expressed by the notion of emotion. Emotion is a notion that gives news and information. It does not carry a value of being good or bad. While we evaluate the emotions that we think make us feel better in daily life, that make us feel in control, energize and activate us as good, we tend to evaluate the opposite emotional states as bad. Although emotions such as anger and fear are high-energy emotions, they are considered "bad" in societies, while emotions such as sadness and disappointment can be called "undesirable" emotions. Instead of classifying emotions as good or bad, it is necessary to name them as positive and compelling emotions.

Emotion does not act alone. It includes thought and behavior, decision-making mechanisms, and complex cognitive systems that include environmental factors. For this reason, each emotion has its own function. According to a study,³ "Each emotion is triggered by a different stimulus." For example, the perception of danger triggers fear, while the sense of loss triggers sadness and leads to different behavioral tendencies. While fear involves a tendency to escape from danger, sadness leads to withdrawal from usual activities. In addition, the facial

expression, tone of voice, and body language associated with each emotion can provide cues about a person's current situation and possible behaviors. For example, expressions of fear or disgust can warn others to move away from a situation or avoid the food being eaten. In this sense, emotions both provide us with information and serve as signals.

In some situations, the behaviors displayed to fulfill these functions may be maladaptive or harmful. When we consider a person who displays aggressive behavior when angry, what is maladaptive is the behavior, not the emotion itself. The sadness experienced by someone who has lost a loved one is natural and normal; however, when it disrupts the ordinary flow of life, it may lead to maladaptive behaviors.

Emotions are a source of motivation to make decisions and take action. The emotion we think we will feel at the end of a decision can play a decisive role in whether to act or not. Emotions work with other cognitive elements to create a decision-making and action mechanism, while minimizing the possible negative consequences of the decision. For this reason, it is important to process and evaluate emotion. Emotions also have an important function in interpersonal relationships and communication. It is important to be able to empathize and understand the feelings of the other person for effective communication. Being aware of the functions of emotions helps us to be more understanding of the person we are in contact with.

Instead of identifying emotions good and bad, it is necessary to create a ground where they can perform their functions. Accepting emotions with their functions and balancing these functions will also positively affect behaviors. Expressing emotions in an appropriate setting and through a healthy method preserves their function, and in turn helps maintain adaptive behaviors. Suppressing, ignoring, denying and rejecting emotions cannot destroy them, on the contrary, they find a way to express themselves. Therefore, expressing emotions in a healthy way and developing skills to regulate intense and strong feelings helps remove the "good-bad" judgment from emotions, allowing them to become an integral part of our existence.

Emotions should be embraced rather than identified as good and bad. Raise your hands and embrace yourself and your emotions.



CAN WE ESCAPE FROM EMOTIONS?



When it comes to emotions, the problem is not the presence of emotions, but trying to escape them by thinking that you can get rid of them at any time.



As a parent, it can be hard to see your child experiencing difficult emotions. In fact, it may be more difficult for your child to feel emotions such as sadness, anger, anxiety, and fear, especially during periods when you have difficulty coping with your own emotions. In such moments, you may often find yourself thinking, “I wish I didn’t feel this emotion; it’s overwhelming me,” or “I hope my child could get through this situation without feeling anxious.” Hearing that these thoughts are quite normal in parenting and that it is not possible to escape emotions can make your job as a parent easier. At this point, what matters is acknowledging your children’s emotions and guiding them on how to continue with their lives while experiencing those feelings.

When it comes to emotions, the problem is not the presence of emotions, but trying to escape them by thinking that you can get rid of them at any time. This is especially the case with difficult emotions, because you already enjoy experiencing emotions that make you feel cheerful, happy, and enthusiastic. It can be helpful

to recognize the messages of emotions and evaluate their functions in order to see them as a guide instead of trying to get rid of them. For example, the emotion of fear can be seen as a signal to recognize danger and take precautions, anger can indicate the need to respect your boundaries, and sadness can signal that you have lost something meaningful to you.

When you try to avoid a challenging emotion, you may often find that, paradoxically, that emotion becomes even more present in your life. Emotions that you ignore, suppress, or try to get rid of often intensify as a result. When your child expresses their emotions, saying things like, “Don’t cry, don’t be sad, there’s nothing to be afraid of,” even if well-intentioned, can send the message that their feelings are wrong and that they shouldn’t be experiencing them. What your child needs is not for their feelings to be ignored or suppressed, but rather a parental approach that accepts emotions as a natural part of being human.

When you recognize and accept your child’s emotion, you show them they are not alone, that no emotion will stay with them forever, that every emotion will do its job and go away. Thus, your child, who learns to live with their feelings instead of running away from them, can become a person who knows themselves

better, expresses their feelings, can ask for help in times of difficulty and is more resistant to the difficulties of life. Raising children who can express themselves, recognize their emotions, and cope with difficult moments in a healthy way can also strengthen your emotional bond and create a safe space for sharing together.

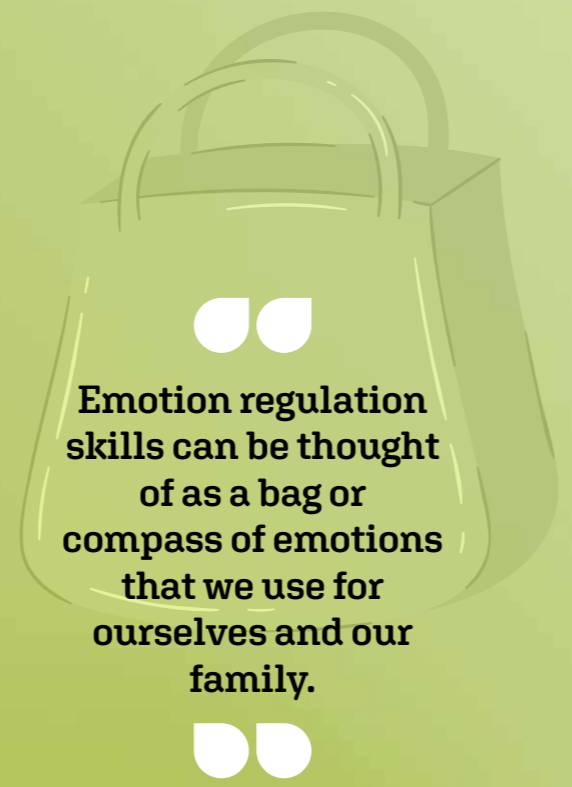
Here is a weather metaphor you can use to explain to your child that it’s impossible to avoid emotions and that they can move forward by accepting them: “Just as rain, snow, and sunshine are all part of nature, emotions such as anxiety, sadness, disappointment, and joy are all a natural part of being human.” Just as no weather lasts forever, no emotion lasts forever, visiting you, being your guest for a while, then leaving you to be replaced by another emotion. You can’t control when it rains or when the sun shines, nor can you control when your emotions come and go, but you can choose how to welcome them. Just as you don’t fight the weather but open an umbrella, you can allow your emotions to be with you instead of struggling against them, suppressing them, or ignoring them—that is, you can accept them as they are.



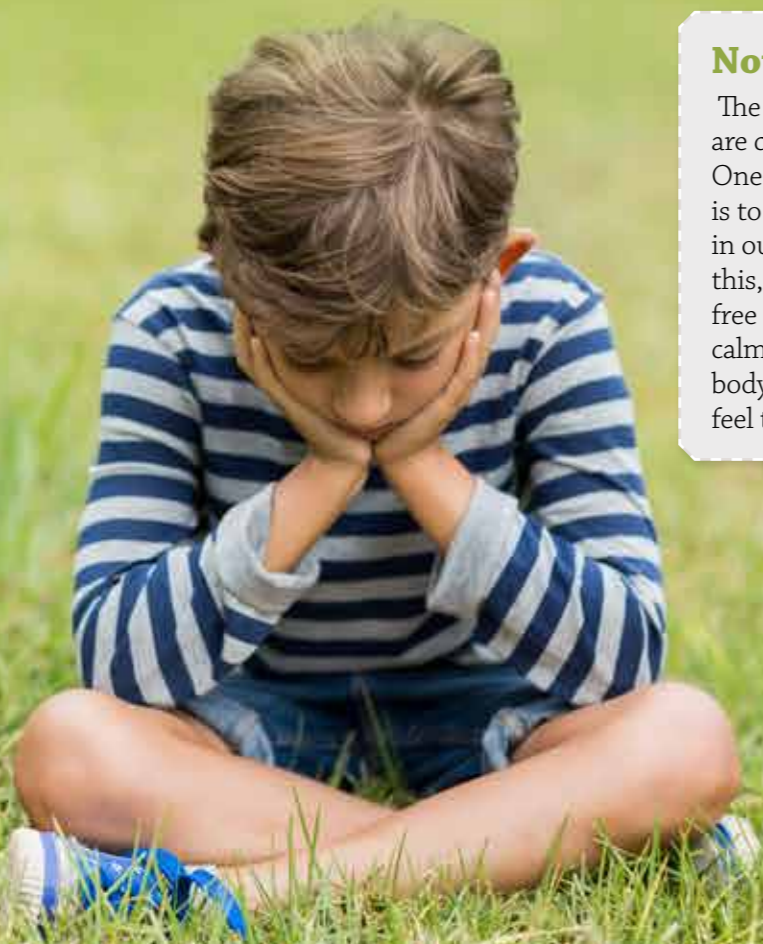
EMOTION REGULATION SKILLS

Emotion regulation skills are physical, mental, spiritual, or social abilities that are learned and developed to balance emotions. These skills will be reinforced with exercises and will turn into a habit and help balance emotions in times of crisis when intense emotions are experienced. Because the person will not be prone to learning in a crisis. Instead, they will apply methods that they have already learned and think are working, so that they can resolve the crisis quickly. The more these methods are made healthy and functional, the easier it will be to balance emotions, and even become a habit.

Emotion regulation skills can be thought of as a bag or compass of emotions that we use for ourselves and our family. Now let's take a look at these skills.



Emotion regulation skills can be thought of as a bag or compass of emotions that we use for ourselves and our family.



Recognizing the Emotion
Knowing what the emotion is and what it is not is very important in terms of increasing the awareness of the person. Even talking about the topic in daily life or doing short readings can help raise awareness.

Noticing Emotion
The person who knows what emotions are can notice their emotions more easily. One of the easiest ways to notice emotion is to determine where we feel the emotion in our body by doing body mapping. For this, it can be helpful to move to a place free from distractions, spend 2–3 minutes calming our breathing and listening to our body, and then name where in our body we feel the emotion.

Accepting the Feeling
The accepted feeling finds a way to be revealed. “Right now my hands are shaking and my stomach isn’t feeling very well. I’m a bit nervous. Being able to say to oneself, “I accept that I’m feeling tense, and perhaps I can give myself a little more time for this,” fosters self-compassion and acceptance, which help regulate emotional intensity.

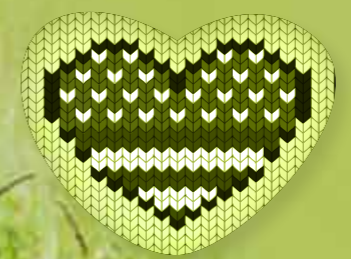
Naming the Emotion
After becoming aware of the emotion, it is important to name it. Naming the emotion also helps with accepting it. To make emotion labeling easier and to learn different emotion words, theoretical models such as Gloria Willcox’s Feelings Wheel⁴ or Plutchik’s Wheel of Emotions⁴ can be explored.

Finding Ways to Calm Down
There are different pursuits and hobbies that calm each of us. During activities such as knitting, drawing, listening to music, cooking, organizing the home, washing the car, keeping an emotion journal, setting aside quiet time to reflect on the day’s feelings, or even smelling a pleasant scent, our mind and body can attune to the flow of the moment and gradually calm down. The main reason for these efforts is to give the person time to calm down and to find a place to calm down. It is necessary to explore the efforts outside the moment of crisis. Because it is difficult to learn an occupation in a crisis. Fulfilling a learned habit is easier and more applicable.

Thinking on Emotion
Thinking on why emotion is caused activates different parts of our brain. Instead of thinking for hours, answering questions such as “what the emotion is, when it arises, what place it is in, what it triggers” allows you to think concretely about the emotion. When thinking, the goal is not to blame oneself or someone else, but to evaluate the process.

Talking
One of the healthy ways to express emotions is through conversation. Effective communication contributes to expressing one’s emotions. Speaking activates many different parts of the brain as it requires the person to be able to process their emotions. When this whole process proceeds in a healthy way, it contributes to the balancing of emotions by reducing their intensity. Emotions expressed by using effective communication skills find their place and are balanced. Incompatible forms of communication, such as speaking out loud, can lead to an increase in the intensity of emotion. The use of other balancing skills before speaking gives the person time for their choice of words and form of expression.

Physical Exercise
Our body is one of our important helpers in balancing our emotions. Doing regular physical exercise and relaxation exercises, albeit intermittently, helps the hormones in our body work more regularly, increasing the flow of oxygen and reducing the stress level. Additionally, breathing and focusing exercises can support the body in returning to a state of physiological and psychological balance.



EMOTION REGULATION SKILLS

for Children and Adolescents

Infancy and early childhood is a period in which a person learns to recognize and regulate emotions from adults.

Let's think about the time between a baby's first laugh and a teenager talking out loud. While talking about emotions with an adult may feel manageable, is it the same for children and adolescents? Let's take a look at emotional development and emotion regulation skills for children and adolescents.

As a person grows, they do not develop only physically. It also nurtures and matures their cognitive, emotional, and social development. Even for their most basic needs, infants depend on their parents' support, and they are able to survive with this support. As they get older, their development progresses. The development of emotions is the same for adults.

Infancy and early childhood is a period in which a person learns to recognize and regulate emotions from adults. Babies express their feelings and needs with basic movements such as crying and laughing. They also express their needs with same reactions when their needs are met or not met. Early childhood, on the other hand, is of great importance because it is a period in which emotional expressions develop and learning takes place as a result of interactions with the environment. With the transition from infancy to childhood, the child is asked to start adapt-

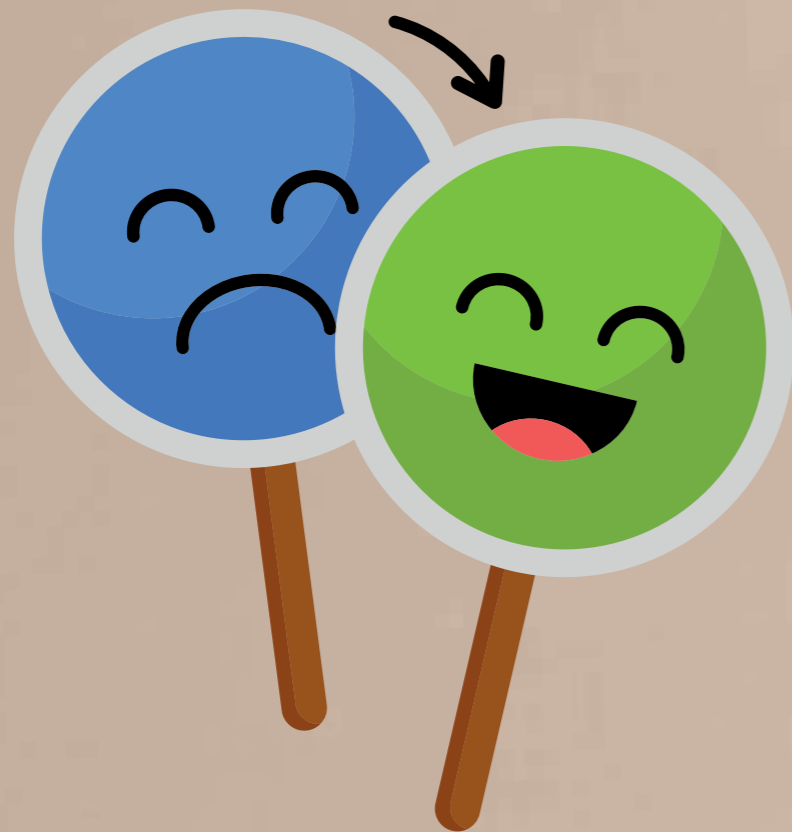


ing to their environment. Most of the emotional skills that enable a child to adapt to their environment and guide their relationships within their community are acquired during early childhood.⁵ Emotional skills consist of different sub-dimensions, such as recognizing emotions, expressing them, and showing empathy. With age and maturity, the emergence of these skills varies and develops. Indicators of children's emotional development by age group are as follows.⁶

- ❖ Between the ages of 2 and 3, children begin to use emotion words, show curiosity, and make "I" statements about their feelings.
- ❖ Between the ages of 4-5, children go through the stage of recognizing their own emotions and the emotions of those around them. The development of empathy is observed.
- ❖ Between the ages of 6-8, children begin to notice and think about the causes of their emotions, albeit at a basic level.
- ❖ Between the ages of 9-11, children's emotions become more diverse and they realize that they can understand their emotions more easily. When they start school, their social learning about their emotions increases.
- ❖ Children aged 12 and over enter adolescence. Emotions develop at the right rate with physical and mental development. Emotions diversify and multiple emotions begin to be experienced intensely at the same time. Emotional changes can occur for no reason. Questions about self-knowledge come into play.

Emotion Regulation Suggestions for Parents

- ❖ Learn about emotion development processes.
- ❖ Recognize your own emotions and acquire harmonious emotion regulation skills. Notice the unhealthy behaviors you are engaging in as a result of your emotions.
- ❖ Remember your parenting when using your emotion regulation skills.
- ❖ Remember that your child is watching you and learning from your behavior.
- ❖ When teaching your child about emotion regulation processes, explain and give information about the process. When you get angry and want to do breathing exercises, you can use expressions such as "I need to get some air to talk to you better right now/ I don't want to hurt you, so I'm going to get some air."
- ❖ Notice and listen to your child's emotions and emotional expressions, and prepare an environment where they can talk.
- ❖ Listen to your child's feelings with empathy and remember that you don't have to respond right away.
- ❖ Inform your child about their feelings. "People can experience intense emotions sometimes. In moments like these, I imagine that I am smelling a flower and blowing out a birthday candle, and take a short break by practicing this breathing technique." By using these expressions outside of the crisis moment, you can help them find ways to give themselves a break.
- ❖ Plan meetings, activities, and games to make emotion regulation part of the family (Emotion cards, talking about emotions, identifying areas of emotion expression, developing empathy, studying emotion facial expressions, etc.). Carry out your planning when your child is open to learning outside of times of crisis.
- ❖ Develop emotion regulation skills that are appropriate for your child's developmental level, encourage your child.
- ❖ While more concrete examples and definitions can be used in early childhood (e.g., "Emotions are like a compass or a map; sometimes they need to be regulated"), for adolescence you may prefer approaches based on experience, peer interaction, reflection, and physical activities.
- ❖ While emotions can be represented through colors, facial expressions, and shapes with children, in challenging situations you may reach adolescents more effectively by asking them to describe, draw, or write about their feelings, express the rhythm of their emotion, or engage in physical activities such as role-play.
- ❖ Consider the elements that are appropriate for your culture and society, but decide with your child's well-being in mind.
- ❖ Teach your child that emotion regulation skills are a resource and are used when needed.
- ❖ Teach relaxation techniques in ways that are appropriate for each age group and model them yourself.
- ❖ Share your feelings with your partner and help your child see the process when appropriate.
- ❖ Give your child time to express their feelings.



EMOTION REGULATION EXERCISES

Emotion Journal



- ❖ It involves thinking about the feelings the person feels during the day or at the end of the day.
- ❖ A emotion journal can be prepared.
- ❖ It is recommended to be in a calm and comfortable setting.
- ❖ They write about the emotions they experienced during the day, the reasons behind them, and how they responded to those feelings, for as long as they need.
- ❖ The emotion journal can be kept every day, on certain days, weekly or in case of need.

Breathing Exercise 4-8

- ❖ Sit in a comfortable position.
- ❖ You can choose between abdominal or chest breathing. (For abdominal breathing, place one hand on your abdomen and make sure that only your diaphragm moves while breathing. You may notice this more easily when you lie on your back.)
- ❖ Take a deep breath through your nose, counting to 4. Imagine smelling a beautiful flower as you breathe in.
- ❖ Hold your breath while counting to 4.
- ❖ Slowly exhale through your mouth, counting to 8. Imagine slowly blowing out a candle as you exhale.
- ❖ Focus only on your breath throughout the entire process.
- ❖ Slowly tell your mind to slow down. To do this, you can try spelling out the word: "SSSS-LOO-WWW DOO-WW-NN"
- ❖ You can do it 5 or 10 times. It is normal to experience a slight dizziness after doing it.
- ❖ You can repeat it every day to turn it into a habit and apply it when you feel tired, stressed, sad or angry.
- ❖ You can simply turn a 4-8 breath into a full breath. Once you have inhaled through your abdomen, continue to breathe through your chest. During chest breathing, your shoulders rise as you inhale, whereas in diaphragmatic breathing only your diaphragm should move (your abdomen should rise).

Emotion Regulation Stones/Cards

- ❖ It can be used in early childhood and adolescence. Adults can also prepare for themselves.
- ❖ Ask your child to say or write things that will make them feel better outside of times of crisis. (You can use shapes-colors depending on your literacy level.)
- ❖ If your child says they don't know or feel unsure, you can offer examples and ask, "What would help you feel better in a situation like this?" . In cases where it is not enough, you can make suggestions such as "Would it be good for you to take a walk?" .
- ❖ You can write, draw or paint the prepared list with your child on the stones you collect from the park or garden. (If the stones are small, just paint them in different colors. Match each of the colors you paint with suggestions. Such as; "Red: hugging my mom." Hang the list where your child can access the stones/cards.)
- ❖ You can also use cardboard instead of stone.
- ❖ Put your items in a basket or box.
- ❖ Leave the basket or box where it can be accessed when needed.
- ❖ In moments of need, choosing a color from the basket or box can help remind the child of emotion regulation skills.



MIRROR NEURONS: DOES MY CHILD FEEL MY EMOTIONS?

Mirror neurons are specialized brain cells that become active both when a person performs an action and when they observe someone else performing the same action.⁷

WHERE ARE MIRROR NEURONS IMPORTANT IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT?

LEARNING BY IMITATING

Children learn new habits by watching and imitating others. Mirror neurons also help them do this imitation.

EMPATHY AND SOCIAL UNDERSTANDING

Mirror neurons allow children to understand the feelings and thoughts of others.

EMOTION REGULATION

Children learn to regulate their emotions by observing others. A parent who manages stressful and challenging situations calmly also teaches children how to cope with stress.⁸

Attachment research proves that children who are mirrored, seen, heard and valued can build self-esteem and regulate their emotions. Strengthened by emotional attunement, this dynamic is a complex and ongoing process in which the child develops intuitive responses to internal experiences, soothes themselves by naming their emotions, and builds their own coping strategies. This shows that just as anxious parents may raise anxious children, a calm parent can also demonstrate how to soothe a child during emotionally turbulent moments.⁷

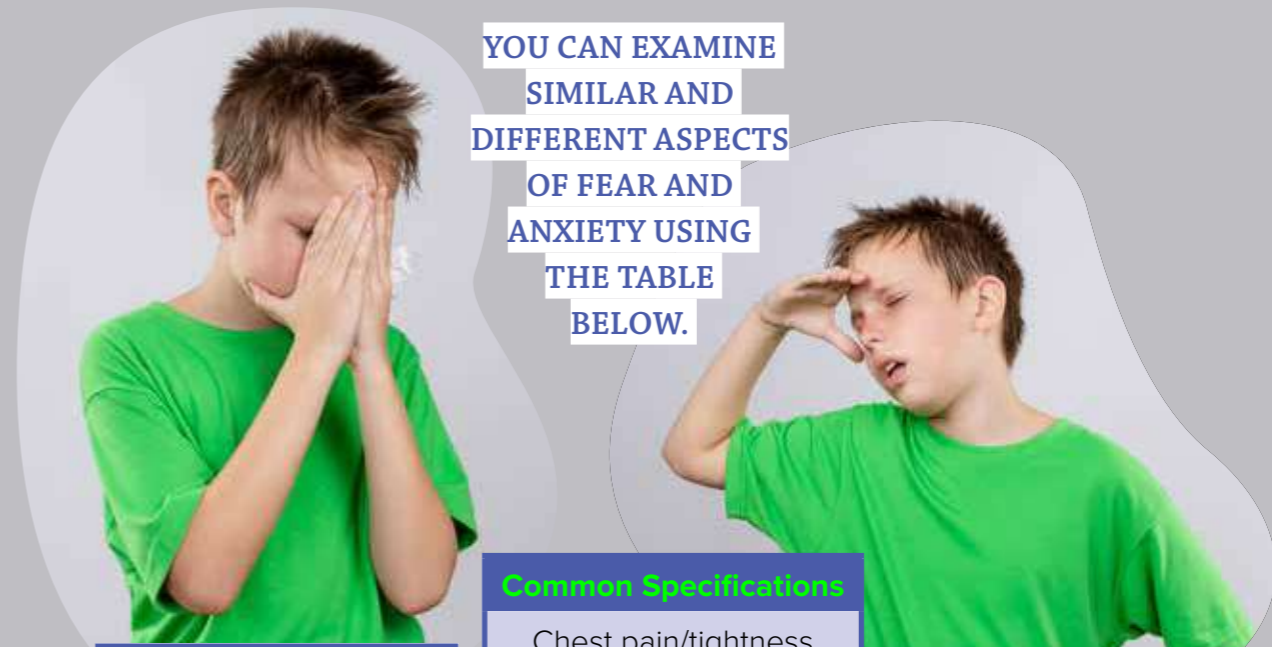


DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FEAR AND ANXIETY

●● Fear arises in the face of a specific, real, and clear event or situation. Anxiety arises in response to perceived or imagined threats, potential harms, and worries about the future. ●●

Although fear and anxiety are emotions that a person naturally develops to combat potentially dangerous and harmful situations, there are some differences between them. Fear arises in the face of a specific, real, and clear event or situation. Anxiety arises in response to perceived or imagined threats, potential harms, and worries about the future.⁹

YOU CAN EXAMINE
SIMILAR AND
DIFFERENT ASPECTS
OF FEAR AND
ANXIETY USING
THE TABLE
BELOW.



Common Specifications	
Fear	Anxiety
The flight reflex to feel safe	Chest pain/tightness
The freeze reflex: inability to move or take action	Rapid heartbeat
Fighting physically or verbally	Trembling and flushing (hot flushes)
Clenching fists	Dry mouth
Goosebumps	Stomach pain and nausea
	Transpiration
	Headache
	Feeling frightened, in danger and panicked
	Difficulty focusing
	Nervousness
	Feeling tense
	Avoiding environments, places, situations and people that may trigger anxiety
	Excessive repetitive thoughts and anxious thoughts even when safe
	Panic attack,
	Obsessive and repetitive behaviors

WHAT WILL I DO WITH MY CHILD'S ANGER?

What Lies Beneath Your Anger? Write or draw what is underneath your anger. What feelings or situations are hidden below the surface?



“When pain is ignored for too long, anger emerges.”

Dear parents, before you do anything with your child's anger, there's one thing you need to know: Anger is a normal and functional emotion. Children may notice that something is not right or fair, and in such cases they may become angry. However, if a child's anger gets out of control and they display aggressive behavior, it can become a problem.¹⁰

Let's explore what you can do with your child's extreme anger.

- Children;
- ❖ when they see that people in their family are fighting with each other or are angry with them,
 - ❖ when friendship problems occur,
 - ❖ when bullied,
 - ❖ when challenged with homework and exams,
 - ❖ when they feel stressed, anxious and scared,
 - ❖ when they experience hormonal changes during adolescence, may feel and appear more irritable or angry.¹⁰

RECOGNIZE THE SIGNS OF ANGER

Help your child notice when they are starting to get angry. By asking what your child feels at the start of their anger; you can help them notice

- ❖ Their rapid heartbeat,
- ❖ Their contracted and stretched muscles,
- ❖ Their clenched teeth,
- ❖ Their clenched fists,
- ❖ The sensations and movement in their stomach. In this way, your child can notice their anger before it escalates into a full-blown outburst.

PRACTICE SPECIFIC EXERCISES

When your child is angry, they can:

- ❖ Count from 1 to 10,
- ❖ Move away from that environment to calm down,
- ❖ Breathe deeply and slowly,
- ❖ Close and open fists,
- ❖ Talk to someone they trust,
- ❖ Go to a quiet space to calm down

TRY TO UNDERSTAND THEIR ANGER

Focus on your child's anger, not the child themselves. Focus on your child's anger rather than their personality when responding. With younger children, this approach can be made more playful and fun. For example, you can give anger a name or ask them to paint it.

As discussed in the section on mirror neurons, the way you respond to and handle anger influences how your child will respond in similar situations. Trying to figure it out together, thinking about it, and talking about it can help your child.

DO REGULAR ACTIVITIES AND EXERCISES

Being active can help reduce children's anger. Movement is also a way to improve anxiety, stress, and depressive feelings. Short walks, light or moderate jogging, and cycling are examples of these activities. Short walks, light or moderate jogging, and cycling are examples of these activities.¹⁰

APPROACHES THAT MAY ADVERSELY AFFECT CHILDREN'S EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT



TARGETING EMOTION, NOT BEHAVIOR

One of the processes that negatively affect the emotional development of children is to tell the child that the feeling they feel is wrong. At this point, parents need to emphasize the child's behavior, not their emotion. "Don't be sad!", "Don't be afraid!", "You can't get angry!" such approaches ignore the child's emotion. Instead approaches such as; "I understand that you are scared, I am with you, you are safe.", "I realize that you are angry. However, I do not think it is right for you to hit your friend because you are angry. ", "This must have upset you a lot, do you want to talk?" may be preferred. Remember that emotions are part of us, and we can't cut them off. But our behavior is made up of our choices. For this reason, we cannot choose how we feel, but we can decide how to behave.



TRYING TO ESCAPE FROM EMOTIONS

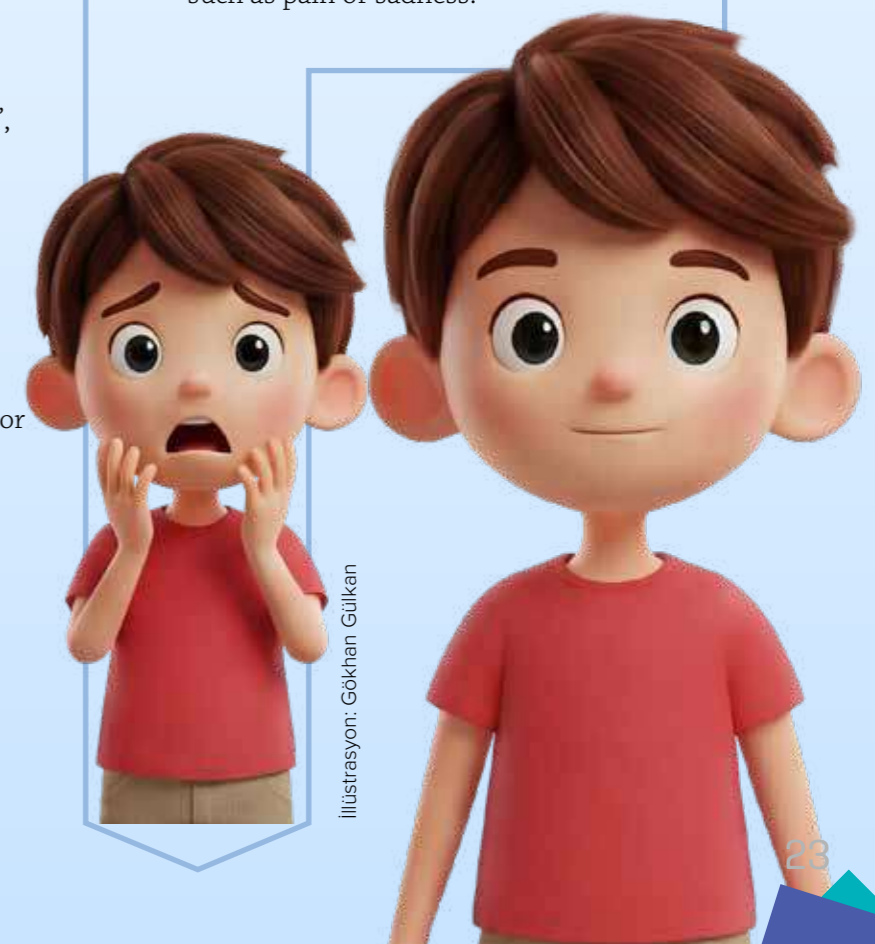
Parents don't want their children to be upset, hurt, and bullied. This is a natural parental approach. However, we cannot always protect our children from difficulties in life. Children may encounter various challenges throughout their lives. Trying to remove every difficulty from a child's life does not necessarily mean good parenting. For this reason, parents should teach their children how to overcome these difficulties. Therefore, when a child experiences pain, sadness, or a difficult situation, immediately trying to distract them, make them laugh, or silence them does not help develop their ability to cope with emotional challenges. A child who grows up in this way may tend to avoid difficult emotions when they experience them. However, no matter how much they try to escape, they cannot escape these feelings.

UNDERESTIMATING EMOTIONS

Mocking the child's emotion embarrasses them. This situation may lead the child to suppress their emotions and make an effort not to feel them. Approaches such as "You cry like a baby.", "Are you upset about this?", "A man doesn't cry, does he?", "There is nothing to be afraid of, you are too cowardly." can be examples of such mockery. This situation may also lead the child to turn what they feel in certain situations into labels about who they are. For example, they may begin to associate their identity with labels such as "I'm a coward," "Boys don't cry," "I'm worthless," or "I'm weird."

CLASSIFYING EMOTIONS AS GOOD AND BAD

Classifying emotions as "good emotions" and "bad emotions" can cause children to think "I should always feel good." and "I should avoid difficult emotions." Therefore, it is not right to label emotions as good and bad. Every emotion is a part of a person. A person can only overcome challenges when they acknowledge what they feel in difficult moments and make space for those feelings in their life.



İllüstrasyon: Gökhan Gülkan

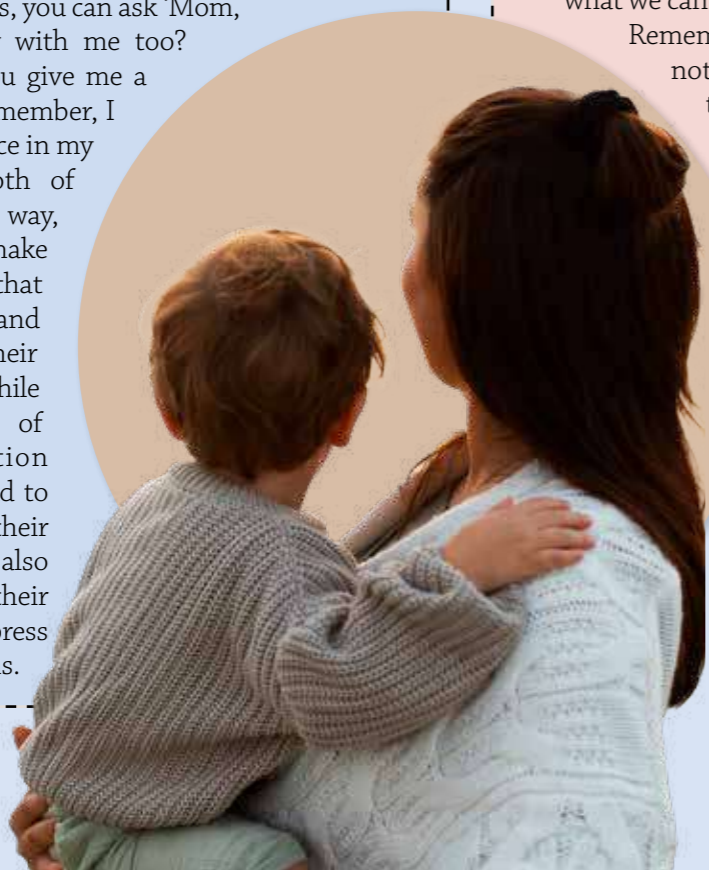
ADVICE FOR PARENTS



Teach your child about emotions

Children experience many emotions just like adults, but they may not be able to identify them. The child who cannot recognize their emotions cannot express them. The first step for children to recognize their emotions is to learn about emotions. At this point, parents should help the child's emotional vocabulary develop. In this context, they can create a list of emotions in accordance with the developmental level of the child. If they predict an emotion that the child feels during the day, they can express this emotion and enable the child to learn. For example, let's think of a girl who is jealous of her siblings. The girl starts shouting and jumping when her mother takes her into her arms to feed her. The mother can calm the child down and say, "My child, sometimes children do not want to share the love and attention of the mother with their siblings. They think that if this love and care is divided, it will not be enough for them. I think you're worried that my love and interest in you will diminish. My dear girl, my love and my heart is so big that I have a big place in my heart for both of you. Could what you are feeling be jealousy? Sometimes we can be jealous of our loved ones. But instead of yelling when you are jealous, you can ask 'Mom, will you play with me too?'

Mom, can you give me a hug too? 'Remember, I have a big place in my heart for both of you.' In this way, parents can make the child feel that they understand and accept their feelings. While this form of communication helps the child to recognize their emotions, it also improves their ability to express their emotions.



Talk to your child about their feelings.

Talking to children about their feelings helps them understand their inner world and express it correctly. The more parents get to know their children, the easier it is for them to learn about their feelings. At this point, parents can put into words the emotions their child might be feeling in a given situation. For example, imagine a child who is trying to build a car with their Lego pieces but cannot succeed and begins to cry. The parent can say, "You tried to build a car with your Lego, but I guess it didn't work out the way you wanted. Could that have made you feel inadequate?". As another example, let's consider a child who is being excluded by their friends. The parent can ask, "How did that make you feel? Could it be that you felt a little lonely and worthless? I could feel the same way. It's a pity that your friends didn't include you in the game. Let's see what we can do about it if you want."

Remember that children may not always be able to name their feelings. They can often respond with "I don't know" or "I don't understand." In these cases, the parents can name the child's emotion and ask, "Can this emotion be called...?"

Read books and watch cartoons with your child.

Reading books or watching cartoons together with children can be an enjoyable way to work on emotions. It is important for parents to pause at certain points while reading with their children and ask questions about the characters' emotions and the behaviors displayed in response to those emotions. For example they can ask questions such as; "How do you think the child feels in this situation?", "How would you feel if you were in this situation?", "Here, when the child is angry, he hits his brother. What do you think about this." . Likewise, they can stop the cartoons and ask questions about emotions such as; "Look, his eyes are wide open. He looks surprised. Do you remember a situation where you were surprised recently?" "The child seems very worried about his brother. Who do you think he should ask for help?"



Accept your child's emotion.

Accepting the feeling of children allows them to experience their feelings without suppressing them. Parents must teach children that sometimes they can be happy and sometimes they can be sad, that all this is a part of life. Sometimes we may feel joyful and excited, while at other times we may experience challenging emotions such as anxiety, anger, or sadness.

All emotions are part of being human. Emotions cannot be directly controlled. Emotions cannot be directly controlled; therefore, they cannot be made to come or go whenever we want.

The important point here is to accept emotions as they are, while emphasizing that not every behavior is acceptable. For example, let's consider a child who is angry. Here, the parent can understand and accept the child's anger. However, being angry does not mean that hitting their mother is acceptable or approved. In such cases, the parent may say, "You seem a little angry right now. I understand your anger. But I won't let you hit me because you're angry. You can't hurt others because you're angry. I can help you calm down if you want. Then we can talk about why you're angry."

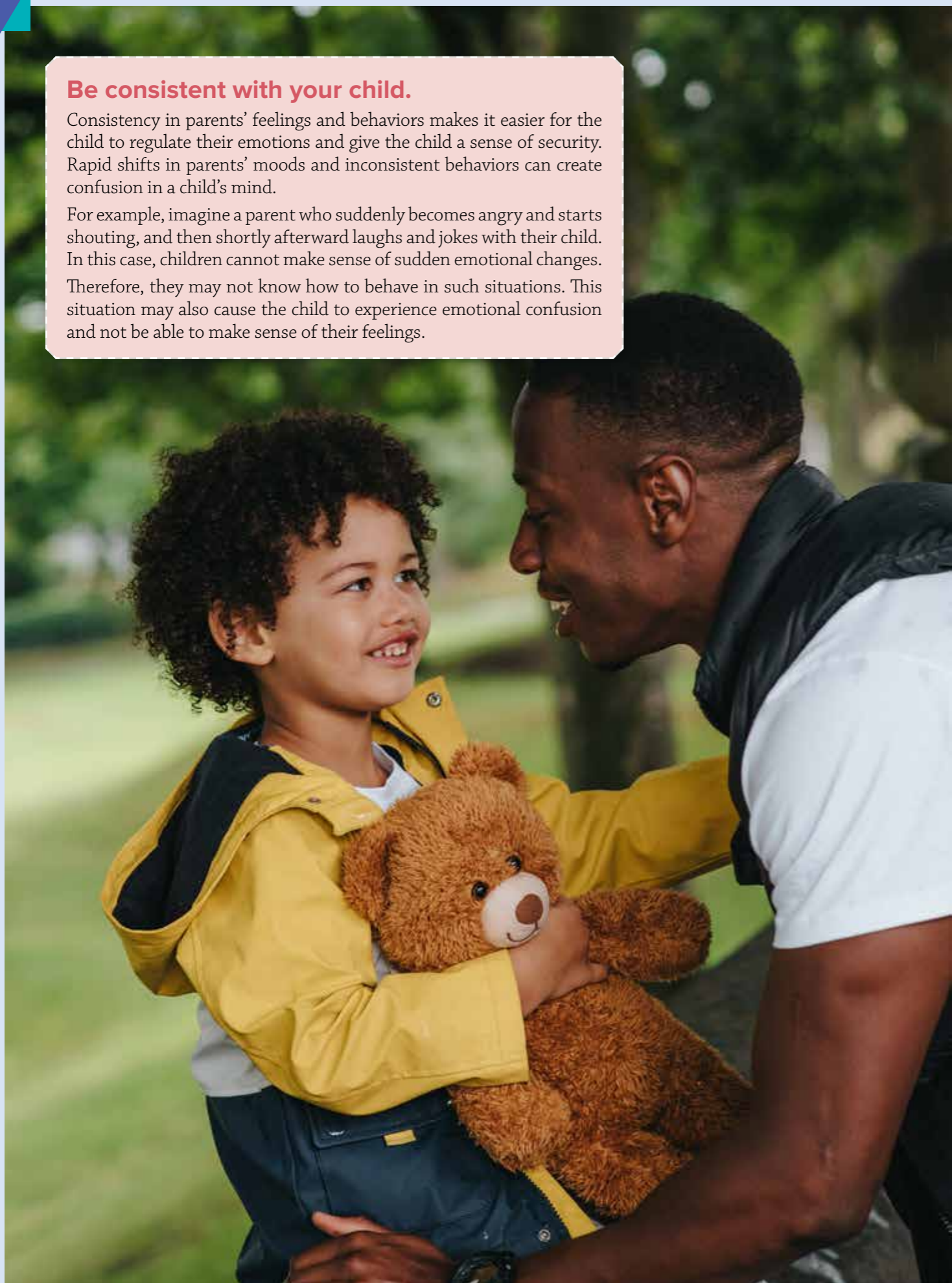


Be consistent with your child.

Consistency in parents' feelings and behaviors makes it easier for the child to regulate their emotions and give the child a sense of security. Rapid shifts in parents' moods and inconsistent behaviors can create confusion in a child's mind.

For example, imagine a parent who suddenly becomes angry and starts shouting, and then shortly afterward laughs and jokes with their child. In this case, children cannot make sense of sudden emotional changes.

Therefore, they may not know how to behave in such situations. This situation may also cause the child to experience emotional confusion and not be able to make sense of their feelings.



Listen to your child and make special time just for them.¹¹

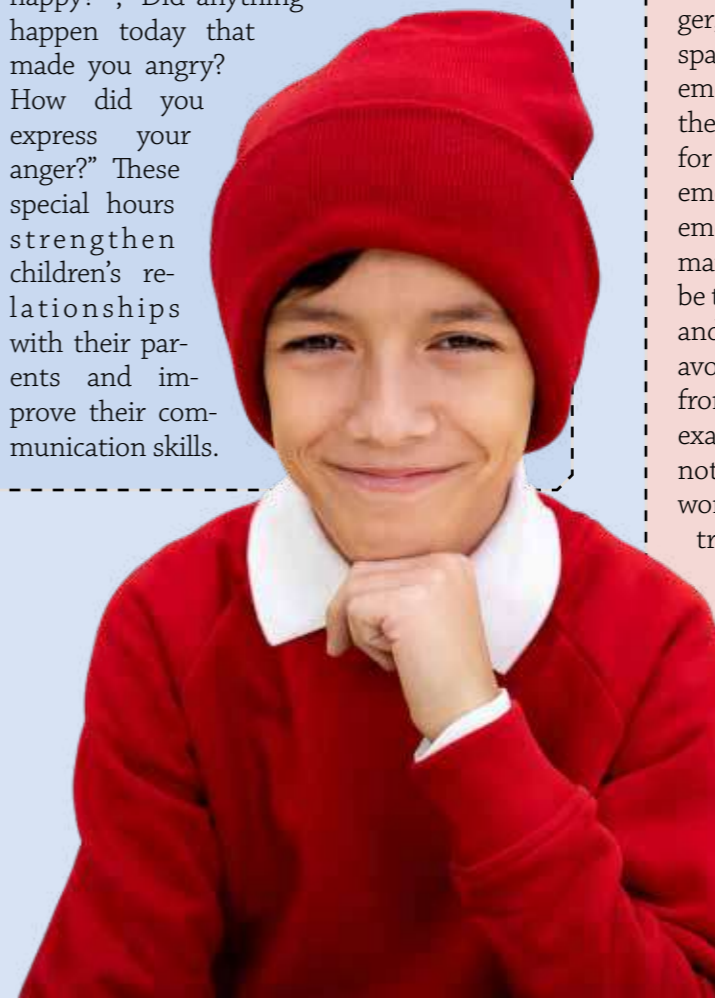
The child needs to be understood and listened to. Parents should respond to the child's need to speak with effective listening. They should avoid pretending to listen to their child or dismissing them. They should make the child feel that they are listening to them and understand their feelings.

Parents should make time to talk and spend time with their children. If parents have more than one child, it is necessary to do this separately for each child. This makes children feel special and valued. This time should also be a space where the child feels safe. In such an environment, children feel comfortable, and a foundation is created for them to talk about their emotions. For example, mother-daughter/son tea time, father-daughter/son tea time, or bedtime conversations can be planned. During these special moments, conversations can be initiated by asking open-ended questions. For example the conversation can continue with questions such as; "What was the most striking thing you remember from school today?", "What were the 3 most interesting things you learned at school today?", "List 3 things that made you happy today. Why did these make you happy?"; "Did anything happen today that made you angry? How did you express your anger?" These special hours strengthen children's relationships with their parents and improve their communication skills.



Let your child experience their emotions.

Children experience many emotions such as joy, excitement, enthusiasm, anger, sadness, anxiety. In order to create space for children to experience their emotions, parents must first accept their child's feelings. It is important for parents to teach their children that emotions cannot be avoided and that all emotions are a natural part of being human. At the same time, children should be taught that every emotion has a place and a purpose in life. Parents should avoid approaches that prevent children from experiencing their emotions. For example statements such as; "There is nothing to be so excited about.", "Don't worry, nothing will happen. Try to distract yourself."; "What's there to be upset about? Let's do something that will make you feel better."; "Don't be so afraid, be a little brave." may cause the child to perceive their emotion as unimportant, unnecessary or something that should not exist.



Story Time



A FOREST OF EMOTIONS

When Hümeýra woke up in the morning, she could hardly contain her excitement. It was as if a bird inside her was about to spread its wings and fly. Today, she was going on a picnic in the forest with her family. Perhaps the bird fluttering inside her was excitement. She immediately got up from her bed and ran to her brother Ali's room. She woke her brother up saying; "Ali, come on, wake up. Today will be a great day." Hümeýra was so excited that she didn't know where to run inside the house. Should she have washed her face first? "No, no, I'll go and pack my bag first," she thought.

While Hümeýra was packing her bag, her mother came to help her. Hümeýra wanted to take all her toys with her, but she couldn't fit them all in her bag. Her mother said, "Hümeýra, if you'd like you can choose one toy. We don't need to take all your toys to the forest. The forest is a very mysterious place. There are a lot of things out there waiting to be discovered." Hümeýra's eyes widened. "Really?" she said. Her mother said, "Yes, my dear, now let's set off on a journey to this mysterious forest."

The whole family got into the car and began their journey. The father asked, "Guys, what are you most curious about in the forest?" . The father wanted the children to think and explore their sense of curiosity with this question. Ali said, "Worms! I'm curious about worms. I wonder if we can see it in the forest?". Hümeýra grimaced and said, "Ugh, worms? Disgusting! ". The worms were disgusting to Hümeýra and she didn't like them at all. "I don't like worms. Are there different kinds of leaves? I want to collect different kinds of leaves," she said. The father said, "The things each of you are curious about are different." We can find them all in the forest."

When they finally arrived to the forest, Hümeýra and Ali started running around. The birds were chirping, the sun was shining, and the forest looked lush. The children were very happy to come to the forest. Hümeýra ran under the trees. There were a lot of leaves here. "Mom, Dad, look at this!" Hümeýra found a huge leaf. This huge leaf surprised her. How had it become such a large leaf? She had never seen such a leaf before. "Indeed, this forest is full of surprises," she thought.

At the same time, Ali and his mother came up to Hümeýra and her father. When Ali saw the stack of leaves, he wanted to collect the leaves and take them in his arms. When Ali lifted the leaves, worms came out from underneath. Hümeýra froze in astonishment. She suddenly jumped and fell backwards. Her heart was pounding. She was scared and hurt because she had fallen. She was also a little disgusted with worms. That's why she started crying. Hümeýra ran to her mother and hugged her. Her mother said, "Let's get some rest. Let's talk about what you feel." Ali, on the other hand, was glad to have found the worms and was curiously trying to examine them closely. His father and Ali, were studying the worms and talking about them.

Her mother said, "You know, Hümeýra, fear tells us to be careful. In this way, it protects us from danger. We feel disgust when we need to stay away from things that can be harmful to our health. These feelings are not bad. On the contrary, they are alarms that ensure our security." For the first time, Hümeýra realized that her feelings were trying to talk to her and tell her something.

It was time to go home. Hümeýra and Ali were so tired that they fell asleep in the car. When they returned home, they took a nice shower and cleaned up. When it was time for bed, the whole family was gathered in the children's room. Their father said, "Guys, let's make the most of today." Ali immediately said: "I am very happy to have seen the worms. It was nice to study them. My sister was afraid of worms. I'm sorry about that." Hümeýra said, "I am very happy that we went to the forest. Examining the leaves surprised me. But I was afraid of the worms. My mother told me that my fear was trying to protect me."

Their mother said, "You've come across so many things and experienced so many different feelings, haven't you?" It was like this forest was full of emotions, wasn't it? Should this forest be called the "forest of emotions"? The children said, "Yes! We loved the forest of emotions," they chuckled. After a family hug, the children fell into a deep sleep.

Let's think about it!

What emotions were there in Hümeýra and Ali's forest of emotions?

Is there any feeling familiar to you in this story?

Have you felt these feelings before?



ACTIVITY: SIGNS OF OUR EMOTIONS IN OUR BODY

When something isn't going right in our body, pain, aches or discomfort appear as physical signs that warn us. When things are going well, our body also shows different signs. Emotions can also manifest themselves in our bodies.

HAPPINESS

It may appear as a smile on the face, energizing movement in the body, a desire to share and talk, inner balance, and peace.

What does your body tell you when you're happy?

.....
.....

What can you do when you feel happy?

.....
.....



ANGER

It may appear as intense energy from shoulders to fingertips, blushing of face, rapid breathing, trembling of hands.

What does your body tell you when you're angry?

.....
.....

What can you do when you feel angry?

.....
.....



SADNESS

It may appear as sunken shoulders, drooping face, change in body posture, tearing in eyes, absent-mindedness in gaze.

What does your body tell you when you're sad?

.....
.....

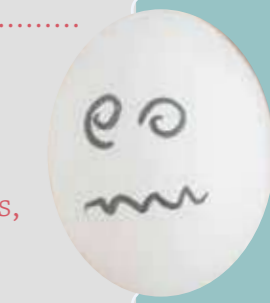
What can you do when you feel sad?

.....
.....



FEAR

It may appear as rapid heartbeat, sweating, enlargement of pupils, rapid breathing, nausea.



What does your body tell you when you're scared?

.....
.....

What can you do when you feel fear?

.....
.....

EXCITEMENT

It may appear as heart palpitations, shaky hands, nausea, difficulty staying still, a frequent need to use the restroom, and dry mouth.

What does your body tell you when you feel excited?

.....
.....

What can you do when you feel excited?

.....
.....

ANXIETY

It may appear as palpitation of heart, sweating, blurring of mind, focal problems.

What does your body tell you when you feel anxious?

.....
.....



What can you do when you feel anxious?

.....
.....

DISGUST

It may appear as nausea, a grimacing face, the urge to gag, and sweating

What does your body tell you when you are disgusted?

.....
.....

What can you do when you feel disgusted?

.....
.....

SHAME

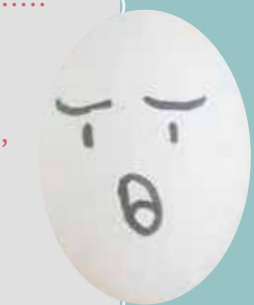
It may appear as blushing of the face and ears, avoiding eye contact, dry mouth, and nausea.

What does your body tell you when you're ashamed?

.....
.....

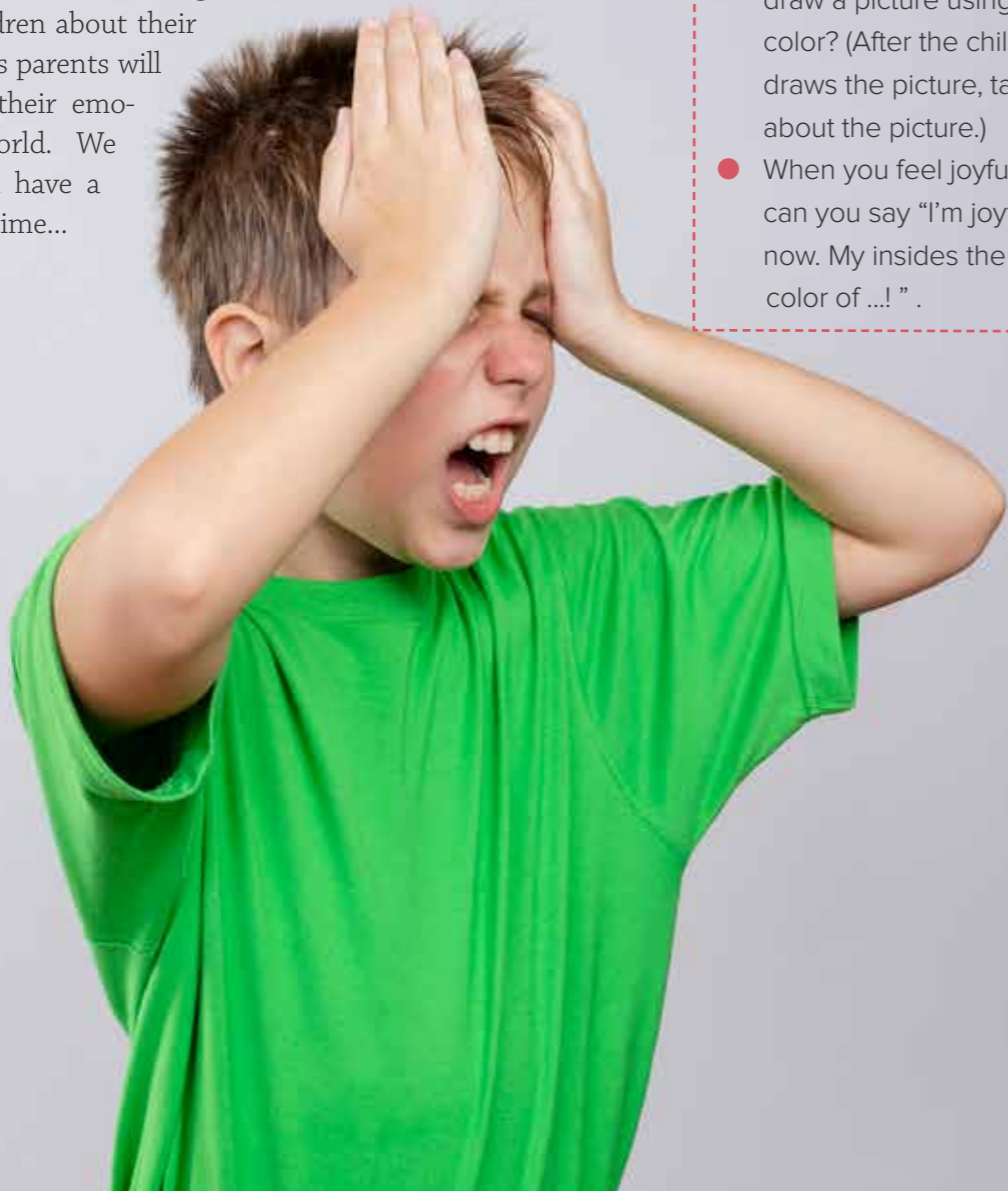
What can you do when you feel ashamed?

.....
.....



ACTIVITY: THE COLOR OF MY EMOTIONS

Dear parents, children sometimes find it difficult to put their feelings into words. Embodying emotions makes it easier for children to make sense of their emotions. In this activity, we aim to make it easier for you to talk about emotions with children by comparing emotions to colors. The only materials you need for this are colored crayons and paper! You can find example of emotions in the boxes below. For each emotion, there are questions you can ask your child. You can use different paper for each emotion and talk about each emotion at different times. Talking to your children about their feelings as parents will improve their emotional world. We hope you have a pleasant time...



JOY

- Have you ever heard of joy? What do you think it means?
- Have you ever had a moment where you felt joyful? Can you tell me about that moment?
- If joy were a color, what color do you think it would be? Why?
- For you, joy looks like the color of ... Can you draw a picture using this color? (After the child draws the picture, talk about the picture.)
- When you feel joyful can you say "I'm joyful now. My insides the color of ...!"



SADNESS

- Have you ever felt sad? Why do you think people get sad?
- What do you compare the feeling of sadness to?
- If sadness were a color, what color do you think it would be? Why?
- When you feel sad, can you say, "I'm sad right now. My insides the color of ...!"
- Sadness for you looks like the color of... Can you draw a picture using this color? (After the child draws the picture, talk about the picture.)



FEAR

- How does fear feel? What happens in your body when you're scared?
- If fear were a color, what color do you think it would be? Why?
- When you feel scared, can you say, "I'm scared. My insides the color of ...!"
- What makes you feel safe when you're scared?
- You said that when you get scared... makes you feel good. Can you draw a picture of that? (After the child draws the picture, talk about the picture.)



ANGER

- What makes you angry?
- Do you think anger is a warm feeling or a cold one?
- If anger were a color, what color do you think it would be? Why?
- When you feel angry can you say, "I'm angry right now. My insides the color of ...!"
- What do you need to calm down when you're angry?
- Can you draw a picture of anger?



DISGUST

- Have you ever had a moment when you felt nauseous and said, "Ugh, disgusting!" . What emotion do you think we feel in such moments?
- If disgust were a color, what color do you think it would be? Why?
- When you feel disgust can you say, "I was disgusted by this. My insides the color of ...!"
- How does our face change when we're disgusted? Let's do it together.
- For you disgust looks like the color of Can you draw a disgusted facial expression using this color? (After the child draws the picture, talk about the picture.)

ACTIVITY: EMOTIONS IN MY BODY



Hello! My name is Ahmet. Today, I would like to share my feelings with you. I have a big world of emotions inside me. Let me give you some examples of my feelings: joy, sadness, excitement, fear, anxiety, anger, and more.

Did you know that sometimes my body can talk to me? You're wondering how, aren't you? Let me tell you — through my emotions, of course! Each of my feelings creates a different sensation in my body.

For example, when I feel anxious, it's as if red strings are wrapping around my whole body.

When I feel joyful, it's as if a green cloud of gas rises from my stomach up to my head.

What about when I feel excited? When I'm excited, it feels like tiny little butterflies are fluttering in my stomach. And sadness... Sadness is a difficult emotion. When I feel sad, it's as if a crying cloud suddenly appears above my head.

Finally, I want to talk about anger. When I get angry, my face turns as red as a beet, and I feel as if flames are shooting out of my head.

Turning my emotions into symbols like this helps me understand them better



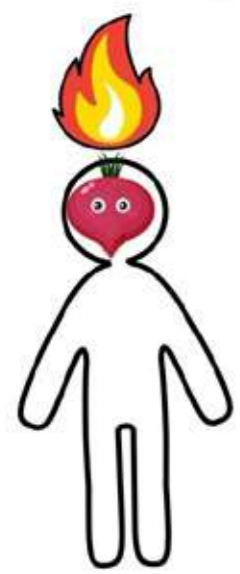
Excitement



Joy



Anxiety



Anger



Fear

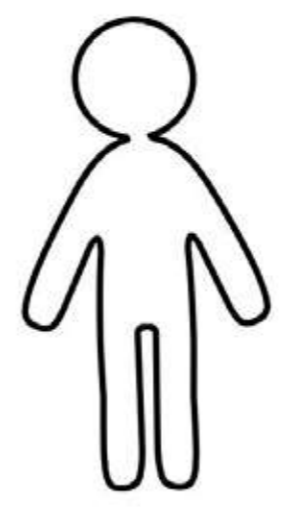


Sadness

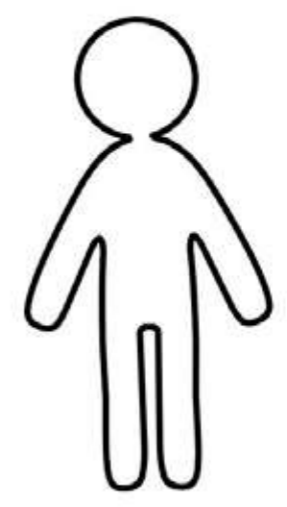


Now it's your turn! Notice your own feelings. Think about the times when you experience these emotions. When do you feel them? Where in your body do you feel this emotion?

What color is it? If you drew a line around it with a pencil, what would it look like? Take a little time to think about these questions. Then, use your colored pencils to draw on the body outlines below. You'll see — as you do this, you'll become closer to your emotions and understand them better.



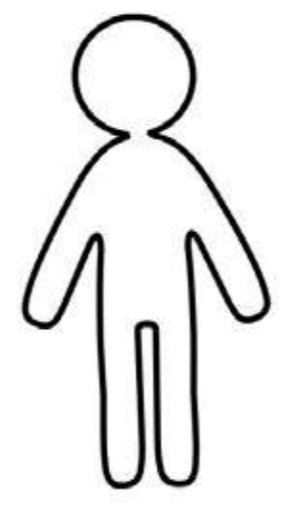
Excitement



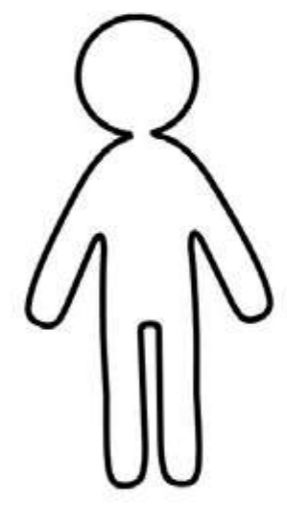
Joy



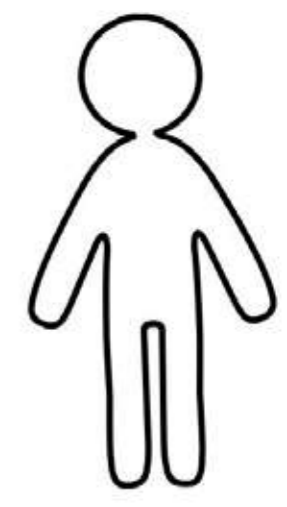
Anxiety



Sadness



Fear



Sadness

ACTIVITY: EMOTION DETECTIVE

Dear parents, helping your children notice, name, and express their emotions will support them in becoming more resilient in the face of challenges they encounter throughout life. In this exercise, you can guide your child in learning to catch emotional clues like a detective and explore their feelings. In this way, while your child is trying to understand their own emotions, they will also connect with your feelings as a parent and observe that emotions are natural for everyone. I hope it will be a mindful experience for all...

The parent asks the child the following questions without judgment:

- What made you the happy the most today? What happened to your body at that moment?
- Was there a moment today when you were frustrated? What happened to your body at that moment?
- Did anything happen today that made you angry? What happened to your body at that moment?
- Was there a moment today when you felt scared or anxious? What happened to your body at that moment?
- Has anything disgusted you today? What happened to your body at that moment?

The parent asks the child the following questions about the emotions they have experienced and invites the child to draw their answers on a piece of paper in any way they like.

- What if this feeling had a color?
- What would this feeling tell you if it could talk?
- What was the magnitude of this feeling? Is it small, big, or huge?

After talking with the child about the emotions they have experienced, the parent asks the child to ask them the same questions and then draws their own answers on a piece of paper. The parent shares their answers with their child.

After sharing their experiences, the parent summarizes the achievement of the exercise saying;

“Today, we have both experienced many similar or different emotions. Some emotions may feel difficult for us, but as we get to know them, we can begin to see

which needs they are quietly whispering about. The important thing is to examine our emotions like a detective, to listen carefully to what they tell us, and to realize that they are so natural that we can all feel them from time to time. You can share your feelings with me at any time and we can talk about it together.”



GAME: HOW STRANGE!



If you are looking for an emotion-based game that can be played with all family members, “How Strange!” is absolutely for you. Moreover, it is very easy to prepare and play, yet it has a strangeness that makes it just as fun.



Materials: Paper, pencil, scissors, two boxes or cups.

Duration: As long as you want

Entertainment: 100%

How To Play

- Family members gather.
- A leader is determined.
- Paper and pens are distributed to each family member.
- Each family member writes down five different emotions that come to mind on a piece of paper.
- In the remaining blank spaces on the paper, they write five different actions or situation. Which actions and situation will be valid or not is determined by the joint decision of the family members. (Picking fruit from the tree, climbing stairs, tripping and falling, running to catch the bus, etc.)
- Family members give what they write to the leader without showing it to each other.
- The leader erases the common action-situation and emotions. They can replace what they removed with new action-situation or emotion.
- Cuts and folds emotions and action-situation so that they are separate from each other.
- Two boxes or cups are chosen to hold the paper. (Another object that the paper can fit can also be used.)

- The game leader puts the emotion slips in one box or cup and the action or situation slips in the other.
- Each family member picks a slip of paper from each of the two boxes or cups in an order to be determined by them.
- They act out the behavior they draw in a way that matches the emotion written on their emotion slip.
- For example, if the slips “anger” and “climbing a tree” are drawn, the person should act out climbing a tree in an angry way.
- After the game, you can talk about emotions and ask, “What would you do? For what reason could you have acted this way?”

Tips

- In order to shorten the game preparation time, paper can be prepared before the game.
- The game can be enriched by selecting more than one emotion.
- The answer can be sought by asking what emotions and behaviors the role-player exhibits.
- Role playing can be performed quietly.
- You can use the shared sample emotion-behavior chart.

Sample Emotion-Behavior Chart

Climbing stairs	Excited
Picking fruit from the tree	Embarrassed
Eating	Scared
Walking on the street	Joyful
Shopping	Exhausted
Cleaning the room	Peaceful
Writing/reading messages	Disgusted
Packing suitcases/bags	Angry
Hanging pictures/posters on the wall	Disappointed
Organizing a library	Surprised
Smelling perfume	Compassionate
Getting in the car	Energetic
Preparing/making meals	Confused
Giving a presentation	Proud
Watching TV	Full of gratitude



PARENT-CHILD ACTIVITY CALENDAR



Dear parents, in this parent-child activity calendar, there are suggestions for both educational and fun activities that you can do with your children or have your children do. We aim for these activities to increase the interaction between parents and children and to develop positive communication. We wish you a pleasant time...



1	2	3
Studying the life of ants.	Share a chapter of your favorite book with your family.	Gather information about the Marimba musical instrument.
7	8	9
Look at the sky and compare the clouds to different animals or objects.	Learn to make boxes with origami.	Write down the feelings you feel today in your diary.
13	14	15
Write a thank you note to a friend.	Check out the pictures of Angel Falls.	Examine Sevket Dağ's "Hagia Sophia" painting.
19	20	21
Learn to say "Hello" and "I love you" in sign language.	Learn to say "how are you" in Italian.	Find out what Kintsugi is and tell a family member.
25	26	27
Stand in front of the mirror and make "confused, angry, happy, sad" facial expressions in order.	What weather do you feel like today? (Sunny, rainy, stormy?) Draw on a piece of paper.	How many seconds can you stand on one leg? Compete as a family.

4	5	6
Learn a song in Turkish.	Turn off the light, create animal figures on the wall with your hands using a flashlight.	Let the parent say an emotion (surprised, angry, proud), and you make that expression with your face.
10	11	12
Design a robot and draw a picture of it.	Research how waves are formed.	Learn an Uzbek dish.
16	17	18
Listen to "Peer Gynt Suite" by Edvard Grieg.	Learn the rules of basketball.	Draw a new cover for your favorite book to read.
22	23	24
Check out the family album.	At the dinner table, find a reason to thank everyone in the family one by one.	Say "Hello" in an angry, then sad, then very cheerful tone.
28	29	30
Find your pulse and count your heartbeat for 1 minute.	Listen to some Arabic music.	Choose a country you don't know on the map (or online) and find out where its capital is.



Question And Answer Corner



Question:

How does the difference in attitude between parents affect the emotional development of the child?

Answer

The family can be similar to an orchestra with its members and the individual differences of each member. Attitude differences between parents are like dissonant voices in an orchestra. If the mother says “yes” and the father says “no” to the demands or needs of the children, the child may not know which rhythm to follow. This uncertainty can cause the child to perceive the world as an inconsistent, unstable, and unreliable place and feel anxiety. One of the biggest obstacles to a healthy personality development is that the child starts to use these attitude differences in line with their own wishes instead of learning the limits over time.

Developmentally, the safest path for a child is to see their parents united in a shared decision. But, of course, it’s not always possible for parents or another caregivers to agree. In such situations, even if there is a difference of opinion, it is best to discuss and decide on the matter privately rather than in front of the child. It’s important to choose to be “consistent” parents rather than perfect parents. Thus, both the cooperation between the parents is strengthened and a safer and clearer framework is drawn for the child. When the child is given a single road map, their emotional development will form on a more solid and balanced ground. This will build the foundation of social skills in adulthood.



Question:

How do we know that a child of primary school age is developing emotionally healthy? Is there a specific criterion or observable sign of this?

Answer

The emotionally healthy development of a primary school-age child cannot be assessed by a single criterion or checklist. Because this age period is a period in which emotions are discovered, tried and sometimes experienced intensely. However, some observable behaviors give strong clues that the child’s emotional development is progressing on a healthy basis. First of all, an emotionally healthy child in early childhood begins to notice and make sense of their emotions. The effort to express one’s emotions is one of the key indicators of healthy development. The child may not always find the right word; sometimes they say “I am angry”, sometimes they reflect on their body language, and sometimes they explain their feelings with reason. The important thing here is that the feeling is not completely denied or suppressed. The second important sign is that the child may experience emotional fluctuations, but these feelings are not permanent. In this age group, feeling angry, crying, getting hurt, and even sometimes sulking are

quite natural; however, if the child is able to calm down over time, return to the relationship, and maintain daily functioning, this may indicate that their emotional development is progressing positively.

Another important criterion is that the child can rely on secure relationships. The emotionally healthy child turns to an adult or someone they trusts when they have difficulty. This does not always have to involve lengthy explanations; sometimes simply staying close, making physical contact, or conveying your presence can also be a sign of this bond. If your child is able to tell you about a problem they experienced at school, share their mistakes instead of hiding them, and express their feelings with words rather than destructive anger, it means you are on the right path.

The key indicator of healthy emotional development is not a child who is always happy; rather, it is a child who can experience sadness, anger, and joy in balanced ways and move through these emotions with a sense of security.

Question:

How should children in adolescence be evaluated for introversion, reactivity, and distance from parents? Are these attitudes a natural part of emotional development or do they point to a different need? How can parents maintain bonds with their children during this period?

Answer

During adolescence, behaviors such as withdrawing, reacting defensively, and creating distance from parents are often a natural part of emotional and developmental differentiation. This period is a stage in which the adolescent is trying to form their own identity, experiencing intensified emotions, and often struggling to regulate those emotions. Withdrawal is often more an effort to understand what is going on in the inner world of the adolescent than a detachment; reactive behaviors are the expression of emotions that cannot be regulated. However, if this distancing becomes long-term, the adolescent loses their daily functioning or completely withdraws from social relations, this may indicate a need beyond the developmental process. At this point, it is important to get support from an expert.

During adolescence, maintaining the parent-child bond is less about constantly trying to make the child talk and more about offering an accessible and emotionally safe relationship space. Making them feel that you can listen without judgment, giving them space without completely withdrawing, and consistently conveying the message “I’m here” form the foundation of the bond. Instead of constantly asking questions and trying to enter the child’s world, it is important for parents to make the child feel that they are there when they need it. Even if the door is closed, it is the child’s greatest need to know that they are loved and not judged behind that door. Instead of questioning the child, just spending time in a common area of interest (such as watching a series, cooking a meal) will be able to quietly repair the broken ties. In adolescence, the healthy bond is not strengthened by sharing everything, but by knowing that the child can share when they need to.

REFERENCES

(1) Goleman, D. (2013). *Emotional intelligence: why is EQ more important than IQ?* (B. S. Yüksel, Trans.). Varlık Publications.

(2) Gottman, J. M., Katz, L. F., & Hooven, C. (1997). *Meta-emotion: How families communicate emotionally*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

(3) Ataca, B., Boratav, H. B., & Sunar, D. (2011). Display Rules of Emotions and Their Contextual Determinants: A Study Conducted with University Students in Türkiye. *Turkish Journal of Psychology*, 26(68), 90-101.

(4) Six Seconds, The Emotional Intelligence Network. *Plutchik's wheel of emotions: Exploring the feelings wheel and how to use it*. <https://www.6seconds.org/2025/02/06/plutchik-wheel-emotions/>

(5) Özkan, S. (2019). *Examination of the relationship between the emotion regulation skills of preschool children and their parents' ability to solve social problems and cope with their children's negative emotions* [Master's thesis]. Gazi University

(6) General Directorate of Child Services, Ministry of Family and Social Services. (2025). *I explore my emotions: A guide to understanding and managing emotions for kids*. <https://www.aile.gov.tr/media/271060/ashb-duygularimi-kesfediyor-um-rehberi-v7.pdf>

(7) Heloa. (2025). *Mirror effect in parent-child relationship: Understanding the science and transforming daily life*. Helo. <https://helo.app/en/blog/1-3-years/health/mirror-effect-in-parent-child-relationship>

(8) Ernest, E. (2026). *Understanding mirror neurons and co-regulation: A guide for parents*. Mindful STL. <https://mindfulstl.com/understanding-mirror-neurons-and-co-regulation-a-guide-for-parents/>

(9) Skurat, K. (2024). *How to tell the difference between anxiety and fear*. Calmerry. <https://calmerry.com/blog/anxiety/how-to-tell-the-difference-between-anxiety-and-fear/>

(10) National Health Service [NHS]. (2023). *Helping your child with anger issues*. <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/children-and-young-adults/advice-for-parents/help-your-child-with-anger-issues/>

(11) Saltalı, N. D. (2013). Development of emotional skills in preschool period. *Yalova Journal of Social Sciences*, 3(6), 107-120.





TÜRKİYE MAARİF VAKFI
TURKISH MAARIF FOUNDATION

Vakıfing education!

