

Helping your child manage Big Emotions

Helping your child to manage big emotions



Meltdowns, shouting,
refusal to cooperate,
aggression, becoming
withdrawn or distracted,
tearful

Behaviour



Angry, confused,
frustrated,
scared, worried,
unhappy,
needing some
extra attention

Feelings and Needs



I can't do this, I am so stupid!

I want sweets now! It's not fair!

You never let me do that. I hate you!

I don't want to go to netball practice today



COMMON RESPONSES IN THE MOMENT...

REFUTING...

- You're not stupid – you are in the top maths group
- You know you are only allowed sweets after school on Fridays
- You don't really hate me
- But you love netball...and all your friends will be there

QUESTIONING...

- Why....?
- What has happened, did something happen at practice last week?
- Why would you say that to me?

JUMPING TO PROBLEM-SOLVING OR ADVISING...

- Let's get the study guide you brought home from school...or I could write a note to your teacher
- Why don't we see if there are any dried apricots – you like them, and they are nice and sweet

I am sick
of
cooking

Calm down, you
are overreacting.
You usually love
cooking, and you
are really good at
it.



4 steps to take



1. Helping your child to begin identifying and naming their emotions

2. Helping your child to understand and express their emotions

3. Helping your child to respond appropriately to emotions

4. Helping your child to find healthy ways to manage their emotions

Name Your Feelings



Support your child to recognise and name their emotions by saying what you see

| Behaviour | Emotion | Empathy and recognition |
|---------------------|--|--|
| Tearful at bedtime | Upset that it is not possible to go to Granny's house at the moment | You are feeling sad. It's really hard that you haven't been able to see Granny for such a long time. I know that she misses you too. |
| Ripping up homework | Frustration at not being able to answer a question, after trying for some time | I know you feel frustrated that you cannot complete the question. It must feel really difficult, especially when you have been trying so hard for such a long time |

VALIDATE, BUT DON'T CONDONE UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

For example:

“It’s ok to be angry with John. He knocked down your tower and you had spent a long time building it. I think I would be angry if someone did that to my tower. But it is not ok to hit John”



Helping your child identify signs of anger

WARNING SIGNS!

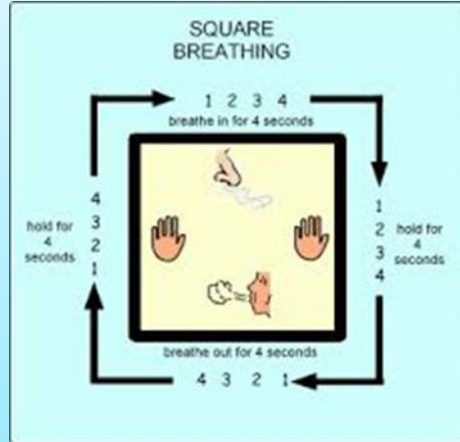
Whenever you start to get angry, your body sends you warning signs. It is important to pay attention to these signs so that you know when to start using a coping skill. Color in the body warning signs that happen for you!

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| WARNING I START TO FEEL DIZZY! | WARNING SWEATING! | WARNING MY CHEST FEELS TIGHT! |
| WARNING I FEEL LIKE CRYING! |  | WARNING MY WHOLE BODY FEELS HOT! |
| WARNING I GET A HEADACHE! | | WARNING MY BODY STARTS TO SHAKE! |
| WARNING IT'S HARD TO BREATHE! | WARNING I CLENCH MY FISTS! | WARNING MY MUSCLES HURT! |
| WARNING MY HEART BEATS FASTER! | | WARNING I HUFF AND PUFF! |

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Some ideas of things that can help your child to deal with strong emotions:



5 THINGS YOU CAN SEE

4 THINGS YOU CAN TOUCH

3 THINGS YOU CAN HEAR

2 THINGS YOU CAN SMELL

1 THINGS YOU CAN TASTE

The worksheet features illustrations of a hand, an eye, a nose, a tongue, and an ear. There are five empty boxes for each category, and a vertical line of five empty boxes on the left side.

Step 1. Recognize your feelings.

A green cartoon turtle with a sad expression.

Step 2. Stop your body.

A green cartoon turtle with a red octagonal 'STOP' sign above its head.

Step 3. Tuck inside your shell and take three deep breaths.

A green cartoon turtle with three numbered thought bubbles (1, 2, 3) above its head.

Step 4. Come out when you are calm and think of a solution.

A green cartoon turtle with a lit lightbulb above its head.

Coping Skills Tool Box

Count to 10

Happy Thoughts

3 deep breaths

The graphic includes icons of a toolbox, books, a person counting, and a head with a thought bubble.

- Rip paper
- Pop bubble wrap
- Squish playdough
- Wrap your arms around yourself and squeeze
- Write a letter to someone
- Jump on a trampoline
- Do wall push-ups
- Write down what's bothering you and rip it up
- Squeeze a stress ball
- Talk about it
- Scribble on paper and crumple it up
- Do jumping jacks
- Put the palms of your hands together, push and release
- Do stretches

Top Tips

- Help your child begin to notice and name their emotions
- Separate the emotion from the behaviour
- Reflect on what has happened later, not in the heat of the moment
- Help your child to develop appropriate ways to deal with strong feelings
- Try to model good emotional regulation
- All this can be exhausting as a caregiver, so make sure you take some time for yourself


THANK YOU
for listening
-
ANY
QUESTIONS?



For more support email MHST@croydondropin.org.uk