

Understanding Emotions

Children begin to explore and understand emotions from birth, supported by interactions with their caregivers.



THE FEELING IS MUTUAL

Children seek guidance from other people to inform their emotions and behavior, especially in new or unfamiliar situations.

This is called social referencing.



TRY THIS!

When your child tries something new, adjust your expression and tone of voice to show encouragement and to help them feel safe. Smile and say, "You're okay! You've got this!" Wave and say, "You're doing great, I'm right here!"



A STATE OF MIND

Children are always watching and listening. They are sensitive to the emotions of others, even when they are not directly involved in the interaction.



TRY THIS!

When disagreements arise with other adults, model good problem-solving skills. Respond with understanding. Say, "I'm sorry, I can see I upset you." Then, model next steps. Say, "I'll work on __" and, "Next time, let's try __."



SET THE STAGE

Children begin to manage their own emotions and behaviors in the second year of life. This is called self-regulation. Children learn regulation strategies from adults.



TRY THIS!

Play helps children practice self-regulation. Engage in dramatic play with your child. Guide the characters through conflict resolution and complex emotions. Play games like "Red light, Green light" to practice impulse control.

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