

Helping children recognize and express their emotions builds emotional intelligence, reduces outbursts, strengthens communication, and supports mental health.



Helping Kids Name and *Express* Their Feelings

Step 1: Teach Feeling Words

- Children need vocabulary to name what they feel.
- **Start with the basics:** happy, sad, mad, scared
- **Later include:** frustrated, excited, lonely, proud, nervous, disappointed, embarrassed, grateful

Step 2: Talk About Emotions Often

- Make feelings a normal part of conversation.
- **Use moments in daily life:** “You’re jumping around! Are you feeling excited?”
- **Reflect emotions you observe:** “You smiled when your friend came over. Did that make you happy?”

Step 3: Link Feelings to Experiences

- Help kids understand the “why” behind emotions:
- “You felt left out when friends played without you.”
- “You’re proud because you finished your puzzle.”
- “You’re angry because your brother took your toy.”

Step 4: Give Tools to Express Feelings

Kids need help knowing what to do with big feelings.

- **Teach and model:** “I feel ___ when ___.”
- Taking deep breaths or counting to 10
- Drawing or journaling emotions
- Talking to a trusted adult

Everyday Practices That Help

- **Name your own feelings:** “I’m feeling a bit overwhelmed today. I feel like I need a break.”
- **Read books about emotions:** Talk about how the characters of the stories might feel and why.
- **Create a feelings check-in:** Use a chart, wheel, or color system (e.g., red = angry).
- **Praise emotional honesty:** “Thank you for telling me you were scared today. That was really brave.”

When Big Emotions Show Up

- **Stay calm.** Your calm helps regulate their storm.
- **Avoid shaming or dismissing:** “You’re fine” or “Stop crying” teaches kids to hide feelings.
- **Instead try:** “It’s okay to feel upset. I’m here with you.”

Helping children name and express their emotions is a gift that lasts a lifetime. When you listen, label, and love—you teach them that feelings are safe, manageable, and human. Reach out to learn more or visit [EAP4YOU.com](https://www.eap4you.com).