

Investigating feelings - Self-acceptance

EXPLANATION:

Young children build understandings of feelings and emotions from birth. The 'Feelings cards' provide children opportunities to explore, identify, label and talk about a range of emotions using visual cues to build vocabulary and label everyday emotions contributing to well-being.

YEAR LEVELS: Prior to school

STUDENT GROUPING: Whole group discussion and pairs or small groups

ACTIVITY LENGTH: 15 mins but once the concept is introduced and the games have been explained and trialled children can engage with a friend at any appropriate time during the day

LINK TO CURRICULUM:

Early Years Learning Framework

Learning Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity

- 1.2 Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency.
- 1.3 Children develop knowledgeable and confident self-identities.
- 1.4 Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect.

Learning Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world

- 2.1 Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation.
- 2.2 Children respond to diversity with respect.

Learning Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

- 3.1 Children become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing.
- 3.2 Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing.

Learning Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators

- 5.1 Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes.
- 5.2 Children engage with a range of texts and gain meaning from these texts.

SCOPE OF TASK:

Feelings and emotions cards can be used for a range of activities in prior-to-school settings. They can be used as vocabulary words, sight words on word walls, or in simple games.

1. Young children need regular exposure to different feelings and to understand them and to begin to understand them within a context. There are many short videos on YouTube that can be used to introduce emotions using both visuals, sound and verbal cues. The teacher can introduce a few emotions at a time using the emotion cards as props. Make different emotion faces and have children guess what you might be feeling. To model facial expressions teachers can create exaggerated looks on their own faces and explain the aligned feeling. For example, 'I am so sad when I fall over and hurt my knee'. Explain to children how facial features help us to understand how people are feeling. Ask children to model emotions using their face and body.

Games that can be played using the 'Feelings cards'

Guess the feeling: The teacher or child can hold up cards and get others to name the emotion and make a face that matches. You can flash the card and the first person to call out the emotion can 'win' the card to add an element of competition.

Make a face: Spread the cards face down on a table. Children take turns to pick up a card, name the emotion and make the facial expression that matches the emotion. Other children can also imitate the emotion.

Memory (similar to 'Concentration'): Cards are placed face down on a table. Children take turns to flip over 2 cards — trying to find a match of emotions/feelings. If they get a match they can keep the pair. Children should be encouraged to identify what the emotion or feeling is. Teachers can ask questions to explore the emotions, for example: 'When have you felt like that?'

What is the emotion?: Spread the cards face down on a table. Allow children to choose one card but they keep the card secret. The child acts out the emotion and others must guess what it is. They can use facial expression or role playing to convey the emotion displayed on the card.

Playing with their peers a range of games using the Feelings cards, enhances the development of the children's social and communications skills contributing to increased pro-social skills. Card games provide opportunities for children to take turns, collaborate, build self-esteem and self-confidence.

Hint: Developmentally children grasp emotions at different stages. For example, typically:

- 3–4 year olds can explore basic feelings like sad, happy, angry and excited
- 4–5 year olds can explore more complex emotions such as anger, frustration and disappointment

But every child is an individual and teachers can determine which emotions are appropriate to explore in their context.

RESOURCES:

Two types of emotion cards see below:



