



Wellbeing: Emotions Coaching

Previously we hosted an Emotions Coaching workshop for parents and carers, led by the Camden EP team. Many of you have voiced your positive feedback about Emotions Coaching, as it provides a framework for approaching a child's emotions and behaviours **in the moment**. Our experiences of the current lockdown and Coronavirus pandemic may be triggering a range of emotions in all of us, as well as our children - this may be a perfect opportunity to try out this approach. Here we revisit the key steps from the workshop:

Step 1 Recognising and empathising with the child's feelings

- Empathise with the child from their point of view (this doesn't mean agreeing with them, but viewing things from their perspective)
- All emotions are natural and normal, and not always a matter of choice
- Their behaviours are communicating these emotions

Step 2 Validating the feelings and labelling them

- Use words to reflect back the child's emotion and help the child to label the emotion - say what you see/observe rather than asking questions
- Saying that you understand their emotional situation and that you don't blame them helps soothe their emotional brain
- *"I can see you're angry because you are frowning and you're kicking the wall. I would be feeling like that too if I didn't want to do something"*

Step 3 Setting limits or a boundary on behaviour (if needed)

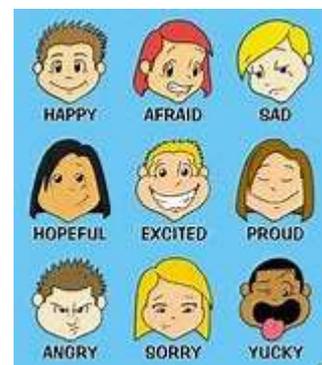
- Be clear to your child what is the boundary limits of acceptable behaviour - that certain behaviours cannot be accepted (*"It's ok to feel angry but it's not ok to hit or kick"*)
- Let the child know they are safe and secure - *"I can see you and I'm going to stay near you to make sure you stay safe"*
- Encourage and provide the child with things to regulate their emotions - a calming space/time out zone (see below for ideas)

Step 4 Problem-solve with the child

- When the child is calm and in a relaxed, rational state (at least 90 minutes after), explore the feelings that gave rise to the behaviour
- Help think of ideas and actions that could lead to more appropriate outcomes (*"Let's think of what we could have done instead"*) and empower the child to believe they can overcome difficulties and manage feelings/behaviour
- Over time, this supports a child to be able to do this themselves

Ideas for a calming space/time out zone:

1. Repetitive activities e.g. sorting, lacing, dot to dot, colouring
2. Sensory experiences - putty, lavender, calming music, chewy toys, blankets, bubble timers
3. Breathing activities: count breaths in and out, mindfulness, milkshake breathing



All emotions are natural and normal, it's how we manage them, and our resulting behaviours, that's key.



Any questions or concerns?

If you have any concerns regarding your child's mental health or wellbeing during this time, please don't hesitate to contact our ELSA, Lorraine Watkins, through the wellbeing email address and she can share some advice, ideas and resources: wellbeing@emmanuel.camden.sch.uk.