

Learning About Feelings

How many times a day do you hear the excited laughter of a child? Do you ever hear the raised voice of someone who is angry about something? How often do you wipe the tears from a sad child's face?

A mixture of feelings is natural as things happen throughout the day. Naming our feelings and finding a positive way to show them can improve our relationships with others. We can also enjoy life more when we understand our own feelings and those of the people around us.

In school, we help children learn to name and control their feelings as they occur in the classroom. Recently, we talked about four basic feelings and some of the different words used to name them:



Happy: glad, excited, pleased, proud, friendly



Upset: sad, scared, angry, mad, hurt



Surprised: amazed, startled, worried, confused



Calm: normal, quiet, willing, peaceful, helpful, relaxed

We've also talked about having more than one feeling at the same time. The feelings can be very different from each other. For example, a child might feel both excited and scared about starting school in the fall.

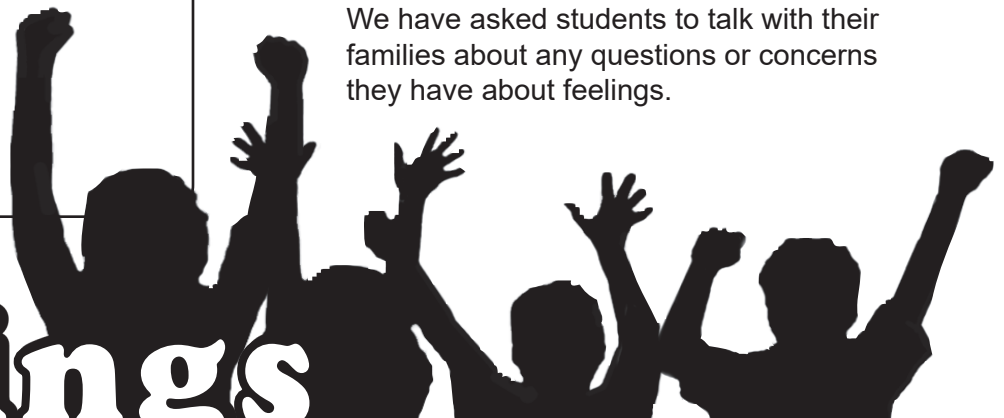
Identifying feelings in themselves and others is a key part of how students learn to have healthy relationships. Today we practiced the following ways to predict or find out how someone might feel:

- Watch the person's face and body.
- Notice how the person acts.
- Listen to how the person speaks.
- Think about how we might feel in the situation.
- Ask the person how he or she feels.

Students learned that the first four ways provide good clues, but the last idea is the best way to find out how someone feels.

We have asked students to talk with their families about any questions or concerns they have about feelings.

Feelings



Learning About Feelings Can Be Fun!



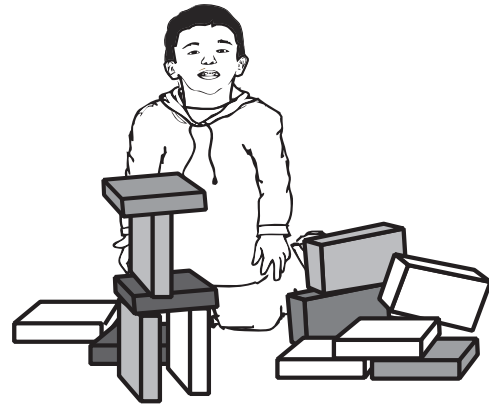
Build on what your child has learned in school. Try a few of these ideas!

- Ask your child to name his or her feelings at home.
- Use different feeling words to describe how you feel to your child and other family members.
- Ask your child to identify feelings he or she notices in stories, television programs, or movies.
- Play “How Might People Feel?” Describe a situation and ask your child to predict how people might feel in the situation.
- Play charades. Write different feeling words on pieces of paper. Have family members draw a slip of paper and act out the feeling.
- At dinner, have each family member name one feeling they had during the day and the situation that elicited the feeling.

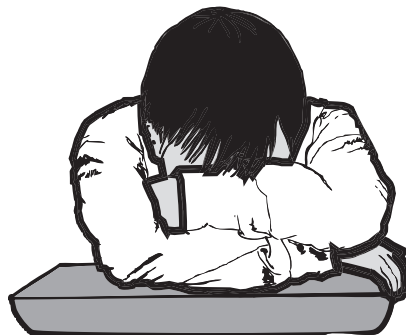
What to Do About **Strong** Feelings

Sometimes feelings can be strong. Calming down helps us think clearly and feel better. When your child feels very upset or very excited, suggest the following ways to calm down.

- Tell yourself, “Uh-oh! I need to stop and think.”
- Tell yourself, “I need to take a minute and settle down.”
- Sit down away from the situation for a minute. Take a timeout.
- Count to 10.
- Lay your head on your desk.



- Find a quiet activity to do for a few minutes, such as look at a book, draw, or listen to music.
- Shake your hands or shrug your shoulders.
- Ask permission to run around the house.
- Ask permission to sit away from the group or to play alone or walk alone in the yard.
- Talk with a trusted friend or adult about your feelings.



These ideas also work when children get upset or angry while playing together.

