

Naming and communicating feelings



Puberty is a time where lots of changes happen.

This can include changes to how you feel.

Your child might start to have lots of different feelings that can change quickly.

This is OK.

They might feel:

- sad
- angry
- frustrated
- confused



They might not know why their feelings change, or how to calm down.

It is normal to have lots of feelings through puberty.

It can be hard to manage these feelings if your child has trouble naming different feelings and communicating them.



What is on this page?

This page has information on how to support your child to name and communicate their feelings.

It has easy read information on:

- why it is important to learn about feelings
- ways you can teach your child about feelings
- things you can try to teach your child about feelings



Why is it important to name and communicate feelings?

It is important for your child to be able to name and communicate how they feel.

This can help them to manage changing feelings during puberty.

This can also help your child to know when they might need help with managing their feelings.

Naming and communicating feelings can take lots of support and practice.

Your child might see a speech pathologist or an occupational therapist that already helps them to do this.

This is OK.



Ways you can teach your child about feelings

Learning to name and communicate feelings can take a long time for some children.

This is why it is important to communicate about feelings with your child every day.

It is important to show your child what feelings look like at home.

This means you should stay calm and give support when your child is struggling with feelings, especially when they are angry or frustrated.



How to teach your child about feelings

Here are some things you can try to teach your child about their feelings.



Name everyday feelings

Name the different feelings your child is having during the day.

Name the different things they do when they have different feelings like:

- how their face looks
- how their body moves
- the words they use

You might say things like:

- “You look very happy playing with your Lego! I can see your big smile”
- “I can see that you are feeling anxious because you are fidgeting with your toys a lot. What would you like to do to feel better?”

You can also try this when your child is doing things like:

- reading a book
- watching television
- playing alone or with friends

There are lots of different shows for children that talk about what feelings look like.

You can find lots of clips on websites like YouTube.

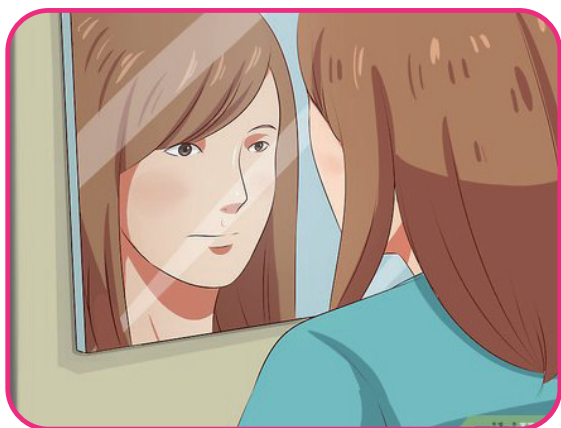


You should always watch clips before showing them to your children to make sure they are safe.

Label strong feelings

If your child is having strong feelings, you can try naming them as they happen.

For example if your child is laughing you might say:



“You are laughing, you must be happy!”

or

“You are laughing, what kind of feeling is that?”

You can also use mirrors to help your child see what strong feelings look like.

You can sit with your child and ask them to make an 'excited' or 'frustrated' face for you.

You can also try making big faces and asking your child to name the feeling.

Draw your feelings

Drawing can be a good way to help communicate feelings.



Ask your child to show you different feelings by drawing a face.

You can also use big pieces of paper to trace an outline of your child's body.

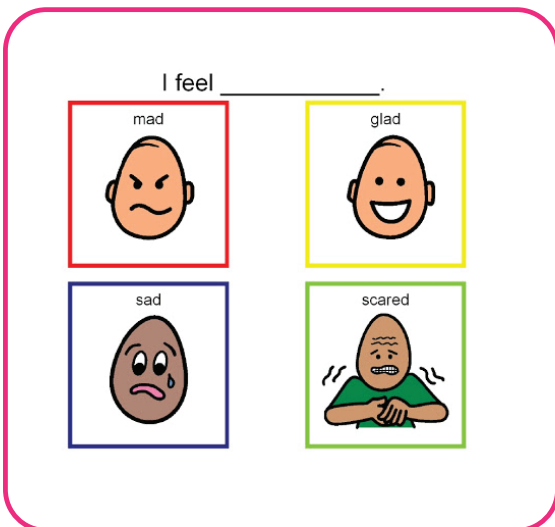
Ask your child to draw where they feel different feelings on the body picture.



They can use different colours and symbols for different feelings.

For example, they might draw a purple swirl on the tummy to show anxiety.

Use feelings scales and emotion charts



Scales and charts are a good way to measure changing feelings.

You can use numbers, traffic lights or different faces to track which feeling your child might be having.

For example, if your child starts to feel angry about something they might point to:

- an angry face
- a red light
- the number 10 on a scale

This can be a good way to help your child tell people how they are feeling.

Make a 'Feelings Book'

You can make a book to help your child with feelings during the day.

You can make a 'feelings book' by putting things in a notebook like:

- different faces
- colours
- symbols

These things can represent different feelings for your child to match to how they are feeling.

This can be helpful if your child is at school, with new people or cannot access their usual communication devices.

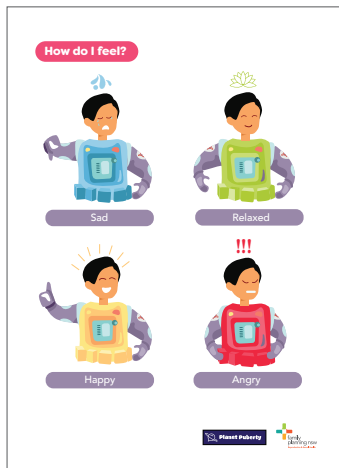


Resources you can use:

How I feel?

Planet Puberty Worksheet

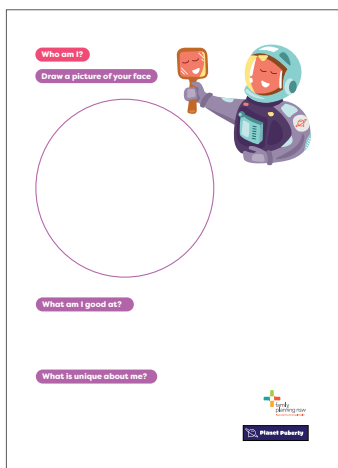
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Who am I?

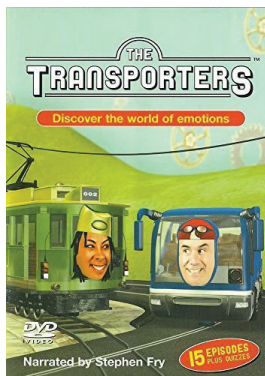
Planet Puberty

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Creating-a-positive-self-F.pdf](https://www.planetpuberty.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Creating-a-positive-self-F.pdf)



The Transporters (DVD)

[https://resources.autismcentreof-
excellence.org/p/transportersuk](https://resources.autismcentreof-excellence.org/p/transportersuk)





Talk About Cards – Self Awareness

<https://www.amazon.com/Talkabout-Cards-Self-Awareness-Activities/dp/0863889018>



The Kids' Guide to Staying Awesome and in Control: Simple Stuff to Help Children Regulate Their Emotions and Senses

by Lauren Brukner



Autism: Parent guide to therapies

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/autism/therapies-guide>



Bears Feeling Cards

<http://www.qcards.com.au/the-bear-cards>



Feelings Chart (PDF)

https://www.highspeedtraining.co.uk/hub/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/autism_hurt_feelings_scale.pdf



What to read next:

- [Creating a positive self-image](#)
- [Communication and social skills](#)

For more information go to the Planet Puberty website

www.planetpuberty.org.au