

Labeling Feelings

Providing words for emotional experiences helps a child become more aware of their feelings, and better able to express and regulate them.

Give voice to their feeling states by saying:

“Your smile shows me that you’re excited about being around your friends. That makes me feel happy, too! ”

“It looks like you feel really angry that you spilled your snack.”

Labeling your own feelings shows a child that it is normal to experience a range of feelings:

“It makes me feel happy when I see you having fun.”

“I feel frustrated when I am running late.”

“I feel sad when we have to say goodbye to our friends, too.”

Describing coping strategies helps a child learn when and how to use them:

“It looks like you feel really angry that you spilled your snack...let’s take some big breaths to calm down, and then we can get another one together.”

“I feel sad when we have to say goodbye to our friends, too...let’s go play something fun to help us feel better.”