



Emotion Coaching for Young Children

1. Recognize negative emotions as a way to connect

- Children have a hard time controlling emotions
- Stay compassionate, loving, kind
- Communicate empathy and understanding
 - “You’re having a hard time. I’m here to help.”
 - “You’re really upset. I’ll stay with you until you’re calm.”

2. Help your child label their emotions

- Once children can appropriately recognize and label emotions, they will be more apt to self-regulate
 - “I sense that you are getting angry.”
 - “It sounds like you’re feeling worried.”
- Describe problem simply, from child’s point of view
- Accept corrections from child

3. Set and enforce limits

- If child is breaking rules, remind them: all emotions are acceptable, but all behaviors are not
 - “It’s OK to be mad, but it’s not OK to hit.”
 - “I understand you’re upset, and I can’t let you throw your toys.”



- Stop the behavior if necessary
 - Prevent child from hitting you
 - Take blocks away
 - Move to safe space away from others

4. Coach child

- If child is calm- brainstorm alternate solutions/offer choices
 - “What might help you to feel better?”
 - “What else can you try?”
- Offer coping strategies