



Emotions and Feelings

As children are still learning and developing, it is difficult for them at times to truly identify and describe how they feel. When they reach a particular stage of build-up with their emotions, it can be especially difficult for them to articulate what's going on and we see them as tantrums, meltdowns, blow-ups, shut-downs and defiance. When things are building up, children need help to define and contain, and manage though the overwhelming waves of feelings, which is an important role as for us as parents.

Skills in naming and identifying emotions are best taught and explored when a child is feeling calm, and helps them to build emotional recognition pathways. When these pathways are built, children can show greater emotional intelligence, and hence better regulate their emotions.

Recognising emotions in ourselves is important, however it also extends to social relationships. When children can recognise emotions not only in themselves, but in others, it can improve their social skills by helping them to learn empathy as well as learning to more effectively interpret signals from others.

Using emotional regulation cards allows for children to increasing children's emotional vocabulary, and is often used as a therapeutic tool. A visual aide can aide in communicating what can at times be difficult to communicate, and can open up all sorts of dialogues in the home about feelings. At this stage, naming the "right" emotion is not as important as learning that there are a range of emotions, and getting a child to stop and momentarily reflect upon how they are feeling.