HEALING
EMPORIUM
RECLAIM • REBUILD • RISE

FREE FAMILY RESOURCE

THE FEELINGS EXPLORER

An emotion wheel and conversation guide
for children, teens and parents

NAME IT • FEEL IT • UNDERSTAND IT

Every feeling carries information.
Every child deserves to feel heard.

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Explore your emotion wheel

Start with the middle: Which big feeling is closest?



More than one feeling can be true at the same time.

You can point, draw, gesture or choose not to talk yet.

What feelings may be telling us

Emotions are clues, not instructions. All feelings are allowed; all actions are not.

JOY

Something feels good, safe, meaningful or fun.

Share it. Savour it. Ask: What made today feel good?

SADNESS

Something hurts, is missing, or did not work out.

Offer comfort. Ask: Do you want company or space?

ANGER

A boundary, need or expectation may feel crossed.

Stay safe. Ask: What felt unfair or blocked?

FEAR

Your brain senses possible danger or uncertainty.

Offer reassurance. Ask: What would help you feel safer?

DISGUST

Something feels unpleasant, wrong or too much.

Respect boundaries. Ask: What feels uncomfortable?

SURPRISE

Something unexpected happened; it may feel good or bad.

Pause and orient. Ask: What did you expect instead?

GO DEEPER

Frustrated = blocked. Disappointed = hoped for something else.
Lonely = longing for connection. Overwhelmed = too much at once.

How emotions work

A simple way to explain feelings to a child.

1 NOTICE

Your body sends signals: hot cheeks, tight tummy, tears, a fast heart, buzzing energy or a quiet, frozen feeling.

2 NAME

Choose a feeling word. 'Mad' might actually mean frustrated, embarrassed, jealous, disappointed or misunderstood.

3 FIND THE NEED

Ask: Do I need safety, rest, a choice, respect, connection, food, quiet, help or a fair boundary?

4 CHOOSE A SAFE ACTION

Breathe, move, ask for a break, drink water, draw, speak to someone or return to the conversation later.

5 REPAIR

When calm, talk about what happened, listen, apologise if needed, and decide what to try differently next time.

For neurodivergent children

Sensory overload, transitions and communication demands can intensify feelings. Use visuals, simple choices and extra processing time; never force eye contact.

From conflict to connection

A parent-and-child script to practise when everyone is calm.

PARENT

'I can see this is hard. You're safe with me.'

'Would you like quiet, a hug, or some space?'

CHILD

'I feel _____ when _____.'

'I need _____. Can we try _____?'

PARENT

'I hear that you wanted _____.'

'My job is to keep us safe. Let's find another way.'

TOGETHER

'What went wrong? What can we repair?'

'What could we do differently next time?'

When a child freezes or fawns

They may go silent or agree to please others under stress.

Reduce pressure, offer choices and revisit the conversation later.

Our family feelings check-in

Use this once a day or after a difficult moment. No pressure to share.

DAY	MY FEELING	BODY CLUE	WHAT I NEEDED	WHAT HELPED
MON				
TUE				
WED				
THU				
FRI				
SAT				
SUN				

OUR FAMILY REPAIR PROMISE

We can feel angry without hurting anyone.

We can disagree and still belong to each other.



EVERY FEELING HAS A STORY.

Every child deserves to be heard.

Three questions to take home

What am I feeling?

What might this feeling be telling me?

What do I need, and how can I ask safely?

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Educational guide only: emotions are not diagnoses. A feelings wheel is a conversation aid, not a test. Seek qualified support for persistent distress, significant behavioural changes or concerns about safety.