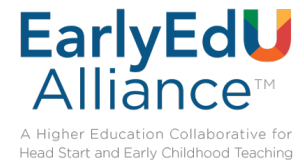


# Emotional Literacy



# Overview

**This module will focus on practices to:**

- Teach children emotional vocabulary, especially words for positive feelings.
- Help children identify emotions in themselves and others.
- Talk with parents about emotional literacy.



**By the end of this module, you should be able to:**

- Teach children expanded emotional vocabulary.
- Use strategies to help children identify emotions.
- Plan to use books to encourage emotional literacy.
- Describe effective approaches to talk with parents about emotional literacy.

# Intentional Teaching Framework





## What Is Emotional Literacy?



Emotional literacy is the ability to **identify, understand, and express emotions in a healthy way.**

## Benefits for Children



- Manage frustration more successfully
- Have fewer conflicts
- Engage in more positive behavior
- Are healthier
- Control impulses better
- Learn more in school

# Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework

		CENTRAL DOMAINS				
		APPROACHES TO LEARNING	SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT	LANGUAGE AND LITERACY	COGNITION	PERCEPTUAL, MOTOR, AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT
▲ INFANT/TODDLER DOMAINS	Approaches to Learning	Social and Emotional Development	Language and Communication	Cognition	Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development	
● PRESCHOOLER DOMAINS	Approaches to Learning	Social and Emotional Development	Language and Communication	Mathematics Development	Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development	
			Literacy	Scientific Reasoning		

Image credit: Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start



# Emotional Development from Birth

# Emotions in First Year of Life

## Birth to 6 Months

**Contentment:** Smiles after eating

**Interest:** Tracks new objects

**Distress:** Cries when left alone

## 6 Months to 1 Year

**Fear:** Suddenly shows fear of strangers at 7 or 8 months when didn't at 6 months

# Infants and Others' Emotions

## Emotional Contagion

When one infant starts crying, another joins in.

## Social Referencing

At 8 to 12 months, infants use caregivers' facial expressions or vocal cues to decide how to deal with new situations.

## Emotions Ages 2 to 4

Age	Emotional Development
2	Begins to understand others' emotions and to have empathy.
3	Understands cause and effect in interactions with children and adults.
4	Knows that others have separate feelings and desires.

# Self-Conscious Emotions

**Embarrassment   Guilt   Shame   Pride**



Around age 2, children start to understand that they are distinct from other people and begin to form a sense of self.

# A Look at Guilt and Shame

**Embarrassment**   **Guilt**   **Shame**   **Pride**

Both guilt and shame can be painful emotions, but which one is likely to be more harmful to a child's sense of self? Why?

## Multiple Emotions

Most preschoolers struggle to understand that people can experience more than one emotion at the same time.

**Example:** During a wedding ceremony, Paul's mother starts crying. When Paul tries to console her by saying, "It's okay mommy, don't be sad," she says, "No, I'm happy because they are getting married" and smiles at him through her tears.

# Teaching Emotional Vocabulary





## *Emotional Vocabulary*



Write a list of ten feeling words that you would like to teach young children.

## Share Many Emotion Words



Use *happy*, *mad*, and *sad*, but add in ***surprised***, ***annoyed***, ***excited*** and more...

“Like other forms of literacy, the richer the vocabulary, the more rewarding the experiences.”

(Joseph & Strain, 2003, p. 1)

## Negative or Positive?





In one study, children who had fewer emotion words in their vocabulary also showed ongoing challenging behavior.

# *Make Plans to Teach Emotion Words*



Discouraged



Joyful

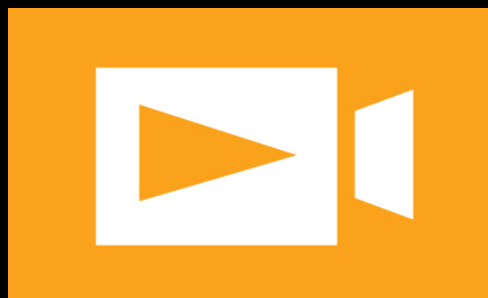


VIDEO

## *Signs for Emotions*

Think about these questions while watching this video:

- How does the teacher teach emotional vocabulary?
- How do the children respond?
- What else could the teacher do to engage the children in learning?



VIDEO: Signs for Emotions



## Video Debrief

What did you notice?

- The teacher uses sign language in addition to the names of the emotions.
- Some children join in and sign the emotions.
- She could also ask children to share a time when they felt that emotion.



## Label Throughout the Day



**Describe what you notice about children's moods.**

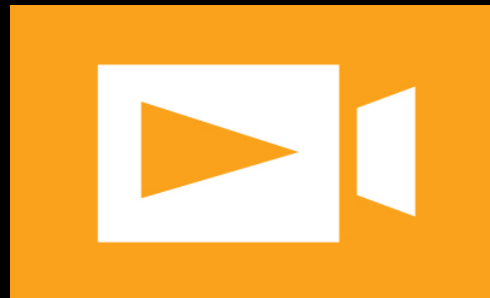
“You two seem really happy to be playing together! You keep hugging each other!”



## *Star Child*

Think about these questions while watching this video:

- How does this teacher label the child's emotion?
- How does the child respond?



VIDEO: Star Child



## Video Debrief

What did you notice in this video?

- The teacher asks if the girl is excited.
- The girl nods her head *yes*.
- The teacher describes the *big smile* on the girl's face, which suggests she is *excited*.

# Identifying Emotions



## Help Children Read Cues

Point out:

- Expressions on faces
- Body language
- Tone of voice



Teach them  
to identify  
emotions in  
themselves  
and others.



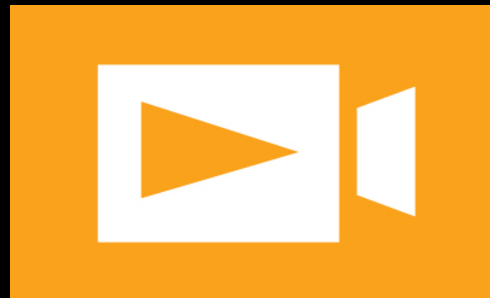
VIDEO

## *Conversations: Accident*

Think about these questions while watching this video:

- What does the teacher do to help a child identify his feeling?
- How does the child respond?
- What else could the teacher have done to expand the child's learning?





VIDEO: Conversations: Accident



## Video Debrief

What did you notice?

- The teacher asks the boy how he is feeling.
- The teacher validates the child's feeling by describing that he would also feel that way in a similar situation.

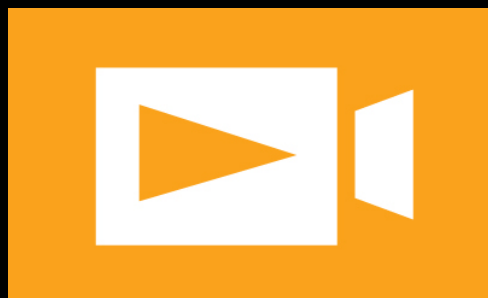


VIDEO

## *How Did You Feel?*

Think about these questions while watching this video:

- What does the teacher say and do to help children identify their feelings?
- How do the children respond?
- What else could the teacher do?



VIDEO: How Did You Feel?



## Video Debrief

What did you notice?

- The teacher asks children how they feel.
- She brings children to a chart with feeling faces to help them identify their emotions.
- She asks them what happened to change their feeling.

## Using Story Books



- Ask questions about what characters are feeling and why.
- Share new emotion words and meanings.
- Plan activities related to emotions that arise in the book.

## Sample Activity

“I feel proud when I reach the top of the climber.”



**Example:** Make a class book with children’s photos and stories about feelings.



Take a look at the *Book Nooks* on the website <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu>, but create your own activities.

## *Using Books: Emotional Literacy*

- Form small groups.
- Look at a story book.
- How would you use this book to support emotional literacy during group story time?
- Plan questions to ask, emotion words to teach, and two activities that relate to the story and support emotional literacy.



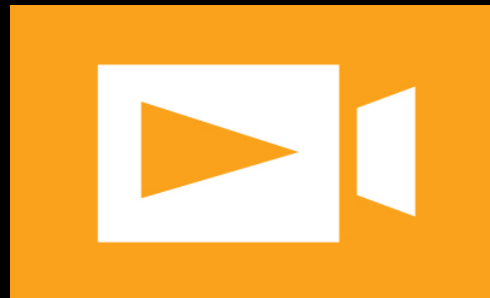
# Families and Culture



## *Ideal Emotions*

Think about these questions while watching this video:

- In what ways can cultures vary in the way they value emotions?
- Why is this important for teachers to know?



## VIDEO: Ideal Emotions

(Real to Reel: Exploring Culture and Emotions excerpt)



## Video Debrief

- Cultures may value different emotions such as *excited* or *calm*.
- It is important to understand differences to avoid making assumptions about children's behavior.

## Impact on Self-Conscious Emotions

Situations that cause self-conscious emotions in children may vary across cultures.

**Example:** Among Zuni Indians, standing out from others is discouraged. As a result, Zuni children who achieve an individual success, such as outdoing peers on a task, may feel embarrassment or shame.



## *Talking with Families*

- What questions would be helpful to ask families about what they teach their children about emotions?
- What words can you use to indicate respect and equal partnership with families?
- How can you share about practices you are using to teach emotional literacy and why?

# Bringing It All Together



## **Teachers encourage emotional literacy when they:**

- Teach emotional vocabulary, including words that describe positive feelings.
- Help children identify their feelings and those of others.
- Talk with parents about values and practices related to emotions.





VIDEO  
ASSIGNMENT

## *Teaching Emotion Words*

- Spend a couple hours **observing children** in your class and the emotions they express.
- Based on your observation, **make a plan to teach two feeling words** to a small group of children.
- Think about child-friendly definitions, ways to show children how to identify the emotions, and opportunities for children to share about times when they felt them.



## *Using Books to Teach Emotional Literacy*

- 1. Make a plan to use a children's story book** to teach children about emotions.
- 2. Arrange to film** your lesson with children.
- 3. Read the book** and do the planned activities.
- 4. Review your recording and reflect** on your use of practices and children's responses.



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