

## Teacher Time: Emotional Literacy with Infants and Toddlers

Mike Browne: Ooh-whee! Estoy aquí! Estoy listo! I am here. I am ready. And let's rock and roll.

Becky Sughrim: I'm ready, too.

[Music plays]

Group: "Teacher Time"

"Teacher Time"

"Teacher Time"

"Teacher Time"

Becky: Hi, everyone, and welcome to our second infant/toddler episode of Teacher Time, Emotional Literacy with Infants and Toddlers. I am Becky Sughrim. My pronouns are she/her.

Mike: I'm Mike Browne. My pronouns are he/him.

Becky: We are from the National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning. We are so excited to have you here with us today. We're going to be focusing on positive behavior supports this season of Teacher Time. And last webinar we talked about the importance of building relationships. Today, we're going to be talking about emotional literacy.

Mike: I want to call your attention to the Viewer Guide again. You will find that once again your resource widget. This season our Viewer Guide might look a little different than you're used to. This Viewer Guide is really focused on birth to five, including specific age group information for infants, toddlers, and preschool children. It's packed full of so many wonderful information about the development, teaching practices, helpful, quick tips and reminders that you cut out and post in your learning space.

There's also notetaking space and a resource list for you to get yourself into. You can download it, download the guide, and use it throughout our time together for taking notes, reflecting, and planning out how to use Teacher Time practices in your settings. As always, share with anyone, mom, dad, sister, cousin, or colleagues. I think that's it for logistics, and I'm ready to rock and roll, Becky, what about you?

Becky: Thank you so much, Mike. I also love the Viewer's Guide. Today, during our time together we're going to be discussing positive behavior support teaching practices. We're going to take some time to promote your wellness in our All About You segment. Then we're going to connect effective practice to brain development in our new segment this season called Neuroscience Nook. We're going to discuss the Small Change, Big Impact. Our focus on equity segments about individualizing strategies that build a sense of belonging and promote

emotional literacy skills for all children, including children who have a variety of learning characteristics. Then we're going to wrap up our time as we always do with our BookCASE segment, where we get to connect our topic to books that you can share with children and families.

Let's start off, Mike, with connecting to our famous Teacher Time tree. Let's check-in, and we will hear from you. Enter the number you most relate to at this moment, we want to hear how you're feeling. Mike, what about you, what creature are you most relating to right now?

Mike: I'm feeling like a number 12. We're in snowy Seattle right now. There's a leaf blower somehow going off outside of my window, so you might hear a little bit of that. I'm feeling 12 because the change of seasons and times makes me just feel all cuddly. I think with that connection, with that relationship, it's really helpful for me to be in a relationship with other people, to be in a relationship with community because it mentally and spiritually, and emotionally fills up my bucket, as well as it's super great for my mental health. I really love to focus on that. I hope that other people take the time to take inventory, take stock of where you and lean into community. Becky, what about you?

Becky: I am definitely feeling like a number six, I need to ask for a little bit of help. I got to reach my hand out for someone, and I'm feeling so grateful talking about community, Mike, that I'm here with you. We have our media team, Ryan, and Dougal. We've got our Q&A support, Vanessa, Christa, Tomay, and Katie, just surrounded by people who are reaching their hands out back to me. Let's look at our Q&A. I see some 10s and 15s a combo, a one, and a five. I love that. A little bit of both. A 10 and a 17. Keep on putting those numbers into the chat. Feeling like a number 11. We're so happy you're here with us today and thanks for sharing how you're feeling.

Mike: We are super excited to be focusing on positive behavior supports this season and social and emotional development – one of the domains in the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes frameworks, or ELOF. These practical strategies will be discussed today, which will be focusing on emotional functional categories of the social and emotional domains, as you can see highlighted here. This season of Teacher Time we'll be working our way through the Pyramid Model. The Pyramid Model is positive behavior support, or for short, PBS. This framework is really used for addressing our social and emotional development, and challenging behaviors of young children.

This framework offers a continuum of evidence-based teaching practices that are organized into four levels of support. We're just going to work our way from the bottom all the way to the top. It looks a little bit dark blue to me – nurturing and responsive relationship is our bottom piece. Then we go to our next one which I think is a little light blue, it's our high-quality supportive environments. We move into our purple, which is the social and emotional teaching strategies. Finally, right at the very top is our intensive intervention

Today we're really going to be focusing on the third level of the pyramid, the social and emotional teaching strategies, found in purple. If you want to learn more about the Pyramid

Model, check out the resources from the NCPMI in your Viewer's Guide, which I mentioned earlier, in the resource list section. Becky, to you.

Becky: Thinking about emotional literacy and regulation, which is all about the ability to recognize and express our feelings, and manage our actions and feelings. We want to hear from you, what strategies and practices you have in place to support emotional literacy skills with infants and toddlers in your care. Go ahead and put those in the Q&A. Mike, I'm curious, how do you support emotional literacy?

Mike: I am big on environmental justice when I'm in the classroom. And supporting children and connecting to nature in so many different ways that are really responsive to their needs, hopes, and desires. As we were in the season of fall or as you can hear from our leaf blower, the leaves are falling and depending on where you are in the world, that might be a lot, that might be a little bit. What I do in my classroom, because there are a lot of leaves in our area is we go out and we collect them. We collect pinecones and use the pinecones as writing utensils as opposed to traditional pen and paper, just to get different fine motor skills, and texture in our hands. Then we use those leaves that we collect as replacements for paper, that environmental lens on that.

Then we invite the children to write love letters, or notes of care, back on the leaves, back into the environment. We take them, assuming they don't jump into them because they are children, they love jumping into things. We replace it, and we go back into the environment. It's just a really nice way to show nurture, social and emotional growth, relationship, love, and care for our natural environments, as well as just having the opportunity to say, hey, thanks for helping us breathe this wonderful air and helping us connect and heal. That's one way in which I try to get all those different domains altogether. Do you have any ideas, Becky?

Becky: I have some ideas that are very much connected to some of the ideas we're getting in the chat. I really enjoy reading books about emotions. I saw that come up through the chat. I saw a participant say by letting children express themselves, recognizing their emotions. We saw teachers helping children identify their feelings. A number of comments about using contrast discipline, using mirrors around the classroom, and pointing out emotions in the characters in the books. Model expressing my own emotions when appropriate, and helping label children's emotions, especially using accurate labels, more than just sad and happy. So many ideas in the chat. Social stories and roleplaying. Again, the use of books. So many great things. Our Q&A team is working fast to get those out to everyone. Thank you so much for sharing.

Mike: Positive behavior support, or PBS, is a positive approach to challenging behaviors. It's focused on using intentional — keyword, intentional — teaching strategies to proactively build social and emotional skills. PBS recognized that all behavior, no matter how big or how small, communicate a message or communicates a need. And it's us as educators to understand that need of a child's behavior, which could be anything from maybe the child's hungry, or maybe there's a change in sleep routine, maybe a family is gone, or a new family member has arrived. When we are very intentional, we work together in relationship, in partnership with the

families. We can then come to a better conclusion to what's coming up for this child. We can teach the child more effective ways to actually communicate their needs.

Becky: Let's turn our attention to you in our all about you segment. We do our best caregiving and teaching when we feel well ourselves. Engaging in self-care practices can help educators build greater social-emotional capacity to work through challenging times with the children in their care. Before we can support children's behaviors positively and intentionally, it's important to find ways to regulate our own feelings throughout the day. The technique we're going to be talking about today is color visualization. Emotional literacy and regulation is the ability to recognize and express our feelings and manage our actions and behaviors, which can be really hard.

I don't think we can say it enough, before we can support children with their emotional literacy and regulation, it's important to find ways that we regulate our own feelings throughout the day. Our ability to self-regulate is foundational to our ability to support the child in our care and help them through coregulation.

Color visualization is one way to strengthen our emotional literacy and the ability to regulate. We invite you to take a few seconds to pause and focus on a color. You'll breathe and feel. This can help support you in responding intentionally to a child's cues, behaviors, and communication. It gives you that second to pause and think. We want to invite you to follow along in this exercise. Take a moment and get in a comfortable position. Wiggle and get comfy. Try to relax your body. Allow your eyes to softly close if that feels safe and comfortable for you. Imagine a color that feels soothing or happy to you. Inhale and visualize that color entering your body. Allow the color to wash over you, feeling calm and safe, refreshed, rejuvenated. Feel that color travel through your body from your head to your toe, relaxing the muscles as it goes. Then exhale and return to this moment.

We hope that this is going to be a helpful self-regulation strategy for you in the classroom and the learning environment. If you feel like sharing what color you visualized, please go ahead, and put that in the chat and our Q&A team will push those out for everyone to see.

Mike: As you begin to type, let's talk more about emotional literacy. Emotional literacy is the ability to monitor the emotions of oneself and others. It's about noticing and expressing and regulating for yourself, as well as for young children. Especially with young children, it's about coregulation. Coregulating your own emotions, noticing emotions in those around you. All children need guidance to learn emotional literacy skills, and some need more frequent and intensive intervention. When children can manage their own emotions, they're more equipped to establish healthy relationships, focus better on learning tasks, and engage in positive behaviors.

Supporting emotional literacy is about helping children learn the ways to understand and identify their emotions, and their feelings, and helping them to learn to recognize, to accept it, because all feelings are valid. Then to express those emotions in healthy ways. Emotional literacy also includes understanding and responding appropriately to other people's emotions.

Some key ideas and practices for supporting emotional literacy are, for example, we're going to focus on identifying children's emotions. Emotions start in the body. Children need help from experienced adults to learn how to recognize and eventually describe those physical sensations such as their energy level, their body tension, and the variations in breathing, and then the heart rate. Educators can increase children's self-awareness by using a wide variety of words like we mention in the chat a little bit to label and describe the emotions they see infants and young children experiencing. It's more than just happy or sad, maybe you feel anxious or overwhelmed.

In the picture on our far left, the adult is holding the infant in their lap and might be saying something to the infant, at least what I think. You seem so focused. You are looking so intently at what's happening over there at the carpet. When supporting children to really develop emotional literacy, it's important for adults to individualize how you're communicating about emotions with children. For a child who is deaf or hard of hearing, work together with that child's family, the specialist, and the community to learn simple sign languages to use when labeling a child's emotions. For a child who is dual language learner, or a multilingual learner, you can learn and use a few emotion words in the child's home language.

Becky: Another key idea to supporting emotional literacy is practicing empathy, that young children calm more quickly when they feel accepted and understood. Supportive educators validate children's feelings and can help the child determine what might have happened to trigger those feelings. When children make the connection between what happened and their feelings, they are more likely to understand their own emotions and have empathy for others who might be experiencing the same thing.

In this picture, in the middle, the adult might have picked up the infant after the infant got startled and began to cry, and maybe the adult held the infant for a while and patted their back and made those shushing noises to emulate the sound in the womb, it can be really comforting for an infant to hear and support the infant in co-regulating.

Mike: Let's teach self-regulation strategies. As young children better understand their emotions they become more capable of emotional regulation. Infants manage emotions by co-regulating through warm interactions with responsive caregivers. As children really develop, they begin to self-regulate. Educators can really help them maintain positive feelings or shift unwanted feelings by modeling safe and culturally respectful ways of expressing emotions and teaching a variety of self-regulation strategies.

Co-regulation is very much needed in the infant and toddler years, as they are just beginning to develop emotional literacy and some infants and toddlers can engage in self-regulation by hugging, sucking on their thumbs or other fingers, or finding a cozy spot to rest, as shown right here on the picture on the right.

Becky: Now it's time for our neuroscience segment. Research tells us that in the early years, which are foundational for brain development, adults play an important role in supporting healthy brain development connections and architecture. In this segment, we're really excited

to connect this research to everyday teaching practices. Today, we're going to be looking at some work from Dr. Dan Siegel.

This is a quick way to think about your brain. That's using your hand. Your wrist is your spinal cord, which is the pathway from the brain to the body. Your palm is the inner brain stem, which regulates automatic functions. Your thumb is your amygdala. If you place your thumb in your palm you'll form the limbic system, which is our emotional responses. Your fingers are your cerebral cortex, which includes things like language, memory, and reasoning. Your fingertips are your prefrontal cortex, which is our decision making.

If you close them on top of your palm and your thumb, there you have it, a model of the brain. The brain system and limbic system, this area right here, work together to release cortisol and prepare your body for fight, flight, or freeze response to feeling overwhelmed, or large amounts of stress, and this can be a good thing. We do need this to happen to react to danger. Usually our prefrontal cortex will kick in and calm us down once we've realized that the threat is unreal or that it's ended. But if we're in survival mode and our fight, flight, freeze response is really triggered, we might flip our lid. Our limbic system, our emotional responses, will take over. When we've flipped our lid our cortex is no longer in control. We can't access those decision-making parts of the brain, the language, memory, or reasoning, which means we can no longer effectively communicate with others, control our emotions, or respond to reasoning.

Have you ever tried to reason with a toddler or infant or an adult, for that matter, during these strong feelings? It's really hard, and you can't because they're just not capable of accessing those parts of their brain at the moment. What we need to do is we need to help them close their frame, put their lid back on, through coregulation so that they can access those parts of their brain.

Now, we don't have to be in real danger to flip our lid, that really any stressful situation can cause our cortisol levels to rise and shut down our thinking brain. Did you know that the prefrontal cortex isn't fully developed until we're 25, which means children and young adults can find it much harder to respond to stressful situations and regulate their emotions. For young children, infants, and toddlers especially, the caregiver must be responsive to the child's needs, supporting that child with coregulation to put their lid back on.

I also want to say that in stressful situations adults can flip their lids. I know I have experienced this in my personal life and in my work life in the learning environment, and it's important that we have our own strategies to help us put our lids back on. That's for your own wellbeing and also so we can best support the children in our care. Tying this back to all about you, maybe the color visualization is one way that you can help put your lid back on in moments where you feel like you're going to flip it, or it's been flipped. Let's look at what this might look like for a child in the learning environment.

[Video begins]

Educator: Do you want to come look at it? Oh my goodness, you stepped on a toy and that really hurt, didn't it? I'm so sorry you stepped on a toy. Can I rub your foot for you to make it feel better? Can I rub your foot to make it feel better? There you go. What? Dada. Where did dada go? Are you feeling better now?

[Video ends]

Becky: As we saw in this clip here, the child stepped on a toy and fell. This might have seemed like such a small situation for an adult, but it was a big event for the infant. This infant flipped their lid. She was unable to process the steps of this event or self-regulate. The adult noticed this and responded to it intentionally through coregulation. The educator pulled the infant into their lap, they rubbed their foot, they talked about what happened. The infant was able to calm down, was able to get her lid back on and engage in a different activity.

Mike: Becky, if this doesn't work out, you can definitely be a hand model. I loved it. Now that we discussed the importance of emotional literacy let's shift back to looking at looking at practical strategies for how to support emotional literacy with infants and to toddlers. How do we do this? We go right back into the basics, y'all.

The basics are a collection of strategies that can be used in any setting with infants and toddlers. The Teacher Time BASICS are behavior expectations in advance. Attend to and encourage positive behaviors. Scaffold with cues and prompts. Increase engagement. Create or add a challenge. And last but not least, specific feedback.

In this season of Teacher Time, we are focusing on two letters of the basics for each episode. We hope that you will join us for all the webinars of the season. My colleagues will post that back into the chat where you can find that. If you missed the last webinar on building relationships with infants and toddlers you can access the recording on push play. We invite you to tune into all the webinars so you can get all the basics of positive behavior supports.

Today we're going to be focusing on providing examples of S, scaffold with cues and prompts, and I, increase engagement to support emotional literacy in self-regulation. S, scaffold for cues and prompts. One way we can scaffold with cues and prompts to support emotional literacy is to use a variety of emotion words to describe what you notice about a child's emotions as well as your own emotions. You might say to an infant, you are kicking your legs so fast. You seem pretty excited. Or you might engage in some self-talk and say, that was such a nice hug, thank you so much, that makes me feel loved after sharing a hug with a toddler.

In addition to using emotion words like happy and sad, mad and tired, try adding in some other difficult words, advanced vocabulary, such as content or calm, interested, excited, glad, safe, scary, worried, and frustrated. It's important to include these emotion words in their home language representative in the learning environment. Check-in with families about the emotion words that they use at home and then try adding it into your day throughout the day. You can

always scaffold by helping children read emotion cues and others by naming and describing the emotions on faces, and body language, and other people's tone of voices.

After an infant gets started during, for example, tummy time, you might say something like, oh, Demari's eyes got super, very big and wide and she jumped a little, and squeaked. I wonder if she was surprised, as an infant is sitting into your lap. Or you might say to a toddler after they run into a peer and they bump into them, you ran into Ross, and Ross fell. Look at Ross's face, he has tears coming down his cheeks and his mouth is turned down at the corners, it seems like he might be upset. Then you can try to wait, wait for a second, pause and see how Ross responds. You can try asking, Ross, how are you feeling?

We can make our best interpretations of how our child is feeling, and it's super important to hold that space where the child feels safe in sharing how they are feeling. Remember the importance of individualizing the strategies you use to scaffold to ensure they're matched to a child's learning characteristics and needs for support. For a young child with a language delay you might need to use shorter phrases or emphasize or repeat certain words. For a child who's less attentive to cues you can use strategies to help them orient to your face before you scaffold.

Move your body so your right there on their level. Use exaggerated facial expressions. Or you can gently touch the child to help gain their attention.

Becky: Thanks, Mike. Let's watch a video of what this might look like in a setting with infants.

[Video begins]

Educator: Are you interested or just studying? I don't think you're very hungry for lunch, either, since your nose is so runny. You're feeling kind of yucky today.

[Video ends]

Becky: In this video clip we saw the educator name so many feelings in such a short period of time. The educator said things like focused, interested, not hungry, feeling yucky. I also appreciated the way they phrased the feeling, saying things like, oh, I think you're feeling, or you could say, it seems like, or I'm wondering that. We don't know for sure what infants and toddlers are feeling and starting with those sentences can be really helpful. I also loved that at the end that little nod from the toddler when the educator said, oh, you're feeling yucky.

Mike: One way to increase engagement – speaking of, feel free to type your thoughts, your ideas, what's coming up for you into our chat. We'd always love to hear from you. But one way to increase engagement and support infants and toddlers with emotional literacy is through hands on activities. If culturally appropriate, we can try the following activities. For example, we can use a mirror to inspect feelings in yourself and others. You can place an infant size mirror on the floor for infants to look at, or safely on the wall at the child's level. You can talk about expressions and name the feelings you see, or ask the children, hey, what do you see?



You might practice making different feeling faces in the mirror while writing while reading a book about emotions with toddlers or take turns making different expressions in the mirror for different emotions. You can support children who are dual language learners or children with language delays. You can [inaudible] photos or drawings of faces to explain different emotions next to the mirror. Then point to those emotions as you verbally label it to help provide the information in a multitude of ways.

Another one that I love to use is using puppets or dolls. Model and use puppets to show safe emotion expression and self-regulation strategies. You can create puppets from belts, from small paper bags, and then you can walk through daily experiences while pointing their various feelings that might be coming up for them. Or you can create stories where puppets experience strong emotions that toddlers can very often relate to, and explain ways in which the puppet can coregulate or self-regulate. Once again, check out the Viewer's Guide for more hands-on activities. Let's watch how one educator uses puppets and dolls to talk about different emotions.

[Video begins]

Educator: [Speaking Spanish] We are going to talk about something very important, right? Our emotions. When I cry, what do I do? Right? When I laugh... ha-ha-ha-ha. Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha. When we are angry, right, yes. We go like this... angry. Let's find the different faces here. How does he feel? Look at his tear here. Right? He is sad. Why do you think he is crying? Why do you think he cries? It's normal, right? Is crying normal? Is it okay to cry? It is, right?

Child 1: [Inaudible]

Educator: [Speaking Spanish] Oh, and that's why we cry, right, because we're sad.

[Video ends]

Mike: You heard different words being used here. You heard [Speaking Spanish]. How is he when asking the children questions. You heard, [Speaking Spanish], why is he crying? This is an example of nurturing relationships. Nurturing responsive relationships that serve and return model that we talked about in our last webinar. Make sure you go back and check that out in Teacher Time webinars.

The educator talked about several different emotions. In addition to using the puppets they had little feeling faces on the dolls, and they made facial expressions for each emotion. Let's see what's happening into the chat, because I keep getting these pings. There's a couple things, like, you can use socks if you don't have felt material. One person said that we have dolls with various facial expressions in the class that teachers imitate while showing the infants, and it always gets a fun reaction from them. Keep your comments coming. Becky, did you see on that I potentially missed or anything coming up for you?

Becky: I just loved that this educator talked about the feelings and made the expressions with it. I think that's what's coming through out chat a lot, too. It's having multiple means of communicating the skill and the information. One of the comments I see in the chat is that I found that having scripts for situations help with how I respond to children, especially when it comes to social conflicts. Having something to work from is helpful. We also have comments about social-emotional beanbags with older toddlers, where, again, mirrors, looking at mirrors, and pointing out emotions on different [inaudible].

Let's jump into our next segment, which is small change, big impact, where we share how small adjustments to the way we set up our learning environment, modify our curriculum, or engage with children can make a big difference in a child's learning. We know that children vary in their learning characteristics and how they engage with the people and materials in their learning environments. These small changes also known as curriculum modifications are made based on the individual needs of a child to help promote their engagement and participation. We know that when children are more engaged, they have more opportunities to learn.

Some children might need more highly individualized teaching to help them learn emotional literacy, like we see at the top of the pyramid, such as embedded teaching or intensive individualized teaching. Making curriculum modifications based on a child's individual learning needs can be a really great place to start to support engagement.

In today's segment, we're going to share examples of visual supports. Like we saw in the last video clip where the educator used those little stuffed faces to talk about emotions with a group of children, visual supports are an environmental modification where adults intentionally add visual information to the environment to help children engage in activities and routines or with others. Visual supports can be helpful for all children. They can be especially effective for children with disabilities or suspected delays. Some children may have a difficult time attending to understanding or processing verbal information. Visual supports can provide that static, concrete information about a variety of information. It can be routines, expectations, or as we've been talking about today, language and vocabulary related to a specific concept or skill like emotional literacy.

Using visuals along with verbal language presents information in a way that can help children focus on key elements. Visual supports can be designed to meet the individual needs of a child, like their age, developmental level, or learning style by using different visual formats to share information. It might be small objects, photographs, drawings, or prints, or something like this feelings wheel we see on the slides.

Let's take a look at some examples of how visual supports can be used to support learning emotional literacy. I also want to say to check out your Viewer's Guide for a link to a webinar from our inclusion series that shares some highly individualized teaching practices, including visualized supports to support social and emotional learning for children with disabilities.

Mike: This feeling face poster is an example of a visual support to help children learn emotional vocabulary. This poster includes illustrations of different emotions and expressions, and the

feelings are written out in both English and Spanish. This type of visual is used in many different learning environments and can be super useful for many children. But some children may not attend to or benefit from a visual like this. They might need visual information in a more individualized format.

If a child in your program needs more individualized support to learn emotions or feeling words, how might you individualize visual support? That's a question I'm going to throw out into the chat.

Becky: As you are thinking and writing in your ideas, we're going to share some ideas that we have thought about. Individualizing a visual support for a specific child could be bringing in dolls with different expressions so that the children can engage with information in a 3D format.

I think we've heard a lot about that in the chat, the emotion beanbags, having puppets, using emotion dolls. You might individualize by using photos of real children versus illustrations, and specifically toddlers. And maybe you cut these feeling cards out, like, these ones we see on the slide here, and laminate them so that they can be carried around and held. Having something that's tangible You could also individualize the feeling cards further by taking pictures of the specific child or their friends, or their family members, to help increase their attention to the visuals. Or maybe you pare down the number of visuals that you provide and slowly introduce emotions over time.

This is a really wonderful opportunity to engage with families on how to individualize the modification for their child. There are so many ways to modify this information, and I see there's lots of ideas coming through our chat, using videos, emotion dolls, or have them look at pictures from a parent's phone. Lots of narrating, adding in that language to the visual supports, using pictures of real children, role playing with dolls or bears.

Using different formats outside of pictures and illustrations to support different types of learners. There's so many ideas coming in, keep them coming and our Q&A team will continue to push those out for everyone to see. It's also important to remember that not all visuals are supportive for every single child. The key is to think intentionally about each child's learning needs, their preferences, and their styles, and individualize and modify visuals as needed. If you want to learn more about visual and other environmental supports, we encourage you to check out the 15 minute [inaudible] on environmental supports on the ECLKC website. That link is in your Viewer's Guide.

Mike: Throughout this webinar we have been discussing ways to foster social and emotional skills for all children, and today, in our focus on equity segment we would use our equity lens to take a closer look at implicit bias and how that impact it can have on building relationships with children. The way emotions are expressed and valued differs across cultures.

In some cultures overt expressions of emotions is encouraged, while in other people are a bit more reserved. For example, looking at these representations of emotions, starting with the

one on the left, the different emotions can signify, be interpreted, or received differently depending on the culture, background, or experience of the person.

For example, in my culture, I'm Afro Caribbean, and in my community we actually don't say sorry. The word sorry is not used often because sorry indicates something was done intentionally. And we try not to intentionally hurt someone.

It's extremely important to think about how emotions are expressed within the different cultures, and more specifically how they're expressed in each family as they are nuances in every single different culture as well. Sometimes these subtle biases that we might not be able to be aware of can interfere with our ability to interpret and respond to children's emotions, especially when children come from different background and traditions that are different from our own. The process of uncovering these implicit bias takes time, and it takes reflection.

Becky: Yes, it really does. It's important work. Let's hear from Dr. Jeanne Tsai from Stanford University, and learn more a little bit about how culture and ideal affect. While you're watching the video we encourage you to think about these two questions, in what ways can cultures vary the way they value emotions? Why is it important for educators to know?

[Video begins]

Educator: The little girl was far from home.

Narrator: As schools across America become more diverse what are the implications of culture in the classroom? Dr. Jeanne Tsai, who directs the Culture and Emotions lab in the Psychology Department at Stanford, says, for starters, culture greatly influences what's known as our ideal affect.

Dr. Jeanne Tsai: Ideal affect refers to the effect of states or the feelings that people value, desire, ideally want to feel. This is opposed to the feelings that people actually have or what we call their actual affect.

Narrator: Dr. Tsai initially conducted a series of studies with adults, some European American, some East Asian, to measure the specific feelings they ideally wanted to feel or their ideal affect.

Dr. Tsai: What we found was that European American context, valued these excitement states, or what we call high arousal positive states, like excitement, enthusiasm, elation, more than many East Asian context, which valued the more calm states, calm peacefulness, serenity, what we call these low arousal positive states. What's interesting is that across a variety of different studies and samples we always find these cultural differences in how people want to feel, or their ideal affect. We often don't find any differences in how people feel.

We think that this is because culture teaches us what's desirable, what's moral, what's virtuous. A lot of cultural psychologists have talked about that as being one of the primary roles of culture. And we've just applied this to the idea of emotions, that culture also teaches us what emotions are moral, right, and virtuous.

Narrator: At what age do culture and cultural differences affect ideal affect?

Dr. Tsai: Kids begin to develop an understanding of the emotions that they should feel, or that they should display on their faces right around preschool age, between the ages of three and five. We reasoned that once they developed this understanding that when we should see cultural differences and ideal affect.

I think it's really important to consider not only how culture shapes the languages that people are speaking, or the kinds of foods they're eating, but also how culture shapes the students' psyches and how they're thinking and feeling and relating to others. I think if educators can be sensitive to those cultural differences then we can reduce the likelihood of misunderstandings, mischaracterizing a child as disengaged or as not being creative or not having the potential to be a leader when they might have all of those things, they're just coming from a culture that manifests those qualities in a different way.

Educator 2: Still exploring all the colors?

Dr. Tsai: If we could have classrooms that could accommodate that and benefit and capitalize on the cultural differences, I think we would all learn much more rather than being restricted to just one way of being.

[Video ends]

Becky: There are so many wonderful points in that video. One of the things that really stands out to me is that children begin to develop an understanding of emotions they should feel around preschool. We're thinking about infants and toddlers today, which means we're thinking about building the foundation. How can we set up a learning environment where all cultures and feelings are valued.

This is an opportunity to reflect on our whether our learning environments support ongoing family engagement, and setting up our spaces in a way that represents each family's values. I think it's also always helpful to restate and to name that culture shapes how children are thinking, feeling, and relating to others. If educators are sensitive to cultural differences we can reduce the likelihood of misunderstandings.

Mike: One way we can connect with families and show that our learning environments are more equitable spaces and representative of the children in our care, so I asked the families to share labels for emotions in the child's home language and then use those familiar words with children. We can also include visuals of emotions that represent the children and families in the learning community.

On this slide we see four different languages. We see Spanish, Farsi, Somali, and Mandarin. Becoming more aware of our biases is super important and it's challenging work. Some helpful questions that we can reflect on are, what emotions are you most comfortable expressing? How do you manage your strong emotions within the learning environment? Do you respond to all children's range of emotions with the same amount of patience and guidance? Reflecting on those questions provide an opportunity to address our own feelings so that we're better able to be emotionally available for the children in our care.

If you do feel comfortable, we do invite you to share some of the questions. Share some of these questions with your colleagues. It can be helpful to think through some of these questions with someone that you do trust. Speaking of questions, if you have any, please feel free to throw it into the chat. We are coming up to the end of our time and we have time for one or two questions right after the BookCASE.

[Video begins]

Becky: I want to say to check out your Viewer's Guide for those reflective questions from the focus on equity segment. They're so helpful to share with your colleagues. I am so excited for this segment. I got to meet with our Teacher Time librarian, Emily Small, to make the case. And let's check out the books that she showed us this month. Hi and welcome back to the BookCASE. We're so excited to be here again with our Teacher Time librarian, Emily.

Emily: Thanks for having me back.

Becky: I'm so excited because today Emily has a number of books for us all about emotional literacy.

Emily: Before we get started I just want to mention, please utilize your local library for these books, no expectation that anyone purchases them. If your library doesn't have the specific title, talk to the librarian the staff and they can find you similar titles.

Becky: Thanks for that tip, Emily.

Emily: Our first one is *Calm* by Dr. Jillian Roberts. It has great photographs of an adult and child together when the child is expressing different emotions. Great for coregulation, which is the first step in self-regulation. It has great back matter for parents and caregivers about what coregulation is.

Becky: This book has so many wonderful opportunities to add in emotion words and different emotion words to talk about the pictures.

Emily: Our second book is we have *Rest and Relax* by Whitney Stewart and Rocio Alejandro. Great illustrations. It's bilingual, English/Spanish. Just a reminder to read it through in its entirety in one language and then read it again in the second language. It has great examples of things to do to help start calming down your body.

Becky: I would imagine that being really helpful to start self-regulating before naptime or before, in a moment of frustration.

Emily: This would be a great resource in the classroom for that. Then we have *Making Faces*, which has been a longtime favorite of mine. It has children's photographs, very simple text, look at the happy baby, can you make a happy face, find the happy baby. Very interactive between the child and the adult reading the book to them. It also goes through many emotions and then it has a mirror in the back so you can practice making different emotion faces.

Becky: Such a great book for emotional literacy. If you work with infants in your program setting, in our Viewer's Guide we make the case for this specific book, so we hope that you'll check it out. Our next book Emily's going to help us make the case. When we is making the case for a book we're thinking about the four letters, C, standing for connecting, which we're connecting to the ELOF. Then A is for advanced vocabulary, where we introduce new and novel words and provide child-friendly definitions to support language and concept development.

Then we have supporting engagement, so that children are active participants while we're reading the book. Finally, we have E, extending the learning beyond the book where we plan activities to help children make connections to the content. This is also a great place to repeat that advanced vocabulary and support concept development.

Emily: For today we have *Mad, Mad Bear!* by Kimberly Gee. Bear is mad, you can see it right on the cover. In this book, you see what made Bear's day so frustrating. You see how they express their emotions. Then what they did to self-regulate. There's very simple text in this book, but it's purposeful. We see words like favorite, fair, breathing, very specific words. This is a great book to also ask some open-ended questions. For instance, Bear gets an [inaudible] on the way home.

I imagine kids are actually just going to freely share the times they've gotten [inaudible]. But maybe leaving his favorite stick outside, what's something that's a favorite of yours, and that's also a concept that they're learning. We see in this book Bear self-regulating. They're having a temper tantrum. They push the chair over and then we see that Bear, after they've expressed their emotions, they take a breath. They start self-regulating. This is a great opportunity to talk about ways that kids can safely express their emotions in the classroom, such as, how can we safely push a chair when we're angry. That's *Mad, Mad Bear!*.

Becky: There's also *Sad Bear* and *Glad Bear*. For more emotional literacy. Thank you so much, Emily. This was so wonderful, and we can't wait to see you until next time. And that is our BookCASE for this month. We hope that you will access this list in your Viewer's Guide. A reminder that if you work with infants in your program setting, check out the infant section of your Viewer's Guide for making the case for the book on *Making Faces*.

[Video ends]

Mike: We thank you all for joining us today. It is always so much fun to be [inaudible] with you all. Make sure you join us for all of our Teacher Time webinars, especially next month with this emotional literacy with preschool children. Then we will be right here back [inaudible] in February for supporting peer relationships with infants and toddlers.

Becky: Thanks so much for joining us. We hope that if you have any questions you'll put them in our MyPeers Community, the Teacher Time community. We will also be sharing the videos from today there, and the feelings tree there. Lots of information on MyPeers. Please come and join us. Thank you again so much for being here and we can't wait to see you until next time.