

# Emotions Matter: An Overview for Families



Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence



**“Educating the mind without  
educating the heart is no education  
at all”**

*- Aristotle*



# What Are Emotions?

An emotion is an immediate response to something that happens in the environment or is evoked in the mind that causes shifts in:

- Thinking (like, dislike)
- Physiology (breathing, heart rate, hormones)
- Expression (face, body, vocal tones)
- Behavior (fight/flight, approach/avoid)

# Emotions matter!

## Emotions and what we do with our emotions influence:

- ✓ Attention, memory, and learning
- ✓ Decision making and judgement
- ✓ Relationship quality
- ✓ Physical and mental health
- ✓ Everyday effectiveness

...at home and in the classroom!



# Research Shows...

- Early environments matter and nurturing relationships are essential
- Children's early development depends upon the health and wellbeing of their parents.
- Parents affect children, and children affect their parents. It gets complicated!— *National Scientific Council on the Developing Child*
- "Relationships are the soil in which children's SEL [social-emotional learning] skills grow." — *Jones & Bouffard*

# DEFINING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

**“Emotional intelligence is the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and action.”**

-Salovey & Mayer, 1990

-Mayer & Salovey, 1997

How did your own family deal with emotions?



Think about it: our upbringing impacts how we deal with emotions in our current families

# RULER



- Evidence-based approach to social and emotional learning
- Helps school communities integrate the teaching and practice of emotional intelligence into daily life
- Trains “everyone with a face” beginning with the adults
- Reduces problem behavior and enhances academic achievement

# Anchor Tools

## Emotional Intelligence Charter

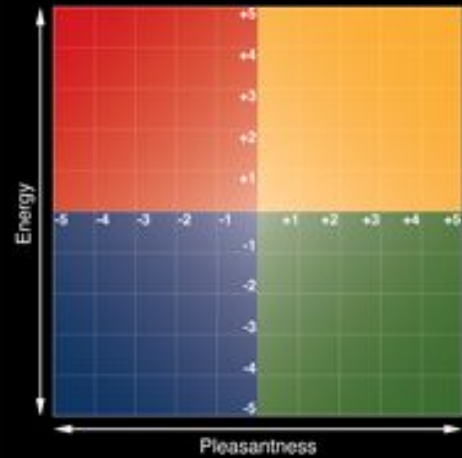
*As a class, we want to feel...*

*In order to have these feelings consistently, we will...*

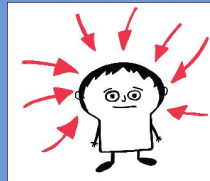
*We will prevent and manage conflict by...*

## The Mood Meter

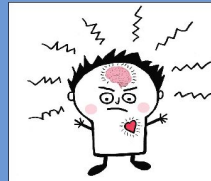
How are you feeling?



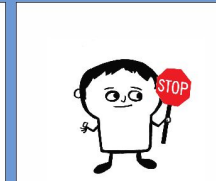
## TAKE A META-MOMENT



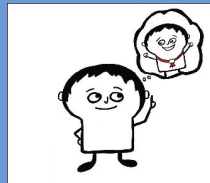
1. Something happens



2. Sense



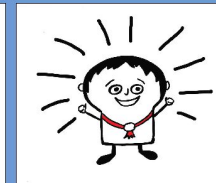
3. Stop



4. See your best self



5. Strategize



6. Succeed!

## Solve problems with The Blueprint

Describe	What happened?	
RULER Skill	Me	Other Person
Recognize & Label	How did I feel?	How did ____ feel?
Understand	What caused my feelings?	What caused ____'s feelings?
Express & Regulate	How did I express and regulate my feelings?	How did ____ express and regulate his/her feelings?
Reflect & Plan	What could I have done to handle the situation better? What can I do now?	

## Emotional intelligence refers to five key skills:

- **R**ecognizing
- **U**nderstanding
- **L**abeling
- **E**xpressing
- **R**egulating



## Recognizing Emotions

Identifying emotions in oneself and others by interpreting facial expressions, body language, vocal tones, and physiology.

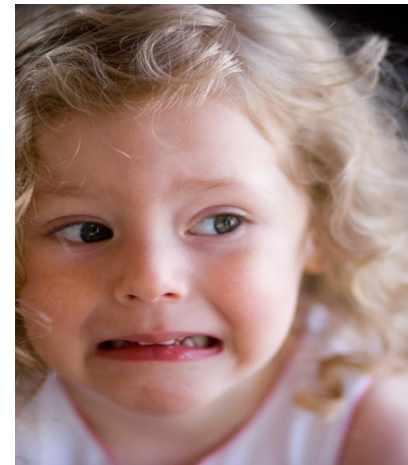


## What Can Parents Do?

- ✓ Pay attention to your emotions and the emotions of your child
- ✓ Point out and talk about the facial expressions, tone of voice, and body language that reflect different emotions

# ACTIVITY

How skilled are you at recognizing emotions?



# WHAT DID THIS ACTIVITY TEACH US ABOUT RECOGNIZING EMOTIONS?

- ✓ It's not as easy as we think
- ✓ Some expressions are more clear than others
- ✓ We are not always sure how others are reading us
- ✓ How well we know a person may influence how we read them

## Understanding Emotions

Knowing the causes and consequences of emotions



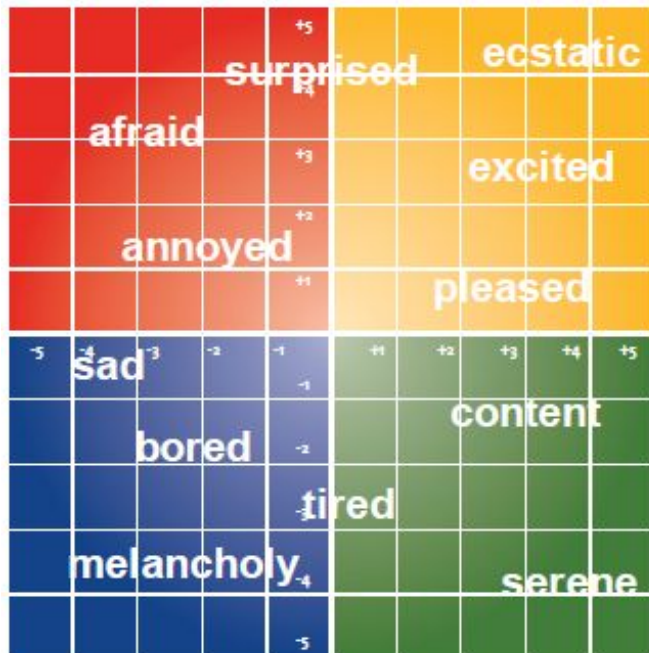
## What Can Parents Do?

- ✓ Discuss with your child what leads him or her to feel a range of emotions
- ✓ Share how your feelings have affected your thoughts and behavior



## Labeling Emotions

Having and using a wide array of words to describe the full range of emotions



## What Can Parents Do?

- ✓ Use a wide range of emotion words with your child
- ✓ Encourage your child to find the best word to describe his or her feelings

## Expressing Emotions

Knowing how and when to express emotions with different people and in multiple situations



## What Can Parents Do?

- ✓ Express feelings at the best time, in the best place, and in the best way
- ✓ Help your child evaluate the best time and place to express their feelings

# ACTIVITY

Pair Share:

Successful Expressions of Emotions

## Regulating Emotions

Knowing and using effective thought and action strategies to prevent, reduce, initiate, maintain, and enhance different emotions



## What Can Parents Do?

- ✓ Model many different effective strategies for your child when you manage your own feelings
- ✓ Help your child find useful and successful strategies for managing the range of emotions they experience

# HELPFUL STRATEGIES

## Thought Strategies

- *Positive self-talk*
- *Positive reappraisal*
- Acceptance
- Visualization
- Humor
- Distraction (short-term)

## Action Strategies

- Good health habits:
  - Food, sleep, exercise
- Social support
- Constructive activity
- Avoiding/modifying situation
- Problem solving
- Seeking professional help

# ACTIVITY

Role Play:

Regulating Emotions

# DEBRIEF

- How did the parent regulate his/her emotions?
- What was he/she modeling?
- Are there other strategies that could have been used?

# Practices For Parents

- ✓ Pay attention to your emotions and the emotions of your child
- ✓ Discuss with your child what leads him or her to feel a range of emotions
- ✓ Use a wide range of emotion words with your child
- ✓ Express feelings at the best time, in the best place, and in the best way
- ✓ Model many different effective strategies for your child when you manage your own feelings





# QUESTIONS?



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