

# HEALTH PROMOTING SCHOOLS

## Feelings Matter

Adapted from an APPLE Schools resource

### HEALTH NOTE FACTS:

Regulating emotions leads to better performance in school, builds positive and long-lasting relationships, and helps us deal with life's challenges. Parents play a significant role in helping their child develop the skills they need to deal with their emotions. Here's some practical tips on emotion regulation:

1. **Identify Emotions:** Help your child recognize their feelings by paying attention to all the physical sensations that come with emotions.
2. **Validate Emotions:** Help your child feel heard and supported when expressing their emotions. Validate their feelings by saying something like, "It looks like you're upset, can you help me understand what's going on?" We may not always understand why they feel a certain way, but reassurance allows them to know that their emotions are valid.
3. **Communicate Emotions:** Did you know that children are likely to copy behaviors. How you show your emotions teaches your child how they should show theirs. So, remember to take time to calm down before reacting by taking a deep breath or removing yourself from the situation to organize your thoughts.
4. **Empathy:** When you have the ability to understand and share others' feelings you are showing empathy. This is a skill that can be developed by encouraging your child to think about how others might be feeling and why they may be feeling like this.
5. **Active Listening:** By asking your child how they feel and restating their response in your own words confirms you are paying attention and listening to their answers. Remember to turn off technology when you are having these conversations.

### RESOURCE LINKS:

- [6 tips to help kids manage emotions](#)
- [Be a Role Model](#)
- [Parents Promoting Positive Mental Health](#)
- [Promoting positive mental health - Canada.ca](#)
- [Helping Kids Cope with Strong Emotions - The Kids Mental Health Foundation](#)
- [Your child's mental health | Caring for kids](#)
- [Promoting positive mental health 3min video](#)

### Additional Tips:

Family communication helps foster empathy in children. Family dinners, travelling in the car, game nights and even family meetings are all ways to build connections and communication.

A "Question Jar" is a simple way to start conversations about emotions and other topics that may not come up in everyday conversation. Pick a question out of the jar when you're gathered around the table for a meal or going on a road trip. Remember to give everyone the opportunity answer. This is a great way to get the communication flowing and give everyone a chance to say how they feel. Encourage family members to keep adding questions/topics to the jar.

Here's a few questions to get you started:

- What were some of the ways you felt loved today?
- What are some of the things you are excited about?
- What made you laugh this week?
- What are you thankful for?
- What is something you feel proud of?
- What makes you feel cared about?

What questions/topics are you going to add?

