



My Emotion Cards

Turn familiar little moments into an emotion theater. Choose a card, make up a story, and act out the feeling together.

Helps Your Child Grow



Emotional Functioning

Connecting familiar situations with facial expressions and feeling words helps your child recognize and express a wider range of emotions.



Emergent Literacy

Looking at an emotion card while listening to your words and watching your expression helps your child understand what different facial expressions can communicate.



What You'll Need

1. Craft sticks
2. Markers
3. Tape
4. Scissors
5. Colored cardstock and several pre-made emotion cards showing happiness, surprise, fear, sadness, and anger
6. Blank cards and colored markers for adding more emotions



You Act, Your Child Watches

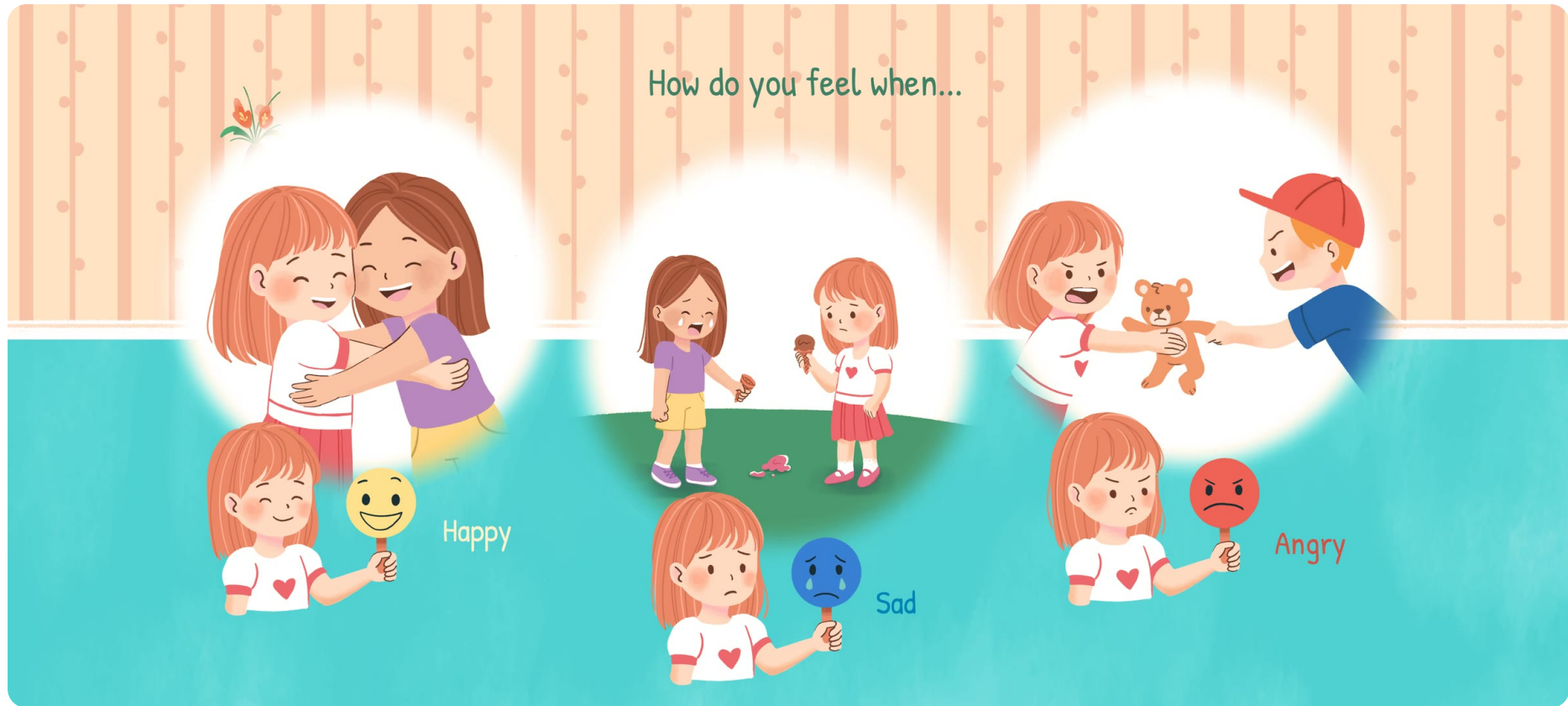
Choose an emotion card together and tell a short story about the feeling on it. For a surprised face, you might say, “The balloon suddenly popped!” Make a surprised face and movement, then invite your child to act it out with you.

Observations

- Copies the words or actions you use to act out surprise
- Asks you about an emotion card they do not recognize

Tips

- Begin with feelings and events your child often experiences in daily life.
- When acting out anger, fear, or sadness, keep the performance gentle enough that it does not overwhelm your child.
- The cards and stories make each feeling easier to see, name, and explore through imitation.
- Invite your child to copy a surprised face or describe what surprise feels like in their own words.



You Describe, Your Child Acts

Describe a few familiar situations, such as dropping an ice cream or having a friend come over to play. Ask your child to choose the matching emotion card, then ask, “Why might you feel that way?” Invite them to respond with a face, movement, or words.

Observations

- Uses feeling words such as happy or sad to describe how they feel
- Connects a facial expression on a card with the feeling it represents

Tips

- When a difficult feeling comes up, talk about one way to manage it - for example, taking a slow breath when you feel angry.
- If your child cannot find the right word, build on their response: “Do you feel a little worried, or a little sad?”
- Welcome different ways of expressing a feeling, including facial expressions, movements, and words.



How Do You Feel Now?

Your child does not need to name a feeling or explain its cause precisely. Accept what they communicate and respond to how they feel right now. If they call boredom sleepiness, for example, you can simply end the game for today. Feeling heard makes it easier to keep expressing emotions.

Observations

- Uses a more specific feeling word, such as bored
- Stays engaged in the emotion-card game with you for a short time

Tips

- If your child enjoys the game, make new emotion cards together to give less familiar feelings a visible form.
- Use your child's real reactions to introduce more feeling words over time, such as bored, worried, disappointed, left out, or shy.