

DANCING WITH EMOTIONS





WHAT IS EMOTION?

When we are stimulated, it triggers our inner feelings, bodily reactions, thoughts, and actions, which is what we refer to as emotion.



THE IMPORTANCE OF REGULATING EMOTIONS



Parents must first regulate and take care of their own emotions before they can effectively manage their children's emotions and avoid projecting their feelings onto them. Engaging in activities that help calm emotions, such as exercising, meditating, drawing, or chatting with friends, can be beneficial.

Expressing empathy and acceptance as a parent can stabilize a child's emotions. To improve a child's behavior, it is essential to first understand and address their feelings and build a good relationship with them.

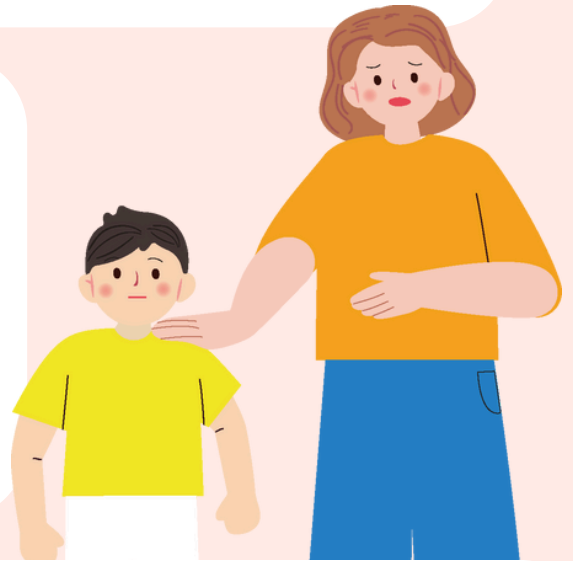


WHAT TO DO WHEN A CHILD IS ANGRY?



Parents should first control and stabilize their own anger, providing a calm space for both themselves and the child.

After everyone has calmed down, parents can briefly explain what they observed and how they felt, allowing the child to express the reasons for their anger, and finally discuss appropriate ways to express those feelings.



Parents should be factual, avoiding criticism and blame, and refrain from bringing up past issues.

Communication Examples:

I see that you are really upset. Would you like to tell me what happened, or do you want to take a break first and talk later?

You looked really angry just now. I think it's because you don't want to do your homework. I heard you yell at me, and that made me sad. I hope we can talk about how to handle this homework issue. Can you tell me what difficulties you're facing?

WHAT TO DO WHEN A CHILD IS ANXIOUS?

- Children may lack confidence, feel worthless, or encounter problems they find difficult to solve, which can trigger anxiety.
- Older children are particularly prone to anxiety due to academic performance and interpersonal relationships.
- Caregivers should guide children to express their worries, support them in facing challenges, and not dismiss their thoughts and feelings.

Example :



I'm such an idiot!

You're not!

You're just saying that because you're my mom; you want to comfort me, but you don't really understand me.

I've already said you're not. If you think you're an idiot, then you should try harder.

- Arguing and denying are ineffective and fail to acknowledge the child's feelings.



I'm such an idiot!

If you think you're an idiot, that must feel really bad! It seems like you're worried that you're not good enough. What happened that made you think that?

- This approach helps the child feel understood, and then attempts to guide them to express their feelings and experiences.



WHAT TO DO WHEN A CHILD LIES?

- Guilt can also trigger anxiety, so when a child does something wrong, they may lie or make excuses to avoid punishment or unpredictable consequences.

Example :

Did you steal my money?

No, I didn't!

You're lying! You clearly stole the money. Still not admitting it? When did you learn to be so bad? I don't have a son like you!

I already said I didn't. Why don't you believe me?

- Strong criticism and immediate demands for explanations and apologies put the child in a corner, making them reluctant to admit wrongs.

I know you took my money. I want to understand if you faced any difficulties. Can you tell me what happened?

I wanted to buy a game console.

So you've really wanted a game console because all your classmates have one? Why didn't you tell me directly?

Yeah, a lot of classmates have game consoles. But I feel like even if I told you, you wouldn't buy it for me.

I admit I have my concerns because I love you very much. And seeing you sacrifice your honesty for a game console hurts me. I hope that in the future, you can discuss things with me first. I promise to try to understand your perspective and thoughts.

- This approach gives the child space to express their thoughts and helps them feel accepted and safe, which aids in sharing and facing the issue.



WHAT TO DO WHEN A CHILD IS SAD?

- Caregivers should maintain empathy, putting themselves in the child's shoes to understand their reactions and feelings.
- Patiently listen to the child's feelings and thoughts regarding their difficulties, express understanding and support, and then together think of ways to resolve the issues.
- Caregivers should avoid dismissing the child's feelings and refrain from lecturing or suppressing their emotions.

Example :



I've been feeling down lately because Xiaotian only invited Aling to play and not me.

Isn't that a small matter? Maybe you're being too sensitive. You don't need to feel sad; just take the initiative to invite them!

- The child feels rejected and dismissed, leading them to be reluctant to share their feelings in the future.



I understand you're feeling sad because Xiaotian only invited Aling to play and not you.

I imagine that must hurt because you really want to play with them.

Yeah, I feel like they don't care about me.

I can hear that you're really hurting because you care about them. Let's think of ways to solve this problem together. What do you think can help improve this situation?