

Emotion Works

Emotion Works is an educational programme designed to help children learn emotional language, develop emotional understanding and manage feelings and emotional behaviours. We use this programme throughout our school to help our learners understand, discuss and manage their emotions in a healthy way.

This is the 'Cog Model' that the programme is based on. It breaks the subject of emotions into 7 different parts, but also shows how each links together to help learners understand how 'emotions work'.



At first level we start to look at the 'Five Cog Model'. The yellow cog helps us to think about various triggers/causes for different emotions. The red cog encourages us to think about how the emotion makes us feel inside i.e., butterflies in our tummy, feeling hot or shaky etc. The green cog is the behaviour cog. This looks at what we do to show how we are feeling? Is this behaviour okay, and if not, what could we do instead? This cog is important as we need to ensure our children are expressing their emotions in healthy and safe ways. The blue cog is our regulation strategy. Here we explore what strategies we could use to cheer up or calm down if the emotion we are experiencing is a negative one. Different children will have different strategies.

Emotion Works at home

When your child has an emotional response to something at home, use the cogs to help them tell the story of how they feel and what has made them feel that way. You could also do this when looking at how characters feel in books and films or share some stories of your own. Talking through and rehearsing responses helps children learn how to cope with and react appropriately to different emotions.

5 steps to the discussion:

1. Name it – what emotion word describes how you feel?
2. Acknowledge how it feels inside – where do you feel it in your body? What does it feel like?
3. Triggers and Causes – what made you feel this way?
4. Behaviour – what did you do to show this feeling to others? Is this behaviour, ok? What else could you do?
5. Regulate to feel better – what strategies could you use to calm down, cheer up or feel safer?