

Supporting Big Feelings

BodyClues – helping kids to recognise and respond to their emotions

Children and teenagers who can understand and manage their emotions are more likely to:

- express emotions by speaking calmly or in other appropriate ways
- bounce back after feeling strong emotions like disappointment, frustration or excitement
- control impulses
- behave positively – that is, in ways that help with getting along with others, staying safe and developing well.

And this is good for children because it helps them learn, make friends, become independent and more. Your child's ability to understand and manage emotions develops over time. When your child is young, they'll need help with understanding emotions. This mostly involves recognising and naming emotions, which lays the groundwork for managing emotions as your child gets older. As your child grows, they'll learn more strategies to manage their emotions without your help.

Understanding and managing emotions is also called emotional regulation. It's an important part of your child's self-regulation. The Zones of Regulation provides an easy way to think and talk about how we feel on the inside and sorts emotions into four colored Zones, all of which are expected in life. If we can recognise what zone we are in, it makes it easier to do what we need to help us manage our emotions and sensations.

Children and young people are still developing this skill. The “Body Clues” Activity provides a way to help children and young people to

- identify what is happening in their bodies in each zone
- identify what helpful strategies they can use for each zone.

How to use this activity:

Print out the worksheets twice and invite your child to reflect on each of these questions:

1. What is happening in your body in each zone?
2. What strategies would help you when you are in this zone?





