

TEACHING CHILDREN ABOUT FEELINGS

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When it comes to helping young children learn about their emotions there are a number of ways in which adults can help. One of the ways to help children learn different emotions they experience is to help them identify the ways in which their bodies respond. The descriptions below help by beginning to identify a specific emotion with specific physical responses. A suggestion is to role-play facial expressions and act out the feeling with your body. Role-playing these with your child can be fun as well as educational. Don't be surprised with the responses your children come up with. Children are great with these exercises!

Here are a few suggestions:

- Mad: Tight jaw, clenched fists, arms want to hit, eyes narrow
- Sad: Throat feels tight, face droops, eyes look downward, tears come, feet drag
- Glad: Relaxed muscles, smiles come easily, walk lightly
- Afraid: Fast breathing, stomach feels sick, eyes open wide
- Excited: jumpy, shivers all over, high pitched voice, eyes open wide
- Tired: knees feel weak, muscles limp, head droops

(Adapted from Handout: Author Unknown)

God gives emotions to us. They are a part of our soul. As children of God our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit. Learning to care for our bodies when we feel different emotions is a way to care for the dwelling place of God. With God living in our hearts, all that we are becomes an expression of the heart of God. The sensitivity developed by learning about who we are and how our bodies respond better enables us to be sensitive to what may be going on in other people. Bringing it all to the Lord presents opportunity for us to express the heart of our heavenly Father. In turn, we bring glory to Him as our Savior and as our Creator.

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