

Top 7 Things to Consider! Where do I start?

Understanding Feelings

As parents, we often want to jump to change the behavior but we have to start first with understanding the feelings our children are having that the behavior is an outcome of.

Mood Meter

We can help our kids recognize and label their feelings with a mood meter. Sometimes kids have difficulty labeling the feeling they're having. For example, a child may constantly be on their phone to try to interact more with friends because of their feelings of loneliness. As a parent, you continue to see the behavior of being on the phone but miss an important part: how your child is feeling. If we see an unwanted behavior and want to change it to a wanted behavior, we may need to start by helping our child recognize and label what

RULER:

We can help our children by using the Ruler Technique. The example below may be for a child not wanting to go to school.

Recognizing emotions in oneself and others.

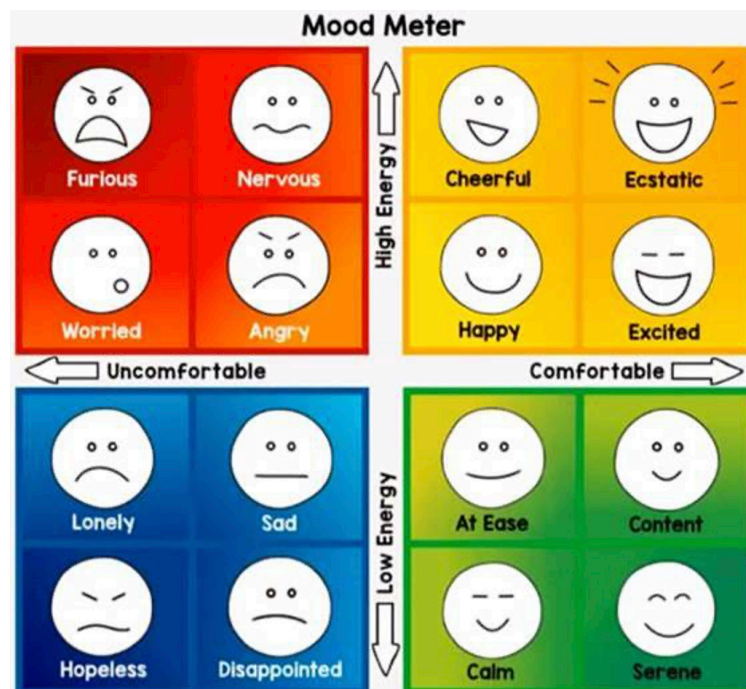
A parent may recognize their own anger, disappointment or shame they feel that their child is not attending school.

Understanding the causes and consequences of emotions. Parent may understand the consequences of their own feelings and how they may impact their interaction with their child.

Labeling emotions with a robust vocabulary.

Parent asks child, "What are you feeling right now?" and shares the mood meter to help their child name the feelings they're having.

Expressing emotions in accordance with cultural norms and social context. Parents may ask their child to help them express their feelings.



Ways to Express Emotions



Regulating emotions with helpful strategies.

Parent may pause and do deep breathing with their child or ask them to go for a walk with them to express their emotions and help them problem solve what we could do at school to help them feel more supported.

- 1. Recognizing, labeling and regulating our own emotions.** To help our child, we need to be regulated ourselves. If I can remain calm, I'm more likely to help my child become calm. If I'm not in control of my feelings, my child will struggle to be in control of their feelings.
- 2. Recognizing feelings can be hard.** Sometimes it's hard for children to recognize the feeling they're having. We may see them as tired, hungry, scared but they may only say it's anger. Sometimes seeing a professional can help a child better learn their feelings.

- 3. Coaches.** We are our children's coaches to help them understand their feelings. We're there to find the cues of our children's feelings and then we can help to support them and teach them in this process. How can we help to partner and support them? How can we help to partner with others to ask them to help us? Keep in mind it may be helpful for you to have a coach and that is where reaching out to a professional may be helpful.

4. Resources:

- Daniel Tiger
- Elephant and Piggie Biggie
- Guide to Mood Meter
<https://www.punahou.edu/life-at-punahou/parent-life/ruler-for-families>
- Guide to Emotional Coaching
<https://www.gottman.com/blog/an-introduction-to-emotion-coaching/>

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