

Understanding Frustration Build-up

Frustrations are a daily occurrence, here is a range of ideas, games and strategies that adults can use to help children express and manage themselves



This information is a collaborative collection of suggestions made by Daycare Technicians and Daycare Educators from Riverside School Board during a workshop facilitated by Martine Demers, Behavior Consultant, RSB

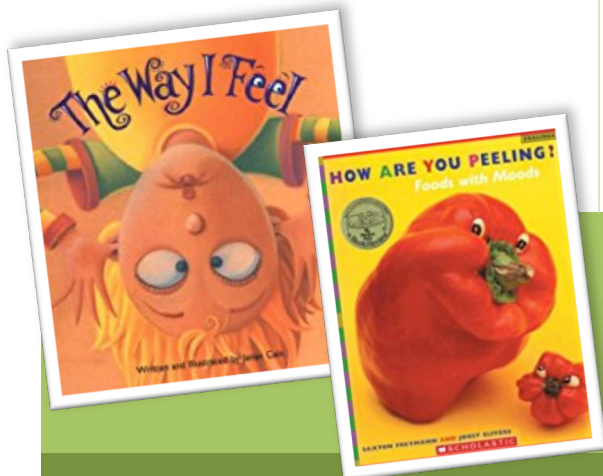
Playing with emotions

- Role play, Emotion charades
- Matching card games, Inside Out board game
- Emotions Bingo,
- Making puppets and creating skits
- Drama, dress-up & acting
- Emotions Pictionary – draw faces and have others guess
- ‘Would you rather’ game
- Create ‘Public Service Announcements’ – video and play for other age groups

Respecting personal space

An ongoing challenge for some students, some activities which can help:

- Puppet shows on personal space
- Art activities - respecting areas/zones with different materials/colors
- Learning about different cultures
- Social dance, yoga, gymnastics, ‘Just Dance’ videos
- Creating different stations (work, quiet time and play)
- Hoola-hoops, skipping ropes, cushions for individual seating
- Badminton, relay races and relay games
- Board games that require two children to face each other (chess, checkers, connect four, etc.
- Tag games without touching – use of hoola hoop, Rabbit hole game, Waddle game.
- Building games within a designated space – eg. Lego, Straws’n Connectors, K’Nex, Plus Plus Blocks
- Team sports – demonstration, support and reminders
- Needless to say...this is an ongoing process and for some this will be something to be addressed and supported throughout their elementary



The Way I Feel by Janan Cain

A fabulous resource to read with students and follow with discussion.

How Are You Peeling? By S.Freymann & J. Elffers

Children will love this funny perspective with emotions and vegetables!

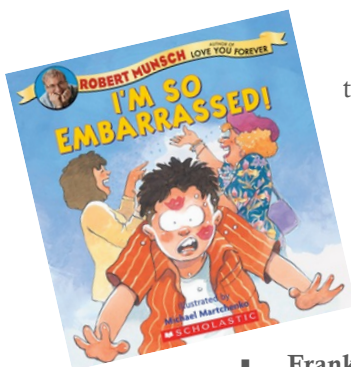


Naming, Feeling and more *'Playing with Emotions'*

Providing a range of opportunities and materials is key to prime creativity, reduce vulnerability and prime expression

- Tracing body silhouettes on large banner paper and coloring or painting different sections in relation to how they experience different emotions
- Making paper plate monsters or characters
- Creating your own HeadBanz game – Emotion HeadBanz! Which emotion am I?
- Improvisation. Miming
- Calming yoga, use of different textured exercise balls
- Creating a Texture Discovery game (hide different textured items in a cloth bag, have children reach in to take an object – touch, describe, how does it make you feel?)
- Emotions Parking Lot – Emotion pictograms on one side, ways to get my energy out on the other
- Dancing and moving to different types of music – which emotions do they evoke in you? Which kind of music do you like when you feel excited, sad, tired, happy?
- One-on-one conversations are often helpful, whenever time permits
- Having visual cards demonstrating a range of emotions
- Aim to shift emotions by expressing themselves, possibly by being 'bucket fillers'
- Create songs and music – play with beats and rhythms that depict various levels of emotional energy

Children's literature that relates to emotions



- **In My Heart** by J. Witek & C. Roussey
 - **The Grouchy Ladybug** by Eric Carle
 - **I'm So Embarrassed** by Robert Munsch. Many others by this author are also wonderful to talk about a range of emotions.
 - **Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day** by J. Viorst and R. Cruz
 - **The Giving Tree** by S. Silverstein
 - **The Kissing Hand** by A. Penn (others by her are also very good)
 - **My Mouth is a Volcano** by J. Cook (others by her are also very good)
- **Franklin books** by P. Bourgeois (numerous books with different themes)

Fine-motor activities to help distract and calm down

Being able to 'read' the needs of our students is key. This enables us to match up interventions with them that will be both helpful and meaningful for them. They will sense and know that we truly understand them.



- Doodling/drawing materials
- Fidget tools – having a range of items with different textures
- Building games – eg. Legos, Plus Plus Blocks, something that can be started and continued on another day. Especially if this is a student who requires such intervention support daily
- Corking/knitting/weaving projects – individual project that can be ongoing
- Card games, 1 player, 2 players (depending on whether the student can manage being with someone else at this time)
- Chess, Blokus – 2-player quiet games
- Self-made stress balls
- Sketchbooks
- Play dough
- Search'n find bottles
- Mandalas, colouring pages
- Rainbow Loom bracelets
- Puzzles
- Listening to music
- Drawing on white boards
- Small crafts
- Kinetic sand
- Tangram games
- Architeck cards & blocks
- Dot-to-dot pages



- Word Search – some websites offer you to create your own. Can be done with theme words and with various levels of difficulty.
- Origami – the internet offers a range of printables that are then ready to use.
- Dice games with foam dice.
- Bubble wrap – for fingers or for feet
- Tracing
- Rubik's cube/Orbo ball

Finding what appeals and helps a student is key in helping to address his/her needs

- Tangram games
- Architek cards & blocks
- Numéro game
- Dot-to-dot pages
- Search'n find books
- Threading beads



Materials/supplies that you keep on hand that are helpful...and can also be creatively used!

- *Timely Tools* cards (Ignore, Apologized, Talk-it-out, Avoid, Get Help, Take Turns, Chance, Share, Humor, Postpone, Compromise, Negotiate)
- Coloring and drawing materials (used both for distraction and emotional expression)
- A range of fidget tools
- Uno cards
- Playdoh to manipulate
- 'Phantom mail' (envelope with a message, being brought by a student to another educator or technician to provide a walking break)
- Bubble wrap, pop, pop, pop!! Good for hands and feet
- 'Parachute pass' for students who need a break from the group



- Puzzles of different sizes
- Mandalas with different themes



- Deck of cards with instructions for different 1 player and 2 player games
- "Would you rather" game questions with 'either or' answers that promote conversation.
- Charade cards
- Pictionary game
- Connect 4
- Maze ball



- Checkers

- Kinetic sand
- Stuffed animal to hold and find comfort with
- Gel/Bubble timers – simply look at or count the bubbles and they flow downwards
- Sound reducing headphones



- Pictures of pets (have a range, enables student to bond with photo, distract them from their frustrations and provides another entry point from discussion that is less vulnerable)
- Dominoes (regular, triangular, with pictures)
- Finger puppets (templates to color and make their own finger puppets)

When energy overflows in the group, what helps to keep it safe and return to a healthier level?

- Calling out 'if you hear me clap 3 times, give me thumbs up, all eyes on me'
- Turning the lights on and off
- Doing BrainBreaks, GoNoodle to get energy out
- Lowering your voice to get their attention
- Additional privileges for quick group management & response (eg. Additional time outside or in the gym)

- Bringing children to the Gym or outside to expend energy (changing location is key)



- Using music to help get ore energy out or to calm the flow of energy
- 'Simon says' with big movement exercises

- Stopping the activity, talking with students, 'shake it out,' changing the game, breathing exercises
- Putting 'Just Dance' on the Smartboard
- Divide and conquer – divide into subgroups, set-up stations vs. large group activity





Big movement activities

- In the gym – running, setting up obstacle courses, skipping ropes, relay races, dancing to music, tag games, bouncing on balls, scooters, gymnastics, wall climbing (where available), basketball, soccer, hockey, setting up stations – offers students different options to choose from
- Movement breaks interspersed within scheduled activities (especially on rainy days or repeated rainy days!!) – GoNoodle, Just Dance, yoga, etc.
- Outside – Throwing tennis balls against the wall, crab soccer, dodgeball, 3-legged soccer baseball, relay races, obstacle courses
- Games – Simon Says, Statue tag, Human fuseball, To & Fro ball, scavenger hunt, 7-up, musical hoola-hoop, capture the flag, blowing up lots of balloons and then building a tower with them...pop them all when you're done!

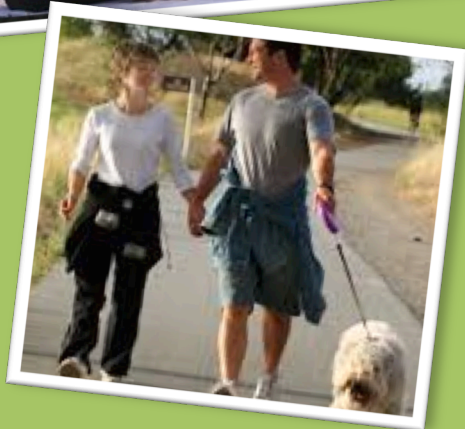


At the Technician's office interventions continue – strategies that have proven to be helpful

- Greet student with a warm invitation to be in your presence
- Provide a quiet, calm space and time for the student to settle from the situation he/she is coming from
- When the child has settled, talk with them, away from peers
- Having a note from the educator naming what actually happened provides a good starting point
- Collect information from student, his/her perception of what happened.
- Help child name the different emotions involved – expect that many will be intertwined or they may not be able to name them!
- Provide a quiet place where student can retreat to when needed, in hopes of preventing further incidents
- When possible have a troubleshooting discussion with all parties involved
- Give students time to think about a solution, to consider the pros & cons of these options prior to deciding what will be the intervention implemented
- Inform parents of situations, naming emotions and degree of situation, solicit their support in having a discussion with their child
- Over the next few days – check-in with involved students to see how things are going. Improvement? Ongoing struggles? Follow-up as needed.
- For students who have recurring situations or struggle greatly in the context of large groups – have personal items that are a resource to help them manage themselves or activities they enjoy doing at the Technician's office – this becomes a safe haven and acts as prevention.
- Providing breaks from stimulation and noise can be helpful for some students to become better able to manage themselves and their emotions.
- 'Go to Technician's Office' cards for students who need a reprieve from the group, occasionally or daily, from the large group
- Orchestrate a visit to a 'foster group' if a student is having repeated struggles or if there is a substitute educator replacing the assigned educator with whom students have an attachment with – prevention that is highly valuable for some students
- Providing access to fidget tools to help reduce anxious or frustrated energy
- Providing Quiet Time activities- to be used individually as a means of helping a student re-center him/herself



- Active listening – tune into the facts and emotions involved. Normalize feelings being expressed, name the segments of the situation to help clarify and understand what unfolded.
- Express that you and the other adults in your team are always there to take care of him/her, to keep them safe and to help navigate challenging situations. They can count on you!
- It's okay to make mistakes, solicit their good intentions to try another strategy when they leave your office, today and the days to come.
- Thank them for sharing with you. For many students this is very challenging for them.



Working with children is one of the most rewarding experiences. It brings forth so many special and tender moments, however they may also trigger so much in us!

Let's not forget how important it is that we take time to take care of ourselves, in order that we may be at our best to take care of them and help them grow into incredible individuals!

Suggestions from educators which help them be at the '*Top of their Game*'

- Talking with colleagues of challenges, asking for help, pro-actively looking for ideas and other interventions to try when facing challenging situations. Having people who care about what you are saying is key!
- Knowing that you can have a student visit in another group to provide you and your group a break on difficult days (sharing the 'weight' of challenging students)
- Taking deep breaths, re-centering self
- Using personal strategies – thinking of upcoming events. Bridging to the next activity or next day
- Speak with Special Education Technician/classroom teacher in the school to trouble shoot additional strategies for specific students
- In the face of challenging situations – requesting for a colleague to step-in so you can step-out and have a few moments for yourself
- Using fidget tools and personal strategies
- Going for a walk, a run or a bike ride to expend energy and enjoy some time for self
- Enjoying your hobbies, adopting a new hobby! Making time for it.
- Journalling/ Sketching/ Drawing
- Yoga/Stretching – releases tense muscles
- Cooking your favorite recipes, enjoying with family, friends, your students
- Listening to music...singing!
- Ensuring to get sufficient rest
- Laughing with family and friends. Finding humor in situations – having a good laugh can definitely change perspectives!

