

## HEALTHY FEELINGS GAMES & PLAY ACTIVITIES

1. LABELING: Name as many feelings as you can in 1 min (use a stop watch- kids love it!)
2. CUEING: Name as many healthy coping choices in 1 min (see Appendix A)
3. LABELING: Take turns talking about something that makes you...happy, sad, embarrassed, angry, frustrated, worried, scared, excited, nervous (ie. during circle time)
4. RECOGNIZING: Ask everyone to talk about what color, object or animal the different emotions feel like in their bodies [This helps them learn to recognize their feelings and allow themselves to experience them so they can pass] (examples below)
  - ANGRY might feel like a volcano, a lion or the color red
  - SAD might feel like a heavy box is sitting on their chest, like a turtle, or the color blue
  - EXCITED might feel like a blown up balloon letting out air, or a rabbit hopping up and down, or yellow
  - WORRIED/ SCARED might feel like a mouse, or something invisible or tiny
5. RECOGNIZING: SIMILAR AND DIFFERENT
  - How are angry and excited similar or different?
  - How are sad and worried similar or different
6. CUEING BY LABELING: Randomly ask kids to show you on a cue card or a feelings chart how they are feeling throughout the day (don't *only* ask when they are looking sad or frustrated, they need to learn to label their positive feelings too)
7. CUEING BY MATCHING: Print out pictures of healthy coping options and get them to match them to pictures of feelings (ie. match doing jumping jacks with dealing with anger or being overly excited)
8. REWARDING by GOTCHA: Periodically stop and ask kids through day to:
  - Talk about 1 feeling and how it feels to them (see #4)
  - Ask them to name a feeling and 1 coping strategy, then with the other kids try to come up with as many as you can
  - [Can play similar game with Do's, Don'ts and Consequences]
9. MODELING & CUEING: Pretend to be feeling a certain way (make sure you name the feeling AND talk about how it feels in your body) and ask the kids for suggestions on what you can do to feel better
10. MODELING & CUEING: Pretend your car/doll/ stuffy is upset or excited etc and cue to what they can do when they feel that way (talk about the not healthy choices as well as the good ones, and the consequences of both – this ties in nicely with DO's and DON'Ts)
  - Ie. Toy 1: "I wanted the last cookie! You already had 2 and I only got 1!"
  - Toy 2: "Finders keepers!"
  - **YOU ASK-**
    - How do you think Toy 1 feels right now? (frustrated, angry, sad)
    - What do you think they want to do? (ie. hit, cry, hide)
    - Would that be a good choice (a "DO") or a bad choice (a "DON'T")
    - Have you ever felt that way? When? What did you do? Then what happened (this last part helps them connect choices to consequences)?
    - What is the healthiest thing for Toy 1 to do?
    - *Can use this same approach when reading stories etc*
11. MODELING & CUEING IN REAL LIFE: When someone is overly excited or frustrated or sad etc, ask other kids how they think the child is feeling and ask for suggestions about how they can help themselves feel better? Cue kids to WHO IS RESPONSIBLE

FOR THEIR ACTIONS (them) aka CHOICE and that they are RESPONSIBLE AND EXPECTED TO MAKE THE HEALTHIEST CHOICE FOR THEM.

### BOOKS & MODELING

1. Read books about feelings and coping strategies
2. Talk about the how characters in books might be feeling, and what would happen if they made good choices or bad choices in how they cope with those feelings  
*(emphasizes that how we deal with our emotions is a choice and helps them learn to reason through their actions)*
  - You could even draw it out on a piece of paper or use a graphic organizer
    - Cause and effect (if character hits when they are angry, what will happen? If they choose to yell in a pillow, what will happen?)
    - Decision tree (if-then)

CALM CORNER IDEAS (it is important to keep these things as being SPECIAL and ONLY belonging to the calm corner and that it be somewhat removed from the rest of the group or the main area)

- Books about feelings and coping strategies
- A few pillows
- A nice blanket
- Some stuffies
- Feelings chart
- Some small toys, dinkys to distract themselves
- A puzzle or 2
- The Feelings Cue cards (and coping strategies) on the wall