

Supporting children to label, recognise and manage feelings: happy, sad and angry



Use emoji pictures and make into cards to use for knock-knock, fishing, posting and matching games

Model use of the vocabulary in context each day with reference to the child and their peers

Take happy photos on the tablet at home and in the setting



Use 'happy', 'sad' and 'angry' signs (BBC's Mr Tumble)

Use mirror and make happy, sad and cross faces together. Photograph children making these faces and make these into cards to use in games (as suggested with emojis - see above)

Do happy/sad/angry dances together at circle-time

Plan frequent 'letting off steam' activities and sensory breaks to help the child with regulation of their emotional state

Talk about what makes us happy/sad/angry

Use happy, sad and angry stories in picture books, drawing attention to characters' faces



Moira Butterfield 'My feelings' series: 'when I'm happy/sad/angry' books have photographs to illustrate these emotions

Extend with happy, sad and angry story scenarios with puppets



Make up a bag with sensory toys tailored to support an individual child's needs e.g. to squeeze, twist, bang, throw (with target) or chew on.

Provide a quiet, visually calming and cosy space as a calm down zone. Maybe a small tent or large cardboard box...

Support a child to access the bag and/or space when they are sad or cross

Support children to begin to self-regulate using strategies such as: taking deep breaths; choose a cloud and blow it away; stomp like a dinosaur etc

Other appropriate strategies can be found in Moira Butterfield's, 'when I'm angry' book (from her 'My Feelings' series and 'Little Monkey Calms Down' book by Michael Dahl etc. Share books at happy times. Then support children to use some of the same strategies in context (by encouraging them to join in with you)

Progress to helping children to engage in these calming techniques when they are at the very early stages of getting anxious/upset

Working towards supporting children to be able to recognise and label their own emotions of sadness or anger and to respond by accessing their calm down resource or using a particular calming strategy independently