

Emotion Coaching



Guiding One Child Through Upset Feelings or Challenging Behaviors

CONNECT with your child by acknowledging his/her feelings

“Of course you are feeling mad. It would make most children feel mad if their brother just grabbed their toy rather than asking. I am so sorry that happened Phillip.”

COMMUNICATE your family values and rules

“Remember, it is okay to be mad but it never okay to be mean with our face, eyes, voice, hands or words.” (If your child is young, make a fighting face, voice and hands as you say above.)

CREATE a positive plan for how to manage this upset feeling and situation

“Can you think of something you could have said or done to make things a little better rather than grabbing back?” (If your child has an idea acknowledge him and put them in the same situation so they can show you how this plan might work. For example, if their brother grabbed from them you grab from this child so your child can show you his plan.)

PRACTICE helpful communication scripts and actions that your child can use to manage this predictable situation in the future.

Instruct your child, *“Grab this toy from me so I can show you what I do with my face, eyes, hands, voice to make things better.”* Call your child’s name, making eye contact and pause before you say, *“Please give my truck back.”* (Model saying those words with a Talking Face, Talking Voice and putting out your Talking Hand.) Say, *“Thank you”* when your child returns the toy.

“Now I’ll grab from you so you can practice using your Talking Face, Voice and Hand to ask for the toy back.”

NOTE: Explain that if someone does not cooperate you turn up the seriousness not the meanness. Have your child grab from you again and tell them to not give it back the first time so you can show how to turn up the seriousness by Calling their name, waiting for eye contact, pausing before using your Serious Eyes and Voice to say, *“I asked you nicely, please give it back.”* Always say *“Thank you”* using friendly eye contact when the person complies as this maintains a positive connection. (Give your child practice by grabbing a toy but not giving it back the first time they ask so your child can practice turning up the seriousness like you have just modeled.)

WRAP-UP

- The parent or childcare giver can share their pride in your child’s courage and

effort to listen, think and practice ways to make things better when we feel upset.



Three Simple Things to Emotion Coach Values

Example for coaching honesty

1. **Admire when your child tells the truth by naming or imagining the emotions your son or daughter was able to manage.** For example, “*Beth, it is very brave and honest of you to tell me you (name event) as I know you might have felt scared to tell mommy the truth.*”
2. **Guide or give your child the words to be honest.** For example, when you see your child has done something you need to correct rather than ask them if they did something or why they did it...say, “*Sharon, you can tell mommy you accidentally spilled the juice and need help cleaning it up.*”

Next, admire your child’s honesty and courage. “*Sharon, that was brave and honest of you to tell mommy you accidentally spilled the juice. Now we can make things better.*”

3. **Give second chances** rather than thinking you “caught your child in the act of lying.” When your child is unable to be honest you can say with encouragement, “*Petra, I am going to ask again and this time I know you can get yourself to tell me what happened.*” Again, acknowledge your child’s ability to practice being courageous to re-do the moment and tell the truth. “*Petra, I admire when you can tell me what happened even when you feel afraid. That is what mommy and daddy call telling the truth.*”

1) List your Family Values

2) Where and when can they practice?

3) What do they do or say that forgets this value?

4) What do they do and say that shows you they remember this value?

5) How will you coach?