

## TOP TIPS FOR EMOTION COACHING

### ACKNOWLEDGE

Low levels of your child's emotion before they escalate to full-blown distress.

### REMEMBER

Emotions are natural and normal, and not always a matter of choice.

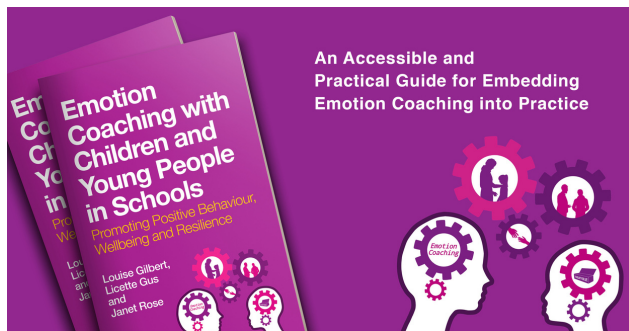
### RECOGNISE

A child's behaviour is a communication of an emotion they are experiencing.

### CHECK HOW YOU'RE FEELING

Are you calm and ready to Emotion Coach the child?

### LEARN MORE IN OUR BOOK...



## THE 4 STEPS TO EMOTION COACHING

### 1. NOTICE AND EMPATHISE

Notice any reactions and judgments the child's behaviour causes in you. Imagine a similar situation for an adult.

### 2. LABEL AND VALIDATE

Help your child to name what they're experiencing in this moment.  
*"I can see that you're angry.  
I would feel angry, too, if that  
happened to me..."*

### 3. SET EXPECTATIONS

EC accepts the emotion, but the behaviour may be inappropriate.  
*"I understand you're feeling sad, but  
hitting your friend is not okay."*

### 4. PROBLEM SOLVING

When the child is calm, find solutions with the child. When possible, follow their lead in picking a solution.

*EMOTION COACHING is a way to help children calm down. It teaches them how to manage their emotions.*



## A POCKET GUIDE to Emotion Coaching



## STEP 1: NOTICE AND EMPATHISE

Be aware of the different emotions a child may feel. Observe, listen, and learn how the child expresses different emotions. Watch for facial expressions, body language, posture, gestures, tone of voice, and speed of speech.

**"Be curious rather than furious."**

Look beneath the behaviour:



The child's behaviour tells you they are struggling with how they're feeling and need your support. Accepting the emotion will help you to de-escalate the behaviour.



## BE A 'STAR' FOR YOUR CHILD

- S STOP** - Don't react straight away. Notice how *you* are feeling.
- T THINK** - What feeling might lie beneath the child's behaviour?
- A ATTUNE** yourself with the feeling by putting yourself in the child's shoes.
- R REFLECT** - What would be an equivalent situation for you, as an adult, to feel that way?

## STEP 2: LABEL AND VALIDATE

Sometimes a child can't tell you what they're feeling, so you can help them to do this. By putting a child's feelings into words, you are comforting them and showing you care and understand. Be aware of your body language and tone, and use phrases like:

*"It must have made you mad when he took your toy..."*

*"You look sad. I wonder if you wish it was your birthday party..."*

**"Name it, to tame it." (Siegel, 2012)**

## STEP 3: SET EXPECTATIONS

Provided the child is safe and no one is at risk of harm, setting expectations is an opportunity to remind the child about acceptable behaviour. Focus on the boundaries and behaviour the child needs to understand and practice. Perhaps a kind reminder is all they need: *"We agreed that you need to put toys away before bedtime..."*. Kind reminders acknowledge that none of us learn things straight away. Managing emotions is no different than any other skill - it takes time and lots of practice.

## STEP 4: PROBLEM-SOLVE

Reinforce the idea that the child has the capacity to develop skills to cope with strong emotions.

*"How were you feeling when that happened?"*

*"Let's think about what you could have done instead."*

*"You could...or..., which one sounds good to you?"*

*"What will help to remember this?"*