

BRISTOL CHILD PARENT SUPPORT TOP TIPS FOR MANAGING EMOTIONS



You have probably noticed that I like to talk about emotions, research tells us that when you help your child with big feelings, it helps to make connections in the pathways from their lower brain to their rational brain (wise mind). Making connections here can help emotional regulation to prevent activating the "Fight or Flight Response". So try some of these tips to help make those connections. Good luck with love Catherine

1

Talk about your feelings, you don't need to be perfect. Let them know how you are feeling. Use emotional language. Examples are happy, proud, confident, frustrated, pleased, scared, excited, sad, embarrassed and more importantly ashamed. Please avoid asking "why" this can invoke a shame response and remember their emotional brain is still developing so they are learning how to regulate, and name their emotions.

2

Use play, puppets, drawing, stories and films to help to encourage them to talk. Most children respond when you enter into their world of play and feel more comfortable when they are in the world of metaphor. Eg being a cat, monster, superhero etc. If you are drawing feelings be balanced, for example, draw happy on one side and sad on the other, or scared and angry. Try not to focus on one specific emotion.

3

Help them to understand feelings within their body. When we are scared our bodies give a signal of being afraid or anxious. Eg, if your child has butterflies in their tummy, a headache or feels sick. Ask them if they may be worried. Likewise, if they are excited, they feel their heart beat faster and seem energetic. Help them to feel and remember what it's like to be calm.

4

Ask directly if you feel something is wrong. It is important to have a space where there is openness, respect and honesty. Do say sorry if you have lost it. This will help them feel that they can make mistakes too. Do not feel that you are putting words into their mouths, use phrases such as I wonder if you are feeling..... sometimes it seems as if you seem....

5

Children often struggle with soothing/regulating emotions, so make a "soothe box" for helping them to calm down, this could be full of soft materials, feathers, a toy they can stroke, anything that helps them to calm down. Let them use the box whenever they want.

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TO BE THE PARENT YOU WANT TO BE. LOVE CATHERINE**