

UNDERSTANDING EMOTIONS AND BODY SENSATIONS



Age Group: 3–5 years

Duration: 30–40 minutes

Objective:

To help young children identify basic emotions, understand how they feel in their bodies, and recognize what those emotions might look like.

Materials:

- Emotion flashcards (happy, sad, angry, scared, surprised, calm)
- A large mirror for group activity
- Body outline poster or printout
- Stickers or crayons to mark body parts
- Soft toy or puppet for role-playing
- Pre-selected books about emotions (Resource list on page 3)

** Free printables of **Emotion Flashcards** and **Body Posters** are available for download on our website.

Lesson Steps:

1. Introduction (5 minutes)

Start with a Song or Rhyme: “If You’re Happy and You Know It” (modify to include other emotions, like angry or sad).

- Ask Questions:
 - "What does it mean to feel happy?"
 - "Do you know what happens in your body when you feel sad or angry?"
 - "What does it look like when we feel happy? And how about angry?"

Let’s learn how our body talks to us about our feelings!

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Lesson Steps cont.

3. Group Activity: Body Sensations Check-In (10 minutes)

- Body Outline Poster: Show a simple outline of a body and ask, “Where do you feel happy? Where do you feel angry?”
- Stickers or Crayons: Let kids place stickers or color spots on the body outline where they think they feel each emotion.
- Discussion: “When you feel angry in your hands, what can you do to calm them?”

4. Closing Activity: Story Time (5 minutes)

- Read a Book: Choose a story about emotions.
- Ask Reflection Questions: “What did the character feel? How do you think their body felt?” Use our list of questions that promote reflection to support this conversation.

Book Recommendation List:

- My Body Sends A Signal - Natalia Maguire
- Listening To My Body - Gabi Garcia
- A Little Spot of Feelings: Emotion Detective - Diane Alber
- Guys Stuff: The Body Book for Boys - Cara Natterson
- The Emotions Book: A Little Story about Big Feelings - Liz Fletcher
- My First Book of Emotions For Toddlers - Orlena Kerek MD
- The Way I Feel - Janan Cain
- Breathing Is My SuperPower - Alicia Ortego

**DOWNLOAD
OUR FREE
POSTER FOR
ACTIVITY 3!**



QUESTIONS THAT INSPIRE REFLECTION



Here are some reflection questions designed to help children think about the connection between their emotions and their body:

General Reflection Questions:

- What happens to your body when you feel really happy?
- Can you think of a time you felt mad? What did your hands or face do?
- Where do you feel scared in your body?
- When you're sad, how does your body feel? Is it heavy or light?
- What does your tummy feel like when you're nervous?
- When your heart beats really fast, what do you think your body is trying to tell you?
- What do your feet or legs want to do when you're excited or angry?
- How does your body feel when you start to calm down after being upset?
- Have you ever noticed your breathing change when you're scared or mad? What does it sound like?
- What can you do to help your body feel better when it feels tight or heavy?

Situation-Specific Questions:

- If your hands are fidgety, what feeling might be causing that?
- If your shoulders feel tight, what could that mean? How can you make them feel better?
- What does your body do when you're about to cry?
- When you're running around and can't sit still, what feeling might be in charge?
- How does your body tell you it's time to take a break or calm down?

Future-Oriented Questions:

- What could you do next time your chest feels tight or your heart is racing?
- If your tummy feels upset, how can you check in to see if it's your feelings or something else?
- What are some ways you can help your body feel calm and safe when you're scared or angry?
- How could you tell a grown-up what your body is feeling if you're sad or mad?
- If your face gets really hot when you're mad, what could you do to cool down?