

Negative Labels	Self Esteem Building Labels
Demanding	Hold high standards
Unpredictable	Flexible, a creative problem solver
Loud	Enthusiastic and Zestful
Argumentative	Opinionated, strongly committed to goals
Stubborn	Assertive, persists in the face of difficulties
Nosy	Curious
wild	Energetic
Extreme	Tender hearted
Inflexible	Traditional
Manipulative	Charismatic
Inpatient	Compelling
Anxious	Cautious
Explosive	Dramatic
Picky	Selective
Whiney	Analytical
Distractible	Perceptive

Kurchinka (1991)

Communication and Feelings

When we are emotional we are not able to communicate our needs clearly, so with children it can come out as behaviour. Our thinking part of our brain is offline and we need to calm the emotion before we try to help build a new skill or help problem solve a situation.

When we are only seeing the behaviour we are not seeing what are child is really communicating.

We need to ask ourselves in these situations:

What is my child trying to communicate with this behaviour?

(around Behaviour) Why now?

When we do this we can really explore what our child needs and how we can support them.



Feelings

Children need to know that all feelings are okay. We need to use feeling words in situations so that children can get comfortable labelling and exploring the feelings.

What we are needing to do is create a PAUSE between the feeling and the response. This will allow time to make a good thoughtful response and not a reactive response that leads to hurting behaviours.

Example:

"It is okay to be angry or frustrated, but it is not okay to hit."

For children to recognize and label these feelings we also need to look at where in our body we are having this feeling. With practice children learn how to see and feel the emotion coming and are able to create that PAUSE so they can choose a better way to respond.



Talking About Your Feelings

How many feelings can you name? *Happy, sad, scared?* That's a good start.

Can you name some more? How about *playful, joyful, calm? Mad, upset, worried. Confused, lonely, nervous. Grateful, glad, cozy. Loved, friendly, peaceful.*

There are so many feelings to name. Try coming up with some of your own.

No matter how you feel — good or bad — it's healthy to put your feelings into words. Talking about feelings helps us feel close to people who care. It helps us feel better when we're sad or scared. Putting feelings into words helps us use self-control when we feel mad or upset. If your little brother took something of yours, you can say, "Hey, I'm *annoyed* that you took that without asking me. Next time, please ask." No need to get in a big fight over it. Just say how you feel and why, without yelling.

Know Your Feelings

It's easier to talk about your feelings if you know how you feel and why. Try these easy steps:

1. Think of the name for how you feel. (Let's say you feel *nervous*.)
2. Think of why you feel that way. (Let's say you are nervous because you have a *spelling test* tomorrow.)
3. Put them together into words. (Say to yourself, "I feel *nervous about my spelling test* tomorrow.")
If you don't know why you feel a certain way, you can still talk about it. You can say, "I feel *upset, but I don't know why.*"

Pick Someone to Talk to

A parent, grandparent, or a friend can be a good person to talk to. It's easier than you think. You can start by going to the person and saying, "Can we talk for a minute?" Then say how you feel and why.

Let the other person listen. Maybe they will give you advice. Or say something kind. Maybe they will help you laugh, or give you a hug. Or say, "Don't worry, I'll help you study your spelling words." Just saying how you feel and why helps you start to feel better. It helps to know you are not alone with a problem or worry.

Talk About Feelings Any Time

You don't have to wait for a big problem to talk about your feelings. You can say how you feel any time. It's a good thing to practice.

Talking about feelings doesn't have to be a big talk. You can make a short and simple comment. Like this:

- "Dad, I'm really *glad* we're having pizza tonight! Thanks!"
- "I'm *excited* about the game tonight. I think the coach will let me start."
- "I'm so *relieved* because I did really well on my math test!"
- "I felt so *awkward* when I asked Kyle to the dance, and I was so *happy* when he said yes!"

You don't have to talk about every feeling you have. But noticing your feelings and saying how you feel and why is good practice. **The more you do it, the easier it gets.** Talking about your feelings is a healthy way to express them. And when you have difficult feelings you need to talk over, you'll be ready.

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