

Section 4

Feelings

**Helping children to
explore and become
comfortable with
their feelings**

Feelings

Aim:

The aim of this section is to allow children to explore and identify a variety of feelings, thus extending their emotional vocabulary.

It also enables them to understand the way in which feelings can be expressed, be it non-verbally or verbally.

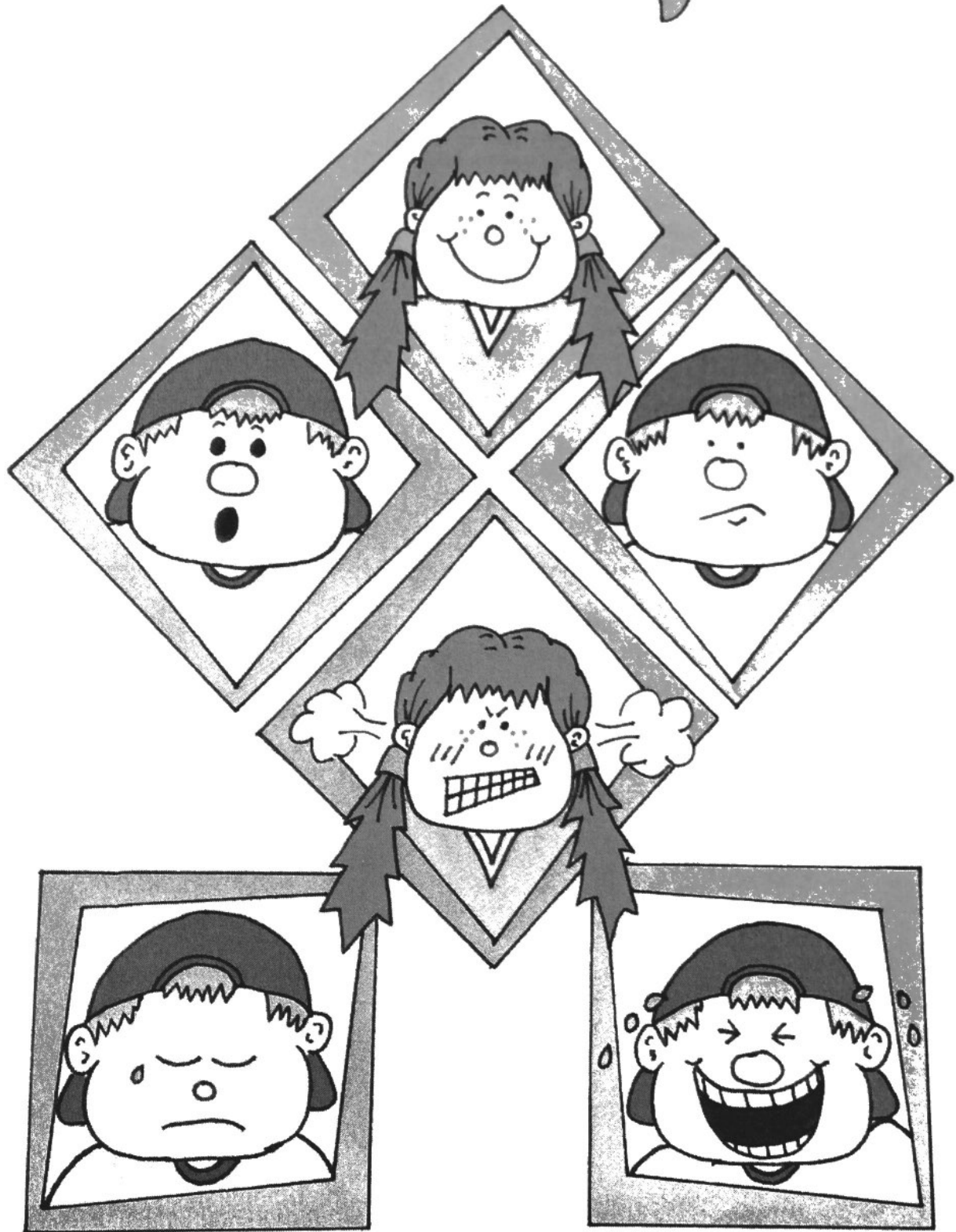
As the worksheets progress, children are able to consider their own feelings and the ways in which these can be communicated.

The contextual element of feelings is also explored i.e. how emotions are dependent on events and situations.

The discussion of feelings can be a very sensitive area for some children. If this is the case, you may want to consider using puppets or soft toys in order to depersonalise the section. Hopefully, as you work through it, the child will become more relaxed and the need for props will reduce.

Notes:

Feelings



Guidelines for using 'A Handful of Feelings!'

This worksheet allows you to gain knowledge about the child's level of emotional vocabulary. Some children may find naming emotions and feelings difficult. If this is the case, you could encourage responses by asking them questions such as, "How would you feel if someone gave you a present?" or "How would you feel if someone called you a name?"

If a child has a limited emotional vocabulary, which consists only of happy, sad and angry, it will be important for you to name and discuss the nature of more complex emotions.

For children who have a wide emotional vocabulary it would be useful to make sure they understand the context of emotions. Therefore, when they name a feeling you could ask questions such as, "What would make you feel that way?" or "Can you think of a time you felt that way?"

Notes:

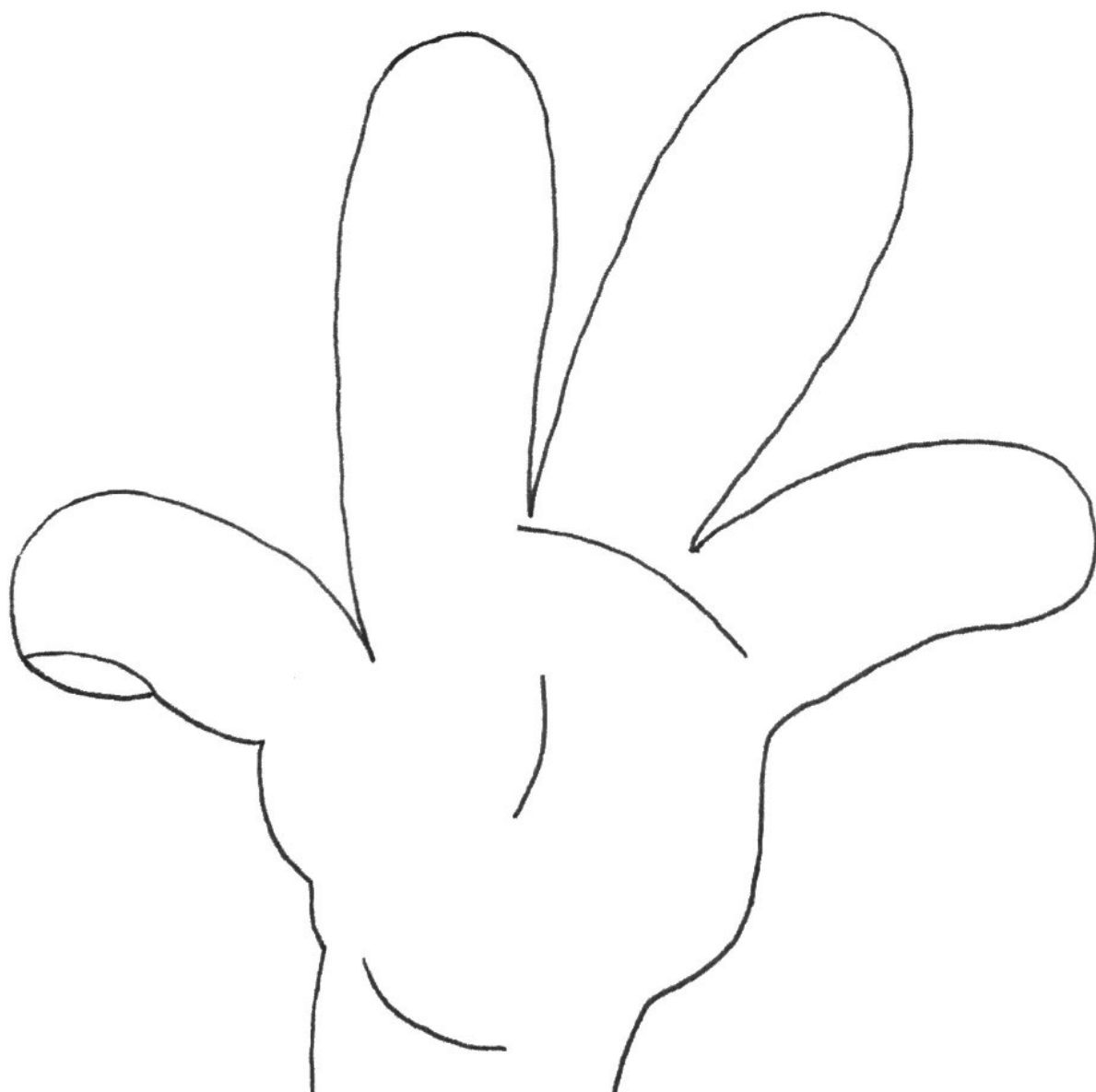
A handful of feelings!

THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT
feelings

THAT WE CAN HAVE.

CAN YOU THINK OF SOME OF THESE?

WRITE THEM ON
THE HAND BELOW!



Guidelines for using 'Picture This!'

The purpose of this worksheet is to help children understand the way in which people communicate their feelings facially.

Try to contextualise these emotions by asking what might make them feel that way.

As well as asking the child to draw the expressions on the faces, it may be useful to ask him or her to pull the faces too. You could use a mirror or a digital camera to show what they look like. Alternatively, you could pull the faces yourself!

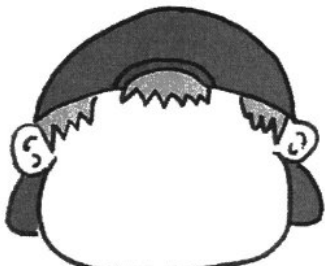
This activity, as well as being fun, further emphasises the child's recognition of facial forms of communication.

Notes:

Picture This!

WE CAN LET PEOPLE KNOW HOW WE
feel
BY USING DIFFERENT
Facial Expressions!

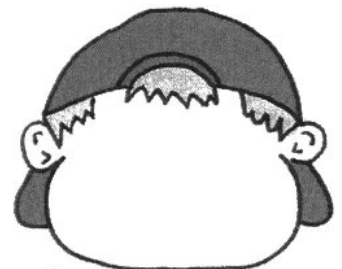
DRAW THE
expressions
ON THE FACES BELOW THAT MATCH THE
feeling!



ANGRY



SAD



HAPPY



WORRIED



SCARED



EXCITED



BORED



RELAXED



SURPRISED

Guidelines for using 'About My Feelings!'

This worksheet helps children to realise that feelings change and are often related to an experience or action.

Try to gain as much information as possible about the times the child has felt the feelings listed on the worksheet, without invading their privacy.

If the child is finding it difficult to talk about personal feelings, then this may be another opportunity to use props to depersonalise the experience.

In order for the child to understand the contextual element of feelings, it might be useful to ask questions similar to the following: "Would you be likely to feel sad if someone gave you a really cool present?" and "Would you be likely to feel happy if someone called you a nasty name?"

It is also important that children understand that feelings are an individual experience and that however they feel is fine. It would be useful to explore this with the child. You could do this by exploring certain scenarios. For example, "How would you feel if you got called up to the front in assembly to receive a certificate?" The child may have various responses, from proud to happy to embarrassed. Whatever response the child gives, you could say "I can see why you would feel that way. I think I might feel ... We both seem to feel differently about the same thing, but that's fine because your feelings are personal and it is natural for people to feel differently about the same thing."

Notes:

About My Feelings!

HOW WE **feel** CHANGES.

SOMETHING MAY HAPPEN TO MAKE YOU **feel** **sad**
THIS DOESN'T MEAN THAT YOU WILL **feel** THIS WAY FOREVER.

SOONER OR LATER SOMETHING WILL HAPPEN TO MAKE YOU
feel **happy**

AGAIN!

PERHAPS SOMEONE WILL TELL YOU A JOKE OR GIVE YOU A CUDDLE TO CHEER
YOU UP!

YOU WILL HAVE ALREADY EXPERIENCED LOTS OF **feelings** IN YOUR LIFE.

CAN YOU THINK OF A TIME WHEN YOU HAVE **felt**
THE FOLLOWING **feelings**?

Excited

Worried

WRITE THEM
IN THE
BUBBLES!

Happy

Sad

Scared

Embarrassed

Guidelines for using 'Talking about Feelings...'

This worksheet introduces children to the idea of expressing their feelings verbally. It deals predominantly with finding the right person to trust when sharing their emotions. This safeguards the child and reduces the vulnerability felt when revealing personal thoughts.

However, we believe it is also important to talk to the child about the effects of bottling up emotions.

One useful analogy to help explain this is the 'fizzy drink can'. This not only helps the child's understanding, but also depersonalises the situation. The analogy asks the child to imagine he or she is a can of fizzy drink. When something happens that causes upset or anger, the can is shaken and fizz and bubbles (symbolising feelings) are created. If the child opens the can and releases the fizz and bubbles there will be a small explosion, which is easy to clean up.

However, if fizz is not released then the next time something happens to cause anger or upset, the can is shaken again, creating more fizz and bubbles. This continues until the can is no longer able to keep all the bubbles and fizz inside and there is a huge explosion, which causes drink to fly everywhere and affects many people around them. This explosion is much more difficult to clean up than the smaller one.

Notes:

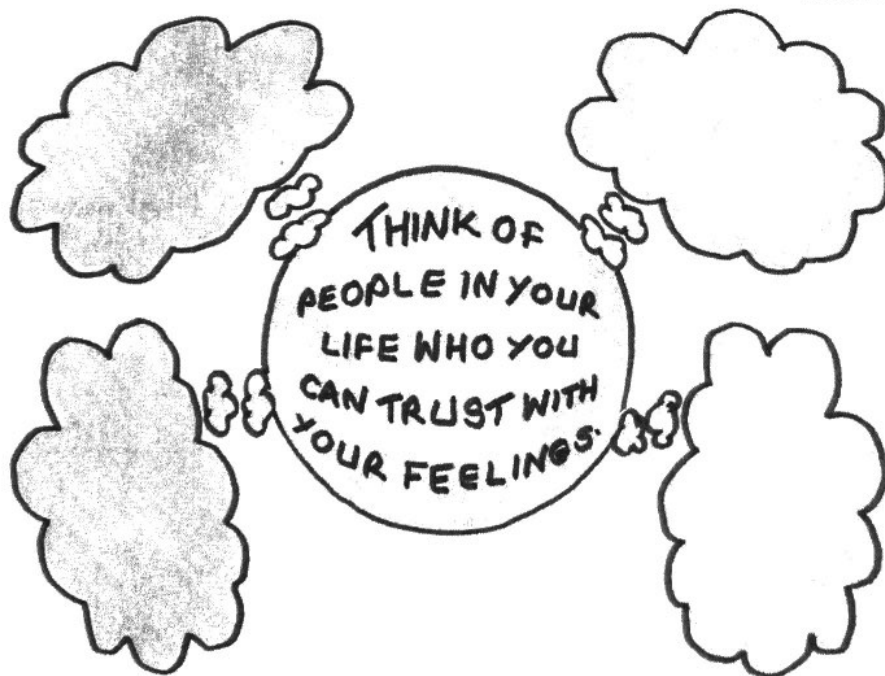
Talking about feelings...

WE CAN LET PEOPLE
KNOW HOW WE FEEL BY
THE WAY WE LOOK...



WE CAN ALSO LET PEOPLE KNOW BY TELLING THEM.
TALKING ABOUT FEELINGS LETS OTHERS KNOW HOW WE
FEEL AND CAN HELP US FEEL BETTER ABOUT THINGS TOO.

WHEN WE TELL SOMEONE HOW WE FEEL WE NEED TO BE ABLE TO
TRUST THEM.



REMEMBER THAT YOUR FEELINGS ARE
PERSONAL. PICK A PERSON YOU TRUST AND
FIND A PRIVATE, QUIET PLACE WHEN TALKING
ABOUT YOUR FEELINGS.



Guidelines for using 'My Week of Feelings'

This worksheet provides a useful starting point to help children begin to understand and express their feelings. This is not meant to be a worksheet that is completed once in a session. Rather, it is intended to form a diary which the child can complete daily.

Children will be at very different stages as to how well they understand their own feelings and how able they are to express these. Children may wish to keep their diary private - and of course they have every right to do so and to have this right respected! However, it may be beneficial for the child to express some feelings to you. It is important to re-emphasise to the child that bottling up feelings doesn't help those feelings become easier or sorted. If they share their feelings with someone they trust, then this might release the pressure their feelings are placing on them and, ultimately, make them feel happier. It also allows someone to help them work through solutions when feelings are uncomfortable.

Modelling, by expressing your own feelings, may provide children with the skills to do this themselves. It may also make them feel more secure in expressing their own feelings as a two-sided relationship will make them feel less vulnerable. Obviously, professional boundaries need to be kept if you are to model in this way.

Notes:



My week of feelings



SAD



HAPPY



ANGRY

Today I am feeling...

MONDAY



BECAUSE _____

TUESDAY



BECAUSE _____

WEDNESDAY



BECAUSE _____

THURSDAY



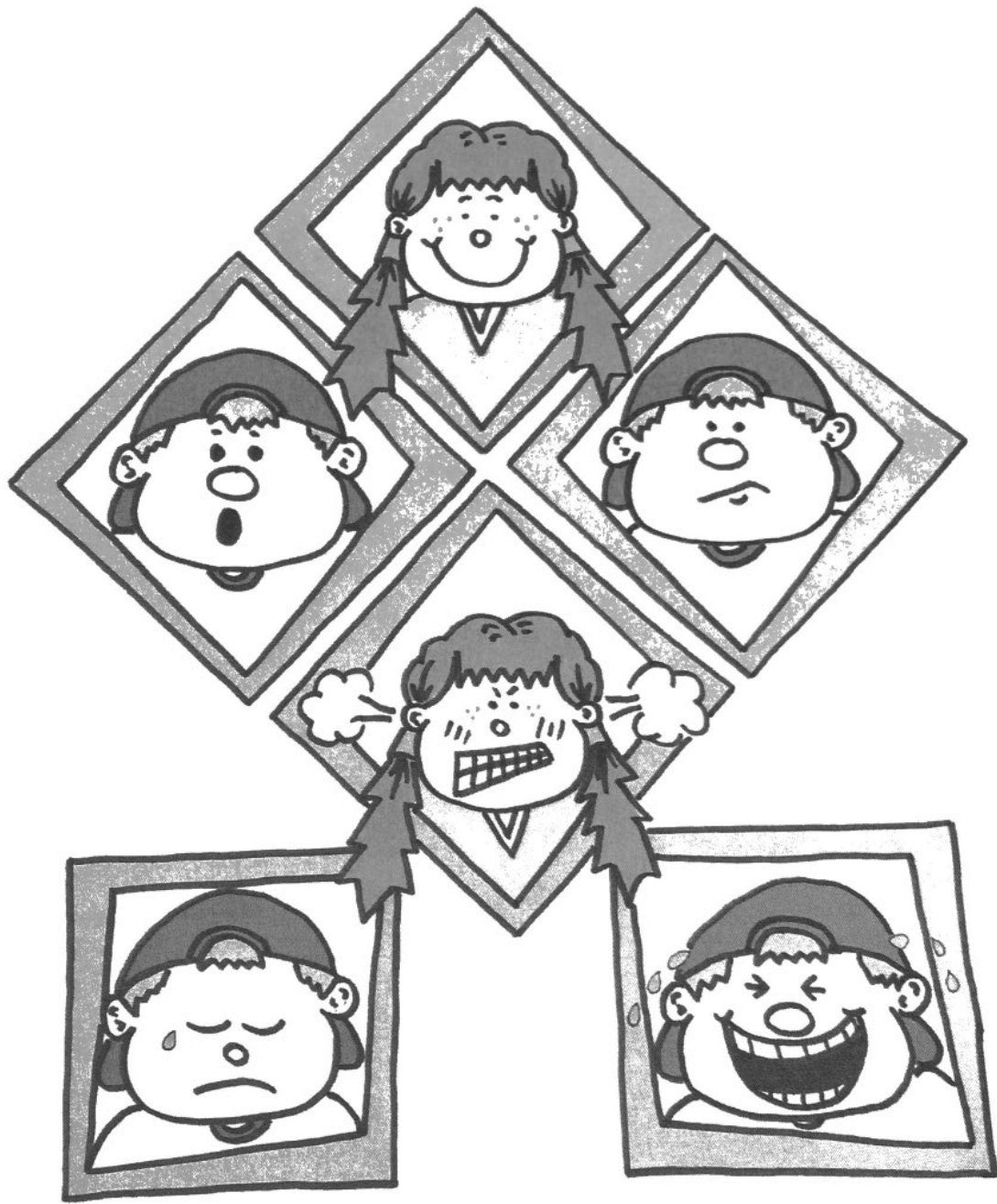
BECAUSE _____

FRIDAY



BECAUSE _____

I can understand my



Feelings

Transferring Skills

Using 'My Week of Feelings' in a diary format, to be completed on a daily basis, is one way in which skills can be transferred and developed in the everyday environment.

Another is to encourage significant adults to make good use of emotional vocabulary with the child. Comments such as "It made me feel proud when you completed that lovely piece of literacy" or "It made me feel frustrated when you kept interrupting in class" will assist this. Try to encourage an emotional response from the child during these conversations i.e. "How did you feel about that/what happened?"

Allowing children to practise and model positive expression of emotions will help develop their skills. You can also extend this and encourage empathy skills by asking them to consider how their behaviour impacts on others. For example, you could make comments such as, "How did you think it made that boy feel when you called him a name?"

Notes:
