



Wednesday 11th January
Jo Suchy
Educational Psychology Service



Intro discussion

What do you remember from the first session?

What have you tried? And has it been effective?



Emotion Coaching

A **universal approach** to support children and young people to **understand their feelings**.

'Emotion Coaching helps children and young people to understand the different emotions they experience, why they occur and how to handle them'

Gottman (1996)



Emotion Coaching styles

Emotion Coaching

High empathy
High guidance

Disapproving

Low empathy
High guidance

Laissez Faire

High empathy
Low guidance

Dismissing

Low empathy
Low guidance

How to Emotion Coach

- Step 1

Recognising the child's feelings and empathising with them

- Step 2

Validating the feelings and labelling them

- Step 3

Setting limits on behaviour (if needed)

- Step 4

Problem-solve with the child

Discussion

Which have steps have been easiest to use?

Which do you have questions on/do you think you need to practise a bit more?



“Proposing solutions before empathising is like trying to build the frame of a house before you lay a firm foundation” (Gottman)

- Emotional ***first aid*** is needed ***first***
- Emotion Coaching builds a ***power base*** that is an emotional bond – ***this creates a safe haven, a place of trust, a place of respect, a place of acceptance, a sense of self etc.***
- This in turn leads to children and young people ***giving back*** respect, ***acceptance*** of boundaries, etc.

CONNECT BEFORE RE-DIRECT (Siegel, 2013)
RAPPORT BEFORE REASON (Riley, ,2009)

“Connect before correct”

- Need to genuinely empathise with the child/young person from their point of view.
- This doesn't mean agreeing with them, just viewing things from their perspective
- Recognise all emotions as being natural and normal
- Recognise behaviour as communication
- Look for physical and verbal signs of the emotion being felt
- Take on the child/young person's perspective



Discussion

When has it been challenging about showing empathy?

What have the barriers been for you?

What would help to overcome them?

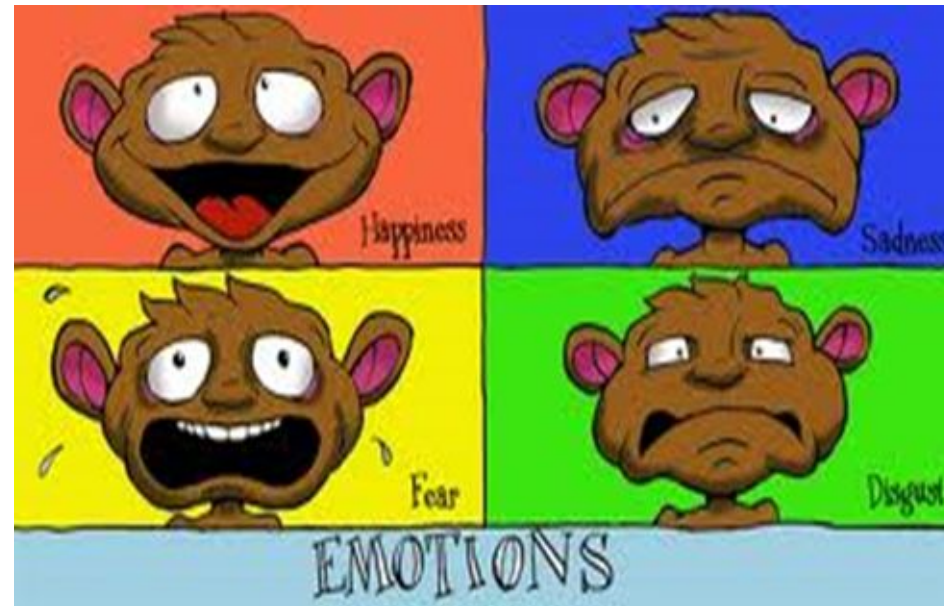


Step 2

Validating the feelings and labelling them

- Use words to reflect back child's emotion and help child to label emotion
- Provide a narrative/translation for the emotional experience (creating cognitive links)
- Try not to ask probing questions to which young people might not know answer
- Telling the emotional person that you understand their emotional situation and that you don't blame them helps sooth their emotional brain

Step 2 Validating and labelling emotions



“It sounds like you are feeling...”

“You didn’t like it when he said that to you. That really hurt your feelings”

“I can see that you get angry when that happens. I would feel angry if that happened to me. It’s normal to feel like that”

“I can see you’re frowning and you’re kicking the wall; I think you might be feeling frustrated. I would be feeling like that too if I didn’t want to do something”

“I noticed you looking around at the other who are working on their projects. I think you might be feeling nervous right now about whether your work will be ok. Have I got that right?”

Discussion

Share some phrases when you have used this type of language

Is there a situation which happens frequently when you think you could validate your child's emotions more? What might you say?



Things we can do to co-regulate a child who has ‘flipped their lid’

The lowest part of the brain needs to be regulated first:

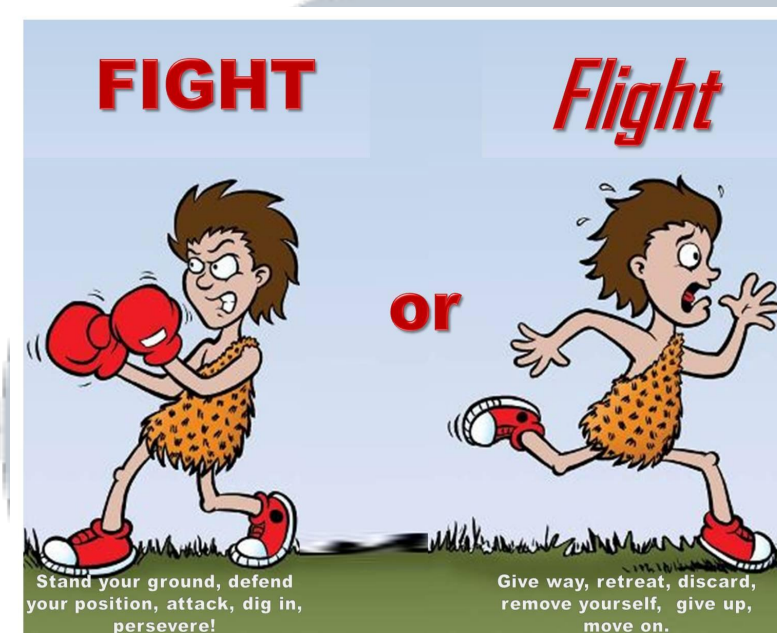
Way to do this is through **rhythm**: Patterned, repetitive rhythmic activities or somatosensory activities

Fight impulse: pushing, deep touch pressure activities

Flight impulse : running, jumping, proprioceptive activities

These might include: Walking, running, dancing, singing, deep breathing, colouring trampolining, swinging, drumming, tug of war, bouncing on a fitness ball, walking along balance beam, balance board, measuring heart rate.....

*(Step 1 & 2 of **Emotion Coaching** - recognising a child’s emotion, empathising with them, labelling and validating the emotion)*



Things we can do to co-regulate a child who has 'flipped their lid'

Grounding and calming strategies:

Grounding helps keep someone in the present. It works by **focusing outward on the external world**. You can think of it as distraction, centering, a safe place or looking outward.

Strategies include:

- Counting breaths in and out, watching clouds, counting backwards from 20
- Counting how many steps they can walk with a beanbag on their head
- Placing a cool cloth to their face
- Playing 54321 game

Let child know they are safe and secure

(think about the 4Ss of attachment)

“I can see you and I’m going to stay near you to make sure you stay safe”.

Step 3 Set limits (if needed)

Validate the emotion and label the feeling

...BUT...

certain behaviours cannot be accepted.

“I understand how you are feeling but these are the rules that we have to follow. Doing that is not ok’.

‘You didn’t put do the task as we agreed. You’re probably angry that you can’t join in the practical session with the others now because you have to complete the written assessment first’

‘We can’t behave like that even though you are feeling annoyed because it is not safe’.

“You are angry that I’ve taken away your phone but these are the rules everyone has to follow. I will keep it safe for you”

Step 4 Problem-solving

- ‘This is not a safe place to be angry. Let’s go to a safe place and then we can talk’
- ‘Next time you’re feeling like this, what could you do? How do you think you will react next time or if this happens again’
- ‘You need to work in a group with Ruth or work with me - which do you want to do?’

Rose,
2014

Discussion

With problem solving and boundary setting what challenges have you faced?

Generally what would be your top tips to another parent new to Emotion Coaching?



Any questions
Final thoughts
Thank you!