

8.12.18

EMOTION COACHING

Following on from our piece last week about supporting children’s emotional wellbeing, this week we are looking at how to help them deal with any feelings that they might have.

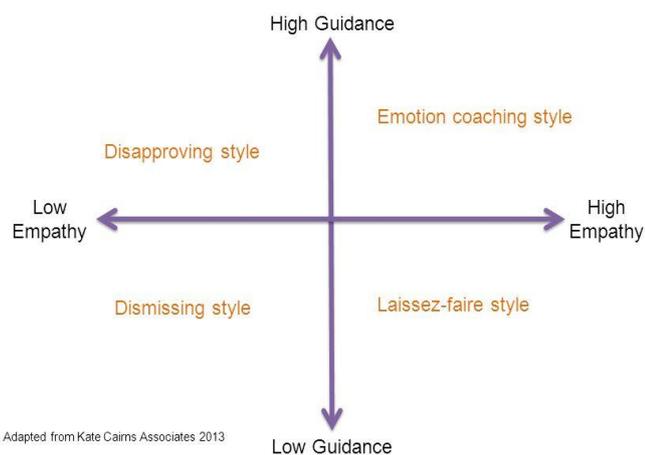
How might my child be feeling?

Sad	Tired	Lonely	Ashamed
Scared	Horrible	Jealous	Rejected
Frustrated	Angry	Nervous	Depressed
Disappointed	Embarrassed	Upset	Annoyed

A good place to start is to understand the different kinds of responses that adults usually give. These fall into 4 categories. While we might have a type of response that we are more likely to give, parents and teachers can also use different kinds of responses depending on how they are feeling themselves.

Have a look below. Do you have a style that you use more often than others?

<p>Disapproving style <u>Low empathy/high guidance.</u> Is critical and/or intolerant. Believes that negative emotions are used to manipulate them. Does not notice the emotion driving the bad behaviour. Uses punishment or discipline to get rid of emotions. Is motivated by the need to control and regain power.</p> <p>Negative emotions are weak and show lack of control. The child needs to toughen up.</p>	<p>Emotion Coaching style <u>High empathy/high guidance.</u> Adults are aware of their own and the child’s emotions. They empathise, actively listen to the child and build rapport. They are good role models. They help the child to recognise what they are feeling and help them problem solve and regulate their feelings.</p>
<p>Dismissing style <u>Low empathy/low guidance.</u> Wants the child to feel better but is uncomfortable with negative emotions. Sees negative emotions as ‘toxic’ and to be ‘got over’ quickly. Believes paying attention to emotions makes them worse. Reduces or minimizes the emotional experience. Uses logic or distraction to get rid of the emotion. Motivated by the need to rescue/make things better.</p> <p>It’s not a big deal.</p> <p>I’ll buy you a new one.</p> <p>Have a biscuit!</p>	<p>Laissez-Faire style <u>High empathy/low guidance.</u> Happens when the adult is overwhelmed by the power of the emotions driving the child: there are two flipped lids! The adult feels helpless, afraid or distressed. Despite the empathy of the adult, the child sees the adult mirroring their behaviour – they are not able to contain their feelings and the adult is not modelling how to do this. The child receives no guidance on how to manage the feelings. Once the adult is in laissez-faire, the behaviour will escalate.</p>



“All feelings are valid but not all behaviours are acceptable.”

“Don’t just discipline – teach emotions.”

Why do we use emotion coaching?

- ✓ Helps child to learn to **self-sooth**
- ✓ Helps child to learn to **self-regulate**
- ✓ Helps child to learn to **resolve problems**
- ✓ Helps child to learn they can **survive adversity** (or thwarted wishes/desires/needs)
- ✓ Helps child to learn about **empathy and pro-social behaviour**.

What is emotion coaching?

There are 3 steps to helping your child regulate their feelings. Before starting step 1, be attuned to the child and set the emotional tone (NOT the adult reflecting back the angry or distressed face of the child, but the child being able to reflect the calm and empathic face of the adult).

Step 1: Empathise, label & validate	Step 2: Set boundaries	Step 3: Problem Solve
“I see....” Or “I notice....” “You look like you are feeling...” “I imagine that feels....” “It sounds to me like you feel because Is that right?”	“It’s okay to feel..... but it’s not okay to.....”	“What other ways can we respond when we feel.....?” “Let’s think about some different choices...” “Let’s think about what we could have done instead.” “Next time you feel that way, try to use your voice to explain what you are feeling and then we can explore things that might help.” “What might happen if....?”

Feedback from using this approach would be very welcomed. Please send any responses via adminoffice@potleyhill.hants.sch.uk marked for the attention of Mrs Clarke.