

Emotion Cards

Eight faces, eight words, and the control cards that let your child check their own work. Enough to put a name on what they are feeling, before they can even explain it.

3-6 years

Language and Social Life

3 sheets to cut out

Heavy paper recommended

What your child practices

A three-year-old feels everything, very strongly, and often has only one word to say so. Naming an emotion does not make it disappear, but it stops being a nameless storm: it becomes something you can point to, and so something you can talk about. These cards isolate a single difficulty at a time, the vocabulary, and set aside the situation that triggered the feeling.

Prepare the material

1. Print the three sheets on heavy paper, then cut out the cards one by one.
2. Store the faces, the words, and the control cards in three separate envelopes.
3. Bring out the eight faces alone first, and save the words for later.

Show once, then step back

1. Place three faces in front of your child, not eight: always start with three.
2. Name the first one slowly, without adding anything: "joy". Then the second, then the third.
3. Then ask: "show me anger". Your child points, they don't need to speak yet.
4. Only on the third day, show a card and ask: "what is this?".
5. Once the eight faces are known, add the written words and have your child place them under each face.

The built-in control of error. It is in the control cards, which carry the face and its word together. Your child makes their pairs, then checks against the control card and corrects themselves. You have nothing to validate, and above all nothing to correct out loud.

Once your child feels confident

- Look for a character's emotion in a book your child knows by heart.
- Place the day's card next to their plate in the morning, without comment.
- Add two blank cards for words your child uses that aren't included.

Safety. These cards are for naming, never for judging. None of the eight is a bad emotion, and anger does not need correcting: it needs saying. They are not used in the middle of a meltdown either, when your child is overwhelmed, but later, calmly, like a game.

The faces, to cut out card by card. Nothing is written on them: your child does the naming.



The words, cut out the same way. Bring them out only once the faces are well known.

joy

sadness

anger

fear

surprise

disgust

tiredness

calm

The control cards, face and word together. Your child keeps them aside to check on their own.



joy



sadness



anger



fear



surprise



disgust



tiredness



calm