



*Emotion Coaching
for parents.*

Aims of the session:

- *To understand the basis of Emotion Coaching.*
- *To look at the science and research behind this strategy.*
- *To recognise how this strategy could be used at home.*
- *To become confident in using the 4 stages of Emotion Coaching.*

What is Emotion Coaching

Emotion coaching is an approach to caring for children which values their feelings while guiding their behaviours. Emotion coaching takes effort and patience. It's not necessarily easy—but it's definitely worth the effort.

This approach encourages healthy emotional development so that “children delight in the happy times and recover more quickly from the bad ones.” Using emotion coaching does get easier with practice. It's like learning a new skill in sports or learning to play a musical instrument. The more we use it, the better we become.

“Emotion Coaching is helping children to understand the different emotions they experience, why they occur and how to handle them.”

(Grottman, 1997)

Video on emotion
coaching

2/15/2022

Introduction to Emotion Coaching



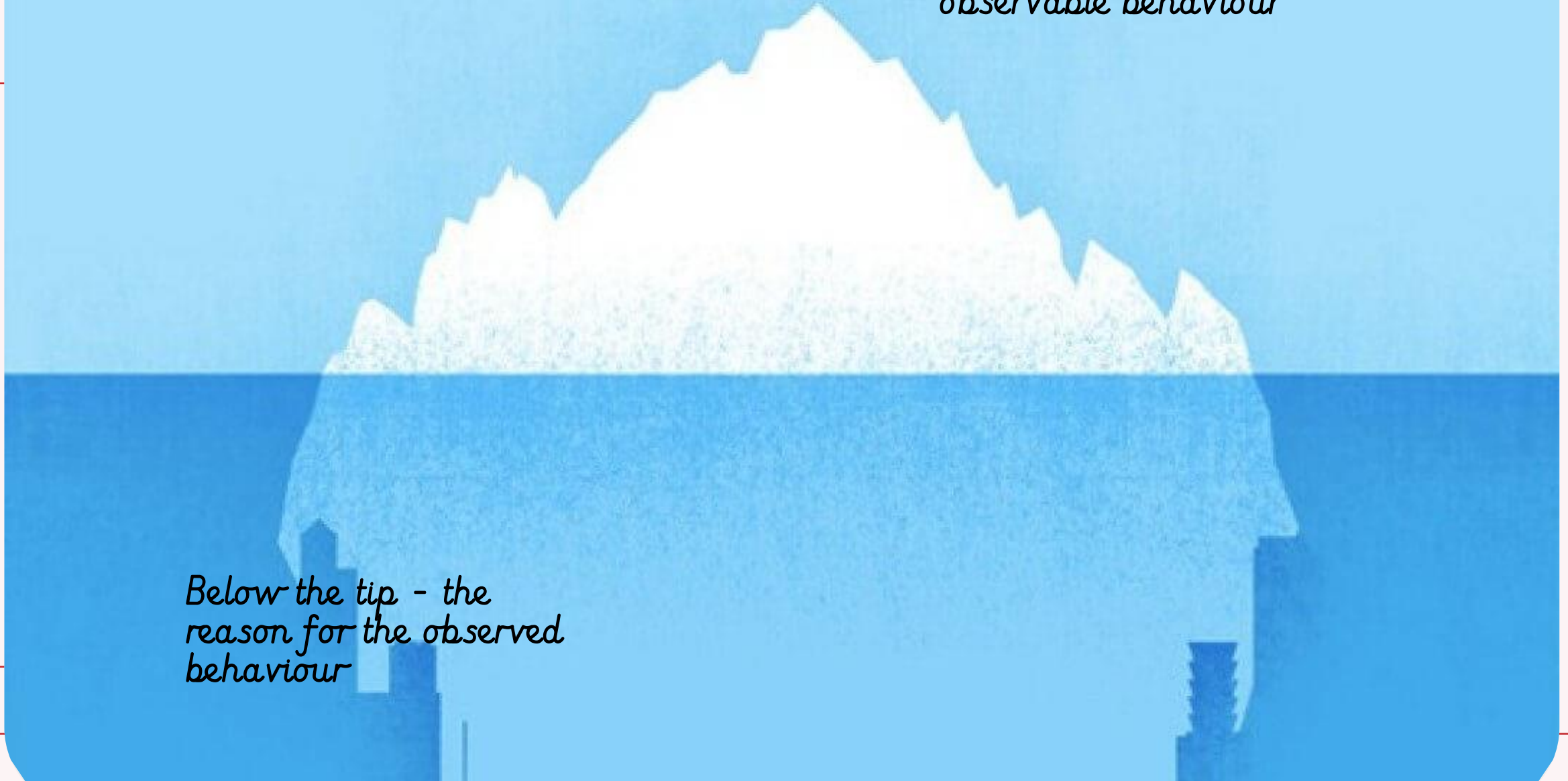
Emotion Coaching at St Joseph & St Theresa.

- All staff have been trained on Emotion Coaching and how to use this during a variety of situations.
- Two members of staff (Mrs Roden & myself) are currently completing training delivered by the Local Authority.
- Children's Mental Health Week will be celebrated across the school where children will complete activities based on recognising and talking about their emotions (7th-11th February).
- 1:1 and small group emotion coaching groups are planned for and delivered for those children who require this support.

Iceberg model

*Tip of the iceberg -
observable behaviour*

*Below the tip - the
reason for the observed
behaviour*



Iceberg Model

Tip of the iceberg =
observable behaviors

Tantrum

Aggression

Self-Stimming

Screaming

Self-Injurious behavior

Isolating self

Refusal/non-compliance

**Lack of understanding
(receptive communication)**

**Inability to express self
(expressive communication)**

Social skill deficits

Difficulty with change

**Sensory processing
problems**

Below the tip = the underlying
reasons for the observable
behaviors

So, why Emotion Coaching?

- Learning, attention, memory, decision making and social functioning are both profoundly affected by and subsumed within the processes of emotion.
- Emotions matters to learning
- Emotions and cognitive thinking = good decision
- We all have emotions and they are hardwired for our survival. Emotions help to adapt behaviour. All emotions are needed.
- Emotions are a form of communication - they should never be ignored.

Cont...

Emotion coached children are better able to:

- Control their impulses
- Delay gratification
- Self soothe when upset
- Pay attention

As a result of Emotion Coached children:

- Achieve more academically in school
- Are more popular
- Have fewer behavioural problems
- Have fewer infectious illnesses
- Are more emotionally stable
- Are more resilient.



The Research

The Hand Model of the Brain

What happens when we "flip our lid"

When our brain is working efficiently both the upper and mid brain are communicating effectively. Information comes in and is processed logically. Sometimes too much information is coming in for the Upper brain to process and it disconnects. We "flip our lid" and can no longer access the functions provided by the upper brain



Lego hand made model of the brain

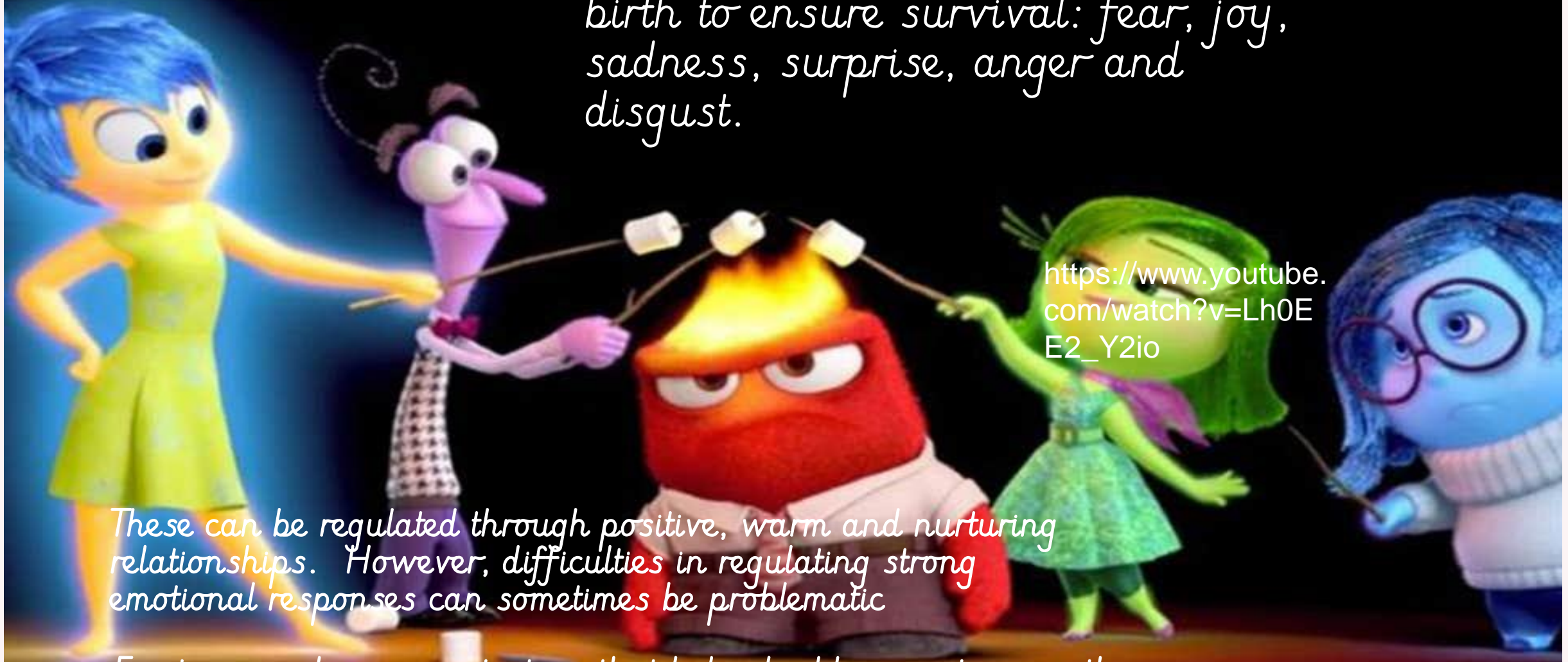
[Emotion Coaching Resources for Professionals \(emotioncoachinuk.com\)](#)

The research suggest...

- Children to regulate, improve and take ownership of their behaviour.
- Children to calm down and better understand emotions.
- Supports academic attainment
- Practitioners to be more sensitive to children's needs.
- Create more consistent responses to children's behaviour
- Practitioners to feel more in control during incidents
- Promotes positive relationships between adults and children.

Inside Out

Six primary emotions are hardwired into human brain from birth to ensure survival: fear, joy, sadness, surprise, anger and disgust.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lh0E E2_Y2io

These can be regulated through positive, warm and nurturing relationships. However, difficulties in regulating strong emotional responses can sometimes be problematic

Emotion coaching is a strategy that helps build connections in the brain that will enable the regulation of emotions.



How to Emotion Coach

Step 1

- Recognise the child's feelings and empathise with them, soothing and calming (be careful not to sympathise)

Step 2

- Validate the feelings and label them

Step 3

- Setting limits on behaviour (if required)

Step 4

- Problem solve with the child.

Remember ALL emotions are valid but not all behaviours are acceptable.

See the person and not just the behaviour.

Always think 'why'

Step 1 and 2

CURIOUS NOT FURIOUS

Step 1 – Recognise and Empathise

These emotions are natural and normal.

Look for physical/verbal signs
(fidgeting, daydreaming, flushed)

Not killing with kindness

Step 2 – Validate and Label

Validate the emotion and acknowledge its existence

“I understand that you are feeling”

“I can see you fists are tight and you are feeling angry”

NAME IT TO TAME IT

Step 3 and 4

Step 3 - Setting limits

- State the school rules/boundaries of acceptable behaviour
- Make it clear certain behaviours are not acceptable.
- "In this school we..."

Step 4 - Problem solve with the children

- When the child is calm and relaxed and in a rational state.
- Explore the feelings that gave rise to the behaviour.
- Scaffold alternative ideas and actions that would lead to more appropriate outcomes.
- Empower the child to believe they can overcome difficulties.
- Talk WITH the child - not dictate
- "What do you think would help?"

Top tips for Emotion Coaching

Acknowledge low levels of your child's emotion before they escalate to full-blown crisis.

Acknowledge all emotions as being natural and normal and not always a matter of choice.

Recognise your child's behaviour as communication of an emotion they are experiencing.

Check on how you're feeling. Are you calm and ready to Emotion Coach your child?

www.emotioncoachinguk.com

The four steps to Emotion Coaching and how this might be used at home:

1. Notice your child's feelings and empathise with them.

Notice any judgements your child's behaviour and emotion cause in you. Remember not being picked for a team is the same feeling as not getting that job you applied for.

2. Label and validate the feeling your child is experiencing right at this moment

'I can see that you get angry when that happens. I would feel angry if that happened to me. It's ok to feel angry'

3. Set limits (if needed)

Emotion Coaching is not about ignoring the fact that some behaviours are not acceptable. After steps 1&2 you need to make clear which behaviours are and are not acceptable.
'I understand you're feeling really sad today, but one of our golden rules is kindness, so hitting your friend isn't an ok thing to do'

4. Problem Solving

When the child is calm, help your child to consider what they could do when they feel those strong emotions next time. Explain why their behaviour was inappropriate or hurtful, find solutions for what they did, not for how they feel, give your child time to suggest solutions and when possible follow his/her lead in picking a solution.

A Pocket Guide to Emotion Coaching



Step 1: Notice your child's feelings and empathise with them

It is important to be aware of the different emotions a child may feel. In this stage it is valuable to observe, listen, and learn how your child expresses different emotions and to watch for changes in facial expressions, body language, posture, gestures, speed of words and tone of voice. Look beneath the behaviour you see and wonder what emotion was informing this.



Recognise that your child's behaviour tells you that they are struggling with how they are feeling right now and need your support. It is important not to ignore or avoid the emotions your child is feeling. See this as an opportunity for you to connect with your child. By accepting their emotion and not blaming them for it you can help them to understand and learn to manage that feeling. It will help you to de-escalate a situation or prevent it from getting worse. For example, I can see you are angry today".

Be curious rather than furious

When you listen to what your child has to say or notice their emotions, you are letting your child know that their emotions are important, that you don't blame them for feeling emotions and that you take their concerns seriously. This will help your child to feel seen and safe, it will help to soothe and start to calm down.

★ Be a STAR ★
for your child

- ★ **S** **STOP** - don't act or react straight away. Notice any emotions the child's emotion/behaviour is making you feel.
- ★ **T** **THINK** - what is going on for the child right now? What feeling might lay underneath the behaviour I'm seeing?
- ★ **A** **ATTUNE** - yourself with that feeling by putting yourself in the child's shoes and maybe
- ★ **R** **REFLECT** - What would be an equivalent situation for you that could cause you to feel that way?
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Step 2: Label and validate the emotions your child is experiencing

Sometimes a child can't tell you what they are feeling, so you can help him/her to do this. When your child is crying and complaining at their big sister's party, you could say "you look sad, I bet you wish it was your birthday party" or when there is a fight during play, "it must have made you mad when he took your toy". By putting your child's feelings into words you are comforting them but also showing you care and understand. It puts you in a better position to help them find a solution to the problem they were experiencing.

Name it to tame it

Step 3: Set limits on behaviour if needed

Assuming that your child is safe and noone else is at risk of harm or danger, limit setting is an opportunity to teach your child the behaviour that is expected of them. Rather than assuming that your child knows or is always able to respond appropriately - so reprimanding them when they do not, how can you establish and maintain acceptable boundaries positively? Rather than punishing what you don't want your child to be doing, think about what it is that you wish your child to be doing instead. What are the important boundaries and behaviour your child needs to understand, accept and practice? Focus on that. Perhaps a reminder is all that is needed from you; "we agreed that you need to put your toys away before bedtime". Kind reminders acknowledge that none of us learn things straight away and we need practice. Remember how long it takes us to learn some important skills e.g. reading and writing. Managing your emotions is no different, it takes time, teaching and lots of practice.

Step 4: Help your child to problem solve

Reinforce the idea that your child has the capacity within themselves to develop skills to cope with their own emotional worlds. You might: 1) Talk about feelings that gave rise to the problem; 'How were you feeling when that happened?' 2) Identify more productive ways of expressing those feelings; 'Let's think of what you could have done instead.' 3) Help them find and agree a solution; 'You could ...or.... which one sounds good to you?' 'How can you practice to.....' 'What will help you to remember to do this?'

Published in collaboration with Emotion Coaching UK
Emotion Coaching UK (2021)
www.emotioncoachinguk.com



For further information...

- [Emotion Coaching Resources for Professionals \(emotioncoachinguk.com\)](https://emotioncoachinguk.com)