

Tucker the Turtle

Children learn how to identify, talk about, and understand their feelings.

START

- The goal of this activity is to help children learn to identify and express their feelings in fun, healthy ways using the Tucker the Turtle Technique.
- Set up the table with the paper plates, construction paper, circles, markers, and scissors. Put paper plates out at places for children to sit and work.
- Introduce the activity by asking Who would like to do an art project and talk about feelings? You're each going to make your own Tucker Turtle! (Show the sample.)
- For younger children, you can use Tucker to talk with the children: Hi, my name is Tucker Turtle and I'm so happy to see you today!

NEXT STEPS

- Gather the children around you away from the table and ask how everyone is feeling today. You can use the Feelings Face Chart or make exaggerated faces and ask Is anyone feeling sad? Happy? Angry? Do you ever feel like you don't know what to do with your feelings? Today we're going to learn some easy ways to take care of your feelings. It is called the Turtle Technique. Then everyone is going to make a turtle to take home. Feel free to use your Tucker Turtle to talk along with you.
- Begin the exercise:
 - First, Let's all act really angry! Act it out with everyone; you can even include a little foot stamping.
 - Second, Let's all stop! Act it out with a body freeze. Let the children try it.
 - Third, Now we're all going to go inside our Turtle shell, just like Tucker. Show them how Tucker tucks his head in. How can we go inside our shells? You can put your hands in front of your face like this (everyone try), or tuck yourself into some loose clothing, or even curl up into a little ball. Does anyone have any other ideas?
 - Next, We're all going to take 3 nice long, deep breaths, like this—let's all try it together. You can exaggerate this somewhat while everyone practices.
 - Finally, We're all going to come out of our shells feeling so much calmer. Does everyone feel nice and calm? (Have Tucker come out, too.) Now, once you're all calmed down, it's easier to think of solutions to your problems or upset.
- Introduce the next part of the activity by asking if everyone would like to make their own Tucker Turtle to take home. Have children sit at the table and show them how to assemble Tucker.
 - For younger children, have them pick out 4 green circle feet, 1 green triangle tail, and one brown circle head. Help them to staple the pieces onto the paper plate, and encourage them to decorate the paper plate.

(continued on side 2)

MATERIALS

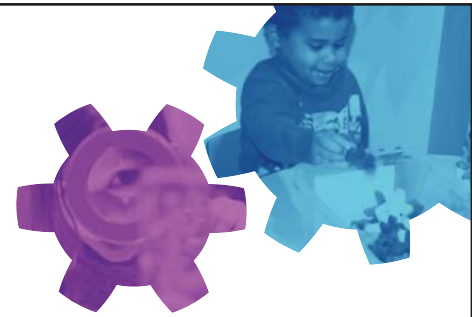
- * 9" paper plates
- * Crayons or markers
- * Construction paper: green, brown
- * Construction paper circles and triangles: 1½" brown circles, 1½" green circles, and small, green triangles (enough for each child to have 1 brown head, 4 green circle feet and one green triangle tail)
- * Scissors
- * Stapler
- * Sample Turtle
- * Feelings Face Chart
- * Mirrors

Learning Guideline:

Social /Emotional: Talk about ways to solve or prevent problems and discuss situations that illustrate that actions have consequences, through a variety of methods.

Tip Sheets:

Be Healthy, Create



(continued from side 1)

- For older children, encourage them to cut out their own shapes to staple on. They can trace the shapes from the premade ones, draw them themselves, or have an adult draw the shapes for them. Then they can decorate as well.

FINISH UP

- As the children are finishing up their projects, you can walk around and ask them how their turtle is feeling. Encourage them to use emotion words by asking questions such as Is your turtle happy? Is he angry? Can you tell me about it? You can also get clues about how the children feel from their drawings, so you can ask them to tell you about their decorations as well.
- When everyone is finished making their turtles, gather them around to review steps 1 through 4 again. Let the children lead as much as possible to help them reinforce what they learned by teaching others.

EXPAND YOUR ACTIVITY

- You can have a turtle (or puppet) show with the turtles acting out a “feelings” play, or encourage the children to create their own puppet shows with their turtles.
- Set the Feelings Face Chart up next to the mirror and brainstorm together about the feelings shown in each face. For each one, ask the children to make each of the faces. Make the faces along with the children and talk about how it feels to make that face. The children can use the mirror to see what their faces look like. You can also use the whiteboard to write the feelings words that match for those children who are learning to read.

TAKE IT HOME

- Practice the turtle technique at home with your children. Talk about the possible solutions to emotional dilemmas that come up. These can include the following: get an adult to help, ask nicely, ignore, say Please stop, say Please, share, trade toys/item, wait, and take turns.
- Look for children’s books that have great illustrations depicting emotions and feelings. Animal characters like Tucker Turtle are just as effective as people. Read the books together in a quiet, calm setting; encourage the child to share his or her thoughts, fears, and experiences by asking questions such as Have you ever felt the way the bunny feels? What would you like to say to the little girl/boy if you could talk with her/him?

BOOKS

- *Duck, Duck, Goose* by Tad Hills
- *Lots of Feelings* by Shelley Rotner
- *When Sophie Gets Angry—Really, Really Angry . . .* by Molly Bang
- *Tucker the Turtle* csefel.uiuc.edu/practical-ideas.html

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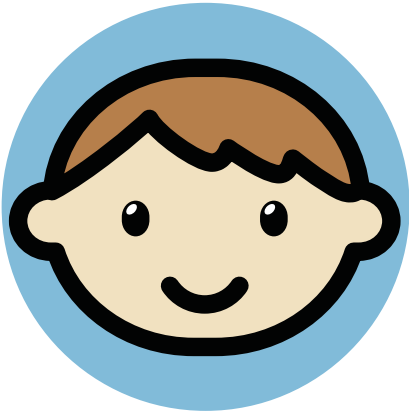
Be Healthy, Create



Funded by:
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FEELINGS FACE CHART



HAPPY



SAD



SURPRISED



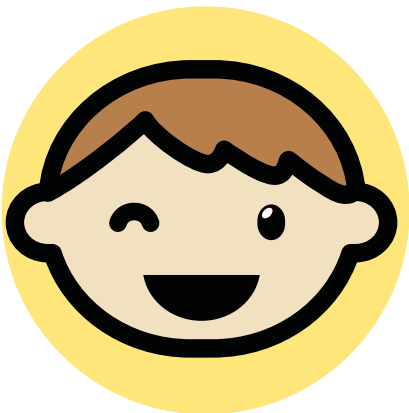
MAD



PROUD



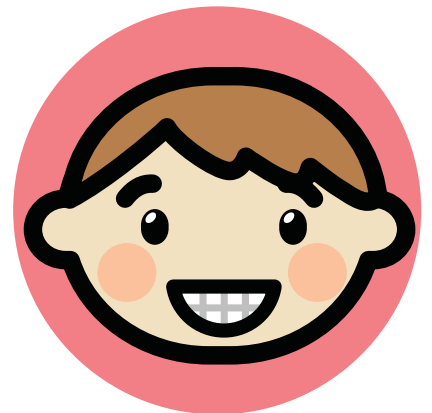
WORRIED



PLAYFUL



UNHAPPY



EMBARRASSED