

Instructional Sample for K-3

Instructional Sample: Emotional Vocabulary

Rationale:

Emotional regulation is an important human function. It allows an individual to focus on a task and suppress inappropriate behavior under instruction. Emotional regulation begins with the ability to identify various emotions and feelings.

This activity can be used with students to help process emotions of various kinds. Opening the space for this kind of conversation helps build a sense of trust and open communication around emotions.

- Grade/subject(s): 2/Physical and Health Education
- Big Ideas:
 - Having good communication skills and managing our emotions enables us to develop and maintain healthy relationships.
- Competency: Managing and expressing emotions
- Content: Identify and describe feelings and worries
- Core Competencies:
 - Communication: Connect and engage with others (to share and develop ideas)
 - Personal Awareness and Responsibility: Well-being
- First Peoples Principles of Learning:
 - Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.

Description:

Begin by brainstorming words that describe 'emotions'. If useful, create four columns labeled, "SAD", "MAD", "GLAD" and "BAD." (Tip: If you choose flipchart paper, you can keep it for future use.) Ask students to come up with words that might mean the same thing as each of the terms on the board. (For example, feeling bad could mean feeling "lonely" or "excluded.") If desired, help students get started by providing your own words. Write the students' answers on the board until the chart is filled in.

Sharing circle – Ask students to move toward an open area and sit on the floor in a circle. Tell students you are going to start an emotion sentence that you would like them to finish. Start by saying, "I feel sad when..." and throwing a soft ball to another student in the circle so they can finish the sentence. After the student finishes the sentence, instruct them to start a new emotion sentence and toss the ball to another student. Continue until all of the students have had a chance to speak a sentence.

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Additional Tips and Information for Teachers

- The concept of “mental health” is often confused with “mental illness”. The Physical and Health Education curriculum focus on “mental well-being” recognizes that everyone falls somewhere on a continuum between optimal mental health and poor mental health, independent of the presence or absence of a mental illness¹. From this perspective, classroom-based and whole-school strategies can be geared to enhancing the positive mental health and well-being of all students, including those with and without identified mental health challenges.
- Teachers have an important role to play in fostering the mental well-being of their students, though they do not require specialized or expert knowledge to do so (ie. they are not expected to play the role of psychologist or counsellor). As a guide, teachers may understand their role to include:
 - supporting students to understand how to foster and maintain positive mental health and well-being, and thereby enhance their readiness to learn;
 - creating a welcoming and safe classroom/school environment;
 - highlighting methods to enhance both physical and mental well-being such as adequate sleep, physical activity, healthy eating and stress management techniques;
 - helping students to recognize the signs of common mental health concerns;
 - guiding students to trustworthy information and resources related to mental health;
 - supporting students to know how to seek assistance when needed; and,
 - challenging common stigmas related to mental health.
- There are a number of simple, everyday practices that teachers can use to supplement their instructional approaches to mental well-being. Examples include:
 - increasing opportunities for physical activity
 - taking students outside, even for a short time, to help them to restore readiness to learn

¹ Consider that “mental health” and “mental illness” can be viewed as two separate but related concepts. From this perspective, someone could have optimal mental health (feeling good about and functioning well in life) while experiencing a mental illness. Conversely, someone without a mental illness could have poor mental health.

- leading a circle check-in, where every student has a chance to voice their perspective
 - intentionally strengthening their relationship with students through personal conversations
- For students who are experiencing a problem related to their mental health, sources of support include:
 - talking to a school counsellor
 - Kids Help Phone #1-800-668-6868 ([KidsHelpPhone.ca](https://www.kidshelpphone.ca))
 - [Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre](#)
- Teachers are encouraged to think about their own mental well-being, and what strategies may be required to support it. A number of helpful health and wellness resources can be found on the [BC Teachers' Federation website](#).