



The Feeling Explorers program is intended for teachers and mental health professionals such as social workers, psychologists, and counsellors working with children 6 to 8 years of age. All facilitators need to be trained by a certified Feeling Explorers trainer. The program is intended to be delivered in its complete form and structured so that the skills are learned sequentially and progressively, as each skill provides scaffolding for the next.

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Introduction to Feeling Explorers

Social and Emotional Learning

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is how children learn how to understand and manage their emotions, set positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and take responsibility for their actions (Payton et al., 2008).

It is well established that effective social and emotional learning (SEL) programs are integral to academic and life success (Diekstra, 2008). Two decades of research on the effectiveness of SEL programs is compelling. Durlak et al. (2011) examined 213 school-based, universal SEL programs involving 270,034 children from kindergarten through high school. Their results indicated that children in SEL programs showed an academic performance reflecting an 11-percentile point gain in achievement. They demonstrated significantly improved social and emotional skills, attitudes, and behaviour compared to children who had not experienced such programming. Another meta-analysis (Taylor et al., 2017) showed that children who participated in SEL programs performed academically 13% higher than non-participating children three and a half years later. Participating children also showed lower levels of conduct problems, emotional distress and drug use, along with higher levels of social and emotional skills and positive attitudes toward self, others, and school. Results were consistent across race, socioeconomic background, and school location.

SEL skills are also crucial in promoting a sense of belonging in the classroom (Sokal & Katz, 2017). Elias et al. (1997) suggest that SEL programs create a safe environment for children to create trusting relationships with teachers and peers. These programs have also been shown to build student resilience and enhance mental health in school-based settings (LaBelle, 2023). Furthermore, the early school-age period is an optimal time to teach children social skills and reduce potential aggression before it becomes a permanent behavioural response (Webster-Stratton & Reid, 2004).

The benefits of good SEL programs are particularly relevant at a time in Canadian society in which levels of anxiety and depression among children and youth have soared (Racine et al., 2021). Numerous culprits have been identified, including the increasing dependence of children, youth and their families on electronic devices and the Internet (Li et al., 2021), a widespread decrease in free play with less access to the outdoors (Gray, 2011), and a general change in parenting approaches where children are not allowed to experience disappointment or failure (Spokas & Heimberg, 2009). Furthermore, the recent COVID-19 pandemic has had devastating impacts on the well-being of children in Canada, increasing the sense of isolation, stress and loss among young people, adults, families and their communities (Government of Canada, 2020). As a result of the pandemic, children are experiencing less social interaction and opportunity to develop social skills or to learn how to tolerate distress, along with less time spent in healthy reciprocal interactions with caring adults, which are the building blocks of emotional regulation (Morris et al., 2007). Social restrictions from the pandemic may have also hindered the development of areas within the brain responsible for social skills, thereby jeopardizing a child's advancement within the social, behavioural, cognitive, and communicative domains (Yogman et al., 2018). Parents have reported increased tantrums, clinginess, and under-stimulation in their children after the COVID-19 lockdown (Egan et al., 2021).



Social-Emotional Learning cont.

Post-pandemic, children also have increased post-traumatic stress, anxiety and depression, elevating their risk for developmental delays and health issues in adulthood (Araújo et al., 2021).

According to anecdotal comments from our teacher colleagues, these challenges are apparent in the classroom, where children appear more dysregulated, less prepared for school, and not settled enough to learn. These concerns, and increased student-teacher ratios, could lead to classrooms becoming arenas for stress and conflict.

To help address some of these issues, the George Hull Centre for Children and Families has developed a social emotional and skills-based program specifically for Canadian classrooms that builds upon research on SEL programs. Feeling Explorers is intended for children in grades 1 to 3 and targets all five areas of SEL programs as defined by the Canadian Association for SEL (CASEL): Self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making (CASEL, 2022).

Courchene (1996) suggests that Canada is a country of immigrants who all bring their cultural values and beliefs. In Canada, one “can keep their own culture and identity and still participate fully in Canadian society.” Other Canadian authors suggest that schools must respond to the varied cultural needs within their communities and support the inclusion of all (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2008). SEL programs facilitate learning about various cultural groups, teach children how to be culturally versatile (Jagers et al., 2018), and foster intercultural school environments (Rodriguez-Izquierdo, 2018). The Feeling Explorers program uniquely reflects our Canadian context, culture and population using images, language, and ideas that resonate with various ethnically, racially, and culturally diverse Canadian children. It uses familiar Canadian-themed imagery and activities, like sitting around campfires (Kalman, 2010) and doing crafts with maple leaves (Government of Canada, 2020). The program also references varying seasons, along with forest and nature imagery, including Canadian wildlife such as bears and loons (Desaulniers, 2003). The program’s characters reflect various cultures, ethnicities, and races, aiming to increase a sense of inclusiveness and belonging and create meaningful and protective connections. While other excellent SEL learning programs are available to purchase and implement, Feeling Explorers is the only one to reference the Canadian context and the incredible diversity of Canadian children, along with immediately relatable and applicable activities.



Social-Emotional Learning cont.

Feeling Explorers is also unique in that it incorporates principles of attachment theory and the latest learnings from advances in neuroscience. Teacher-to-student and student-to-student relationships are emphasized to create a safe environment where all feelings are accepted, and children are encouraged to reflect on their inner thoughts, feelings, and emotions. Concepts are taught through discussion, experiential activities, social coaching, modelling, and full-body engagement. Children learn how to make sense of stressful events, confusing thoughts, and moments of self-doubt by seeing how their bodies and brains respond when they feel big emotions. They learn about the natural consequences of their behavioural responses to their emotions and how to make good decisions. Finally, children learn the value of empathy and, with it, how to cooperate and compromise and how to repair relationships whenever conflict causes stress. Additionally, teachers learn to support children's growth in these areas.

Rationale

This program has ten sessions that are delivered over ten weeks. Each session is up to one hour long and will be led by a trained facilitator. When Feeling Explorers is delivered in a classroom context, teachers are encouraged to practice the learned competencies daily, as SEL programs need regular practice to benefit children (Weare, 2015). For example, students displayed better conflict resolution when SEL program strategies were implemented in the daily classroom routine and practiced consistently and predictably (Jones & Bouffard, 2012).

Teachers are provided with an outline of each session, teaching notes, and suggested exercises so that the learned skills can be practiced and reinforced regularly. The program also aims to enhance social and emotional skills for teachers so that they can effectively explain, model, and practice these skills with their students (Hemmeter et al., 2006). When teacher training is incorporated into SEL programs, children appear more engaged and less aggressive in the classroom (Webster-Stratton et al., 2004). Parents are provided with take-home descriptions of program content and exercises they can practice with their children at home. This creates consistency between the school and home environments, improving a child's relationships with family members and teachers (Albright et al., 2011).

The broad ecological focus of a multifaceted and generalizable program that extends beyond the classroom allows for more sustainable skill development in children (Tolan et al., 1995). In Azar's study (2018), teachers and parents agreed that training in social and emotional skills would benefit them to implement with children in both the classroom and at home. Elias et al. (1997) emphasize that SEL interventions should promote partnerships among schools, families, and the community. We strongly believe that if all the important people in a child's life practice and reinforce SEL concepts, the child will get the maximum benefit from the program.



Each of the ten sessions addresses a critical social and emotional development area. For each, children are taught a skill and then engage in activities that help them practice, reflect on the new knowledge, and consider ways to apply the skill in their day-to-day lives. The skills are used repeatedly throughout the program and are meant to be learned sequentially and progressively so that each provides scaffolding for the next.

Activities are play-based and include campfire circle time and role-playing. Circle time is based on inclusion, respect, and safety through turn-taking to create a considerate classroom environment with opportunities for collaborative problem-solving (Hromek & Roffey, 2009). Role-playing teaches children positive ways to respond to real-life situations (Norris, 2003). Play-based activities give children a fun experience with opportunities for social engagement and meaningful participation, making them ideal for SEL (Social and Emotional Learning) learning (Hromek & Roffey, 2009). Play has been shown to reduce distress and anxiety related to life transitions in young children (Barnett, 1984), while games allow for relaxed problem-solving (Prouty, 2000) and bonding experiences which increase feelings of belonging (Ayers et al., 2005).

All skills are taught with a set of associated gestures or movements. One study found that children who used gestures while solving math problems were likelier to remember the information over time (Cook et al., 2008). The authors suggest that gesturing could play a causal role in learning by providing learners with an embodied method of understanding new concepts.

They also suggest that gesturing could help transfer information into long-term memory since the motor actions facilitate bodily encoding. Using body movements to teach new skills within our program might facilitate more neural connections and memory networks with each new activity learned. Each session has recommended books and/or videos to extend the learning outside the session.

Session One

The Feeling Explorers program starts with “Welcome and Listening” (Session 1) because listening is a fundamental executive functioning skill essential for learning and interpersonal interactions (Rose, 2006). Jalongo (2010) concludes that far more attention needs to be given to listening skills so that children build their vocabularies and learn to listen attentively, while Estrems (2005) shows that children perform better on tasks with listening practice involving rehearsal and repetition (Iliadou et al. 2008).

In Session 1, children are taught how to listen actively “with their whole bodies” and experience the difference between when people actively listen to them and when they do not. This practice allows them to appreciate how their listening responses to others impact how others feel.



Session 2

Session 2, “Getting to Know Each Other,” helps children understand and appreciate the value of diversity and the complicated feelings that can arise when we encounter differences in others. According to Baker (1994), education about our differences reduces young people's fear and replaces it with curiosity and acceptance. Helping young people explore why others look, dress, speak, and act differently can help turn initial mistrust into understanding and appreciation. The session introduces children to the idea that we all have ancestors and come from different places and cultures. They are invited to share their family origins and customs and encouraged to view their similarities. Moreover, differences are qualities that make them unique and exciting.

Session 3

Session 3 is about “Exploring Feelings,” which expands children’s ability to name and identify feelings. Research suggests that fostering young children’s emotional knowledge and language ability can solidify their understanding of mental states (Conte et al., 2019). Children are taught that all feelings are okay and that noticing and accepting their feelings is a way to feel less overwhelmed by them. This self-compassion based approach is emphasized throughout the program, with the understanding that self-compassion is associated with one’s overall psychological well-being, including life satisfaction, happiness, optimism, and reduced self-criticism (Neff, 2009). Self-compassion has also been shown to reduce stress when we face social-evaluative threats, that is, occasions when you are afraid others will negatively judge you (Luo et al., 2018). Individuals who practiced self-compassion had higher heart rate variability associated with better self-regulation (Luo et al., 2018). The session also shows children how to gauge the intensity of their feelings and how to take care of themselves when they are struggling with feelings that are too big.

Session 4

Session 4, “Managing Feelings Using Your Body,” focuses on using the body to regulate feelings. Specifically, children are taught how to engage in diaphragmatic breathing to elicit feelings of relaxation and calm through the reduced arousal of the sympathetic nervous system (Park et al., 2013). They are also encouraged to try various body postures typically associated with different feelings, noticing how they feel in these postures and how their feelings change when they change postures. In a German study investigating the effects of power-posing in fourth graders, the authors found that children who adopted high-power poses (hands behind back, head tilted up) as compared to low-power poses (slumped in a chair) were more likely to feel positive, have better student-teacher relationships, and experience higher self-esteem (Körner et al., 2020). This session shows children how to assume body poses that make them feel confident, strong, and powerful when uncertain or nervous.



Session 5

In Session 5, “The Brain,” children are taught about the human stress response and the parts of the brain that are involved. One study evaluated the effects of a mental health education program designed for elementary school children where children learned about processes which occur within the brain and body during a stress response and found that they gained a greater awareness of how their bodies responded to stress-generating events and a better overall understanding of their mental health (DeSocio et al., 2006). During the program, facilitators urged children to think about mental disorders in terms of brain imbalances rather than as flaws in one’s character, hypothesizing that this approach could help destigmatize mental health problems (Desocio et al., 2006). In this session of Feeling Explorers, feelings of fear are normalized as adaptive responses to danger, and children learn that sometimes this response will show up even with a minor threat. Children learn to recognize and accept their feelings even when they feel overwhelmed and are shown that they can use their thinking brain to help regain a sense of control. They are reminded of the skills and strategies taught in previous sessions, such as breathing and body movement, and how to use them to feel more settled.

Session 6

Session 6, “On a Hike for Body Signals,” helps children connect their feelings to signals from their bodies. They learn to recognize physical symptoms such as increased heart rate, muscle tension, gastrointestinal symptoms, and perspiration as signals of high arousal levels. These connections make children aware of how their emotions and thoughts are reflected in physical sensations. This awareness helps them regulate their emotions and positively impacts their behaviour, stress levels, interpersonal relationships, and ability to focus (De Carvalho et al., 2017). Children are given an opportunity to reflect on the physical symptoms they tend to have when they have big feelings and to consider ways that they might help themselves when they feel uncomfortable.

Session 7

Session 7, “Investigating Thoughts,” introduces children to how thoughts are distinct from feelings and how thoughts often lead to feelings. They also learn to distinguish between helpful and unhelpful thoughts (Sunshine Thoughts and Cloudy Thoughts) and how they can generate helpful thoughts in difficult situations to make themselves feel better. This is a cognitive restructuring intervention, part of a Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) approach (Bond, 2005), which seeks to identify problematic thoughts and beliefs and convert them into more adaptive ones (Burns & Beck, 1978). CBT interventions have been shown to reduce anxiety in children (Bernstein et al., 2005), and cognitive restructuring in particular has been shown to reduce academic-related anxiety in school settings (Asikhia, 2014). Furthermore, Spivack et al.'s (1976) work highlighting interpersonal cognitive problem-solving in children suggests that children should be taught skills to generate multiple solutions to interpersonal problems, along with ways to implement chosen solutions. This approach has improved peer acceptance, resilience (Cowen et al., 1995), behavioural regulation, and social competence (Spivack et al., 1976).



Session 8

Session 8 introduces children to “Empathy” and why it is essential. Farrant et al. (2012) found that children aged 4 to 6 with stronger empathy skills displayed more prosocial behaviour, while in another study conducted with fourth and fifth graders, teachers found more empathetic students to be more helpful (Barnett & Thompson, 1985). One author also suggested that empathy fosters “transcultural solidarity” (Weber et al., 2011). Hence, teaching empathy within our culturally diverse Canadian society might help foster cooperation among diverse students. In this session, exercises encourage children to take different perspectives to see a full range of feelings. For example, they are encouraged to consider how a classmate might feel if unkind and hurtful things were said about them. They learn how to repair relationships with a sincere apology if they have hurt someone intentionally or unintentionally, practicing how to give apologies and reflecting on how those apologies might be received.

Session 9

Session 9 teaches children more about “Getting Along with Others,” focusing on helping them deal with conflicts and disagreements. Here, children use many skills they have learned, such as accepting their feelings, listening to others, and using empathy. They also learn more about effective communication using “I” statements and the art of compromise. They practice these new skills using typical scenarios. It has been found that using “I” statements and conveying one’s perspective reduces perceptions of hostility between individuals (Rogers et al., 2018). In addition, understanding another person’s perspective is more likely to elicit a compromise, where both sides arrive at a mutually advantageous solution (Galinsky et al., 2008). Research suggests that including conflict resolution programs in schools leads to more peaceful negotiations and constructive discussions, with a general increase in students’ psychological health and self-esteem (Johnson & Johnson, 1996).

Session 10

Session 10, “One S’more Time Together,” is a review. Children have booklets which they fill with stickers/stamps as they work through activities to practice all the skills they have learned throughout the program.

Each session of Feeling Explorers has the same format and includes regulating activities for the children to practice every week. For example, at the opening of every session, the children engage in a mindfulness activity where they focus on the sound of a bell until they can no longer hear it. Bells have been used in mindfulness-based interventions for children aged 3 to 6, and focusing on the sound for a prolonged period establishes sensory focus and exercises working memory (Lillard, 2011). Teaching elementary students about mindfulness has demonstrated improvements in academic skills, social skills, emotional regulation, and self-esteem (Meiklejohn et al., 2012). These studies also report that mindfulness techniques enhance children’s mood and decrease anxiety, stress, and fatigue (Meiklejohn et al., 2012). At the end of the program, children do a body scan to focus on their experience of a specific “Peaceful Moment” by paying attention to their heart rate, muscle tension, and breathing before and after. This is similar to the technique used in other Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) training (Kabat-Zinn, 2003).



Such body scans have been shown to induce feelings of calm and increased emotional stability (Juneau et al., 2020). Peaceful Moments include up-regulating activities such as high-energy movements or power stances and down-regulating activities such as guided imagery and progressive muscle relaxation. Many of the activities include a rhythmic component, as rhythm and movement interventions have been shown to have a regulating effect on preschool children (Williams & Berthelson, 2019). The activities provide vestibular, proprioceptive and tactile input, as it is well-established that engaging these sensory systems leads to physiological regulation (Kearney & Lanus, 2022). Having children practice these exercises at least weekly, and more often with the teacher's support, gives them the experience of calming their minds and bodies and gives them approaches to try when they feel overwhelmed or stressed.

At the end of every Peaceful Moment, children are urged to think about something for which they are grateful. Researchers suggest that teaching children gratitude helps them have more mutually advantageous encounters with others during middle childhood and can support relationship formation during this period (Wentzel et al., 2004). Froh et al. (2014) found that teaching gratitude to children aged 8 to 11 increased their thanking behaviour and positive affect up to 20 weeks after the study. Gratitude has also been linked to increased satisfaction with one's school experiences (Froh et al., 2008)

In *The Neuroscience of SEL*, Dr. Richie Davidson speaks about "every behavioural intervention being a biological intervention" and notes that repeated positive experiences in school can lead to the rewiring of neural pathways that is necessary for habits to be built and sustained (Davidson, 2007, 2:24). Creating and sustaining consistent practices helps create the climate and culture that are vital for optimal learning and working conditions for young people. For example, one study found that mindfulness training in middle-school children reduced activation of negative stimuli in their right amygdala (linked with perception and memory of negative emotional instances), reducing overall stress (Bauer et al., 2019). This study implies that a behavioural intervention like mindfulness can induce plasticity and change neural circuitry within the body's biology. Hence, implementing our Feeling Explorers program in childhood can instill healthy and lasting emotional regulation habits early on.



Program Goals

Feeling Explorers is a universal skill-based prevention and intervention program intended to promote children's mental health and wellness. Feeling Explorers program aims to foster social-emotional learning skills and to help children develop self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. These skills are beneficial in increasing resilience in response to adversity. Furthermore, children who are already experiencing mental health difficulties will benefit from the intervention and may experience some relief from their symptoms. Through the Feeling Explorers program, there is an opportunity to intervene in the school environment where emotional and behavioural dysregulation may arise. Teachers participating in the program will develop increased knowledge to support their students' mental wellness.

Children will:

- Build awareness of how to listen effectively and understand the importance of listening
- Build appreciation for similarities and differences between themselves and others
- Increase knowledge of their own and others' feelings and build awareness of how to recognize and understand these feelings
- Develop strategies to help manage their feelings
- Understand the neurological basis of emotions and the fight-flight-freeze response system
- Identify the difference between thoughts and feelings and increase awareness of helpful and unhelpful thoughts
- Develop increased awareness of physiological indicators of emotions
- Build awareness of others, understand others' perspectives, and develop the ability to empathize with diverse individuals
- Recognize that disagreements are a normal part of interacting with others and develop healthy strategies to address disagreements

Teachers will:

- Increase knowledge of social-emotional development and learning
- Become better co-regulators of children's emotions
- Implement cognitive, emotional, and body-based strategies to help children regulate better
- Reinforce and incorporate strategies learned throughout the program

Schools/Classrooms will:

- Develop a sense of community and belonging
- Develop shared values of caring for one another
- Improve school engagement and success



Logistics

The program will be delivered in 10 one-hour sessions over ten weeks in the classroom by the group facilitator(s). Sessions will be delivered in sequential order to ensure the scaffolding of skills.

Group facilitator(s) may be teachers, social workers, psychologists, registered psychotherapists, or any person working with children ages 6 to 8 years old who has been trained to use the “Feeling Explorers” program.

Classroom teachers (or any other people working with the group) who are not in the role of group facilitator(s) will be given an outline of each session with skills that can be practiced and reinforced between sessions. For the best outcomes, teachers will encourage and help children practice skills daily.

Session Structure



Welcome, Campfire and Get to Know You Question



These weekly routines symbolize the start of the session. They set the stage for introducing each participating member and creating a sense of belonging. The children discover new things about each other by answering the question of the week. Children and staff are encouraged to be active participants.



Bell: Listening to the bell allows children to practice focusing their attention on just one thing — the present moment. This offers children the opportunity to relax and calm their minds.



Review Previous Session: From session two onwards, the facilitator(s) will review and highlight content and skills from the previous week to reinforce concepts and strategies taught.



Session Topic: Group facilitator(s) will introduce new content and skills for the session.



Activity: The activity serves as an opportunity to apply and practice learning. These are interactive and experiential in nature and reinforce the learning of key concepts.



Peaceful Moment: The Peaceful Moment offers children an opportunity to practice self-regulation and being in the moment. Activities allow children to tune into their present environment while using their senses. Peaceful moments consist of both activities involving imagery and movement. Imagery allows the mind to relax and offers a safe space for children to be creative with their minds. Movement provides an alternative for the release of energy. Engaging in both activities allows children to determine what helps them feel calm and in control.



Session Structure

Reminder: Read visualizations using a slow and gentle tone of voice that fades at the end of sentences. Implement pauses so children have time to experience and visualize what they are imagining.

A Body Scan will be performed before and after the Peaceful Moment. This practice allows children to notice their breath, heart rate, and muscle tension and reflect on how their body is doing. The intention is for children to develop body awareness and notice if they feel calmer when they have engaged in a regulating activity (e.g., changes in muscle tension, heart rate, and breath).



My Gratefals: A time for children to reflect on their day and think of something for which they are grateful.



Discussion: This is an opportunity for group facilitators to engage in conversation with children and expand on the learning of concepts from the session. Discussion helps children further process what they have learned.



Closing Campfire: This indicates the end of the session. A farewell song helps children celebrate the successful completion of the session and helps them transition to the next activity in their day.



Find Your Compass Activities: Finding Your Compass supports self-regulation. The activities help calm and relax children's brains and bodies so they are ready to listen, learn, and have fun. Find Your Compass activities are intended to be used whenever necessary to help children gain control of their minds, bodies, and emotions.



Book: Stories help children understand and integrate learning. Children may relate to the characters and their situations and begin to make connections with their feelings, thoughts, and experiences. This increases self-awareness, awareness of others, reflective capacity, and problem-solving.











Songs: Songs provide a joyful way to reinforce concepts learned. Singing together contributes to a sense of community and shared experience.



Session Structure

Time Frame for Sessions

Agenda	Time (Minutes)
 Welcome and Campfire	10
 Bell	2
 Session Topic	15
 Activity	20
 Book	5
 Peaceful Moment	5
 My Gratefals	5
 Closing Campfire	2

** Keep in mind these are approximate time frames to be used as a guideline. Some activities on the agenda may not be performed during each session.**



Session Summaries

Session 1: Welcome and Listening

Listening is an important life skill connected to social-emotional development. Children’s listening skills are essential and are the basis of many interactions. Explicitly teaching children listening skills and providing opportunities to practice enhances these skills. It also reminds them why listening is essential and increases their understanding that listening can help them improve feeling, learning, playing, making friends, and following instructions.

Session 2: Getting to Know Each Other

Respecting and understanding differences encourages children to be open-minded and accepting of others. Children with a positive sense of self are likely to be more confident and secure when interacting with people who are different from them and will celebrate how differences enrich their lives and the world. These explicit conversations can help diverse children feel safer in the classroom.

Session 3: Exploring Feelings

Labelling and discussing emotions with children helps them understand that emotions, while sometimes challenging, are normal and necessary. Feeling Explorers will help children recognize feelings, discuss when and why they feel certain emotions and teach them how to manage them.

Session 4: Deep Breathing and Managing Feelings

Deep breathing, also known as diaphragmatic breathing, can stimulate relaxation responses, benefiting both physical and mental health. Teaching this skill when children are calm will help them remember how to use it when they encounter stress.

Session 5: The Brain

Teaching children about the brain helps them understand its function and connection to emotions, thoughts, and actions. When children understand this connection, they may better harness their emotions and face challenges with self-compassion and a greater sense of control.

Session 6: On a Hike for Body Signals

It is helpful for children to notice what their bodies are telling them so they can begin to understand their feelings better. When children recognize, label, and connect their body signals to their feelings, they can use coping strategies to help calm themselves.

Session 7: Investigating Thoughts

When children understand the difference between thoughts and feelings, they realize they can better manage unhelpful thoughts. When children practice changing unhelpful, “cloudy” thoughts into more helpful, “sunshine” thoughts, this equips them to self-regulate, problem-solve, and calm themselves down.



Session Summaries

Session 8: Empathy

Developing a strong sense of empathy benefits children in many ways; it helps encourage self-awareness, promotes good mental health, and helps build compassion and stronger relationships with others.

Session 9: Getting Along with Others

Learning strategies to cooperate, negotiate, and come to mutual compromises when difficult situations arise helps children get along better with others.

Session 10: One S'more Time Together

Practice makes better! The facilitator(s) will review fundamental concepts learned from Sessions 1 to 9. Children will revisit and practice Feeling Explorer concepts through a fun review activity.