

Stage 2 | Ages 8-10 yrs



Sad



Angry



Lonely



Excited



Happy



Worried



Proud

Materials required

For Feelings activity • 7 Feeling card A4 print outs • Body Map (included for download) • selected read aloud book • post-it-notes

For Mental Health Month Challenge • MHM Connection Challenges A4 digital file/printed (included for download)
• pipe cleaners/ chenille sticks (approx 5 per student)

We all feel feelings in our bodies in different ways (Activity 30-40 min)

Learning about our own feelings helps us to better understand ourselves and to connect with other people and our environment.

Do this activity before the Mental Health Month Challenge activity

Introduction

Teacher displays the 8 feeling cards. *We are going to select two of these feeling cards to have a closer look at the feelings.* Teacher selects two of the feeling cards, putting the other to one side. Display the first one (e.g. Worried) and invite students to suggest what they notice about the expression shown. Suggestions might include, the eyebrows are frowning, the eyes are wide and looking down, the lips are curved down or pressed together, etc.

- 1** Teacher invites students to copy the expression. Teacher asks: “What happens to your eyes, eyebrows, lips, teeth when you try and show this feeling?” Suggestions might include: “My eyebrow muscles move down, my mouth goes down, my eyes are wide, my teeth are hidden”, etc.

Teacher asks: “What could be happening to make this person have this expression?” Suggestions might include they are worried about something, they lost something, are not sure what to do etc

- 2** Teacher invites students to **stand up, shake their arms and legs, raise their arms up and down** and even gently and quietly bounce on their feet for 30-60 seconds. Teacher asks: “What do you feel in your body after that movement activity?” Students may respond: “I can feel my heart beating, I feel warm, I’m breathing faster”, etc. Teacher can also note when our heart rate and breathing become regular again.

- 3** Teacher says: “**We can feel feelings in our bodies as well as showing feelings on our faces**”. Invite students to show through their facial expression or body or actions **what worry might be like**. Responses might include: “My face might feel warm and go red, or go pale and feel cold, my tummy might feel tingly, eyes have tears, my chest feels funny (e.g. tight, warm, hot, cold, out of breath, etc.)” Students may show slumped shoulders, wide eyes, frowning eyebrows, may move in slow, heavy or quick, light, hurried movements, etc).

- 4** Teacher selects the **second feeling card**, (e.g. Proud) and invites students to copy the expression. Teacher asks: *“What happens to your eyes, eyebrows, lips, teeth when you try and show this feeling?”* Suggestions might include: *“My eyebrows go up because my eyes are wide, my mouth is smiling”*, etc.

Teacher asks: *“What could be happening to make this person have this expression?”* Suggestions might include, they got an answer correct, they learned something new, somebody gave them a compliment, etc.

Teacher says: *“Remember we can feel feelings in our bodies as well as it show it on our faces”*. Invite students to share their suggestions about what this might be like for the feeling card selected (e.g Proud). These might include: *“My face feels warm, my tummy feels tingly, I sit up straight or stand up and walk head up and chin out”*, etc.

- 5** Teacher distributes post-it-notes – **a different colour for each feeling** and invites students to select one colour and place the post-it-note on the Body Map where they have felt that feeling.

- 6** Teacher **invites students to share**: *“What do you notice about the yellow post-it-notes?”* *“What do you notice about the green post-it-notes?”*. Responses may include, the post it notes are placed in different spots; that where I felt a feeling was different to where others felt it.

Teacher highlights that not everyone will feel the emotion in their bodies in the same way. We feel feelings in different ways.

- 7** Read aloud book-teacher reads a book about feelings. There are many great books which explore emotions which enable students to gain different perspectives as they share the character's journey to understand what's going on in their world. Teacher could select one of the books below or select a book recommended from their school or local council librarian.

Mr Huff by Anna Walker, Ruby's Worry by Tom Percival, Some Days You'll Have Days Like These by Josh Pike

Teacher invites students to listen out for clues about how a character feels (through what they say, their expression, posture, movement etc).

Teacher invites students to share reflections about the feelings different characters in the story may have feel and how their feelings change though the story. Do they feel the same at the end as they did at the start?

Extension activity – start a 'Feelings' vocabulary list starting with the descriptive words and phrases discussed throughout this activity.

Activity wrap up:

We all have feelings. We may show our feelings in our facial expression, our posture and the way our bodies move and through different sensations we feel in our bodies. Knowing that we all feel our feelings differently helps us better understand ourselves and each other. Connecting with each other is important for our overall wellbeing. Teacher could invite students to share something they've learned through this activity.

You may choose to complete the Stage 2&3 Mental Health Challenge next.

A little
Connection
goes a long way

I feel...



angry

A little
Connection
goes a long way

I feel...



excited

A little
Connection
goes a long way

I feel...



happy

A little
Connection
goes a long way

I feel...



lonely

A little
Connection
goes a long way

I feel...



proud

A little
Connection
goes a long way

I feel...



sad

A little
Connection
goes a long way

I feel...



worried

Stage 2 & 3 | Ages 8-12 yrs

Mental Health Month Challenge – A Little Connection Goes a Long Way

Teacher: ***This challenge will help us better understand ourselves, other people and nature. The way we connect with others and with nature is an important part of our wellbeing.***

This activity has two parts.

Part 1: Class creates a **Connection Sculpture** (60 mins)

Part 2: Class undertakes the **Connection Challenge** (20 mins introduction, 20 mins mid challenge catch up + 1 week to carry out challenge).

1 Connection Sculpture

Teacher provides each student 3-5 pipe cleaners/ chenille sticks. Teacher invites each student to these to **create a shape** to represent them. The students will then join their shapes together to make a sculpture collage representing the class. Teacher invites a discussion of **shape ideas**, circle, heart, twist, animal, star, colour, etc.

Students create their shape and then **join their shape** to their classmates at their table group, then they join their combined shapes with those of another table group.

The larger joined shapes are further combined to **form the class collage sculpture**. The artwork could take the form of a framed 3D picture, or a hanging mobile etc.

2 Teacher invites students to discuss- *How did you join the pieces together?* Suggestions may include how they joined two shapes together (with an extra pipe cleaner, creating a loop on both shapes etc, joining similar sized shapes or colour or looking for contrasts, etc).

What did it feel like to join two pieces, then four, then six? etc. Suggestions may include: joining them together makes them stronger. Joining them makes them look impressive.

“How does our sculpture represent us both as individuals and as a group?” Students may suggest each piece represents one person but looking at the sculpture together we are made up of a lot of different pieces, connected together.

3 Connection Challenge

Teacher: *Our connection with each other is important for our wellbeing. This week we are taking a challenge for this year's Mental Health Month. We have a list of challenges to choose from. Some of the challenges relate to connection to other people and some relate to connection to nature.*

Teacher reads out the individual MHM Connection Challenges (A4 printout/digital file).

Teacher invites students to choose two of the challenges and then select one of these to do over the coming week.

Teacher: *This week we are going to complete one of the connection challenges we selected. We'll a check in mid week to see how we're going.*

4 Mid-week check in: “How are we going with our connection challenges?” Suggestions might include, I forgot, I'll do it tomorrow, I did it and it made me feel good, I think I surprised the person, etc.

5 On the final day of the challenge, Teacher invites students to share their experience of connection – either about the class made connection artwork, or a connection challenge they completed.

Connection Challenge

- **Give someone a compliment** – You could say something you noticed like: *Your teamwork was great on that task; You were so helpful; You made a lot of effort with that artwork...*
- **Focus on the positive**– take notice of the little things, the sun shining, a rainbow, a cool breeze, your friend waving, a delicious meal and *tell someone about it.*
- Learn something about your own or **someone else's culture**– *ask about their favourite recipe, how to say Hi...*
- **Celebrate small wins**–solving a problem, finishing something tough, asking for help. You could say, *proud of you for getting through that, you worked hard on that- good job*
- **Ask someone**, *What was one thing that went well for you today?*

- **Kindness challenge**, do one kind thing for someone without being asked. Maybe open a door for them, offer to help, say hello, hold a place for them in line...



- **Help someone out:** offer to help with work, packing up, or explaining something.



Say thank you, notice a helper – thank them for something they do (e.g. librarian, classmate, teacher, cleaner, etc).

- **Notice the good:** tell someone what you think they did really well today.
- **Do something for yourself**–have a bubble bath, dance, sing, go for walk or a run. You can bring more to your connection with others when you care for yourself.

Connection to Nature Challenge

(during lunch break or after school)



- **Look at the sky** for one minute and notice clouds, colours, movement.
- When outside, think of **five** things you can see, **four** things you can hear, **three** things you can touch, **two** things you can smell and **one** thing you can taste.
- Sit quietly for 2 minutes outside and **count how many** bird sounds you hear or count how many birds you can see.
- **Create a picture** from objects you collect from your garden- leaves, flowers, buds, twigs, bark and stones or objects you collect at the beach- sand, shells, driftwood, leaves.

- **Count** how many different types of trees in your street. What makes them different- leaves, bark, scent, seeds, flowers etc



- **Stand still** in a place in nature like the school oval, a local park, your backyard or a nature reserve and count how many different colours you can see in nature.
- When you are outside, **find something** that is:
 - green
 - soft
 - smooth
 - rough
 - tiny

