

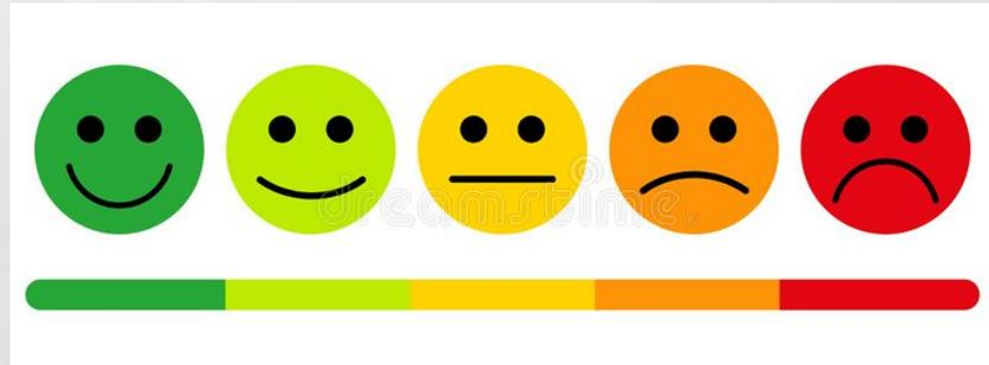
2.GETTING ON & FALLING OUT

THE IMPORTANCE OF EMPATHY IN A CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT
THE PEACEFUL PROBLEM SOLVING PROCESS AND HOW TO HELP CHILDREN USE IT





- Did you try out any of the ideas e.g. meet and greet ?
- Did you focus on what you wanted the child to do – positive rather than negative?
- Did you give children jobs/responsibility, etc. ?



- It is important for adults to keep calm when a child is frazzled/angry
- Listening to your child is important
- Children can be taught to solve their own problems peacefully.



Having disagreements with others is a part of life and absolutely normal - especially when we are young.

We have to LEARN how to get along with other people and to solve problems if we are to have strong friendships and relationships and stability.

The first step is for children to recognise and understand people's feelings and point of view.

When children are able to think about how the other person is thinking and feeling it becomes easier to resolve conflicts - this is empathy.




Being able to resolve conflicts is one of the most important life skills.

To understand another person's point of view we have to:

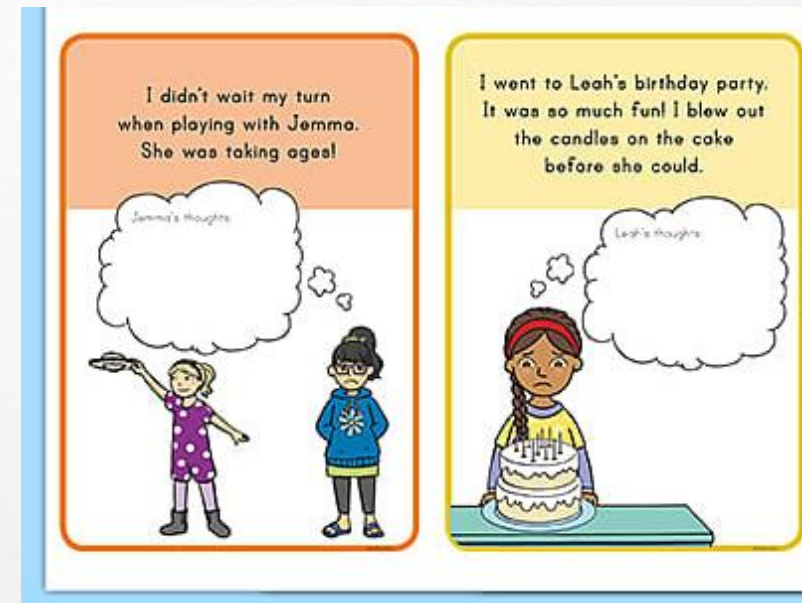
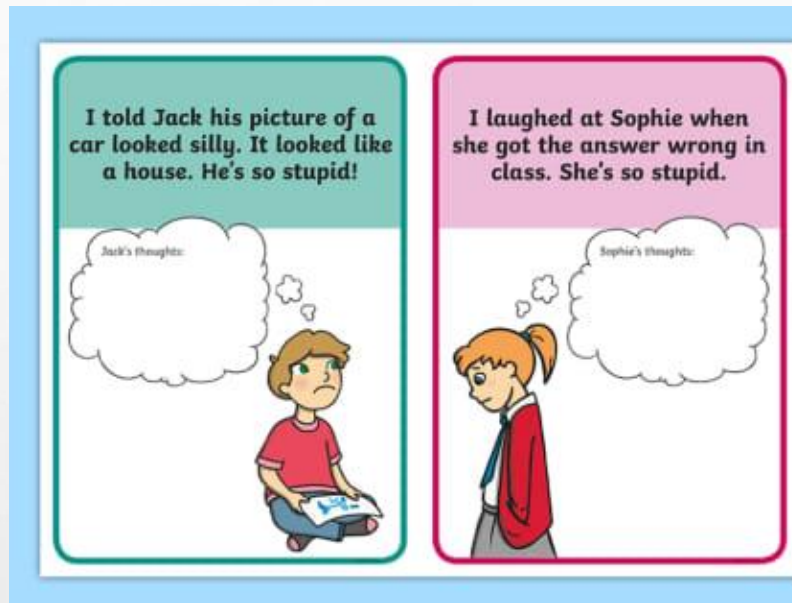
- Recognise our own feelings
- Recognise how the other person is feeling by looking for clues in facial expressions, body language, tone of voice, and the situation
- Show care and understanding



How do YOU handle conflict ?

		
Mouse	Monster	Me
Ignore	Yell	Apologize
Hide feelings	Hit	Report
Whine	Threaten	Compromise
Fake Cry	Fight	Talk it Out
Give in	Deny Loudly	Find a WinWin
Tattle	Stamp Around	Listen
Roll Eyes	Slam Doors	Use Manners
Gossip/Tell Secrets	Loud Put Downs	I Message
Avoid	Break Things	Be Assertive

Children have to learn that their own feelings may be different from other people's feelings in the same situation and that other people have different points of view from themselves.



Adults must show empathy to children; which can be very difficult if they are screaming about something. Shouting 'Stop it' or 'Don't be silly!' can make them feel worse or different from others. Try saying, 'I can see that you feel angry or embarrassed'. It can show that we understand their feelings and the child feels that their feelings are okay and they are not 'silly'. Once you have shown empathy for their feelings you may then be able to understand why the child behaves that way when they lose some self control.

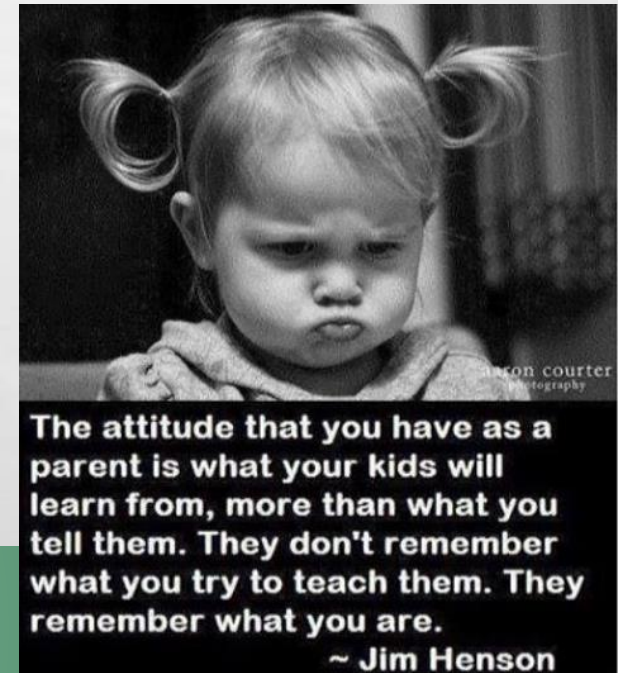


Talking without empathy to children ignores the way they are feeling and can make them feel different to everyone else. When we solve problems for children without listening to the feelings behind the words the child is likely to feel that nobody understands him or her.



- When something goes wrong it often helps to make a straightforward statement to start the discussion.
- Try not to interrogate it makes children clam up.
- Try to avoid asking questions you already know the answer to e.g. 'How on earth did you do that?'
(*This sets a tone of mistrust*)

- When we are tired or pushed for time it is easy to speak without taking account of our child's feelings. Children learn how to behave. They watch, they listen and then they copy and practise. They watch adults carefully all the time and learn more from the ways adults are behaving than what they are actually saying e.g. body language, tone of voice etc. Listening to children is so important. When we listen to our children we show them that they are important. If we *consistently* listen to children and model compromise then they will copy it.



Peaceful Problem Solving Process



- At school we explain to children that feeling angry is normal. However it is also important to teach children that it is not alright to hurt others, ourselves or break anything because we feel angry.
- We all feel angry at times and sometimes it motivates us to do something about a situation but sometimes anger gets in the way of solving a problem.
- If a child can't manage their behaviour when they are angry it can get them into all sorts of difficulties in school.



READY

When we are angry we often lose touch with the thinking side of the brain and just act on impulse. It takes six seconds to override the emotional side of the brain.

This doesn't mean that we don't feel angry anymore but that we are more likely to be able to think clearly about what we should do.

Encourage children to practise ways of calming down and regaining control.

- Take 6 deep belly breaths
- Think about a favourite memory or a place
 - Count to 10 slowly
- Think about one thing you like about the other person
- Close your eyes and say to yourself "I can stay calm, I can stay calm"



PEACEFUL PROBLEM SOLVING

FOR THOSE TIMES WHEN YOU JUST CAN'T HELP FALLING OUT!



READY

Are you ready
to think together?

We know how
we feel

We feel calm enough
to think together

I felt...when...
because...
I would like...

STEADY

Take it in turns to talk
about what went wrong

Don't butt in when it's not
your turn

Think of ideas together

Choose one idea

This isn't working
Perhaps we need a
referee to keep us
on track

We could try...
OR...
OR...
Let's try...

GO

Try out your idea!

It worked well because...
It would be better if...
Next time let's...

REPLAY

Think about how you did it
Check if things are OK



Put in the bin:
It's your fault
It's not fair
You are always...
I hate you

STEADY

Once calm we ask
the children to think
about:

What is the problem
(what is making me
feel angry)?

It's important for
children to take it
in turns to let each
other know how
the problem
affects them from
their point of view.

It helps if they say:

How they are feeling

What happened from
their perspective

What they would like
to happen

GO

Then its time
to try out the
ideas/solutions
the children
have offered.

REPLAY

Try to come back
to this at some
point and think
about how
successful the
ideas were.



Give It A Try!

You will need:

- Paper (assorted colours and types)
- Scissors
- Glue stick
- Colouring pencils
- Craft materials (string, stickers, glitter, fabric, etc.)

First:

Everyone lay down comfortably on the cushions, close your eyes and listen to the meditation. It will feel awkward at first but that will soon pass. Enjoy the peace and calmness.

<https://youtu.be/b57QvR1Ysyw>

Next:

Create a family peaceful place together, use art & craft materials to create a model or picture of an environment where you are most peaceful (beach, woods, sitting room, back garden, etc)



Relaxation Activity

You could use:

Cushions

Blankets

Cuddly toys

Fairy lights





- How successful was the activity?
- What worked well?
- What would you change?
- What did you learn about your child/yourself?

PARENTWORK for the next week:

- Use your good listening skills
- Help your child to practise their calming down techniques
- Practise peaceful problem solving with your child