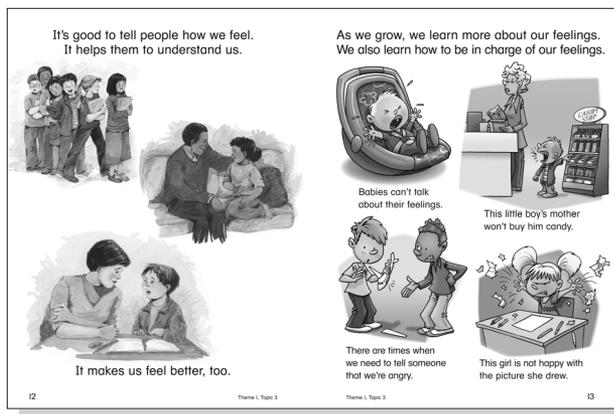




Feelings

Before speaking, it is necessary to listen not only to a person's voice, but to a person's heart.

Pope Paul VI



Expectations

The students will:

- recognize the importance of expressing their feelings.
- recognize that they have choices in the way they express their feelings.
- demonstrate an understanding of how they respond to challenging and uncomfortable situations.
- identify strategies for coping with challenging and uncomfortable situations.

Note to the Teacher

By the time children are seven or eight years old, they have experienced a wide range of human emotions even though their life experience is as yet limited. Although children do not reflect on their feelings in any systematic way, it is important for them to understand that feelings are an essential part of what it means to be a human person. Human emotions are one of God's gifts to us, and they help us to understand ourselves and others. No feeling is bad in itself — not even anger, jealousy, or fear.

The children need to understand, however, that we all have choices in how we express our feelings to other people, and the extent to which we allow our feelings to control our lives. The expression of feelings in a

way that respects other people is a sign that we are maturing and becoming more loving people. You can help children achieve greater self-control by reminders; and by praising them when they are obviously making an effort to be peaceful and loving in their relationships with others.

Students will benefit from learning how to respond to strong feelings and developing strategies for coping with uncomfortable situations. Stress is a normal part of everyday life. Limited amounts of stress can have a positive influence on motivation and creativity. Excessive stress, however, can affect learning and social development; it can have a negative effect on a student's health, interfere with the ability to focus and think, and make it more difficult for students to get along with others. By forming positive relationships with students, teachers can promote emotional health among students. Teaching students how to recognize the symptoms of stress, and coaching their healthy emotional expression by modelling and teaching stress reduction and self-regulation strategies, can help students cope with stress.

Caution: You should be aware that there is a small number children with deep fears about certain situations or people. If this topic uncovers such fears, it is important that you encourage the child to confide in his or her family members or in another trusted person. If it is a school-related situation that causes fear (e.g., bullying in the playground) you may be able to assist the child in resolving the difficulty. If your school has an anti-bullying program, this topic provides an opportunity to introduce it.

Program Resources

- Many Feelings; Learning about Feelings (Big Book, pp. 4 and 5)
- Student Book, pages 11 – 13
- Family Connections (Our Feelings)
- BLM #2 — What Should They Do? (2 pages)
- Coene, Mary Theresa & Tratnyek, Paul. (2017). Christian Meditation. *Curriculum Series: A Catholic Perspective*. The Institute for Catholic Education
- BLM #2.1 — Relaxing Reminders

Curriculum Connections

This topic provides connections to the Health and Physical Education Curriculum (Healthy Living) and the Arts Curriculum (Drama and Dance).

We Experience

Display the Big Book page, “Many Feelings,” for the children, and invite their responses. Encourage them to identify the feelings that are illustrated, using as many words as they know for these feelings:

- reading (content, peaceful, absorbed in his book)
- being scolded by his mother (cross, sulky, guilty)
- opening Christmas presents (excited, wound up, eager)
- playing with a friend (happy, cheerful)
- being excluded by others (hurt, sad, upset)
- being bullied (afraid, scared, angry)

Record the names of these feelings on a class chart. Ask the children:

- What makes us feel the way we do? (things that happen, what other people say or do)

Explore the situations of being excluded or bullied. Depending on your class, you may want to have the children role play these situations. At the end of each role play, invite the children’s comments about what is happening, and how the situation might be changed or resolved. Be sure to add your own comments and suggestions.

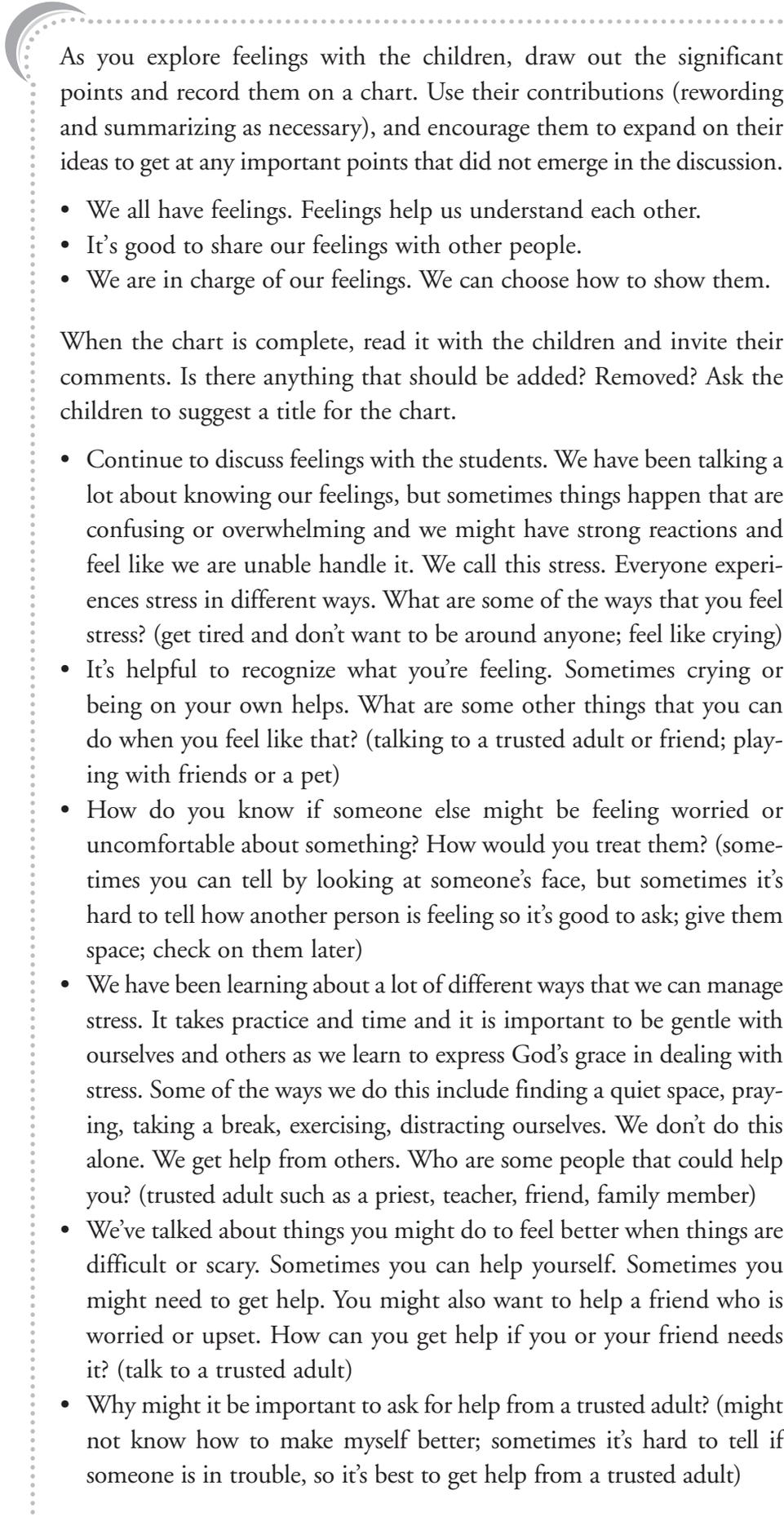
We Discover

Read student book page 12 together, and invite the children’s responses to the three situations (a girl butting into the line; a girl sharing good news with her dad; a boy telling a teacher about a problem). Ask them:

- Why does it help people understand us when we talk about how we feel? (our feelings are part of who we are; if we want people to know us, sometimes we have to share our feelings)
- Why is it important to tell other people when we’re upset or angry? (it helps us feel better; it’s better to talk about our feelings than to kick or hit someone or say something nasty)

Display the Big Book page, “Learning about Our Feelings,” and explore the illustrations with the children. You might remind them about what they learned in Topic 2 about growing and learning. As we grow we also learn how to handle our feelings. Ask them:

- What does it mean to be in charge of our feelings? (we can choose how to let other people know about our feelings; our feelings are not in charge of us)



As you explore feelings with the children, draw out the significant points and record them on a chart. Use their contributions (rewording and summarizing as necessary), and encourage them to expand on their ideas to get at any important points that did not emerge in the discussion.

- We all have feelings. Feelings help us understand each other.
- It's good to share our feelings with other people.
- We are in charge of our feelings. We can choose how to show them.

When the chart is complete, read it with the children and invite their comments. Is there anything that should be added? Removed? Ask the children to suggest a title for the chart.

- Continue to discuss feelings with the students. We have been talking a lot about knowing our feelings, but sometimes things happen that are confusing or overwhelming and we might have strong reactions and feel like we are unable handle it. We call this stress. Everyone experiences stress in different ways. What are some of the ways that you feel stress? (get tired and don't want to be around anyone; feel like crying)
- It's helpful to recognize what you're feeling. Sometimes crying or being on your own helps. What are some other things that you can do when you feel like that? (talking to a trusted adult or friend; playing with friends or a pet)
- How do you know if someone else might be feeling worried or uncomfortable about something? How would you treat them? (sometimes you can tell by looking at someone's face, but sometimes it's hard to tell how another person is feeling so it's good to ask; give them space; check on them later)
- We have been learning about a lot of different ways that we can manage stress. It takes practice and time and it is important to be gentle with ourselves and others as we learn to express God's grace in dealing with stress. Some of the ways we do this include finding a quiet space, praying, taking a break, exercising, distracting ourselves. We don't do this alone. We get help from others. Who are some people that could help you? (trusted adult such as a priest, teacher, friend, family member)
- We've talked about things you might do to feel better when things are difficult or scary. Sometimes you can help yourself. Sometimes you might need to get help. You might also want to help a friend who is worried or upset. How can you get help if you or your friend needs it? (talk to a trusted adult)
- Why might it be important to ask for help from a trusted adult? (might not know how to make myself better; sometimes it's hard to tell if someone is in trouble, so it's best to get help from a trusted adult)

We Respond

Distribute copies of BLM #2 (What Should They Do?) to the children, and read the two stories together. The children could work in pairs or small groups to talk about and answer the questions. When the children have finished their work, they could share their answers with the class.

Have students complete BLM #2.1 — Relaxing Reminders

We Explore (related activities)

- **Family Connections** — Send home the Family Connections sheet (Our Feelings) so that the children can share what they have been learning with their families.
- **Journal** — Invite the children to think of a situation that makes them feel angry, afraid, sad, or happy, or another feeling from the class chart of feelings. Encourage them to think about how they express this feeling. If there is a problem, what solution can they think of? These journal entries should be considered private.
- **Feelings Billboard** — Invite the children to work with a partner to create a small Feelings billboard, using words (for example, “Use your words, not your hands.” or “It’s good to talk about feelings.”), drawings, or photographs. (**Curriculum Connection**, Language, Media Literacy, see Appendix B, page 205)
- **Drama** — Invite the children to pick a feeling word from the class chart, demonstrate it with their face and body, and have the class guess the feeling.
- **Feelings Illustrations** — Invite the children to choose a feeling, and draw a face that shows the feeling. Then ask them to print the word for the feeling in a style that represents the feeling. They could use colour, size, and style of letters to communicate the feeling. (**Curriculum Connection**, The Arts, Visual Arts, see Appendix B, page 198)

- **Christian Meditation** — Lead the students in Christian Meditation. Continue this practice over the course of the year. Comprehensive Teacher Resources are available on the Institute for Catholic Education (ICE) website under resources/monographs/curriculum&educational practices.
- **Stress Buster Activities** — Learning how to recognize signs of stress and practicing ways to address these symptoms are important steps on the path to good mental health. Co-create a classroom chart of “Stress Buster Activities” with students. Add new strategies to the chart and practice throughout the year. Some examples include:
 - Stretching Activities
 - Breathing Activities
 - “I Am Thankful For...” Journal

Name _____ Date _____

Relaxing Reminders

Write or draw a picture of what makes you feel stressed in the left column. Then write or draw a picture of what can make you feel better in the right column.

 Makes me feel stressed 	 Makes me feel better 
 Makes me feel stressed 	 Makes me feel better 