

Emotions Ladder

This is a powerful way of helping children to express how they are feeling in your class. It's a very simple idea that can be implemented in a number of different ways. Here are some examples/ideas of how to implement it within your own classroom – you can be as creative as you like; choose a theme that grabs your class' attention.

In its basic form, an emotions ladder is a way of enabling the children in your class to show you, and other children, how they are feeling at a given moment. I've called it a ladder because the idea is that you place the emotions in order. For example, the lower rungs of the ladder could be emotions associated with anger, moving upwards on the ladder towards happiness/joy etc at the top. Or the other way around. Children place their name/photo somewhere on the ladder depending on how they are feeling. You then have an immediate picture that you can address in whichever way you feel appropriate. It is advisable to have some basic rules for your children, explaining appropriate times to use the 'ladder' i.e. first thing in the morning, after playtime and lunch time and just before home time.

Instead of a ladder, there are many different ways you can use to display the emotions. Other ideas include a rocket or a thermometer (this one works well as you can have the emotions 'boiling' up). You can literally use any theme you like. Have a look at the two examples below; this works best if it's a big display on the wall that shows how important you value how the children are feeling.

This one uses feeling pumpkins! Why not change the theme to suit your current topic.



This is a different way of arranging the emotions: put names on the cloud or the sun – a simplified version for younger children.