



Emotional literacy in schools

The ELSA Project



What is ELSA?



ELSAs are emotional literacy support assistants working in schools. They:

- help children recognise, understand and manage emotions to increase success
- plan and deliver individual (and small group) support programmes
- receive training and supervision from educational psychologists.

Origins



- peripatetic ELSAs working for Psychology Service (Southampton)
- school-based ELSAs given training and supervision by Educational Psychology Service (Hampshire)
- school-based model adopted in other local authorities.

Training modules



- Day 1 - Raising Emotional Literacy Awareness; Emotional Literacy in Schools; The ELSA Project: An Introduction for ELSAs and line managers
- Day 2- Building resilience and self esteem part 1
- Day 3- Building resilience and self esteem part 2
- Day 4 – Managing Emotions; Social and Friendship Skills
- Day 5 - Supporting children through Loss, Bereavement & Family Break Up; The use of story in ELSA work
- Day 6 - Active Listening and Reflective Conversations; The use of puppets in ELSA work.

Supervision



- half-termly in cluster groups with link EP
- secondary ELSAs grouped together
- 'clinical' supervision (not managerial)
- problem-solving approaches modelled
- peer group support – sharing ideas/ resources.

Essential qualities for ELSAs



- good rapport with challenging and emotionally vulnerable youngsters
- ability to work independently and creatively
- willing to plan and evaluate programmes of support
- desire to learn!

Psychology Service commitment



- deliver training to develop ELSA skills
- advise on planning programmes of support
- provide group supervision (and sometimes individual support)
- advise on useful published resources
- assist in dissemination of 'home-grown' resources and ideas, and in problem solving general ELSA issues.

School commitment



- release ELSA for training and supervision sessions
- designate time for planning and delivery of ELSA support to pupils
- provide suitable space for ELSA work
- allocate funds to develop bank of resources over time
- maintain ELSA role within school.

Why is emotional literacy important?



"Developing children as rounded people and active members of the community is at the heart of what schools are about."

Estelle Morris In a speech to SCAA Primary Curriculum Conference, June 1997

Mental health issues



- More than 200,000 young people in England and Wales are admitted to accident and emergency departments each year because they have tried to kill themselves. (papyrus)
- Child line had 34,517 phone counselling sessions with young people who talked about suicidal thoughts in 2013-2014.

Mental health issues



- In the UK, suicide is now the most common cause of death in the 15-34 age group.
- In 2012 there were 1625 young people who took their own life. This was a slight decrease from 2011 where the number was 1746.
- Young men the most vulnerable (in the 25-29 age group 505 suicides in 2012)
- Suicides in people under 15 not included in statistics.
- Three quarters of people not in touch with mental health support.
(PAPYRUS)

Academic achievement



- Children learn more effectively if they are happy in their work, believe in themselves, like their teachers, and feel school is supporting them.
- Achievement in school in academic subjects is vital to pupil happiness and self-esteem.
(Gordon and Grant 1997)

The benefits of focusing on emotional literacy...



- feel good – learn better
- raises standards
- makes learning more enjoyable
- reduces unnecessary stress
- turns vicious circles into virtuous circles

(Sharp, 2001)

More benefits...



- positive emotions influence concentration, memory, problem-solving and all learning skills
- positive relationships enable individuals to break out of dysfunctional patterns
- emotional literacy promotes creativity, innovation and leadership

(Park, 2001)

Benefits to pupils



- feel very supported by having 'special time' and being listened to
- develop greater self-awareness
- learn to talk about difficulties
- develop coping strategies
- interact more successfully with others
- feel better about themselves
- manage better in school.

Benefits to school



- access to prompt support for pupils in need
- positive changes in pupils with behavioural, emotional or social difficulties
- improved learning for target pupils and their peers
- new skills/ideas cascaded to other staff
- increased confidence in managing 'problems' from within.

Benefits to Psychology Service



- indirect input to increased number of pupils
- continuity of support through regular supervision
- development of working relationship with ELSA through regular contact
- ability to contribute to school development
- time and cost effective support to schools.

Research into ELSA



- Grahamslaw 2010 – self efficacy.
- Burton 2009 & 2010 – evaluation.
- Mann 2014 – perception of emotional wellbeing.
- Hardman 2014 – TaMHS
- Bradley 2010 – scope of ELSA
- Mann & Russell – impact of ELSA

Research into ELSA cont.



- Harris 2010 – ELSA in Bournemouth
- Murray 2010 – impact of ELSA on pupil progress.
- Hill et al 2013 – perceived impact of ELSA
- Ball 2014 – analysis of context and impact
- McEwan 2015 – children's experiences of ELSA.

In conclusion...



The ELSA initiative is:

- a long-term partnership between the Educational Psychology Service and schools
- a tried and tested means of building capacity in schools
- an effective way of providing quality support to vulnerable youngsters.



ELSA: Good Practice Guidelines and Getting Started

Allocation of time



- One day a week (or equivalent) per ELSA
- Half day in small schools (e.g. 100 pupils or less)
- Include planning time
- Regularity of delivery

Work space



- Consistency
- Degree of privacy
- Freedom from interruption
- Storage and display space

Resources



- Variety of dedicated resources to support range of needs
- Budget to develop resource bank
- Time for developing resources
- Access to online resources

Referral of pupils



- Manageable workload
- Prioritising referrals
- Identifying programme aims
- Length of involvement
 - Programme
 - Follow-up support

Session planning



- Basic requirements:
 - Session objective
 - Resources needed
 - Activities
 - Evaluation of session afterwards
- Record keeping

Target setting



- Targets should be
 - clear and measurable (SMART)
 - agreed with all those involved.
 - Reinforced outside of ELSA session.

Examples:

- James will be able to take turns with another child in a simple game on 3 out of 4 occasions.
- Jane will recognise the feelings happy, worried and cross in herself during small group activities on four separate occasions.

Activity



- Think about a child you know well.
- Plan an initial 'getting to know you' session.
- Think of the first target that you would want to work on.

Parental support



- Raising awareness of ELSA provision to all parents
- Notifying involvement
- Encouraging parental support / liaison
- Reviewing outcomes

Whole school support



- Effective communication between ELSAs and other staff
- Respecting pupil and family privacy
- Limits of confidentiality

Line manager responsibility



- Understanding and communicating ELSA role
- Overseeing workload and ELSA welfare
- Ensuring appropriate working conditions
- Supporting identification of programme aims
- Supporting evaluation

Role of supervision



- Threefold purpose:
 - To develop skills and competence
 - To safeguard pupils
 - To sustain and support ELSAs
- Requirement of regular attendance to continue practising as an ELSA
- Responsibility of ELSA to communicate needs and provide feedback

Role of EP supervisor



- Arrange and facilitate sessions
- Record attendance
- Follow up non-attendance
- Negotiate group working agreement
- Provide professional support to ELSAs
- Provide psychological perspective on pupil (and ELSA) needs to support planning
- Encourage shared problem-solving
- Uphold principles / guidelines of ELSA project

Role of EP Service



- Maintain availability and quality of ELSA training and supervision
- Develop and deliver supplementary courses to support CPD of ELSAs
- Maintain integrity of project in liaison with schools and Local Authority colleagues

Take Home Task



- Before the next session look into one or more of the following:
 - where you are going to have your sessions?
 - what time are you being given.?
 - what resources does school already have?
 - What resources do you need to update?

Emotional literacy in schools



Aims:

To describe:

- the psychology of emotional literacy

To consider:

- the importance of emotional literacy
- our own emotional literacy
- the school's role in developing children's emotional literacy

Framework and rationale for emotional literacy support

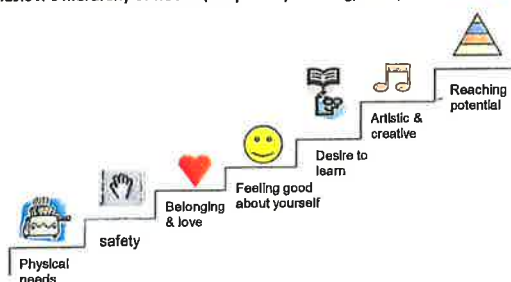
- As an inclusive society we all have a responsibility to encourage the emotional well-being of all children
- A child's ability to succeed within a learning environment is enhanced by their emotional well-being
- The emotional well-being of children in school is promoted through both its culture and ethos, and the clarity of expectations and purpose

Some psychological foundations

- **self-actualisation** (Maslow 1970) – making the most of one's ability and talents
- **self-concept** [thinking aspect of self] & **self-esteem** [emotional aspect of self] – (Bandura)
- **theory of multiple intelligences** (Gardner 1983) – intelligence is more than cognitive ability
- **emotional intelligence** (Salovey & Mayer 1990) – understanding emotions and managing them effectively

Our needs

Maslow's hierarchy of needs (adapted by R Young, 2006)



Reflect and discuss

- Take a few minutes to think about a child you know in school whose needs may not be adequately met at the lower levels of Maslow's hierarchy.
- What impact is this having on how they manage in school?



Self-concept

Different components

- physical
- academic
- social
- transpersonal



Development of self-concept

- personal accomplishment
- visceral feedback
- verbal persuasion
- vicarious experiences



Self-esteem

A person's perceptions regarding himself or herself. These perceptions are formed through experience with and interpretations of one's environment. They are influenced especially by evaluations by significant others, by reinforcements and by attributions on one's own behaviour.

(Marsh 1990)



Theory of intelligence

- visual/spatial
- verbal/linguistic
- logical/mathematical
- bodily/kinaesthetic
- musical/rhythmic
- intrapersonal
- interpersonal

Gardner, 1983



What is emotional intelligence?

Personal competence

"How we handle ourselves"

- self-awareness
- self-regulation
- motivation

Social competence

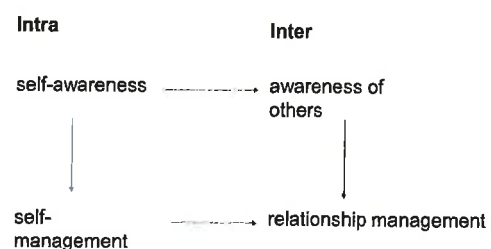
"How we handle relationships"

- empathy
- social skills

Goleman, 1998



Connections between the two emotional intelligence processes



Emotional intelligence



'The ability to perceive accurately, appraise and express emotion; the ability to access and/or generate feelings which facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth.'

(Mayer and Salovey 1997)

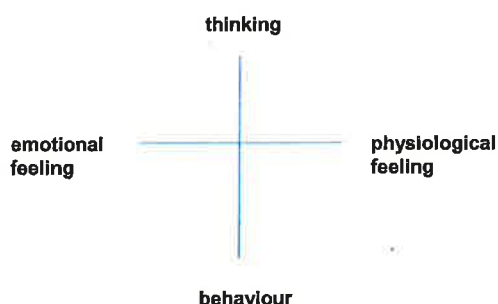
Emotional literacy



Those who cope well and achieve in their learning are more likely to be able to:

- know and articulate their own feelings
- manage their emotional life, without being overwhelmed by it
- be persistent in the face of difficulties
- show empathy, reading others' emotions
- handle relationships with skill and harmony.

Emotional literacy



Self-reflection



- ☐ Complete the EQ self-test
- ☐ Score using the attached score sheet
- ☐ Consider what this tells you about yourself
- ☐ Identify some personal targets on the action sheet

School as a setting for promoting emotional health



- promoting academic achievement through promoting emotional well-being
- equipping young people to take a more pro-active stance in their future
- providing an environment in which children can practice their skills
- providing positive experiences to promote positive self-concepts

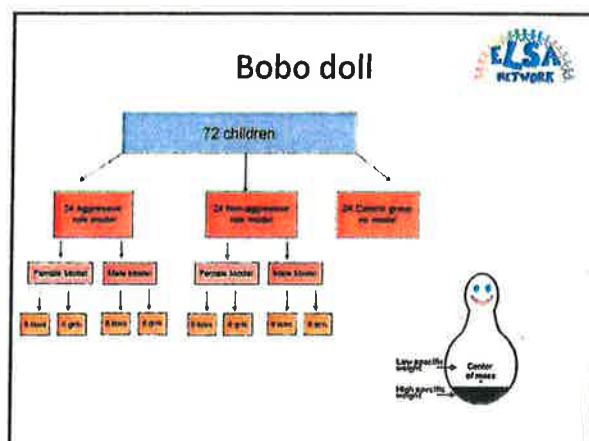
Social learning theory



- Children learn behaviour from the models around them
- Anti-social behaviour can be learned through imitation
- Pro-social behaviour can be learned through modelling: there must be consistency in the system of rewards and the behaviour of models

(Bandura, 1961)

Bobo doll



Primary age curriculum for emotional literacy



- recognising emotions
- building resilience and self-esteem
- social skills
- friendship skills
- emotional regulation including anger management
- loss and bereavement
- use of story in ELSA work
- empowering pupils to make informed choices

Secondary age curriculum for emotional literacy



The primary curriculum plus:

- fostering the development of individuality
- encouraging a longer-term view of the student's role in life
- exploration of role (student, sibling, offspring, grandchild, friend, citizen)
- forming and maintaining stable relationships (friends, peers, teachers, parents)
- empowering young people to ask 'why' questions
- helping them learn to tolerate the ambiguity associated with both comfortable and uncomfortable feelings about the same person or thing (parents, teachers, school)

(Sharp, 2001)

What do we need to do?



- be good models for appropriate behaviour
- reinforce appropriate behaviour
- teach appropriate social skills
- raise emotional awareness



What else do we need?



- the belief that all children can be helped to improve whatever their circumstances or starting point
- a positive problem-solving approach
- commitment
- to support each other when the going gets tough

Teachers and LSAs who can...



- nurture good relationships
- model emotionally literate ways of behaving
- create a calm, positive, orderly atmosphere
- be supportive, encouraging, challenging
- be child-centred
- be inclusive

Priorities...



"A hundred years from now it will not matter what my bank account was, the sort of car I drove...

but the world may be different because I was important in the life of a child."

(Sharp, 2001)

Aims:



To describe:

- the psychology of emotional literacy

To consider:

- the importance of emotional literacy
- our own emotional literacy
- the school's role in developing children's emotional literacy



Raising emotional awareness

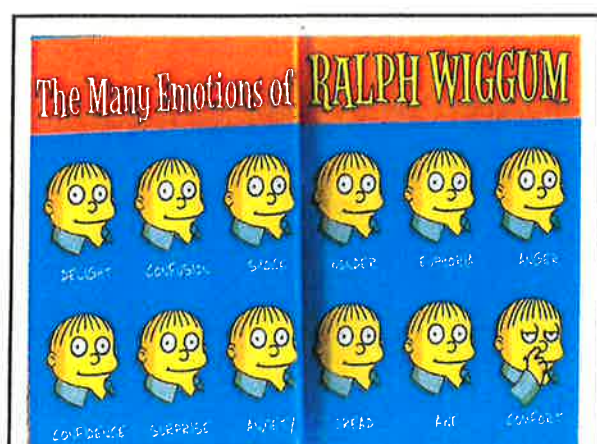


Assessing emotional awareness



Questions:

1. Does the child express a range of emotions?



Assessing emotional awareness



2. Does s/he recognise emotions in other people?

- Recognition of facial expressions, body posture and tone of voice

Activity



In your table groups, one person take an emotion card and show the emotion through:

- facial expression
- body posture
- tone of voice.

The rest of the group must guess the emotion.



Assessing emotional awareness



3. Does s/he have the vocabulary to label different emotions?

Basic feelings



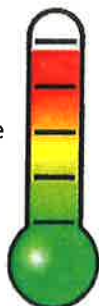
Other feelings



Expanding the range of feeling labels



- happy / glad / pleased / content
- sad / upset / fed-up
- frightened / scared / terrified
- angry / cross / mad / furious / stressed
- lonely / alone / left out
- worried / anxious / nervous
- excited / thrilled



Developing emotional awareness



A variety of activities e.g:

- games and activities
- stories
- pictures
- puppets
- drawings
- role plays
- keeping a "feelings diary"

Useful resources



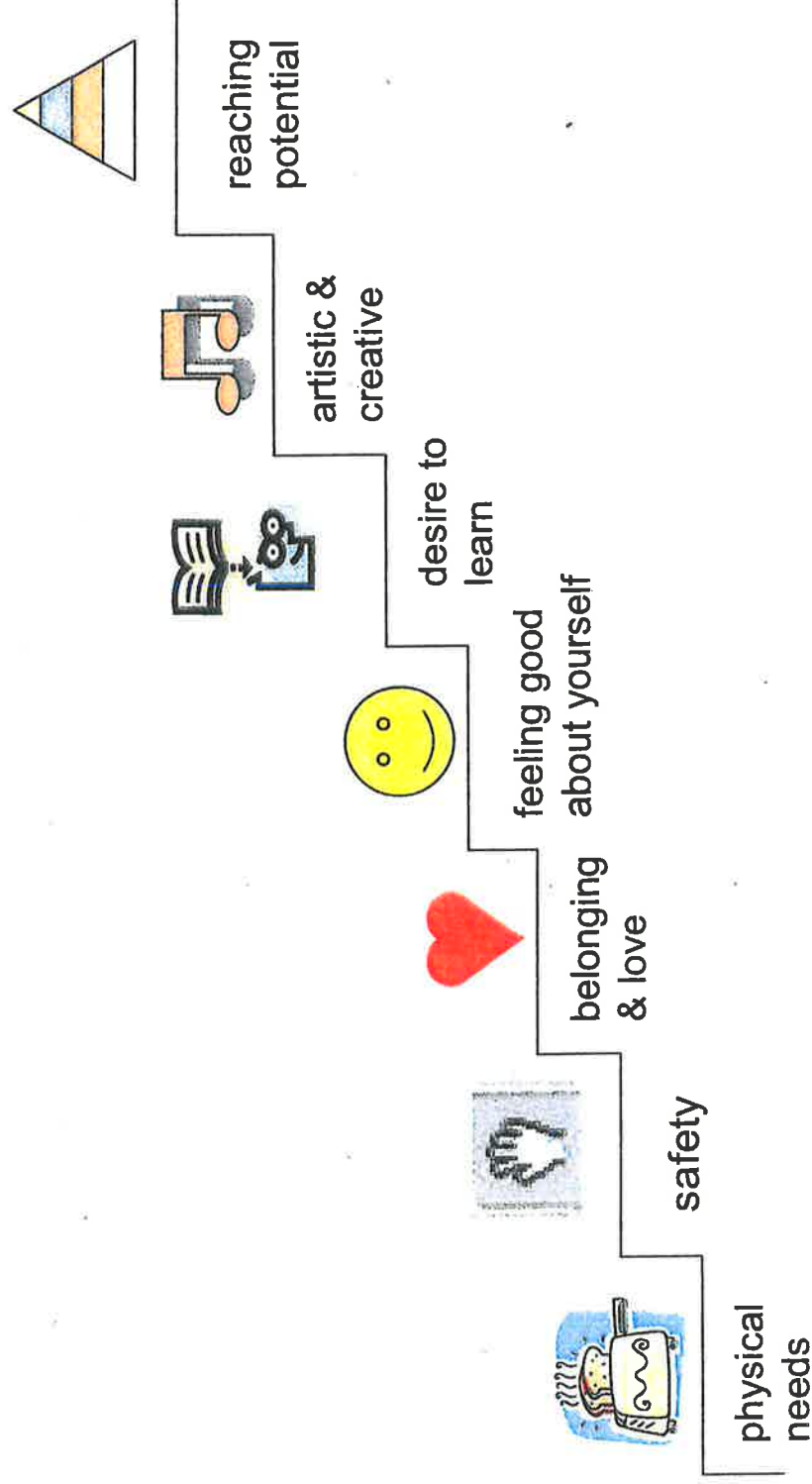
Useful sources



- Incentive Plus (which has absorbed Smallwood Publishing)
- DfES SEAL materials (KS 1 & 2)
- <http://www.rawemotions.org> (KS 1 & 2)
- <http://www.nelig.com>

Our needs

Maslow's hierarchy of needs (adapted by R Young, 2006)





EQ – self-test

I.II

Indicate below how much each statement is like you:

	Often	Usually	Sometimes	Occasionally	Rarely
1. I know which things in my past influence my emotional reactions today.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. When we're working to deadline, I can feel relaxed, and make it enjoyable and productive for everyone.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. I give honest, direct and respectful feedback when I feel someone is behaving in an unhelpful way.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. I make sure I find the time to praise people when they've made a good contribution.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. I listen carefully to try to understand the other's point of view and how they're feeling.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. I can hold back hostile thoughts in a disagreement, even though I would like to 'blast' them.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. I feel comfortable sharing my knowledge and experience with my colleagues.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. I can build good support networks to help me personally and professionally. I ask for support when I need it.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Continued ...



EQ – self-test

... continued

I.I.I

	Often	Usually	Sometimes	Occasionally	Rarely
9. I manage conflict by seeking common ground. I don't allow bad feelings to fester.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. I readily defer present rewards for future goal achievement.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. I feel comfortable learning anew, and letting go of old ideas and ways of doing things.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. I can control anxiety to avoid getting stuck.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. I lead a balanced lifestyle.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. I notice when my body is telling me I need to relax or energise myself, and I do it.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15. When I start to have negative, defeatist thoughts, I can replace them with positive thoughts that motivate me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16. I can sustain optimism in the face of repeated disappointment.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17. I regularly step back from today's urgent demands to remind myself of where I want to be, and what I need to do to get there.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

continued ...



EQ – self-test

... continued

1.11

	Often	Usually	Sometimes	Occasionally	Rarely
18. I manage anger by putting things in perspective and keeping calm.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
19. I avoid feeling helpless in frustrating circumstances by focusing on what I have control over.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
20. I act on the belief that I can choose a different way. It's not 'just the way I am'.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
21. I pick up subtle verbal and non-verbal signals that show how people are feeling underneath the surface.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
22. I can handle rejection because my self-esteem is strong.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
23. I can reframe, or find alternative ways of viewing, a bad experience.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
24. Others would describe me as having lots of drive.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
25. I state my concerns without anger or passivity when I am being excluded.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
26. My personal vision and values keep me focused in times of greatest difficulty.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

continued ...



EQ – self-test

... continued

I.II

	Often	Usually	Sometimes	Occasionally	Rarely
27. I avoid procrastinating, and take decisive action after considering my options.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
28. I sense out and explore opportunities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
29. I am able to take calculated risks without worrying too much about the choices I've made.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
30. I don't just sit and react to events. I take control of my own future.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

continued ...



EQ – self-test

... continued

I.II

Score your responses as follows:

Often ☐ 4
Usually ☐ 3
Sometimes ☐ 2
Occasionally ☐ 1
Rarely ☐ 0

	C	A	R	E	S
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TOTALS					

continued ...



EQ – self-test

... continued

1.11

N.B. This questionnaire has been designed to challenge your thinking about Emotional Intelligence. It is not a standardised psychometric instrument and shouldn't in any way be used to categorise, select, or label anyone.

Interpretation

C reative tension	Managing the tension between dealing with the present and creating the future
A ctive choice	Being proactive and not procrastinating or worrying about choices you've made
R esilience under pressure	Managing pressure positively
E mpathic relationships	Building relationships of trust and credibility
S elf-awareness and self-control	Knowing what you're feeling, and moderating your internal responses

Any score of 18 or above on any of the five competencies indicates that you excel in that particular aspect of Emotional Intelligence (although it would be useful to check your self-rating with ratings by others who work with you).

12–17 indicates a strong foundation for development.

0–11 indicates that you may need to explore the particular competence in some depth and to find ways of building that particular aspect of Emotional Intelligence.

Any individual item rated 2 or below may be an important area for you to work on. Consider how much benefit you will gain if you invest time and energy in moving the rating up to a 3 or 4.

Now choose up to five items from the EQ self-test that you feel are important for you to work on. Discuss with your colleagues what you will do to strengthen these areas.



Stop, start, continue

I.12

I intend to **STOP** ...

•

•

•

I intend to **START** ...

•

•

•

I intend to **CONTINUE** ...

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•



Raising emotional awareness

Introduction

We all experience emotional feelings, but we do not all have the same capacity to understand those feelings, nor indeed the vocabulary to express them. A good starting point when working to increase children's emotional literacy then is to assess their emotional awareness.

How can we do this? Here are some key questions we might ask when preparing to work with particular children:

- Do they express a range of emotions? (Some children present as emotionally 'flat'.)
- Do they recognise emotions in other people? (These can be recognised by facial expression, body posture and tone of voice.)
- Do they have the vocabulary to label different emotions?

If we feel that the children have a limited awareness of emotions we can work with them to increase their skills in all of the above areas.

Emotional vocabulary

We would normally expect children's emotional vocabulary to become increasingly sophisticated with age. Many children in our schools are recognised to be impoverished in their language generally, so it should come as no surprise to find that their feelings vocabulary is very limited. As we work with them to extend their emotional vocabulary we will be helping them to express their feelings through language, rather than resorting to outbursts of emotional behaviour when their emotions become too strong to contain.

The most basic feelings to work on are:

- happy
- sad
- frightened
- angry

Others to work on after these, depending on the children's level of development, may be:

- lonely
- worried
- excited
- proud
- sorry
- shocked

Of course, children may know different words to describe these feelings and, particularly as they get older, we will want to expand their range of labels for core feelings:

- happy / glad / pleased / content
- sad / upset / fed up
- frightened / scared / terrified
- angry / cross / mad / furious / stressed
- lonely / alone / left out

- worried / anxious / nervous
- excited / thrilled

Developing emotional awareness

There are many published resources that are useful for supporting work on emotions. Useful sources include Smallwood Publishers and Incentives Plus. Children generally learn best through games and activities rather than listening to explanations. But as well as using purchased resources there is much that can be done by collecting pictures from magazines or extracts from videos. When planning programmes of support, the key to maintaining children's interest is to include a variety of activities. Varying the approach will help children to sustain their concentration. It is better to leave them wanting more than to persist with a single activity to the point of fatigue.

It is also important to remember that children learn best when the work is well structured. Rather than covering too many feelings in one session, it is better to focus on one emotion. This can be revisited briefly at the beginning of the next session before moving on to another emotion. For some children it may be necessary to move at a slower pace still, revisiting the same feeling several times before introducing another.

The kinds of activities that may be useful include stories, looking at pictures of facial expressions, puppet play, sentence completion (e.g. *I feel happy when...*; *I make my mum happy when I...*; *my happiest memory is...*, etc.), drawing, role play and keeping a 'feelings diary'.

Some useful published resources are:

- *Face Your Feelings* – a book of photographs and accompanying pack of *Face It* cards
- *A Box Full of Feelings* – a resource box including situational cards, feelings post boxes, finger puppets, masks, pictures and a manual which includes many suggestions for use
- *All About Me* – a non-competitive board game
- *The Feelings Diary* – a book by Gillian Shotton including suggested activities and photocopiable resources
- *Mr Happy* and other books in the Mister Men series

Sheila Burton
Hampshire Educational Psychology Service
Raising emotional awareness.SB-EH
October 2003

**Extract from The Emotional Literacy Handbook:
Promoting whole-school strategies
Antidote: David Fulton Publishers, ISBN 1-84312-060-7**

THE EMOTIONAL LITERACY HANDBOOK

Developing a language for feelings

If staff and students are to explore together what is happening for them in their lives at school, they need to develop a language that can capture the nuances of emotional experience and help them navigate the grey areas between 'happy' and 'sad', 'angry' and 'calm', 'confident' and 'ashamed'.

Our ability to expand the language we use for speaking about emotions grows through practice. Such practice becomes an everyday part of school life when staff and students:

- feel they have permission to explore feelings;
- sense that it will be safe for them to do so;
- are offered explicit opportunities for such conversations.

Permission to speak

Young people can easily pick up that they do not have permission to speak about their feelings in school. They have been separated from their more-or-less nurturing homes, thrust into a large group of their peers, then told that they must start to develop new skills and engage in the busyness of school life. It is hardly surprising if some become wary, and reply to questions about what they are feeling with an unrevealing 'Okay' or 'I don't know'.

School staff will counter this if they communicate actively that they *are* interested in young people's feelings. At Mason Moor Primary School in Southampton this message is made crystal clear. Throughout the school year, staff and students explore together a range of different feelings. Posters go up on corridor walls and displays are laid out in the library. Teachers build the exploration of these feelings into their lessons and encourage children to draw pictures, write poems and create their own presentations on a range of contrasted emotions – angry/calm, sad/happy, intimidated/confident, ashamed/proud, lonely/sociable. The intention, according to former head Sue Nicholson, is to give young people 'a vocabulary to express their feelings so that they have a range of words to draw on and apply in their writing'.

p.104

Finding safety

People need different sorts of reassurance to engage in conversations about emotions. Some may need convincing that whoever is supervising the process really will maintain whatever ground rules have been established. Some may need someone to reassure them that they will not be compelled to divulge things they are not

ELEMENTS

ready to share, or to venture into areas that challenge their cultural, religious or familial taboos. Others may want to be absolutely sure that nobody will use this information against them.

The reason for this sensitivity is that any conversation about emotions can bring people into contact with areas where they feel personally vulnerable. One cannot talk intelligently about feelings without at some level connecting to one's own experience. Despite this, people are likely to feel safer if the conversation at least starts on ground that is not personal.

There are many ways of drawing people into the exploration of fictional situations. Inviting young people to work out what is going on emotionally as they play with puppets, act out imaginary situations or talk about stories they have read together draws them towards their own emotional experience. They can compare the story they are exploring against their own. They may identify with particular feelings in the characters and recall times when they felt the same way. Even when we are not conscious of it, the process of understanding our own emotions becomes woven into the process of understanding other people's.

The strength of students' reluctance to talk about themselves directly, as opposed to their enthusiasm for doing so indirectly, was suggested in an exercise carried out by Eric Hall and Andrew Kirkland (1984) from the University of Nottingham. They invited a group of young adolescents to spend 20 minutes writing about the experience of their school holidays, and another 20 minutes writing about the life of a tree. The difference in the level of emotional statements between the two accounts was striking – some 12 per cent about the holidays contained emotional statements as against 57 per cent of statements about the tree. There was a striking predominance in the tree accounts of those emotions – sadness, anger and hurt – that can be difficult to acknowledge to a group of peers.

The way in which young people move between thinking about themselves and thinking about others illustrates that this approach is about more than simply getting them to the point of being able to talk freely about their feelings. Emotional literacy requires us to understand others and ourselves through the dynamic interplay of our different experiences. It is about finding a third position slightly outside ourselves, distanced from the intensity of our current emotional experience, where we can see what is happening to us and reflect upon it. Emotional literacy is about having enough emotional cool to appreciate what is getting us so heated or leaving us so down.

Creating opportunities

Every activity described in this book involves setting up group situations where people can explore experience through the eyes of others and, in the process, start finding ways to be more open about themselves and to learn about others. The two case studies below illustrate the way this can work.

Case study 2 shows how two six-year-old boys were provoked by a story about a stick insect, Zippy, to talk about their own experiences of bereavement. The teacher picked up on one boy's account of his loss and, by sensitively exploring it with his fellow students, enabled another more troubled boy to talk about his own painful experience. Moments of revelation such as this that have the potential to transform the way individuals relate to their teachers and their peers.

Case study 3 concerns a project in Sheffield which used drama and circle time in a way that helped young people enlarge their emotional vocabularies. The work transformed their ways of being with each other, and also engaged them in an experience that was inherently joyful.



Helpful and unhelpful ways of viewing emotions

Helpful

Feeling anger, jealousy and hate is a natural part of life
It is possible to transform distressing emotions into more positive states
Feelings emerge through the interaction between ourselves and others
We can learn different ways of responding to situations

Unhelpful

We are bad people if we have 'negative' feelings
There are some emotions it would be better not to experience
Other people make us feel the way we do
Particular sorts of situation will always generate the same feelings in us

Thanks to Lynne Gerlach and Julia Bird of Sowelu Associates for inspiring the ideas in this table.

Case study 2

How a stick insect gets six-year-olds talking about their feelings



Zippy's Friends is a school-based programme developed for six-year-olds. It teaches children how to cope with everyday difficulties, to identify and talk about their feelings and to explore ways of dealing with them. It also encourages them to help each other deal with problems.

The programme is built around a set of six stories. Zippy is a stick insect and his friends are a group of young children. The stories show them confronting issues that are familiar to young children, such as friendship, communication, feeling lonely, bullying, dealing with loss and making a new start.

Zippy's Friends encourages children to explore and think for themselves. It demonstrates the importance of talking to other people when we feel sad or angry, and of listening to other people when they feel sad or angry. It affirms a child's ability to both use and give support.

One teacher told a remarkable story about the session that deals with death and dying. A seven-year-old called Alexander told the class that his sister Camilla had died a year ago. He explained exactly what had happened and where she was buried. The teacher asked Alexander whether he would like all the children to go to the graveyard where Camilla was buried. He said he would and so they went together. Each child took a flower to put on Camilla's grave, and they had lots of questions for Alexander and the teachers. They were practical questions such as 'Where is Camilla?' 'Which way is she lying?' and 'Where are her feet?'

One blond boy, who was often very disruptive, quietened down a lot during this discussion. When the children returned to the classroom, he surprised everyone by saying: 'When I get to the graveyard, I kneel down on the ground and I feel that I can talk to my grandparents.' The teacher was delighted that the class joker had felt able to share his feelings in this way.

When asked how the programme has changed their children, teachers often report that they have become much better at resolving conflicts. One boy in a Danish school replied to a question about what he had learned from the programme: 'I know what to do now when somebody thumps me. I don't thump him back. I ask him why he's doing it.'

There have been two evaluations of the programme. The first showed that there had not been sufficient improvement in children's coping skills, which led to a comprehensive review of the materials. A follow-up evaluation found that children in the programme showed clear improvements in their abilities to cope with everyday problems, compared to those in control groups. They also improved in cooperation, empathy, self-assertion and control.

Chris Balc (Partnership for Children)

Case study 3

A whole-school approach to giving young people a language in which to talk about their emotions

The Taking Care Project was a whole-school approach to emotional literacy implemented by three primary schools in a socio-economically deprived area of Sheffield.

Its aim was to address the social, emotional and educational aspects of children's well-being through the delivery of circle time, drama and whole-school well-being meetings. Very high numbers of children at these schools were living in situations of adversity that affected their ability to understand and handle feelings; for example, research-based estimates suggest that between two and four children in a class of 30 would be living in a home where domestic violence was an issue.

Each of the three schools nominated a particular year group to take part in the programme. The community psychologist ran five half-day experiential training workshops for teachers, support teachers and school nurses from the participating schools. These were designed to equip them to deliver a programme of ten Taking Care sessions in each school.

For ten weeks, each class worked through a programme that roughly followed the same sequence, covering self-respect, relationships, feelings, bullying, violence and available networks of support.

Evaluation of this project involved children being interviewed before and after the sessions, using scenarios of bullying and domestic conflict to elicit feelings, words and help-seeking intentions. Teachers were asked to rate individual children and the whole class before and after the sessions. Facilitators and head teachers were interviewed on the impact of the sessions.



The evaluation showed that sessions were beneficial to nearly all the children involved. There were significant improvements across both age and gender in the ability to express emotions and to seek help from others. The younger children significantly increased the number of feelings words they used spontaneously. They were using words such as miserable, glad, surprised and jealous, as opposed to the simpler words such as sad and happy used before the sessions. Even for the nine-year-olds, where the effect was less marked, the range of words increased to include words such as grateful and lonely.

Children showed an increase in the number of people from whom they intended to seek help. Boys showed more significant benefits than girls in emotional expression and help-seeking intentions, but teachers rated the girls as showing more improvement in classroom behaviour. The most significant changes that teachers identified were an increased confidence in work and a reduction in disruptiveness.

The majority of the children had enjoyed the sessions and wanted them to continue. They had a clear idea of what the sessions were for, and had appreciated the way drama activities enabled them to express their own experiences and feelings. Head teachers valued the whole-school well-being meetings as they led to increased multi-agency co-ordinated support and new collaborative initiatives in each school.

Heather Hunt and Gill Crow (2001)
Heather.Hunt@care4free.net

I just want to ask ...

But where is the dividing line between talking about personal issues and talking about the emotional issues that might affect people's ability to learn?



The dividing line is not drawn around *what* people are talking about, but around *why* they are doing so. We want people to talk about their feelings in the classroom so that they can trust each other, work collaboratively together and use emotional knowledge in their learning. Keeping that purpose in mind shapes the way these feelings emerge in discussion and how they are then dealt with.

Surely feelings do not have to be articulated to be felt and understood?

You are right to suggest that a lot of emotional understanding evolves without words and that we communicate in many non-verbal ways. Ultimately, though, language is a part of how we construct meaning out of our experience. For understanding really to grow between groups of people, some things do need to find their way into words.

Useful resources

Primary

Equal Voice, Pop-Up Theatre.

A video and book containing a set of techniques and games designed to create a safe space for looking at fictional conflicts between people and to enable the development of emotional expression. The work is designed to improve young people's ability to be emotionally articulate by creating an atmosphere of trust that allows children to experiment with alternative ways of behaving. See Appendix 1 for details.



Rae, T. (1998) *Dealing with Feeling – An Emotional Literacy Curriculum*. Bristol: Lucky Duck Publishing.

This book covers a range of different emotions – angry, sad, happy, surprised, loved, shocked, bored, jealous, ashamed, lonely, greedy, nervous, disappointed, rejected, shy, arrogant, generous, selfish and intimidated. After introducing each emotion, the book provides a narrative account of situations that might engender such a feeling, suggests ways of discussing and role-playing to experience the emotions in safety and learn to empathise with others. Used by Mason Moor Primary School in Southampton to develop the approach described above.

Webster-Stratton, C. (1999) *How to Promote Children's Social and Emotional Competence*. London: Paul Chapman Publishing.

Shows how teachers can work with parents to address the educational and emotional needs of children from four to eight years. Includes games, activities and strategies for the classroom.

Zippy's Friends (case study 2): available from Partnership for Children. See Appendix 1 for contact details.

Primary and Secondary

Bristol City Council, *The Emotional Literacy Hour: Working Towards Emotional Literacy*. Bristol: Lucky Duck Publishing.

This video shows a group of primary and secondary schools in Bristol working with pupils on their emotional literacy through approaches such as assemblies, drama role-play, puppets, circle time and group discussions.

Secondary and beyond

Brearley, M. (2001) *Emotional Intelligence in the Classroom: Creative Learning Strategies for 11–18s*. Bancyfelin: Crown House Publishing.

This book summarises current research on emotional intelligence and learning, and offers practical strategies for use with secondary students.

Getting Connected, Young Adult Learning Partnership (NIACE) (see Appendix 1 and www.gettingconnected.org.uk).

Described as a curriculum framework for social inclusion, these materials are designed to help disengaged and disillusioned young adults (16–25) to reconnect with learning and activities likely to foster their personal development so as to develop the 'soft' skills involved in managing their lives and relationships. Its six modules are: Knowing myself; Connecting with feelings; Holding beliefs; Handling relationships; Getting and giving support; Exploring risks. The first evaluation of this programme suggested that there was a positive impact on young people in terms of their self-awareness, self-management, motivation and ability to manage relationships, as well as their social inclusion.

Making a Connection, contact Children and Youth Partnership Foundation (see Appendix 1).

Curriculum materials for students at KS3 seeking to acquire and practise life skills which will help them understand their own personal resources and social interactions. Covers emotional literacy alongside thinking skills, creative conflict resolution and active citizenship. Organised into three modules entitled: Connecting with yourself; Connecting with others; and Connecting with the community.

See Appendices 1 and 12 for organisations offering processes for developing emotional language.

Feelings

Here are suggestions for children who have difficulties in identifying and expressing feelings. Some of these activities can be carried out in a class/group situation and some require an individual focus.

- Generate words associated with a range of feelings in class. This will provide a range of vocabulary appropriate to the child's age group.
- Use list to classify, either individually or in a group, which can then provide a framework for more detailed work.
- Explore meanings, non-verbal cues, e.g. facial expression, posture, gesture, tone of voice etc, use pictorial material, including picture story books, mime and role-play.
- In stories, emphasise the feelings of different characters, particularly where there are different feelings about an event/behaviour etc. Try to explore how a character would respond if he/she takes notice of the feelings of someone else. It would be useful to provide some other options for the child to choose from, which could be written down if appropriate.
- Explore the child's own feelings about particular 'safe' events. Consider using a rating scale format which is visual and does not necessarily require a detailed verbal response from the child. When established, this format can be used for looking at more difficult individual feelings.
- Look at ways of making others feel good about themselves. Emphasise the small things we often take for granted, e.g. the smile, friendly greeting, getting something for someone else, helping out, sharing, asking someone who is left out to join in, putting an arm around someone who is upset. Reflect on a regular basis with the child/group what she/he has done on that day within this framework. These could be recorded as 'I' statements in a special book, to promote self-esteem.
- Increase explicit awareness of own and others' feelings in paired activities, e.g. verbalise feelings about:
 - how well turn-taking was achieved
 - playing someone else's choice of game as well as your own in a turn-taking situation
 - how it was agreed who would do what on a shared task, which can be play- or work-focused.

Emphasise the importance of finding ways for both partners to 'feel good' and enjoy the activity/game. Also emphasise the non-verbal cues which tell us how we can tell what someone else is feeling.

- Use natural opportunities to talk about feelings, particularly where there are different feelings about an event/happening/request etc.

Jo Birbeck
Educational Psychologist

Feelings.misc-JB-EH
February 2004

WHEPS-ELSA-Trainees' handbook-Feelings.misc.JB/3397845

Feelings opposites

Purpose:

A familiar and fun pairs game that encourages players to: (a) think about feelings; (b) increase their vocabulary of words for feelings; and (c) see the huge spectrum of feelings that we all experience.

You will need:

20-30 pieces of card – A4 size
Felt tip pens

How to do:

Make the cards in advance. Take two cards and a coloured pen. On one card write the name for a feeling, e.g. 'happy'; on the other card write down the name for a feeling which has an opposite meaning, e.g. 'sad'. Continue to make pairs of feelings until you run out of cards, using a different coloured pen for each pair.

Some ideas for feelings pairs:

safe - frightened
glad - angry
insensitive - sensitive
bored - busy
anxious - relaxed
furious - calm
thankful - ungrateful
kind - selfish
hated - loved
happy - sad
shy - impulsive
jealous - indifferent

How to play the game:

The cards are spread out on the floor face down. The group is divided into two teams. The first player from one team turns over two cards and reads out the feelings. If they are a pair of opposites (the different colours help to confirm this!) that team claims the cards; if not, they are turned face down again, in the same spots as they were before. It is now the turn of the other team. Keep going until all pairs have been claimed. The group with the most pairs wins.

Variants:

Encourage the player to turn over one card. Discuss what the feeling is, and what its opposite might be, before turning over a second. You could also ask the players to talk about a time when they felt either the feeling or its opposite. Using words which are not exact opposites can stimulate more discussion, e.g. 'shy' and 'impulsive'.

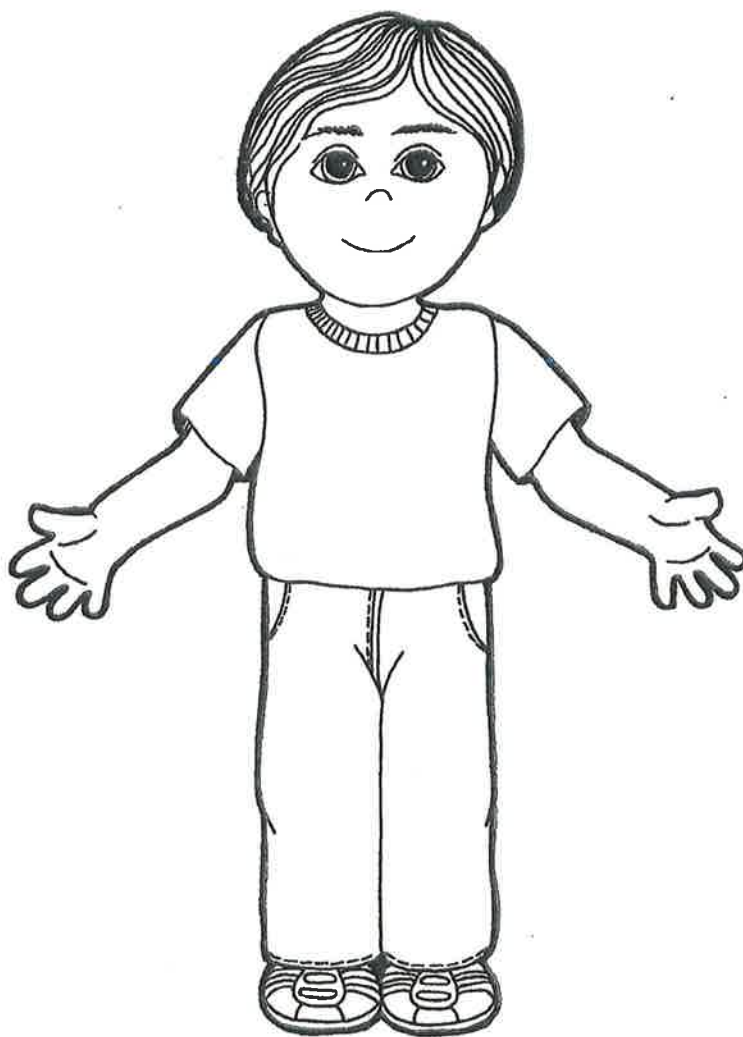
Expand the game by asking the players to think of their own pairs of feelings and write them on spare cards.

Our thanks to Systkinasmiðjan, the Iceland Sibling Group, who taught us this game at our Annual Sibling Group Leader Conference.

www.sibs.org.uk
01535 645453

Where in my body I feel emotions

Everyone has feelings. Some are comfortable and some are uncomfortable. Show the places in your body where you feel your emotions, using the colours shown:



sad

happy

angry

jealous

worried

excited

lonely

scared

If feelings are kept inside too long they often cause aches and pains.

Exercise, sports, play, music, art, writing and talking about our feelings are all good ways of letting feelings out.

Where in my body I feel emotions

Everyone has feelings. Some are comfortable and some are uncomfortable. Show the places in your body where you feel your emotions, using the colours shown:



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happy

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excited

lonely

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If feelings are kept inside too long they often cause aches and pains.

Exercise, sports, play, music, art, writing and talking about our feelings are all good ways of letting feelings out.

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

FEELINGS WORD SEARCH

D	E	S	I	R	P	R	U	S	C	W	B	C	A	Y
M	T	A	S	L	I	S	I	D	O	H	R	S	N	A
A	N	E	O	J	T	D	L	U	N	O	A	I	X	D
X	R	S	M	E	O	E	R	O	F	D	L	L	I	E
J	I	A	U	B	W	I	U	R	I	C	H	L	O	T
E	D	V	P	S	A	R	H	P	D	T	A	Y	U	I
A	N	G	S	I	D	R	U	T	E	I	P	S	S	C
L	O	N	E	L	Y	O	R	X	N	E	A	Y	C	X
O	L	E	T	B	O	W	T	A	T	W	N	R	G	E
U	F	H	D	E	R	O	B	M	S	I	O	G	F	M
S	C	A	R	E	D	A	U	T	E	S	L	N	N	A
P	L	Y	P	P	A	H	V	F	S	O	E	A	Y	O
F	R	I	G	H	T	E	N	E	D	J	E	D	O	B

Can you find
the words to describe
our feelings?

AFRAID
ANGRY
ANXIOUS
BORED
BRAVE
CONFIDENT
CROSS
EMBARRASSED
EXCITED
FRIGHTENED
HAPPY

HURT
JEALOUS
LONELY
MAD
PROUD
SAD
SCARED
SILLY
SURPRISED
UPSET
WORRIED

Feelings anagrams

The words below are all *feelings* words but they have been scrambled up. Can you unscramble them?

DSA

UTHR

MALC

DEOBR

GRYAN

PAPHY

DARESC

EETDIXC

PSRIESUDR

FREDTARTSU

Elaine's letter

Elaine gets home from school. There is a letter waiting for her. She opens it and inside is some money and a card from her Uncle Jim congratulating her for doing so well in her school exams. "Well done on your exams. Buy yourself something nice", the message says. Elaine feels

Richard, her brother, arrives home. "Where did you get that money from?", he asks. Elaine tells him. Richard feels

Elaine decides to go down to the shops right away. At last she can buy that new CD she really wants. She asks her mum if she can go out and she walks down the street to the music shop. She feels

She looks through the many CDs on the shelves and finds the one she wants. She walks up to the counter to pay and puts her hand in her pocket. But there is nothing there. She quickly searches through all her pockets but her money is not there. She feels

There is a big queue of people forming behind her at the pay desk. The shop assistant feels Elaine explains that she has lost her money and runs back out of the shop to see if she dropped it in the street. She runs home looking on the footpath but there is no sign of the money. Elaine feels.....

Elaine looks around everywhere at home but just then she hears her brother giggling in the next room. She goes in and he waves the money at her. "I pinched it from your jacket pocket", he says, rolling around with laughter. Elaine feels

Managing moods

Objectives:

Group members will:

- explain how moods are affected by feelings left over from conflicts
- identify problems and feelings associated with specific conflicts
- describe strategies for releasing residual feelings and managing negative moods.

Procedure:

- Begin by asking the group, *'Have you ever been in an extremely bad mood because of something negative that happened in a relatively small area of your life?'*
- Invite volunteers to briefly share their 'bad mood' experiences. Then ask for a show of hands from students who have behaved badly towards a family member or a friend for no particular reason other than that they were in a bad mood. Point out that this sort of thing happens all the time.
- Distribute the worksheets and quickly go over the directions. Allow the students to work in twos or threes to complete the sheet. Allow about 10 minutes.
- Take a few minutes to discuss the three scenarios described on the worksheets. Looking at one scenario at a time, ask the students how they answered the questions. Help the students recognise and describe how Scott, Jo and Mike each started with a specific problem or conflict which produced certain feelings (frustration, worry, disappointment, anxiety, embarrassment etc). In all three cases, these first feelings were followed by anger, and the anger carried over into unrelated activities involving unsuspecting friends.

Write the following guidelines on the board:

Guide to managing moods

1. **buy yourself some time!!!**
 2. **fill this time with mood-management strategies**
 3. **it takes time for feelings to go away naturally; don't let them affect other activities.**
- Ask the students: *Why is it so important to 'buy time' when you are experiencing negative feelings associated with a problem or conflict?*

- Facilitate a discussion around the three guidelines, inviting input and examples from the students, and making these points:
 - The feelings we take away from a conflict (residual feelings) tend to stay with us for some time. Even a well-managed conflict is stressful and left-over feelings carry over into other activities and relationships. In addition they can be hard on us physically.
 - Internal conflicts, or conflicts that cannot immediately be resolved for one reason or another, also produce stress. Negative feelings may be with us constantly until the problem is resolved.
 - Residual feelings and feelings associated with unresolved conflict affect our moods.
 - The use of *mood-management strategies* can help us relieve stress and negative feelings, lessening the chance that a 'bad mood' will result in damage to our body, our relationships and other areas of our life.
- On the board, write the heading, '**Mood-management strategies**'. Ask the students to help you brainstorm positive, healthy ways of releasing anger and other negative feelings. List all ideas and include items such as:
 - talk with a trusted friend or adult
 - run laps around the block or field
 - leave the situation and take several slow, deep breaths
 - get something to eat or drink
 - listen to relaxing music
 - take a walk somewhere nice
 - imagine being in a favourite place
 - work on a project or hobby.

Give each student a 3" x 5" card. Suggest that the students write down three or four mood-management ideas that they think might work for them. Encourage them to carry the card with them or tape it to a mirror or cupboard door at home as a reminder.

In subsequent sessions, ask volunteers to report on their progress using mood-management strategies. Frequently remind the students that these strategies are short-term controls, not permanent solutions to big problems. However, they do relieve stress and allow us to enter into problem-solving and conflict resolution with greater self-control and productivity.

Managing moods worksheets

Scott was just finishing a report on the computer when he hit the wrong key and erased all of his work. He felt totally frustrated and started to get angry with himself, but he had to get to his next class. Scott walked out of the computer room and down the hall. Lost in his thoughts about doing something stupid, he stumbled right into Claire, knocking her books all over the floor. Then he gave her a disgusted look and yelled, "Why don't you look where you're going?!"

~

Jo was ready to leave for school, but she couldn't find her books and nobody seemed to know where they were. She had two assignments due in that day and both were inside her books. She started to get upset. After nearly thirty minutes of searching, Jo found the books in one of her little sister, Kelly's, favourite hiding places. When she confronted her, Kelly admitted hiding them. Even though she found her books, Jo was still mad at her sister and left for school late and in a terrible mood. When she walked into her first class, her best friend Stacey said, "Hey girl, you look upset" Jo snapped "Leave me alone, I don't want to talk to you!"

~

Mike had just found out that he didn't get into the football team. As he walked away from the gym he started feeling angry. Mike thought it was unfair that some of the guys who did make the team couldn't shoot or move around the pitch nearly as well as he could. He felt annoyed and upset. When he walked round the corner, Mike saw a group of his friends talking. When Andy saw Mike, he said, "What are you looking so down about?". Mike was embarrassed. He didn't want anyone to know he hadn't made the team, so all he said was, "None of your business" and walked off.

~

Scott

1. *What was Scott's real problem?*
2. *What were his first feelings about that problem?*
3. *What were some of his other feelings?*
4. *What did Claire do that caused Scott to behave towards her the way he did?*
5. *Why did Scott yell at Claire?*

~

Jo

1. *What was Jo's real problem?*
2. *What were her first feelings about that problem?*
3. *What were some of her other feelings?*
4. *What did Stacey do that caused Jo to respond the way she did?*
5. *Why did Jo snap at Stacey?*

~

Mike

1. *What was Mike's real problem?*
2. *What were his first feelings about that problem?*
3. *What were some of his other feelings?*
4. *What did Andy do that caused Mike to behave the way he did?*
5. *Why was Mike rude to his friends, and why did he just walk off?*

~

Hampshire Educational Psychology Service

ELSAs – getting started

Practical issues

- Your school has agreed to release you for the equivalent of one day each week to carry out ELSA work. This may be in a block or at set times during the week. For some smaller schools this may be a shorter time (e.g. half a day per week). It will be important for you to find out what time has been allocated. It may be that you do not use all the allocated time initially but that you will fairly quickly build up to using the whole time available.
- Your school has agreed to make some money available to purchase some resources for you to use. It will be important to find out if they have already purchased them and, if not, order some resources to use so you can make your sessions varied and fun. It will be useful to look at existing resources your school may already have, as well as developing some home-made games and activities.
- The length of each session will depend on the child. For a younger pupil, 20 minutes may be enough, whereas an older pupil may benefit from a session of an hour. You will need to judge this. You may find it helps younger pupils to have several shorter sessions each week.
- It is helpful to set some clear goals. Once these have been achieved, you may decide to stop sessions with that pupil and allow time for them to consolidate and generalise these skills. Goals may be achieved within half a term or may take far longer.
- You will need an appropriate place to work with some privacy and quiet but not too isolated.
- You will need to plan the best time to work with each pupil (not during their favourite lesson!) and negotiate with relevant staff.

Parental involvement

- It is good practice to inform parents.
- Schools usually send a letter to parents to suggest their child would benefit from ELSA support, inviting parents to contact the school to discuss further if they have any concerns or would like to find out more about the work carried out. Sometimes it would be more appropriate to approach parents in person.
- It is good practice to feed back progress to parents at appropriate stages. This could coincide with IEP or IBMP reviews. It will be useful for you to talk to appropriate school staff to plan how best to do this.

Session planning and recording

- A good session has pace and variety.
- Start by welcoming the pupil, and warm up with a neutral game or activity.
- Recap from the previous session to see if they have remembered/understood the information. Ask them what they learned from the last session, and find out if they have followed through any actions you had agreed.
- Carry out a range of activities to achieve the objectives for that session. These can include games, puppets, making something with a younger child, looking at or sorting pictures, drawing etc. It is important not to base it all around pen and paper exercises, but a worksheet can be useful to consolidate the activities. Often your role is to facilitate learning by allowing the pupil to experience and talk about the activities.
- You may want to ask the pupil to try something before the next session. This could be something for them to notice during the week, something for them to record, or a new approach to use.
- Finish a session with a fun, cool-down activity or a favourite game, and ensure they are emotionally ready to return to their lessons. Always try to leave the pupil wanting more, not asking when the session is finishing!
- It is important to have evidence of the work you are carrying out to share with the teacher/SENCo/parents/Ofsted, and so you can review and evaluate the work.
- A planning sheet for each session allows you to record the objective for the session, resources needed, activities you plan to carry out, and reflections after the session about how successful it was, and noting anything for the next session. A sample planning sheet is available or you may prefer to design your own to suit you.
- You may wish to increase pupil involvement and engagement by including pupils in setting targets and in reviewing their achievements.
- If a pupil is unco-operative with you:

You could finish the session early and suggest you continue the following week. You may wish to acknowledge that you feel the pupil is not ready to work with you on this occasion but not blame or punish in any way, and ensure the pupil does not receive negative feedback about the session from the teacher when they return to class

If the pupil is wishing to control the session or set his/her own agenda, you may be able to negotiate a little or give a controlled choice of activity.

If the pupil is out of control, go and get help.

Confidentiality

- It is important to build a trusting relationship.
- It is important to use commonsense about where you work with youngsters. Although you need a quiet area, it may be sensible to leave the door open, or find somewhere which is quiet but with other people nearby.
- For further information on confidentiality see documents in this folder entitled:
 - “Confidentiality guidelines – children in school”
 - “Child Abuse – possible indicators” from Kidscape
 - an extract from government document on what to do if you’re worried a child is being abused.

Confidentiality guidelines - children in school

Schools are expected to have a confidentiality policy in place and this is a prerequisite for Enhanced Healthy Schools Status. An online Confidentiality for Schools policy can be found at www3.bants.gov.uk/healthyschools.

ELSAs, as members of staff, should adhere to all school policies. The information below is offered as good practice guidelines.

Guidelines for all school staff members:

- When talking with pupils, it is important for staff to be aware of maintaining their professional boundaries. Whilst being supportive where they can, distancing techniques should be used when appropriate and pupils encouraged or supported to access the confidential services offered on the school site.
- **Staff must make it clear to pupils that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality when a pupil first begins to talk about something where confidentiality may become an issue.**
- Pupils should be warned that if there is a child protection issue where the pupil is, or others are, likely to be at risk of significant harm, **staff are under a duty to inform the school's Child Protection Liaison Officer who may have to involve other agencies.** (Please refer to the school's child protection procedures for further advice on this aspect.) It is important that each member of staff deals with this sensitively and explains to the pupil that they must inform the appropriate people who can help the child, but that they will only tell those who need to know in order to help.
- School staff can only offer confidentiality to pupils on issues that do not involve significant illegal activities e.g. drug trafficking, arson, etc. If the conversation begins to move to this kind of issue, the pupil must be warned that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.
- In all cases where they feel that they have to break confidentiality with the pupil, the member of staff must inform the pupil and reassure them that their best interests will be maintained.
- In talking with pupils, the member of staff needs to encourage them to talk to their parents/carers about the issue that may be troubling them, and support in doing this should be offered where appropriate.
- Pupils should be made aware of the specialist confidential services that may be available on the school site or in the school community e.g. school nurse, counsellor, Connexions, personal adviser, doctor or young people's drop-in service.

Note to ELSAs:

Effective liaison with other staff is an expected part of the ELSA role. ELSAs are not counsellors and should act in line with school policies at all times. It is better to think in terms of respect for a pupil's and family's privacy when sharing information. This suggests sharing general guidance about a pupil's difficulties/needs rather than passing on intimate details of conversations, unless there are safeguarding concerns. The ELSA should discuss with the pupil and get their agreement about what to share and with whom, in order to preserve a relationship of trust. If in doubt ELSAs should discuss with their line manager how and what information should be shared.

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused - summary

Introduction - safeguarding children

All those who come into contact with children and families in their everyday work, including practitioners who do not have a specific role in relation to safeguarding children, have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. You are likely to be involved in three main ways:

- you may have concerns about a child, and refer those concerns to children's social care or the police. School staff (both teaching and non-teaching) should be aware of the local procedures to be followed for reporting concerns about a particular child. This will normally be via the school's designated senior member of staff or their nominated deputy or, if neither is available, another senior member of the school's staff. In emergencies however, contact the police direct
- you may be approached by children's social care and asked to provide information about a child or family or to be involved in an assessment. This may happen regardless of who made the referral to children's social care
- you may be asked to provide help or a specific service to the child or a member of their family as part of an agreed plan and contribute to the reviewing of the child's progress.

Everyone working with children and families should ...

- be familiar with and follow your organisation's procedures and protocols for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children in your area, and know who to contact in your organisation to express concerns about a child's welfare
- remember that an allegation of child abuse or neglect may lead to a criminal investigation, so don't do anything that may jeopardise a police investigation, such as asking a child leading questions or attempting to investigate the allegations of abuse
- if you are responsible for making referrals, know who to contact in police, health, education, school and children's social care to express concerns about a child's welfare
- when referring a child to children's social care, you should consider and include any information you have on the child's developmental needs and their parents'/carers' capacity to respond to these needs within the context of their wider family and environment. This information may have been obtained during the completion of a Common Assessment (2006). Similarly, when contributing to an assessment or providing services, you should consider what contribution you are able to make in respect of each of these three domains. Specialist assessments, in particular, are likely to provide information relevant to a specific dimension, such as health, education or family functioning
- see the child and ascertain his or her wishes and feelings as part of considering what action to take in relation to concerns about the child's welfare

- communicate with the child in a way that is appropriate to their age, understanding and preference. This is especially important for disabled children and for children whose preferred language is not English. The nature of this communication will also depend on the substance and seriousness of the concerns and you may require advice from children's social care or the police to ensure that neither the safety of the child nor any subsequent investigation is jeopardised. Where concerns arise as a result of information given by a child, it is important to reassure the child but not to promise confidentiality
- record in writing all concerns, discussions about the child, decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions. The child's records should include an up-to-date chronology and details of the lead worker in the relevant agency - for example, a social worker, GP, health visitor or teacher.

If you have concerns about a child's welfare

Everyone should ...

- discuss your concerns with your manager, named or designated health professional or designated member of staff, depending on your organisational setting. If you still have concerns, you or your manager could also, without necessarily identifying the child in question, discuss your concerns with senior colleagues in another agency in order to develop an understanding of the child's needs and circumstances
- if, after this discussion, you still have concerns, and consider the child and their parents would benefit from further services, consider which agency, including another part of your own, you should make a referral to. If you consider that the child is or may be a child in need, you should refer the child and family to children's social care. This may include a child whom you believe is, or may be at risk of, suffering significant harm. If your concerns are about a child who is already known to children's social care, the allocated social worker should be informed of your concerns. In addition to children's social care, the police and the NSPCC have powers to intervene in these circumstances
- in general, seek to discuss your concerns with the child, as appropriate to their age and understanding, and with their parents and seek their agreement to making a referral to children's social care unless you consider such a discussion would place the child at an increased risk of significant harm. (Appendix 1 sets out six key points on information-sharing reproduced from Information sharing: Practitioners' guide (HM Government 2006) - Section 4 of this information-sharing guidance provides more in-depth guidance on consent, confidentiality and information-sharing. See www.ecm.gov.uk/deliveringservices/informationsharing)
- when you make your referral, agree with the recipient of the referral what the child and parents will be told, by whom and when
- if you make your referral by telephone, confirm it in writing within 48 hours. Children's social care should acknowledge your written referral within one working day of receiving it, so if you have not heard back within three working days, contact children's social care again.

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Appendix 1 - Information sharing: Practitioners' guide

Reproduced from Information-sharing: Practitioners' guide (HM Government, 2006, Page 5)

Six key points on information-sharing

1. You should explain to children, young people and families at the outset, openly and honestly, what and how information will or could be shared and why, and seek their agreement. The exception to this is where to do so would put that child, young person or others at increased risk of significant harm or an adult at risk of serious harm, or if it would undermine the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime including where seeking consent might lead to interference with any potential investigation.
2. You must always consider the safety and welfare of a child or young person when making decisions on whether to share information about them. Where there is concern that the child may be suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm, the child's safety and welfare must be the overriding consideration.
3. You should, where possible, respect the wishes of children, young people or families who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information if, in your judgement on the facts of the case, there is sufficient need in the public interest to override that lack of consent.
4. You should seek advice where you are in doubt; especially where your doubt relates to a concern about possible significant harm to a child or serious harm to others.
5. You should ensure that the information you share is accurate and up-to-date, necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, shared only with those people who need to see it, and shared securely.
6. You should always record the reasons for your decision - whether it is to share information or not.

Note from ELSA tutors:

1. You may discuss your concerns with children's social care without naming the child in order to ascertain whether further action is recommended.
2. If concerns are reported to the NSPCC (0808 800 5000) you do not have to give your name and address and they will not trace your call.

EMOTIONAL LITERACY SUPPORT

Name:

Dob:

NC Year group:

Background information:

Prioritising key areas to target:

	Skill	Ability				
		1 very poor	2	3	4	5 very good
Emotional awareness	ability to recognise how they feel					
	ability to say how they feel and why					
Social skills	making eye-contact					
	taking turns					
	speaking in a pleasant tone of voice					
	sharing					
	asking for help					
	paying attention when spoken to					
Friendship skills	ability to initiate friendships					
	ability to maintain friendships					
	understanding what friends do and do not do					
Self-esteem	ability to identify strengths					
	ability to accept praise					
	ability to accept constructive criticism					
	perseverance for tasks they find difficult					
	ability to cope with new experiences/change					
Anger management	ability to recognise when feeling angry					
	knowledge and use of strategies to help calm down when angry					
	ability to seek adult help when angry/frustrated					

Aims

By the end of weeks (it's usually good to review after six weeks) we hope that
will be able to:

1.

2.

3.



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Programme and session planning – guidance for ELSAs

Proactive support

ELSAs have been established to deliver planned programmes of support designed to increase the emotional literacy skills of the children and young people with whom they work. This is proactive not reactive work. While ELSAs may often be called upon to deal with the fallout from incidents in school, this should be recognised as additional to their role and not their principal function.

Programme aims

When agreeing to work with a pupil, it is important to set clear programme aims. A referral form has been provided that allows the ELSA to gather brief background information on the pupil's skill level and then, in conjunction with the referrer or the ELSA's line manager, to identify some programme aims. These may be identified by asking the question 'By the end of my involvement, what is it that you hope this pupil will be able to do that they are not able to do at present?'. You may identify up to three aims in this way, but more than that is likely to be unrealistic. Many pupils receiving ELSA support may have quite complex needs and it would be unreasonable to expect all issues to be resolved.

The programme aims should be like SMART targets on individual education plans – **S**mall, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic and **T**ime-limited. Without such targets, it will be difficult to define the direction of the programme and be clear about when it is complete. The time frame within which you expect them to be achieved would generally be between half a term and a term. If a programme lasts a lot longer than this it probably indicates an absence of clear and realistic targets. Once the programme aims have been completed it may be appropriate to provide some ongoing review arrangements so that the pupil has some continued but reduced support while generalising new skills, e.g. a brief weekly review or a longer session once every few weeks. Some pupils may need a further programme of support at a later date, with new aims.

Below are examples of some aims, from different programmes, that might be achievable within a term:

- to recognise and be able to talk about the emotions happy, sad, angry and frightened
- to identify and use a selection of calming strategies appropriate to different contexts
- to be willing to attempt tasks that contain a challenge
- to understand the difference between assertive and aggressive behaviour
- to be able to list six personal qualities or strengths on request
- to be confident to contribute to class discussions.

Session plans

Good sessions require adequate thought and planning in advance. A planning form has been provided and should be completed for each session. The first thing to identify is the objective for the session – the desired outcome. This would normally be quite small but needs to be made specific so that the ELSA knows whether or not it has been achieved. Some examples are provided below:

- for ELSA and pupil to find out three new things about each other
- to practise turn-taking
- pupil to identify the main things that trigger her angry feelings
- pupil to develop and practise scripts for asking to join in activities with peers
- to choose a self-calming strategy pupil will try when finding writing difficult
- to explore the importance of eye-contact.

Like a good lesson, the best ELSA sessions contain a variety of activities carried out with pace so that pupil interest is maintained. Following a brief written plan helps the ELSA ensure purpose and pace within sessions. A good session is likely to include an initial warm-up (e.g. review how the pupil is that day or how their week has gone), a brief recap of the previous session to check that the pupil can remember what they learned, a simple explanation of the objective for the current session, an engaging learning activity, a summary of the main points and a take-away activity. This last part may simply be a request to notice something specific in the week ahead or to try out a strategy that has been discussed.

It is helpful at the end of the session to add a few brief evaluative comments to the planning form, noting what went well or anything the ELSA wants to remember to inform future session plans. On occasion the ELSA will need to deviate from the plan because of something raised by the pupil, in which case this would be indicated in the evaluative comments and the omitted learning activities returned to at a later date.

Record-keeping

The completed session plans form a record of involvement that provides accountability for the time spent in support of a youngster. They are also a useful aide memoire when liaising with other staff or with parents. These should be retained and passed on with other pupil records if or when the pupil moves school. ELSAs should therefore be careful to ensure that they only contain factual information that would not breach confidentiality guidelines. Any notes made by an ELSA could be subject to a Freedom of Information request so should be written with awareness of that in mind. Sensitive personal information should not be written down.

ELSA session plan

Pupil name: Date:

Session objective:

.....

Resources:

Activities:

Evaluation:

Name/signature of ELSA:

ELSA session plan

Pupil name: Jane...(Year 2)..... Date: ...15 Oct.....

Session objective: ...Begin to explore Jane's feelings (following recent parental separation).....

(Programme aims: Jane will be able to talk openly about changes in her life; she will smile and join in class activities as she used to.)

Resources:

Bear Cards
Flip chart paper and range of coloured pens
Hungry Hippos game

Activities:

Lay out selection of Bear Cards representing different feelings. Ask Jane to say how the bear might be feeling and to suggest a possible reason why.

Invite Jane to select a Bear Card that is most like her at the moment.

Taking that feeling first, build a feelings graph (bar chart) on the flip chart paper. Ask Jane what other feelings she has in her life at the moment. (Jane to choose colour to represent each feeling and indicate how much of that feeling is in her life at present.) While drawing the graph together, encourage reflection on what sort of things are contributing to each of her different feelings.

End with game of Hungry Hippos (neutral activity) to prepare Jane for return to class.

Evaluation:

Jane loved the Bear Cards. (These will be a good way of checking out how she is feeling each week.)

She needed time to reveal her feelings (little bit defensive this first session).

Only identified 3 emotions for feelings graph – happy (half way up page because she is going to the fair with Granny tomorrow), tired (quarter way up; didn't get to sleep till late but couldn't say why), scared (nearly half; when I asked what scared is about said she is scared of dogs, but I think there's more to explore when she's ready.)

Continue feelings graph next time.

Name/signature of ELSA: Jill Brown.....

Child abuse - possible indicators

Although these signs do not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused, they may help adults recognise that something is wrong. The possibility of abuse should be investigated if a child shows a number of these symptoms or any of them to a marked degree:

Sexual abuse

- being overly affectionate or knowledgeable in a sexual way inappropriate to the child's age
- medical problems such as chronic itching, pain in the genitals, venereal diseases
- other extreme reactions, such as depression, self-mutilation, suicide attempts, running away, overdoses, anorexia
- personality changes such as becoming insecure or clinging
- regressing to younger behaviour patterns such as thumb-sucking or bringing out discarded cuddly toys
- sudden loss of appetite or compulsive eating
- being isolated or withdrawn
- inability to concentrate
- lack of trust or fear of someone they know well, such as not wanting to be alone with a babysitter or childminder
- starting to wet again, day or night/nightmares
- becoming worried about clothing being removed
- suddenly drawing sexually-explicit pictures
- trying to be 'ultra-good' or perfect; overreacting to criticism.

Physical abuse

- unexplained recurrent injuries or burns
- improbable excuses or refusal to explain injuries
- wearing clothes to cover injuries, even in hot weather
- refusal to undress for gym
- bald patches
- chronic running away
- fear of medical help or examination
- self-destructive tendencies
- aggression towards others
- fear of physical contact - shrinking back if touched
- admitting that they are punished but the punishment is excessive (such as a child being beaten every night to 'make him study')
- fear of suspected abuser being contacted.

Emotional abuse

- physical, mental and emotional development lags
- sudden speech disorders
- continual self-deprecation ('I'm stupid, ugly, worthless' etc)
- overreaction to mistakes
- extreme fear of any new situation
- inappropriate response to pain ('I deserve this')
- neurotic behaviour (rocking, hair-twisting, self-mutilation)
- extremes of passivity or aggression.

Neglect

- constant hunger
- poor personal hygiene
- constant tiredness
- poor state of clothing
- emaciation
- untreated medical problems
- no social relationships
- compulsive scavenging
- destructive tendencies.

Note: a child may be subjected to a combination of different kinds of abuse.

It is also possible that a child may show no outward signs and hide what is happening from everyone.

Suspected abuse

If you suspect that a child is being abused, seek advice from the police or social services. It is preferable that you identify yourself and give details. Knowing how damaging abuse is to children, it is up to the adults around them to take responsibility for stopping it.

Kidscape 2004
www.kidscape.org.uk

ELSA session plan

Pupil name:...Peter (Year 4)..... Date: 13 Feb.....

Programme aim:

By the end of 7 weeks; Peter will be able to recognise when he is feeling angry and will have learnt and practiced two approaches to support him to manage his anger.

Session objective:

Session 1: activities to get to know Peter, to talk about that everyone feels strong emotions, brainstorming words that relate to anger and putting them into order of how strong they are.

Resources:

It's ok to be me (book) – use p5 to develop a personal profile of Peter
Six question dice game
Session 1 from the anger management programme in ELSA file – adapted for Peter
Pat on the back book
Picture of thermometer

Activities:

- Complete the personal profile for Peter – use drawings if this helps for him to show his family and friends.
- Play a simple dice game – the number he lands on responds to one of six questions about him to answer.
- Tell him about ELSA work and that we will meet every week to help him feel calmer in school.

Awareness of feelings:

- What type of feelings is Peter aware of? Ask him to draw some simple faces showing some of his ideas. Highlight that some of these are strong feelings – like anger. Can he talk about any times when he has felt this way?
- Highlight that everyone feels angry sometimes – the challenge is what to do when we feel that way and there are some things that can help. First we need to know what anger is and what it means.

Anger words:

- Brainstorm with Peter some words that mean anger – how many can we think of? E.g. furious, cross, annoyed and also some that mean the opposite e.g. calm, ok.
- Support Peter to place these in order so as to make a thermometer running from e.g. calm to e.g. blowing your top!
- Highlight again – it is ok to feel angry, there are different levels of anger.

Take-away

- Use the pat on the back book to note down any good things that happen before next session.

Evaluation:

Peter enjoyed the session today. He liked the profile so I will keep this and make a special book for him to put all our ELSA work into.

He knew some words for anger, but needed some support to recognise there is a range of feelings for anger – we will revisit this next week.

He really liked the pat on the back book – we make sure other adults help him to complete it when he has a good experience.

Name of ELSA: Cheryl

ELSA session plan

Pupil name:....Joanne (Year 8)..... Date: 25 May

Programme aim:

By the end of 7 weeks, Joanne will be able to understand what anger is (using the firework model) and will have learnt and practiced two approaches to support her to feel calmer.

Session objective:

Session 2: feedback from the week, going through the firework model

Resources:

- Session 2 of the anger management programme – adapted for Joanne
- What makes me angry – sheet from the ELSA file
- Picture of the firework model
- Anger log

Activities:

- Talk through the good experiences Jo has had since we last met
- Talk about any times that she has found more difficult if she would like to

Knowing what makes Joanne angry:

- Highlight again that everyone feels angry sometimes – the challenge is what to do when we feel that way and there are some things that can help. It can help if we know what makes us angry in the first place.
- Using a piece of paper, brainstorm any ideas she has about what makes her angry – use what makes me angry if she finds this difficult. Rate which ones are the most likely to make her angry and some that have less of an effect on her – discuss the difference.

The firework model

- Look at this together to ensure understanding. The trigger relates to the things that make us feel angry.

Take-away

- Joanne to keep an anger log, noting what made her feel angry, the intensity of her anger and what helped her feel better.
- Remember also good experiences to share for next session.

Evaluation:

Joanne generally enjoyed the session today, although she was upset by something that happened yesterday – we talked about this and linked it to our work today. She showed an understanding of the model and we will continue to look at each part of it in upcoming sessions. Joanne knows that her form tutor knows about the anger log and can support her (when calm) to complete it if that would help (and that I can help as well if she wants to find me).

Name of ELSA: Cheryl



Useful websites

www.elsanetwork.org

our own ELSA website, which is very informative on all aspects of ELSA practice. It is hoped to develop an interactive forum for ELSAs

www.rd4u.org.uk

part of Cruse and offers on-line bereavement support for young people

www.winstonswish.org.uk

also offers bereavement support, inc resources for schools that can be downloaded

www.SimonSays.org.uk

bereavement

www.childbereavement.org.uk

has sections for families, schools, children and young people

www.senteacher.org

has general learning support resources but includes some that would specifically be useful to ELSAs

www.mes-english.com

has some useful resources for emotions

www.bandapilot.org.uk

has the SEAL resources which can be downloaded

www.bookhead.co.uk

ideas for story boxes

www.sdqinfo.com/

www.sdqscore.net/

Goodman's SDQ

www.incentiveplus.co.uk

a large range of useful books, games and other resources

www.do2learn.com

some general resources plus some specific to emotional awareness

www.authentic happiness.org

focuses on self-esteem

www.makebeliefscomix.com

construct your own comic strip conversations for children by choosing from a range of characters and adding own speech

www.move627.org

Move627 contains a range of educational games and classroom activities that help prepare pupils for the transition from primary to secondary school

www.eric.org.uk

ERIC - Education and Resources for Improving Childhood continence. This website has very useful information and age-related resources related to toileting issues that can be downloaded.

An Evaluation of the Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) Project: What is the impact of an ELSA Project on support assistants' and children's self-efficacy beliefs?

Evaluated ELSA project taking place in a Local Authority in north-east England. Quantitative and qualitative results found the ELSA project to have a positive impact on support assistants' and children's self-efficacy beliefs.

Support assistants which were found to have the greatest impact on children's emotional self-efficacy beliefs had:

- completed the ELSA training,
- protected time to plan their ELSA work, and
- protected time to attend refresher training events.

Grahamslaw, 2010 (unpublished thesis):

<http://www.elsanetwork.org/files/An%20Evaluation%20of%20the%20Emotional%20Literacy%20Support%20Assistant%20Northumberland.pdf>

An Evaluation of the Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) Programme

In 2005, 22 schools were sent questionnaires, to be completed by ELSAs, their line managers, pupils and teachers.

ELSA questionnaire:

- Those that responded reported that being part of the project had helped them better support vulnerable pupils.
- ELSAs commented on how empowering the training and supervision had been and how much more valued they felt in their new role within the school.

Pupil questionnaire:

- Pupils were asked to indicate whether they felt happy, OK or sad about working with the ELSA. Of primary pupils, 85% indicated they felt happy (60% of secondary pupils), with the remainder saying they felt OK.
- Of primary pupils, 83% felt they were improving in relation to the things they were working on with the ELSA (50% of secondary pupils). The remainder thought that 'sometimes' they were getting better.
- Pupil comments reflected their appreciation of having someone to talk to, someone who listened to them without criticising and who kept their confidences.

Teacher

- For 44 out of the 47 primary schools (and four of the seven secondary pupils), teachers' claimed that progress had been made in relation to the targets identified prior to ELSA involvement.
- All but one of the 54 teachers felt that the ELSA input has been beneficial (the exception indicated that it was too soon to judge).

During the academic year 2007-2008 the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) was offered to parents and teachers prior to the children attending ELSA sessions and then again towards the end of the sessions.

- Teachers' perceptions of children's behaviour improved post-intervention (perceptions of emotional problems, peer problems, conduct disorder and hyperactivity had decreased, and perception of pro-social behaviour had increased).
- Parental perception also changed between pre- and post-intervention but the differences were less dramatic than that found in the teacher submissions.

Burton, Traill and Norgate, 2009:

<http://www.elsanetwork.org/files/ELSA%20evaluation%20report%20July%202009.pdf>