

# Emotional development in early childhood

Emotional development in the early years focuses on fostering emotional growth and well-being, through:

- Getting to discover one-self in relation to emotions
- Exploring, experiencing and developing the abilities to express, feel and begin to temper emotions
- Recognizing different bodily sensations related to each emotion
- Building comfort and confidence in working through emotions

# Emotional development

Being emotionally MATURE means to have the ability to “**temper**” one's emotions. However, before a child can build the capacity for self-regulation, they need to have sustained experiences of emotional co-regulation with a caring adult.



**Younger children still need the support of adults around them to develop recognizing, naming, expressing and managing their emotions.**

## Relationship with caregivers are crucial for this development

---

- All **caring behaviour** develops in the context of the deep connection between a child and his or her caregiver
- A deep and secure attachment is needed for healthy ***emotional*** development to occur



# Defining EMOTION

- **Emotion** means “to be stirred up and to be moved” (happens to us and pushes us around)
- Children’s experience and awareness of emotions will develop as they age **if we provide the right conditions**



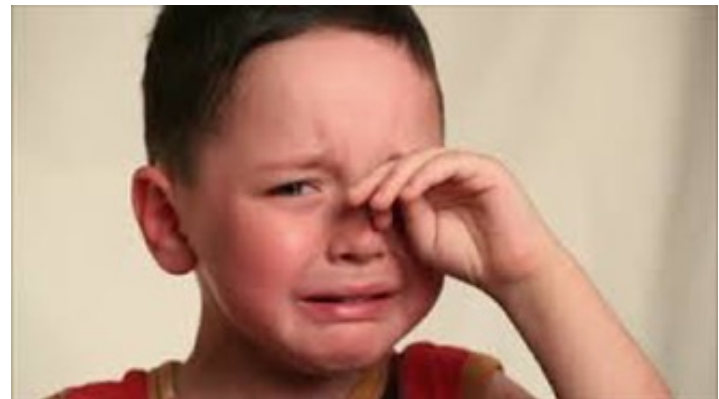


# Children's emotions are **BIG** and shift quickly

With an event such as starting school, there will likely be some big emotions that shift quickly

## **Adult's role:**

- Accept child's emotions
- Normalize child's emotions
- Make room for emotions





## What happens when emotions are SUPPRESSED?

*\* when emotions are suppressed, they come out in in challenging behaviours*

**EMOTIONS NEED TO BE RELEASED AND EXPRESSED**

# FIVE STEPS

to emotional health  
and maturity

RESPONSIBLE SHARING



Dr. Gordon Neufeld

- Young children have little **conscious awareness** of their emotions
- This awareness develops over the years (in ideal conditions)
- For this to happen, children need lots of **room to express their emotions**, which is the first step towards emotional maturity

**Self-regulation starts with CO-REGULATION  
and an invitation to express oneself emotionally**

# Co-regulation is essential

- Emotional regulation starts by co-regulation.
- Emotional health and growth in children requires the support and collaboration of adults.
- Resilience can develop only in a context of safety and trust.





# Emotional development practices

- Setting up the context to **accompany emotional development** by using:
  - ✓ children's books and games on emotions,
  - ✓ photographs (using real faces to help children read actual facial expressions)
  - ✓ emotional creative art activities, dress-up, puppets, role playing, imaginary play, etc.
- Providing opportunities for **emotional release** (Hannah Beach Inside-Out Handbook)
- Offering a variety of tools and materials to discover **body sensations** (body silhouette, sensory box, etc.)

# Emotional development practices

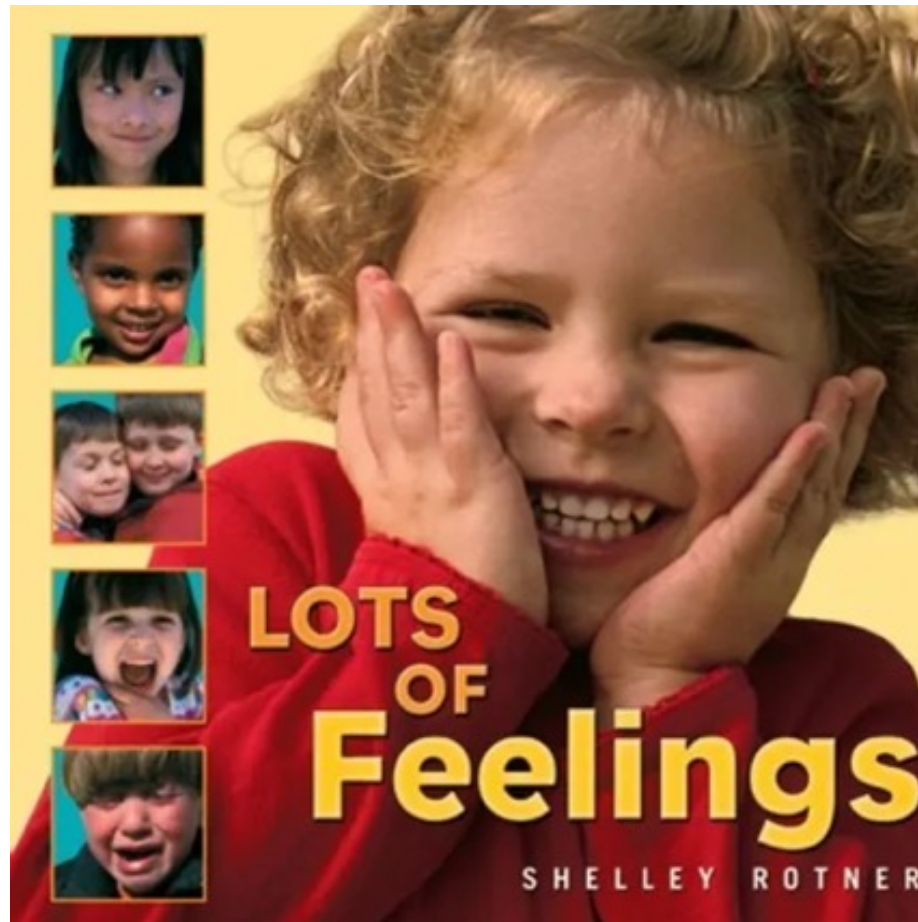
- Creating the context to help the children ‘experience’ a **comforting and calming feeling** through the senses (e.g. play soft music, dim lighting, soft comfy textures, sensory materials, calming nature scenes, comforting scents, etc.)
- Providing measures to allow for **play, movement, respite,** and time **outdoors**, which helps with emotional support
- Being careful with categorizing emotions, which may bring out guilt and/or shame around their expression – all emotions are important and play a key role
- Providing opportunities for emotional development, which goes beyond the focus of self-regulation (inviting the children to explore and express their emotions)

# Playing out emotions

Play is like a release valve –it allows the emotions to move through.



# Children's Literature & Hands-on Activities



<https://www.cebmmember.ca/children-s-literature>

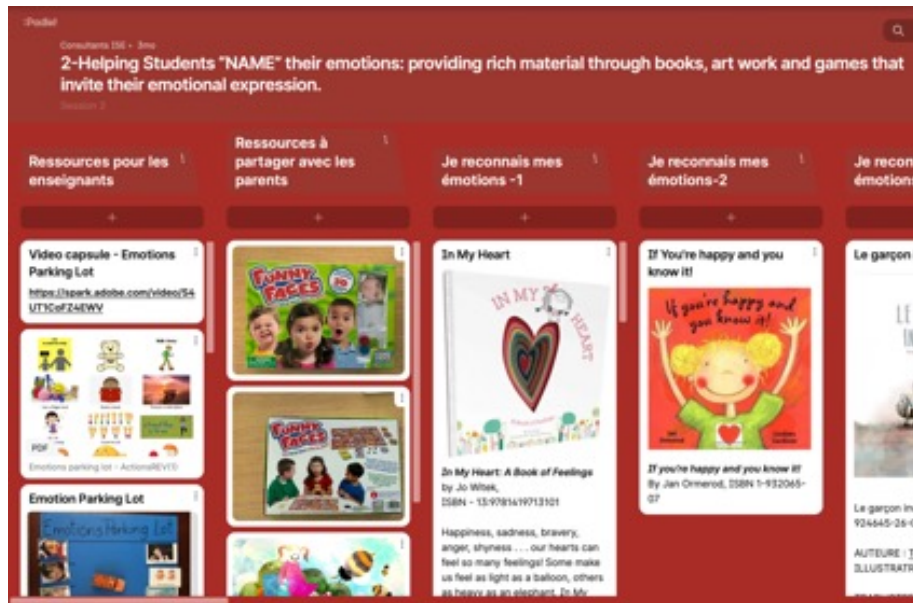
<https://www.cebmmember.ca/play-drama-dress-up>

<https://www.cebmmember.ca/emotions-intervention-materials>



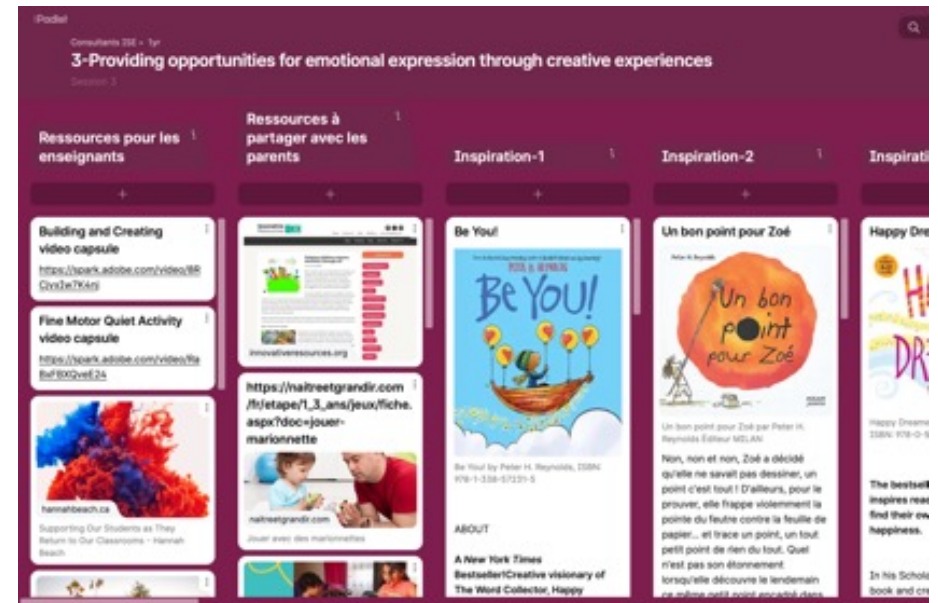
# Children's Literature & Hands-on Activities on PADLET

## Naming Emotions



<https://padlet.com/ConsultantsISE/2-helping-students-name-their-emotions-providing-rich-materi-lhxwwgeqho7qz3ow>

## Ways to express emotions



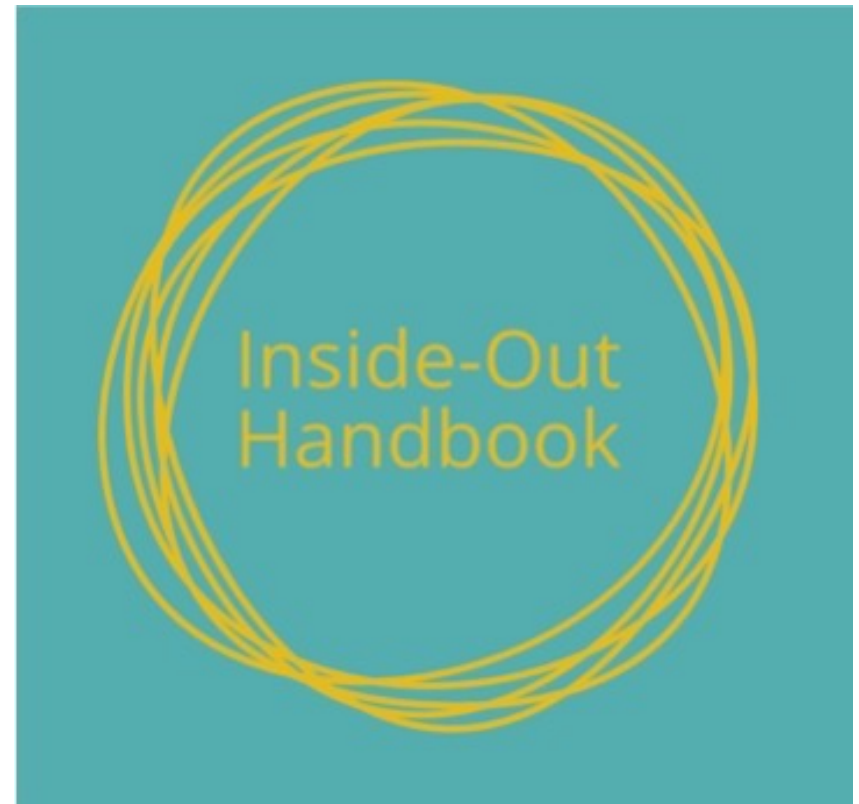
<https://padlet.com/ConsultantsISE/3-providing-opportunities-for-emotional-expression-through-c-rtbbhpekuuy3ngy3>

# Emotional Release Activities

## Examples:

- **Scribble Time!**
- **Drawing the music**
- **Be the Conductor, You Are the Music**
- **Which leaf am I?**

Check out [Hannah Beach's blog](#) for samples of Emotional Release Activities



You can find numerous ideas in the Inside-Out Handbook which is free (password is “**experience**”) when you click on this website:

<https://reclaimingourstudents.com/>

# Padlet with resources to PLAY OUT emotions through getting physical and outside

RSB Special Ed Consultants © SH

## 4-Getting Physical and Outside

Session 4 • Play Drama Dress-up • 'I can dance' series by Hannah Beach • Favoured outdoor games -collection gathered from all

### Ressources pour les enseignants

**Play-Drama-Dress-up video capsule**  
<https://spark.adobe.com/video/3l42qBk5PJJE>

**Part 1 – Classroom Brain Breaks**  
<https://spark.adobe.com/video/C802nf6P77ZPr>

**Part 2 – Movement Stations within a School**  
<https://spark.adobe.com/video/K5mXdc6ciYfev>

**Dance as an emotional playground**  
 YouTube

**Marche photographique**

### Ressources à partager avec les parents

**Why Play Matters**

**Going on a Sensory Walk... Prendre une marche sensorielle...**

VOIR	TOUCHER	ENTENDRE	GOÛTER	SENTIR

PDF  
Marche sensorielle

**Marche photographique**


### Littérature-1

**Si j'étais un chat**

**Si j'étais un chat** par Paloma Sanchez Ibarzabal, ISBN : 979-10-264-0185-8

### Littérature-2

**Miss Fox's Class Shapes Up**

**Miss Fox's Class Shapes Up** by Eileen Spinelli, ISBN: 978-0-8075-5172-1

**La classe de Madame Renard**

### Littérature-3

**Sometimes I Like to Curl Up in a Ball**

**Getting Physical!**  
 -Child can act out the Wombat's actions as you read the story.

### Littérature-4

**Quick as a Cricket**

**Comparing feelings with animals.**  
 I am as \_\_\_\_\_ as a \_\_\_\_\_

**Movement:** let the students act the way the words tell them.

**Measurement!** nearest inch, half inch, quarter inch and eighth inch!

<https://padlet.com/SpecEdConsultantsRSB/gwbsr6o0h5hfmcge>