

## Appendix 1:

# The key steps of Emotion Coaching

### Step 1: Stop, check your own emotions

- Don't react straight away. Stop.
- Take a few breaths.
- Scan yourself and reflect on how you are feeling at this point. Will this affect how I respond to him?
- Recognise that behaviour is a communication. Any challenging behavior is the result of a difficult emotion
- Recognise all emotions as being **natural and normal**

### Step 2: Empathise, validate and label

- Look for physical and verbal signs of emotional distress
- Take on the child's perspective; what are they thinking and feeling?
- Use words to reflect back the child's emotion. Label the emotion you are sensing. Check it out with him *"It seems like you are feeling very angry. Am I correct?"*
- Affirm and empathise with what the child is experiencing
- Provide a narrative/translation for the emotional experience

#### Step 2 examples...

- *'It looks like you're feeling really angry. I would feel angry if that happened to me. It's normal to feel like that'*
- *'I can see you're frowning and you're kicking the wall. It seems like you're frustrated. I would be feeling like that too if I didn't want to do something'*
- *'You said that you don't think you're any good at maths. It looks like you're feeling quite sad about this; am I right?'*

### Step 3: setting limits

*If the emotion has been accompanied with inappropriate behaviour, then the following should be followed*

- State the boundary limits of acceptable behaviour
- Make it clear certain behaviours cannot be accepted

- But retain the child's self-dignity (*crucial for well-being*)

Step 3 examples:

- *'These are the rules that we have to follow. Doing that is not ok'*
- *'We can't behave like that, even though you are feeling annoyed, because it is not safe'*
- *'We agreed to turn off the TV after that episode, but you didn't do it. You are probably feeling annoyed, but that is what we agreed.'*

### Step 4: Problem solving with the child

- When the child is **calm** and in a relaxed, rational state:
  - **Explore** the feelings that gave rise to the behavior/problem/incident
  - **Scaffold** alternative ideas and actions that could lead to more appropriate and productive outcomes
  - **Empower** the child to believe s/he can overcome difficulties and manage feelings/behaviour

Step 4 examples:

- *'When you shouted at me, what emotions were you feeling? It looked like you were angry; am I right?'*
- *'Next time you feel sad, what can we do to help you to feel a bit better?'*
- *'Next time you're feeling like this, what could you do? How do you think you will react next time or if this happens again'*
- *'The last time you felt really angry, I remember that you took yourself away and calmed down. You showed that you CAN do it!'*