Sample Teaching Activities for Feeling Identification

1. Have the child look at a magazine or other pictures and identify the feeling states of the people in the pictures via facial or postural clues.

2. The therapist models a feeling state. The child guesses the therapist's affective state and is asked to state a reason that someone might feel that way (e.g., "A boy might feel sad because _____"). This activity can be conducted through role play or by having the child listen to tape-recorded statements and identify the affective state of the speaker. This exercise emphasizes vocal clues of affective states.

3. Have the child pantomime an affective state and make a video or audiotape after engaging in role plays or take snapshots of the child in an affective pose.

4. Have the child read a statement with intonation and volume for different affective states (e.g., have the child read the statement once in an angry voice, and then in a sad voice).

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Sample Teaching Activities for Discrimination of Emotional States

1.Ask the child whether and how often he or she has special feelings like these. Then, ask the child to identify them, stating, "Okay, now what would make you feel [pick each emotion]? . . . And, how would you show this — what would you do or look like if you felt that way?"

2. Ask the child to complete some incomplete sentences, such as (a) "I feel sad when _____"; (b) "When I feel mad, I _____"; or (c) "I don't usually feel _____."

3. Have the child construct pictures that emphasize the physical sensations experienced during negative emotions. Make the pictures as concrete as possible (e.g., draw butterflies in the stomach, draw a thermometer near the head, draw bands around the back and chest).

4. Describe several physical sensations (e.g., "My stomach is churning," or "I feel hot") and have the child identify the affective state.

5. Have the child pantomime an affective state, and have the therapist guess the actor's feeling. The child can describe an experience and then the therapist can label the feeling associated with the experience (e.g., "When X happened, I felt Y").

6. Ask the child to identify the physical sensations associated with *his or her* own negative feelings (e.g., "How do you know when you're _____? or "When I'm mad, my head gets _____").

Resource: Kolko, D. & Cupit Swenson, C. Harborview Center for Sexual Assault and Traumatic Stress 03