

# HANDLING YOUR CHILD'S BIG FEELINGS

## PARENT NEWSLETTER

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## WHAT DO BIG FEELINGS LOOK LIKE?

HOW YOU CAN TELL WHEN YOUR CHILD IS HAVING BIG FEELINGS

### They could look Loud:

- tears
- tantrums
- yelling
- thrashing about
- slamming the door
- calling names
- getting upset
- saying "I hate you!"



### They could look Quiet:

- shutting down
- seems sad or depressed
- not talking
- disconnected
- tuned out



## WHAT ARE THESE BIG FEELINGS EXPRESSING?

IF YOUR CHILD WAS ABLE TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES WHEN THEY'RE IS HAVING THESE BIG FEELINGS, THEY WOULD SAY...

**"I'm feeling overwhelmed and out of control. I don't know what to do with these feelings, where to put them, how to deal with them. I feel all alone. I'm helpless. Please help me."**

## WHY CAN'T MY CHILD JUST COMMUNICATE WHAT THEY WANT?

Because their brain has gone into a stress response which renders them incapable of expressing themselves calmly. They cannot control this or help themselves. They are in a dysregulated state and parents are the most powerful people to help their children become regulated and calm again.

## WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

When the child's brain gets into a stress-response state (flight, fight, or freeze), this is completely normal and not a problem. This becomes a problem when the parent gets triggered and gets into a stress-response state themselves. When the parent gets into this state, the parent reacts instead of responding. The parent's reactive state then increases the stressed state of both the child and themselves and the child feels isolated, alone, or shamed for having these BIG feelings that are completely normal. When the child feels shame for having a normal human reaction, the child will then (unconsciously) cut off parts of themselves and disconnect from their essence in order to get approval from their parents. Another option is that a child (unconsciously) turns to is to become extremely angry at the parent for hurting them so badly. Either way, the child and parent are both in pain and disconnected from themselves and each other. This is a painful and lonely state and it doesn't have to be that way!

**REMEMBER:**  
**Having BIG feelings is normal!**

THE KEY IS TO LEARN HOW TO  
MANAGE YOUR STRESS  
RESPONSE SO YOU CAN HELP  
GUIDE YOUR CHILD THROUGH  
THEIR EMOTIONS

## HOW TO HANDLE YOUR CHILD'S BIG FEELINGS

Recognize that having BIG feelings is completely normal and perfectly OK! Also, recognize that you are not responsible for controlling or eliminating their feelings. Your responsibility lies in guiding your children through the process of their emotions - which means allowing them to feel their feelings, allowing them their tears and tantrums, helping them understand what they are feeling, and believing in your child's ability to handle the ups and downs of life. Knowing this, you can thoughtfully respond with wisdom to your child's feelings, instead of reacting out of a stress response.

## WHAT TO DO IF YOU'RE BEING TRIGGERED BY YOUR CHILD'S STRESS RESPONSE

Just like your child, you are not responsible for the triggers that make you get into a stress response. However, you are responsible for taking care of yourself and figuring out ways to regulate yourself and get emotionally healthy so you do not spread hurt, unkindness, and reactivity to others, especially to your children.

Figure out ways to get yourself regulated again such as:

- breathing
- positive self-talk
- giving yourself a time-out
- personal therapy work
- reading books to help you grow as a person