

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION EMOTIONS

Emotions are indicators of how a person is feeling mentally. The body has only a few ways to express emotions such as sweaty palms, a racing heart, shortness of breath, butterflies in the stomach, and a red face. Love and hate are expressed by the body in the same way. The difference is the external stimuli on which those feelings are based. This determines the emotions that are felt.

The difference between the adult and child is that the adult should have the ability to limit and control his/her emotions. Few expect a child to control the emotion felt with disappointment. Yelling, biting, hitting, crying, and tantrum throwing are accepted by others because the child is just that--a child. Expectations increase for an adult. Adults are expected to control their emotions. Because an adult is large in size, hitting, biting, and tantrum throwing can lead to bodily harm to oneself and others. Teens are included in this category.

Teens are so emotional because of all of the hormonal changes the body is experiencing. A wide range of feelings are experienced during one day. The behaviors used as a child to get things that are wanted are no longer acceptable. Teens who manifest childish behavior face the consequences of unacceptable behavior. Hitting, using profanity, pulling hair, breaking things, etc., are examples of childish behavior.

There are many adults who have not learned how to be adult in behavior. They have never learned how to control their emotions and deal positively with life's situations. Sometimes their developmental tasks were interrupted at a crucial time and therefore some areas were underdeveloped. Many of these adults are found in prisons and correctional facilities. Acts such as child abuse, spouse abuse, murder, and suicide are the result of adults being unable to cope in certain situations and control their emotions. All of us pay for these acts by paying the support personnel (e.g., prisons, guards, social workers, etc.) through our taxes. Communities are traumatized by acts of crime on its citizens.

Learning to control our emotions while we are young becomes a valuable tool or skill for use when we become adults. Will Foley once said, "The world is full of cactus, but we don't have to sit on it!"

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