

Cultivating your own emotional awareness



ECE resources

Reflective questions to help you build better relationships and support children's social and emotional development

Self-awareness of your own emotional experience, needs and preferences can help you to build stronger relationships with all children and better support their emerging social and emotional skills. Your own emotional awareness and beliefs about emotional expression are key factors alongside teacher-child relationships and use of emotional coaching strategies in the creation of positive emotional climates.

These reflective questions may be useful:

What is your preference for social interactions? For example, are you introverted or extroverted?

How was emotion managed in your family? How free were you to express feelings and how were you supported to express emotions?

What kinds of role models did you have in terms of emotional expression?

With which children do you have strong relationships? Which children do you find more challenging? Why do you think this is? Is there a relationship to your own preferred style for social interaction and emotional expression?

What kinds of feelings do difficult situations (such as hurting/biting, conflict, unkind words, bullying) raise for you? How can this awareness help you to manage these situations?

What are your beliefs about intervening in conflict situations, and under what circumstances?

Do you think that your positive feelings towards the children are being effectively conveyed? Are you naturally quite reserved about showing feelings such as affection? If so, might you experiment with being more expressive and see the effect it has on the children?

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Vicki is a teacher, mother, writer, and researcher. She recently completed her PhD using philosophy to explore creative approaches to understanding early childhood education. She is inspired by the wealth of educational research that is available and is passionate about making this available and useful for teachers.



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