

EMOTION COACHING FOR CAREGIVERS

This infographic has been created based on information from mentalhealthfoundations.ca

What is emotion coaching?

In simple terms, emotion coaching is a way to help your kids (and other loved ones) learn to regulate their feelings and reactions.

It can be used to help connect with your kids, redirect behavior, avoid or deescalate outbursts, and support emotional health.



Emotion coaching prep

Before you start trying to work on emotion coaching make sure you are calm! Take a couple of deep breaths —this will make it easier to complete the steps of emotion coaching.

Step 1: Validation

Validate the feelings of your loved one:

"I understand that you're feeling sad because you can't see your friends right now."

This will have a calming effect on your loved one and help them feel understood.

Pro tip: Adding three or more "because" statements has been proven to be most effective: "...because you can't see your friends right now, because you're stuck in the house, and because you don't know when this will be over."



Step 2: Meeting their needs

There are two kinds of needs that need to be met: **emotional and practical.**

They can only be helped once your child is feeling validated.

Emotional needs

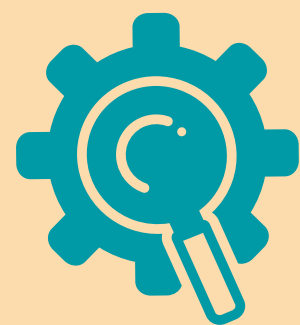
Each emotion has a different support you can offer:

Sad → comfort (offer a hug)

Mad → help them communicate what they need (space, to be heard, etc.)

Anxiety → reassurance and practical support.

Pro tip: Providing emotional support without validation is ineffective in the long run. Providing reassurance is the key to making it all work.



Practical needs

Only once you've made your child feel validated and provided emotional support can you move onto helping to find a solution to the problem.

Offer practical ideas to help boost their mood:

Sad they can't see their friends → organize video calls.

Discouraged they are missing out on fun summer activities → help them make a list of things they will do post-COVID.

Tips specific to COVID-19

It might help your child to know that you're feeling overwhelmed, sad, or scared too. These are difficult times, but we can get through it together!

Our children's emotions (and ours too!) are likely more intense and up-and-down right now. They may have regressed in their maturity and behaviour. This is normal—it's a stress and trauma response. Be forgiving and gentle with yourself and your kids as much as you can.

You're a parent, not a professional therapist, and you're doing a great job.

Need advice or someone to talk to?

Contact our Family Support Workers:

bcadoption.com/support



Adoptive Families
Association of BC