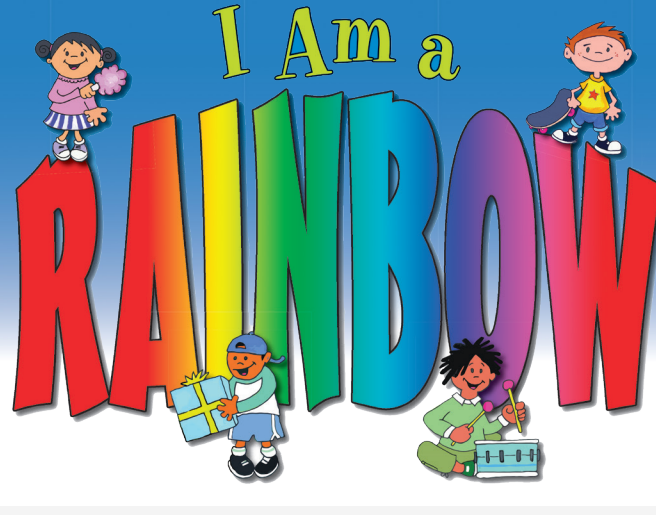


Books to Help Kids Handle All Kinds of Uncomfortable Emotions

by Melissa Taylor

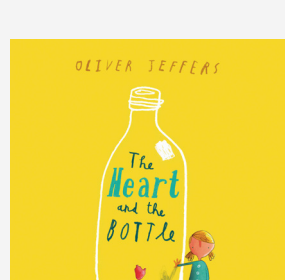


Some feelings are more difficult to handle than others. Feelings like anger, frustration, loneliness, worry, sadness, grief, and fear can be uncomfortable for kids. Yet it's important for kids to be able to accept all their feelings, even the uncomfortable ones. Feeling the uncomfortable emotions is an important part of our overall emotional health and an important part of feeling the more pleasant emotions too.

We can help kids accept their uncomfortable emotions by using the language of comfortable and uncomfortable — as opposed to good or bad. The reason is that children are programmed to avoid “bad,” and we don't want them to avoid feeling any of the feelings that are part of the human experience.

Books can be a great tool for connecting and empathizing with all kinds of different emotions. As you read these stories, talk about the feelings of the characters. Model curiosity. Listen. See what new emotional intelligence lessons these books can teach you and your children.

Feeling All Your Emotions

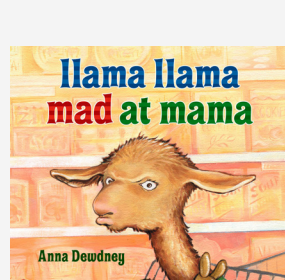


The Heart and the Bottle

by Oliver Jeffers

As this wise story shows, we lose access to all our feelings, even the good ones, when we bottle them up. The bottle metaphor is literally drawn out for children to see. It might be helpful to use this in your family as you each choose to feel, not stuff, any emotions.

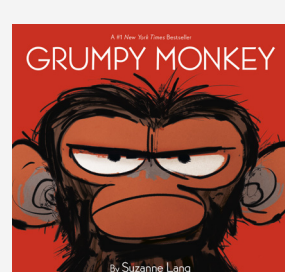
Anger



Llama Llama Mad at Mama

by Anna Dewdney

Llama Llama becomes more and more irritated about shopping with Mama until he finally erupts in a tantrum. His patient mama agrees that shopping is not fun but they are together and can make it fun. Her words defuse Llama Llama's anger. The two pick up the mess he made, finish shopping, and return home peacefully.

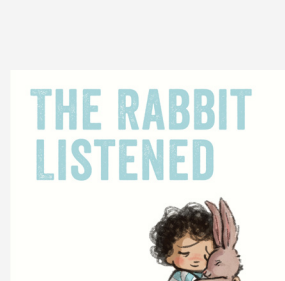


Grumpy Monkey

by Suzanne Lang, illustrated by Max Lang

It's a beautiful day in the jungle, but Jim Panzee is in a terrible mood. His friends want Jim to cheer up, but it's all too much for him and he stomps off. Later Jim realizes it's okay to be grumpy sometimes. Use this hilarious book to show the importance of accepting our emotions and allowing them to pass.

Sadness and Grief

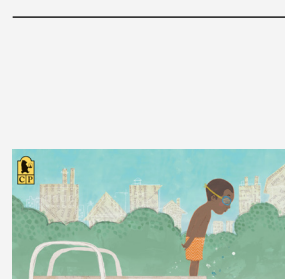


The Rabbit Listened

by Cori Doerrfeld

Birds knock down the block tower Taylor just worked hard to build. His animal friends offer all kinds of suggestions for how to cope but none resonate with Taylor. When his rabbit friend simply listens, it's the opportunity Taylor needs to feel all his feelings about the experience — grief, anger, and acceptance. A great book to help young kids process feelings around losses big and small.

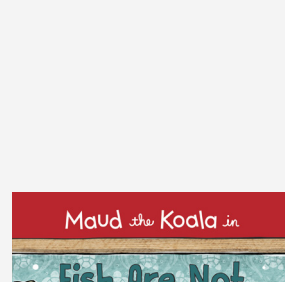
Fear



Jabari Jumps

by Gaia Cornwall

Jabari wants to jump off the diving board but he's scared. His dad helps Jabari with a strategy that makes things feel less scary — to take a deep breath and tell yourself you're ready — and it works! Jabari eventually jumps. I love how Jabari's father allows Jabari to feel his fear, gives him support, and waits for Jabari to dive when he feels ready.



Fish Are Not Afraid of Doctors

by J.E. Morris

Like most kids, Maud is anxious about getting a checkup. She stares at the aquarium in the waiting room, jealous of the fish inside that don't need doctors. When she's told she needs a shot, she closes her eyes and pretends she is a fish.

Swimming along in her head, she never even feels the needle. This installment in the Maud the Koala series is a wonderful example of the power of the mind to overcome anxiety and fear.

Melissa Taylor

Melissa Taylor, MA, is a teacher, mama, and writer from Colorado. Her goal in childhood was to read every book in the children's section of the library. She loves (in no particular order) children's books, her Kindle, Pinterest, and knitting rectangles. An education expert, she's written for many publications, including Parenting.com, *USA Today Health*, and *Scholastic Parent and Child*. Connect with Melissa on her learning blog, Imagination Soup, or on Pinterest.