



# Educator guide: Mixed feelings game

## **Recommended for grades:**

4<sup>th</sup> grade

## **Time:**

10 minutes

## **Prerequisites:**

In order for students to be successful in the game, they would benefit from participating in the following lesson:

- Feelings lesson

## **National Health Education Standards:**

This activity aligns with the following National Health Education Standards:

- Standard 1: Use functional health information to support health and well-being of self and others.
- Standard 7: Demonstrate practices and behaviors to support health and well-being of self and others.

For more information about the National Health Education Standards, visit the SHAPE America website: [shapeamerica.org](http://shapeamerica.org).

## **Learning objectives:**

After completing this lesson students will be able to:

1. Identify at least two things they can do every day to stay mentally healthy.
2. Describe appropriate ways to express and deal with emotions.
3. Explain what empathy is.
4. Identify two trusted adults that can help with mental health goals or concerns.

## **Activity description:**

In this game students will review what they have learned about feelings. They will try to collect as many jewels as possible from four puzzles. To solve each puzzle, students will put together word fragments to spell out a word or phrase to answer a question. If they answer all four questions correctly without any incorrect attempts or using a hint, they collect all four jewels for that puzzle. Jewels will disappear with each hint use and each incorrect answer.



## Vocabulary:

Use the following list of vocabulary as a reference for yourself or your students as you complete the Mixed feelings game. You may choose to use this list in any way that fits your needs.

- Angry – feeling mad or upset
- Anxiety – a mental health condition when a person worries even though there is nothing to worry about, or worries all the time and it affects their daily life
- Compassion – helping and supporting others
- Counselor – a mental health professional who is trained to help people deal with all kinds of emotions, and help come up with different ways to cope
- Emotion – a feeling such as happiness, love, fear, anger, disappointment, excitement, etc.
- Empathy – the ability to understand how someone else is feeling, often by putting yourself in the place of someone else and thinking about how you would feel if you were that person
- Feeling – an emotional state, such as happy, sad, excited, scared, etc.
- Trusted adult – an adult that you are comfortable with, and can count on, such as a parent, family member, teacher, school counselor, etc.
- Worried – feeling very concerned

# Handouts

Included on the following pages are additional resources that you and your students' families may find useful.



# Anxiety disorders in children

## What are anxiety disorders?

Children with anxiety disorders have too much fear and worry that lasts a long time. Children with anxiety often have problems at school or home because of it.

A small amount of anxiety is normal in childhood. At different ages, some fears are common like fear of being away from parents and fear of the dark. Children can also have anxiety when they are in new or stressful situations.

Children can have so much anxiety it causes problems.

Some children:

- Have aches and pains, like headaches or stomachaches
- Feel restless, tired or tense
- Have trouble focusing or sleeping
- Can also have tantrums or meltdowns because of anxiety

## What causes anxiety disorders?

There are many reasons why a child may have anxiety. It can run in families and start at birth. It can also start after exposure to stressful events and problems meeting developmental milestones.

## What are the symptoms of anxiety disorders?

Children with anxiety may:

- Be very upset when caregivers leave them
- Be very shy and quiet in new situations and with people not in their family
- Stay away from places or activities that make them feel nervous
- Worry a lot about many things, and not be able to control the worry
- Talk about or ask questions about the things they worry about
- Not talk in stressful places, but talk easily at home
- Feel very scared of certain things like animals, heights, being in an airplane or seeing blood



## **How are anxiety disorders treated?**

Anxiety will not get better without help. Treatment for mild anxiety starts with psychotherapy. In psychotherapy a health care provider helps your child by understanding how they think and feel about things.

Children will learn to:

- Replace their anxious thoughts with helpful ones
- Control their anxious feelings with coping skills

Your child will need to practice what they learn outside of sessions. This is an important part of therapy. Parents are often part of therapy sessions so they can help their child practice the skills. Psychotherapy is usually done by psychologists, mental health counselors and clinical social workers.

- Medicine can help decrease feelings of anxiety. Medicines may be prescribed to help your child's anxiety.
- For moderate to severe anxiety, treatment that uses psychotherapy and medicine together may be most helpful.

## **How can I help my child's anxiety?**

- Be with your child and support them during stressful times. If your child gets anxious remain calm. Have them take deep and slow breaths. They can pretend they are blowing up a balloon. Do not let your child pass up things that raise their anxiety.
- Ask your child to talk about their worries. You can tell them what you saw that made you think they were anxious. For instance, if their body shakes when they are anxious, this is called a non-verbal cue. Do not tell your child not to worry.
- Have a daily routine or use a schedule so your child knows what to expect.
- Praise your child for facing fears and being brave in stressful situations.
- Talk with your child's school to let teachers know how they can help your child practice using their coping skills. If anxiety causes problems for your child at school a special plan called a 504 Plan or IEP may be needed.



# Recognizing depression in children

## What is depression?

Depression is a mood disorder that affects the way you think and feel. The most common symptom is a feeling of deep sadness. People who are depressed may also:

- Feel hopeless
- Feel that life isn't worth living
- Have thoughts of suicide or death

## Depression in children

Children as young as age 6 may feel depressed. But they can't always tell you how they feel. Instead, your child may:

- Eat more or less than normal
- Sleep more or less than usual
- Seem unable to have fun
- Think or speak about suicide or death
- Seem fearful or anxious
- Act in an aggressive way
- Use alcohol or other drugs
- Complain of stomachaches, headaches or other pains that can't be explained
- Have problems at school or home

## What can you do?

Children with depression can be helped with treatment. Here are some ways you can help:

- Talk with your child's healthcare provider about medicine and psychotherapy. Both can help.
- Look for mental health resources at your child's school, local mental health center, social service agency or hospital.
- Let your child know that they will not feel this way forever.
- Offer your love and support.
- If your child talks about death or suicide, seek help right away.



# Resources for families and educators

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), [cdc.gov/childrensmentalhealth/](https://cdc.gov/childrensmentalhealth/)
- Children's Wisconsin, [childrenswi.org](https://childrenswi.org)
- KidsHealth, [kidshealth.org](https://kidshealth.org)
- Mental Health America, [mhanational.org](https://mhanational.org)
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), [nami.org](https://nami.org)
- National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), [nimh.nih.gov](https://nimh.nih.gov)
- PBS Kids for Parents: Emotions and Self-Awareness, [pbs.org/parents/learn-grow/all-ages/emotions-self-awareness](https://pbs.org/parents/learn-grow/all-ages/emotions-self-awareness)
- Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (Student Services/Prevention and Wellness), [dpi.wi.gov/sspw](https://dpi.wi.gov/sspw)



# Transcript

## Introduction

Welcome to Mixed feelings! Earn jewels by sorting out the answers to questions about feelings.

Menu

Choose a puzzle.

## Instructions

To play this game, drag the words and word parts to the blank spaces to spell out the answers to the questions. If you answer incorrectly one of the jewels will disappear. If you get stuck, you can use a hint, which will tell you which circles answer the question. Each time you use a hint one of the jewels will disappear. Each puzzle contains four questions. After answering all four questions, you'll collect the jewels that are left. Try to collect all four! Click the instructions button to replay these instructions at any time.

## Puzzle 1 questions

1. If someone has a big smile on their face, and is talking excitedly, how do you think they are feeling?
2. When you are angry what should you try to do?
3. What is it called when you try to understand how someone is feeling?
4. What is one way to calm down when you are angry?

## Puzzle 2 questions

1. What is another name for feelings?
2. When you are angry, what is one thing you can do to take a break from the situation?
3. If you are worried about giving a book report in class, what could you do to make yourself worry less?
4. When you need help dealing with your emotions, who should you talk to?





### Puzzle 3 questions

1. If someone is scowling and has their arms crossed, how do you think they are feeling?
2. What is someone called who is trained to help kids deal with all kinds of emotions, including anxiety and worry?
3. What is an example of a trusted adult?
4. What is one thing that can tell us how a person is feeling?

### Puzzle 4 questions

1. What is it called when you are worried all the time and it affects your daily life?
2. What should we always try to show others?
3. What is a feeling that everyone experiences sometimes? You might feel it before giving a presentation at school.
4. What is it called when you help and support others?

Congratulations (Depending on how many jewels are left students will hear one of the following messages.)

Nice job. Go back to the menu to try another puzzle, or try to earn more jewels from this puzzle.

Great job! Go back to the menu to try another puzzle.

Outstanding! You earned all four jewels! Go back to the menu to try another puzzle.

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