

Kimochis™ for the Principal



See if your principal would be open to using a Kimochis™ Bowl of Feelings when students are sent to the office. The feelings are a nonverbal, safe way for a student to show an adult which emotion may have triggered the poor choice that landed him in the office. The feelings can help jump-start problem-solving and keep a positive connection with the student. They can also reveal if there is a pattern that needs to be addressed. For example, if John always comes in to talk about what happened when he got mad, he might need some one-on-one emotion coaching to learn effective ways of dealing with his anger (see page 261).

The principal (or other educators) can use the communication prompts below with students who have made a poor choice.

To understand what he was feeling:

- “What were you feeling when (name the situation)?”
- Students can simply show you a Kimochis™ feeling pillow rather than using words. Students who are feeling scared, ashamed, or sad may find it easier to communicate if they can use this nonverbal tool to tell you what they were feeling (this may be especially true of boys).

What Keys to Communication did the student forget to use that would have helped him manage the upset feeling?

- “What did you do with your communication that was not okay when you were feeling (name feelings he showed you)?”
- Many students will not feel comfortable enough to talk yet. They may still be feeling

emotional. It can be helpful and appreciated if the educator names or describes what the student did and ask the student to simply give you a head nod if he remembers what he did. For example, “Nod if you remember pushing.”

Create a plan “away from the emotion” for what the student can say and do the next time this feeling or situation arises.

- “Next time you feel (frustrated, sad, mad) when friends (name the situation that created the feelings), what can you say and do to manage this feeling with more care?”
- If the student doesn’t have any ideas, show him what some kids say and do when they find themselves feeling (frustrated, sad, mad) in similar situations.

Make things right by apologizing or explaining why he didn’t do the right thing.

- Put yourself in the situation he found himself in so you can model how to use the Keys to communication to manage the feelings. Call “FREEZE” after you model and have the student name three things you did that were positive ways to express this upset feeling. Reverse roles so your student can practice so he is more prepared when this situation occurs again.

Creating Coaching Clinics for Feelings

Create coaching clinics where students can coach others on how to manage feelings. Select students (or ask for volunteers) who are fluent and successful with managing a particular feeling, such as mad. At lunchtime, these students can share and demonstrate their tips and tricks with students who are struggling with managing this emotion. For example, kids who yell and hit can learn how to manage mad feelings differently.

- Have students create a list of situations that happen that can create the upset feeling.
- A student who has this emotion mastered can coach students who are struggling. This will give them an opportunity to mentor and demonstrate what to say and do to work through this emotion.
- Reverse roles so students who need practice expressing this feeling can rehearse and get specific, positive feedback on what keys they used to manage the upset feeling. (Example: talking eyes, face and voice.)
- Wrap up the coaching clinic by having each student make an agreement on one thing they will practice in real life. For example, "I will monitor my tone of voice when I feel mad."
- Periodically check in with students to see how their communication commitment or agreement is going. Are they monitoring their tone of voice? Why or why not? What additional supports might they need?

