

LET'S TALK FEELINGS!



Parents & caregivers need to get more comfortable discussing emotions with their kids. Here's why:

- Suicide is the leading cause of death for 13 and 14-year-olds. Males take their lives at 3-4 times the rate of females.
- "46% of Americans will meet the criteria for a diagnosable mental health condition sometime in their life, and *half* of those people will develop conditions *by the age of 14.*"
- Teens are getting less in-person time with friends, less exercise and sleep than ever before, all of which are needed for healthy development.

There are a lot of social issues that negatively contribute to kids' mental health that are outside of our control. **But what about the things that are inside of our control?** One of the most important things you can do for your child is to provide a space where they feel comfortable opening up to you without fear of ridicule, judgement or even being told what to do.

Though these open-hearted talks can be scary and unpredictable, here's some assurance!

- These conversations **don't have to go perfectly** to still be helpful.
- It's alright if you are still learning how to get comfortable discussing emotions. In fact, if your children see you stumble through these conversations yet stay consistent in pursuing them, you are modeling that if even something is hard, **staying persistent is worth it.**
- Kids will likely only share what they think you can handle hearing, so get ready to **increase your tolerance for awkwardness & tears!**
- Kids will sometimes do you what you *say*, but they will almost always do what you *do*. If you want to raise an emotionally intelligent young person who is in touch with their emotions and can share what they need, you are invited to **demonstrate and model** what this looks like for them!

Tips for the Game:

- As kiddos share, with sincerity, affirm their honesty & show appreciation for their vulnerability. This may sound like, "Thanks for sharing. I didn't know you felt that way. Would *you* like to talk about that more?" Lastly, try to refrain from any judgement or (unless absolutely necessary) telling them what to do.

SOURCES: Quick facts and statistics about mental health. (n.d.). Mental Health America. <https://mhanational.org/mentalhealthfacts> About AFSP. (2023, August 30). American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. <https://afsp.org/about-afsp/>



THE FEELINGS GAME!



How to Play: With a friend, family member or someone you trust, you are invited to play this fun game! All you have to do is roll the dice 1, 2, 3 or 4 times, you choose! If you roll the dice more than once, add your numbers together. Once you have added your numbers together, look at the page to match your number with the feeling word that has that same number! **Example:** If you roll a 1, 3, 6 & 8, you would add them together to get 18 & would share a time you felt "Peaceful."

1 = Excited



2: Optimistic



3: Daring



4: Nervous



5: Scared



6: Overwhelmed



7: Embarrassed



8 = Proud



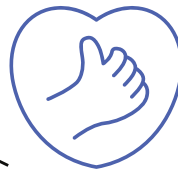
9 = Respected



10 = Confident



11 = Appreciated



12 = Angry



13 = Jealous



14 = Remorseful



15 = Lonely



16 = Not smart



17 = Relaxed



18 = Peaceful



19 = tired



20 = Powerful



21 = Trusting



22 = Aware



23 = Apathetic



24 = Creative

