Understanding Emotions: Guide for Children

www.FeelingsHelpBox.com

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Children's Emotions Posters & Guide: Help Kids Understand and Express Their Feelings

This printable emotions resource helps children recognise, name, and manage a wide range of feelings using simple language and engaging visuals. Each page focuses on one emotion and includes four supportive sections: What I might think, What my body might feel, What I might do, and What might help me. These posters are ideal for emotional literacy activities at home, in school, or in therapeutic and social work settings.

What is included

- A wide range of everyday emotions such as angry, sad, worried, happy, lonely, silly, and more
- Child-friendly descriptions to support understanding and emotional expression
- Space for matching illustrations or facial expressions
- Clear, plain-English wording for use with children of all abilities

How to use this resource

These emotions guide can be used in many ways:

- During circle time, 1:1 support, or feelings check-ins
- As part of a feelings corner, calm-down toolkit, or Zones of Regulation display
- In therapy, counselling, or social work to explore thoughts, feelings, and behaviours
- At home to help children talk about their day and how they feel
- To support emotional regulation, self-awareness, and positive behaviour strategies

Who it is for

This resource is perfect for:

- Teachers and teaching assistants
- Parents and carers
- Social workers and family support workers
- Counsellors and therapists
- SEN staff and pastoral teams
- Foster carers and adoptive families

EXCITED

WHAT I MIGHT THINK:

"I can't wait!"
"This is going to be amazing!"
"Something fun is about to happen!"

WHAT MY BODY MIGHT FEEL:

Heart beating fast
Butterflies in my tummy
Tense or jumpy muscles
Hot or sweaty
Hard to sit still

WHAT I MIGHT DO:

Jump up and down
Clap or wave my arms
Talk a lot or laugh
Run around
Forget to listen

WHAT MIGHT HELP ME:

Take a few deep breaths to slow down
Use my excitement in a kind and calm way
Tell someone how I feel
Notice what is happening around me and let others join in

HAPPY

WHAT I MIGHT THINK:

"This is really nice."
"I like this."
"Everything is going well."

WHAT MY BODY MIGHT FEEL:

Heart feels light
Smiling or laughing
Relaxed muscles
Warm feeling inside
Full of energy

WHAT I MIGHT DO:

Smile or laugh
Say kind things
Join in with others
Do something fun
Show how I feel with hugs, high-fives or dancing

WHAT MIGHT HELP ME:

Enjoy the moment
Share my happiness with someone
Remember what made me feel happy
Keep doing what feels good and kind

ANGRY

WHAT I MIGHT THINK:

"This is not fair."
"Stop it!"
"I don't like what is happening."

WHAT MY BODY MIGHT FEEL:

Heart beating fast
Tight fists or jaw
Hot face
Tense muscles
Breathing faster

WHAT I MIGHT DO:

Shout or say unkind words
Stamp my feet or slam things
Cross my arms or glare
Hit, kick, or throw something
Walk off or say "leave me alone"

WHAT MIGHT HELP ME:

Take deep breaths to calm down
Move to a quiet space
Talk to someone I trust
Squeeze a stress ball or count to ten
Remember it is okay to feel angry, but not to hurt others

SHY

WHAT I MIGHT THINK:

"I don't know what to say."
"I hope nobody is looking at me."
"What if I get it wrong?"

WHAT MY BODY MIGHT FEEL:

Face feels hot
Tummy feels fluttery
Heart beating fast
Hard to make eye contact
Shoulders feel tight

WHAT I MIGHT DO:

Look down or away
Go quiet or whisper
Hide behind someone or something
Stand very still
Avoid joining in

WHAT MIGHT HELP ME:

Take a deep breath and wait a moment
Look for someone I trust
Join in slowly or in my own way
Remind myself that it is okay to feel shy

LOVING

WHAT I MIGHT THINK:

"I really care about them."
"I want to be close to them."
"I feel safe and happy with them."

WHAT MY BODY MIGHT FEEL:

Warm feeling in my chest
Relaxed and calm
Smiling naturally
Heart feels full
Comfortable and safe

WHAT I MIGHT DO:

Give a hug or hold hands
Say kind or caring words
Spend time with someone I care about
Show love by helping or giving
Smile when I think about them

WHAT MIGHT HELP ME:

Say how I feel
Show love in my own way
Spend time with people or pets I care about
Remember kind moments that made me feel close

AMUSED

WHAT I MIGHT THINK:

"That was funny."
"This is making me laugh."
"I was not expecting that!"

WHAT MY BODY MIGHT FEEL:

Smiling or giggling
Warm feeling in my chest or face
Relaxed muscles
Tummy feels fizzy or fluttery
Eyes wide or sparkly

WHAT I MIGHT DO:

Laugh or giggle
Tell someone else what I saw or heard
Smile a lot
Clap my hands or cover my mouth
Try to do it again

WHAT MIGHT HELP ME:

Enjoy the funny moment
Share the laugh with someone
Notice how good it feels to smile
Be kind if someone else does not find it funny

CONFUSED

WHAT I MIGHT THINK:

"I don't get it."
"This doesn't make sense."
"What should I do now?"

WHAT MY BODY MIGHT FEEL:

Face feels hot
Tummy feels fluttery
Heart beating fast
Hard to make eye contact
Shoulders feel tight

WHAT I MIGHT DO:

Look down or away
Go quiet or whisper
Hide behind someone or something
Stand very still
Avoid joining in

WHAT MIGHT HELP ME:

Take a deep breath and wait a moment
Look for someone I trust
Join in slowly or in my own way
Remind myself that it is okay to feel shy

SAD

WHAT I MIGHT THINK:

"I miss someone or something."
"Things are not going well."
"I feel left out."

WHAT MY BODY MIGHT FEEL:

Heavy or tired body
Tears in my eyes
Slow heartbeat
Face feels droopy or tight
Tummy feels empty or sore

WHAT I MIGHT DO:

Cry or go quiet
Stay alone or hide
Move slowly or not want to do anything
Find it hard to smile
Talk less or not want to talk at all

WHAT MIGHT HELP ME:

Talk to someone I trust
Have a cuddle or sit with someone
Do something that helps me feel calm
Remember that feelings can change

DISGUSTED

WHAT I MIGHT THINK:

"That is gross."
"I don't like that."
"That makes me feel sick."

WHAT MY BODY MIGHT FEEL:

Scrunched-up face
Sick feeling in my tummy
Pulling away from something
Heart beating faster
Wrinkled nose or tight mouth

WHAT I MIGHT DO:

Make a face or say "Yuck"
Step back or move away
Cover my nose or mouth
Shake my head or turn away
Say I do not want it

WHAT MIGHT HELP ME:

Move away from what is bothering me
Tell someone how I feel
Take a few calm breaths
Do something else to feel better

EMBARRASSED

WHAT I MIGHT THINK:

"I made a mistake."
"Everyone is looking at me."
"I feel silly now."

WHAT MY BODY MIGHT FEEL:

Face feels hot or red
Tummy feels fluttery
Heart beating faster
Eyes looking down
Muscles feel tight or awkward

WHAT I MIGHT DO:

Go quiet
Hide my face or look away
Giggle nervously or blush
Move away or try to leave
Say "never mind" or "forget it"

WHAT MIGHT HELP ME:

Take a deep breath and stay calm
Talk to someone I trust
Remind myself that mistakes are okay
Think about something that helps me feel better

DEFEATED

WHAT I MIGHT THINK:

"I can't do this."
"I keep getting it wrong."
"There is no point in trying."

WHAT MY BODY MIGHT FEEL:

Tired or heavy body
Slumped shoulders
No energy or motivation
Face feels blank or sad
Slow movements

WHAT I MIGHT DO:

Give up or stop trying
Say "I do not care"
Stay quiet or pull away
Cry or look down
Not want to join in

WHAT MIGHT HELP ME:

Talk to someone who understands
Take a break and try again later
Think about something I have done well before
Hear encouraging words or feel supported

BASHFUL

WHAT I MIGHT THINK:

"I feel a bit shy."
"I don't know what to say."
"I hope people are not looking at me too much."

WHAT MY BODY MIGHT FEEL:

Face feels warm or red
Butterflies in my tummy
Heart beating faster
Eyes looking down
Hands behind my back or fidgeting

WHAT I MIGHT DO:

Smile and look away
Go quiet or giggle softly
Hide behind someone or something
Cover my face or mouth
Move slowly or stay still

WHAT MIGHT HELP ME:

Take a deep breath
Look for someone I feel safe with
Remind myself it is okay to feel this way
Join in when I feel ready

SILLY

WHAT I MIGHT THINK:

"This is so funny!"
"I want to make people laugh."
"I feel full of energy!"

WHAT MY BODY MIGHT FEEL:

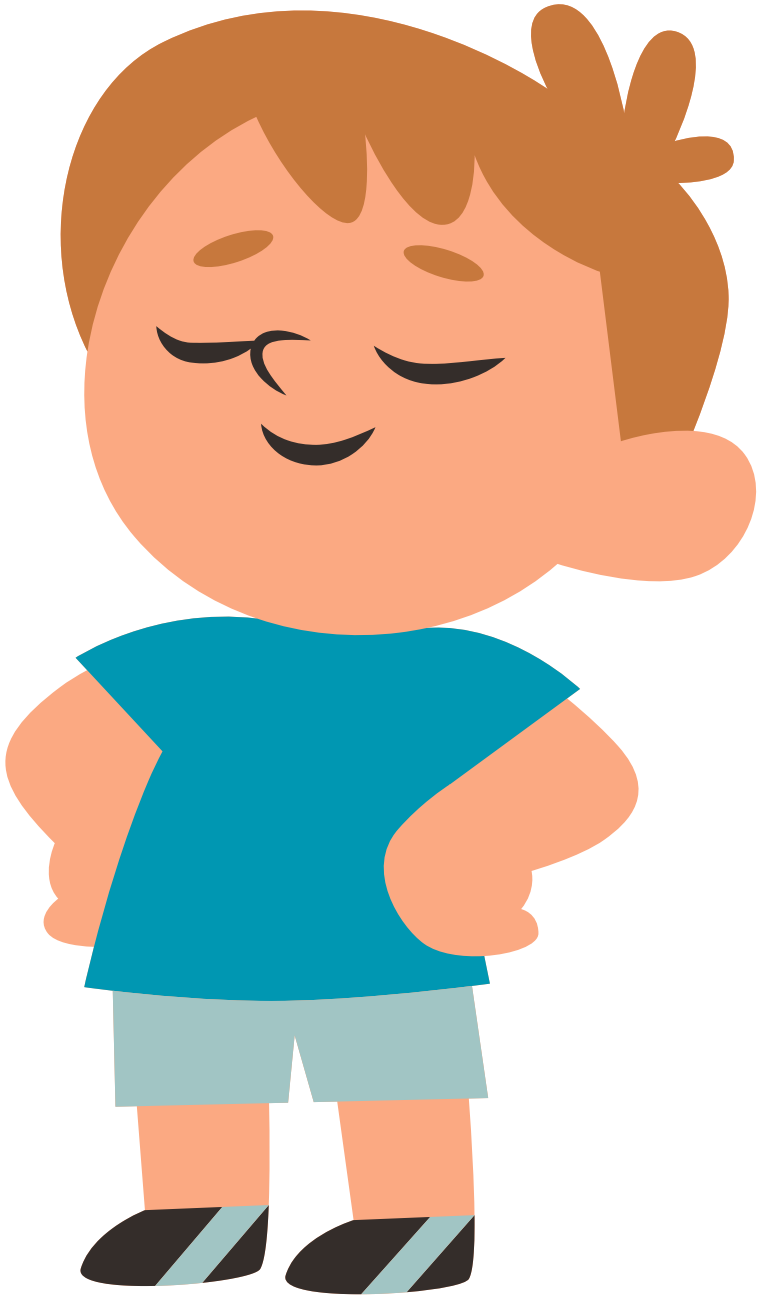
Wiggly or jumpy
Face smiling or giggling
Heart beating a bit faster
Tummy feels fizzy or fluttery
Hard to sit still

WHAT I MIGHT DO:

Make silly noises or faces
Run, dance, or roll around
Tell jokes or act goofy
Laugh a lot
Forget to listen or follow rules

WHAT MIGHT HELP ME:

Use my silly energy in the right time and place
Take a few deep breaths to calm down if I need to
Share my fun with others in a kind way
Notice when it is time to be calm again



PROUD

WHAT I MIGHT THINK:

"I did it!"
"I worked hard and it paid off."
"I feel really good about myself."

WHAT MY BODY MIGHT FEEL:

Standing tall
Warm feeling in my chest
Smiling face
Heart feels full and light
Energy in my body

WHAT I MIGHT DO:

Smile or tell someone what I did
Hold my head up
Show or talk about my work
Feel excited or confident
Do a happy dance or cheer

WHAT MIGHT HELP ME:

Celebrate my success
Share my good feeling with someone
Remember what helped me succeed
Think about what I can try next

ANNOYED

WHAT I MIGHT THINK:

"This is really bothering me."
"Why will it not stop?"
"I don't like this at all."

WHAT MY BODY MIGHT FEEL:

Tense shoulders or jaw
Heart beating faster
Hot face
Fidgety or restless
Eyebrows pulled down

WHAT I MIGHT DO:

Cross my arms or frown
Say something sharp or unkind
Stomp my feet or walk away
Roll my eyes or sigh
Complain or groan

WHAT MIGHT HELP ME:

Take a few deep breaths
Tell someone what is bothering me
Take a short break
Do something that helps me feel calm

CAREFREE

WHAT I MIGHT THINK:

"I don't have to worry about anything right now."
"I feel free to play and have fun."
"Everything feels just right."

WHAT MY BODY MIGHT FEEL:

Light and relaxed
Smiling easily
Breathing slowly and gently
Tummy feels calm
Body feels floaty or bouncy

WHAT I MIGHT DO:

Play happily
Laugh and run around
Try new things without worrying
Daydream or sing
Enjoy the moment

WHAT MIGHT HELP ME:

Spend time doing what I love
Be outside or in a calm place
Play with friends or alone
Remember that it is okay to enjoy peaceful moments

INTIMIDATED

WHAT I MIGHT THINK:

"They are bigger or stronger than me."
"I feel small or not good enough."
"I hope they don't pick on me."

WHAT MY BODY MIGHT FEEL:

Tense or frozen
Heart beating fast
Tummy feels tight or nervous
Looking down or away
Face feels hot or pale

WHAT I MIGHT DO:

Stay quiet or not speak up
Avoid looking at someone
Back away or move to the side
Try to blend in or hide
Say yes even if I want to say no

WHAT MIGHT HELP ME:

Talk to a safe adult
Remind myself that I have a right to feel safe
Stand or sit tall and take deep breaths
Be around people who help me feel confident

CALM

WHAT I MIGHT THINK:

"I feel peaceful."
"Everything is okay."
"I like how quiet and still it is."

WHAT MY BODY MIGHT FEEL:

Breathing slowly and gently
Muscles soft and relaxed
Heart beating steadily
Face feels soft and rested
Tummy feels settled

WHAT I MIGHT DO:

Sit quietly or lie down
Speak gently
Smile softly
Listen well
Enjoy the moment

WHAT MIGHT HELP ME:

Take deep breaths
Sit somewhere quiet or peaceful
Do something slow, like reading or drawing
Be with someone who helps me feel safe

TERRIFIED

WHAT I MIGHT THINK:

"Something really bad is going to happen."
"I need to get away right now."
"I do not feel safe."

WHAT MY BODY MIGHT FEEL:

Heart pounding very fast
Tummy feels sick or empty
Shaky legs or frozen still
Sweaty hands or cold skin
Breathing very fast or hard to breathe

WHAT I MIGHT DO:

Hide or run away
Cry or scream
Hold tightly to someone
Freeze and not move at all
Say "help" or "stop"

WHAT MIGHT HELP ME:

Be with someone I trust
Take slow, deep breaths
Remind myself that I am safe now
Use a calming object or soft toy
Talk about what happened when I am ready

WORRIED

WHAT I MIGHT THINK:

"What if something goes wrong?"
"I don't want to do this."
"I am scared something bad might happen."

WHAT MY BODY MIGHT FEEL:

Heart beating fast
Tummy feels funny or sore
Sweaty hands
Shaky or restless
Hard to sit still or concentrate

WHAT I MIGHT DO:

Ask lots of questions
Stay close to a grown-up
Avoid doing something
Hide or go quiet
Fidget or chew nails

WHAT MIGHT HELP ME:

Talk to someone I trust
Take deep, slow breaths
Think of something that helps me feel calm
Remember that worries are thoughts, not facts

LONELY

WHAT I MIGHT THINK:

"No one wants to play with me."
"I feel left out."
"I wish someone was here with me."

WHAT MY BODY MIGHT FEEL:

Heavy heart
Tummy feels empty or sad
Face feels still or frowny
Low energy
Tight chest or throat

WHAT I MIGHT DO:

Sit or play alone
Go quiet
Look for someone to talk to
Try to get attention
Feel like crying

WHAT MIGHT HELP ME:

Talk to someone I trust
Ask someone if I can join in
Spend time with a pet or favourite toy
Think about people who care about me

UPSET

WHAT I MIGHT THINK:

"That really hurt my feelings."
"This isn't how I wanted things to go."
"I feel like crying."

WHAT MY BODY MIGHT FEEL:

Tight chest or throat
Tummy feels sore or heavy
Teary eyes
Heart beating faster
Face feels hot

WHAT I MIGHT DO:

Cry or go quiet
Say "leave me alone"
Cross my arms or turn away
Hide or walk off
Find it hard to talk

WHAT MIGHT HELP ME:

Talk to someone who listens kindly
Have a cuddle or quiet time
Take deep breaths
Do something that helps me feel better, like drawing or resting

SCARED

WHAT I MIGHT THINK:

"I don't feel safe."
"Something bad might happen."
"I want to get away."

WHAT MY BODY MIGHT FEEL:

Heart beating fast
Shaky legs or body
Tummy feels sick or tight
Breathing fast or holding my breath
Cold or sweaty hands

WHAT I MIGHT DO:

Hide or run away
Cry or freeze
Hold on to someone
Say "stop" or "go away"
Cover my ears or eyes

WHAT MIGHT HELP ME:

Be with someone I trust
Take slow, deep breaths
Hold a soft toy or calming object
Remind myself I am safe now
Talk about what scared me when I am ready

EXHAUSTED

WHAT I MIGHT THINK:

"I can't keep going."
"I just want to sleep."
"Everything feels too hard right now."

WHAT MY BODY MIGHT FEEL:

Heavy all over
Hard to keep my eyes open
No energy at all
Slow movements
Head feels foggy or sore

WHAT I MIGHT DO:

Lie down or slump
Move slowly or stop altogether
Get grumpy or tearful
Struggle to listen or join in
Say "I do not want to" or "I cannot"

WHAT MIGHT HELP ME:

Rest or take a short nap
Have a drink of water and a snack
Tell someone I feel exhausted
Do something calm and quiet
Get enough sleep tonight

OVERWHELMED

WHAT I MIGHT THINK:

"This is too much."
"I can't cope with all of this."
"I want everything to stop."

WHAT MY BODY MIGHT FEEL:

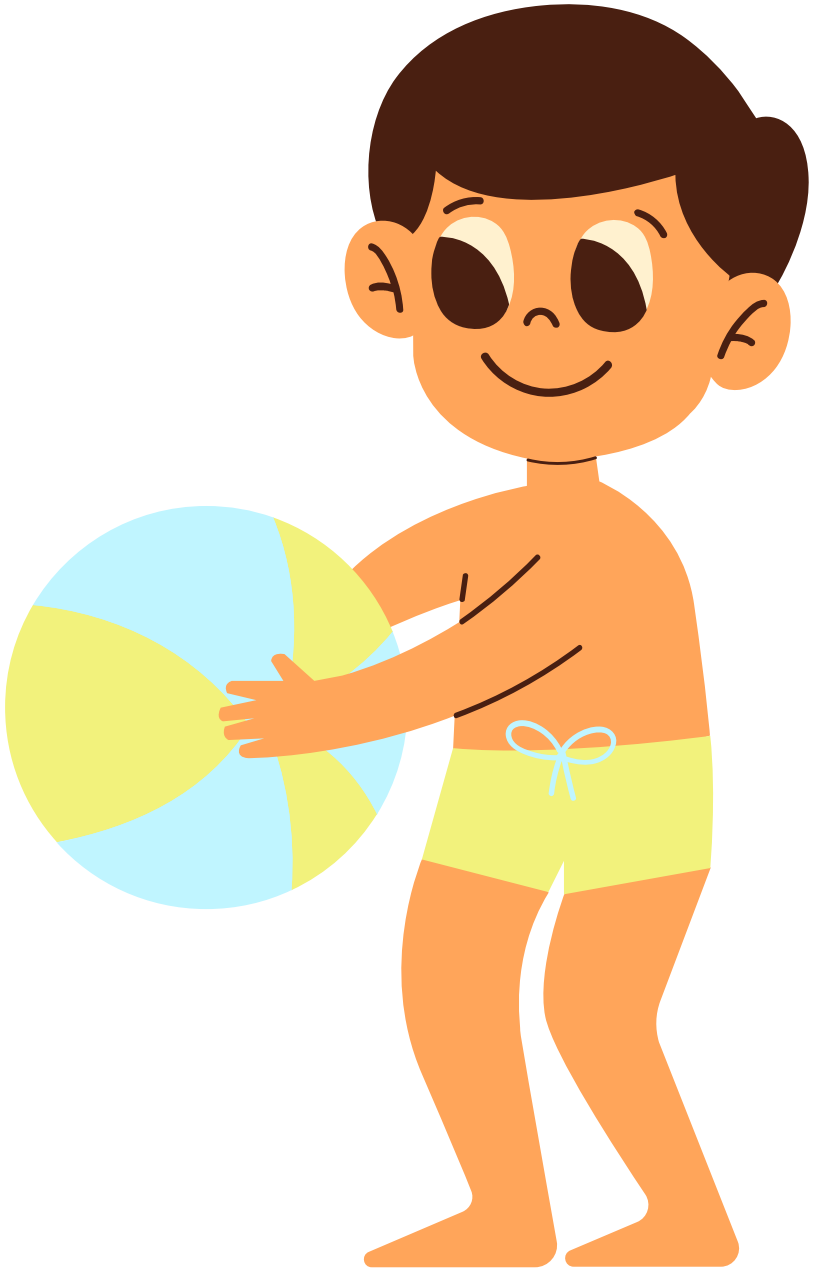
Heart beating fast
Heavy or tired body
Tummy feels tight or sick
Head feels full or dizzy
Breathing fast or holding my breath

WHAT I MIGHT DO:

Cry or shut down
Say "I cannot do this"
Get angry or frustrated quickly
Hide or walk away
Find it hard to listen or think

WHAT MIGHT HELP ME:

Take one small step at a time
Ask for help or a break
Do something calming, like breathing or squeezing a soft toy
Talk to someone who understands



GRATEFUL

WHAT I MIGHT THINK:

"I am glad I have this."
"That was really kind of them."
"I feel lucky right now."

WHAT MY BODY MIGHT FEEL:

Warm feeling in my chest
Relaxed and calm
Smiling gently
Heart feels full
Comfortable and happy inside

WHAT I MIGHT DO:

Say "thank you"
Smile at someone
Give a hug or kind words
Think about something good in my life
Do something kind in return

WHAT MIGHT HELP ME:

Notice the little things that make me happy
Say thank you out loud or in my head
Write or draw what I am thankful for
Tell someone what they did meant a lot to me

BORED

WHAT I MIGHT THINK:

"There is nothing to do."
"I don't feel like doing anything."
"This is taking too long."

WHAT MY BODY MIGHT FEEL:

Slow and tired
Restless or fidgety
Heavy eyes
Sighing a lot
Hard to stay still or focus

WHAT I MIGHT DO:

Complain or say "I am bored"
Fidget or lie down
Do things just to pass the time
Interrupt others
Stop listening or paying attention

WHAT MIGHT HELP ME:

Try something new or different
Get up and move around
Ask someone for an idea
Do something creative or helpful

CURIOUS

WHAT I MIGHT THINK:

"I wonder how that works."
"What would happen if...?"
"I want to find out more."

WHAT MY BODY MIGHT FEEL:

Eyes wide open
Leaning forward or moving closer
Heart beating a little faster
Tingly feeling of excitement
Mind full of questions

WHAT I MIGHT DO:

Ask questions
Look closely or explore
Try something new
Watch carefully
Open a book, drawer, or box

WHAT MIGHT HELP ME:

Ask someone to explain
Try it out safely
Take time to explore
Write, draw, or talk about what I discovered

JEALOUS

WHAT I MIGHT THINK:

"I want what they have."
"That is not fair."
"Why did they get that and I did not?"

WHAT MY BODY MIGHT FEEL:

Face feels hot
Tight feeling in my chest
Heart beating faster
Tense hands or jaw
Butterflies in my tummy

WHAT I MIGHT DO:

Say something unkind
Cross my arms or frown
Try to get attention
Go quiet or pull away
Think about it over and over

WHAT MIGHT HELP ME:

Talk to someone I trust
Remember that everyone gets different things sometimes
Think about what I do have
Take some deep breaths and do something fun

SEE OUR WEBSITES FOR MORE FREE RESOURCES

1 WWW.SOCIALWORKERSTOOLBOX.COM

2 WWW.ANXIETYHELPBOX.COM

3 WWW.FEELINGSHELPBOX.COM