

THE RABBIT LISTENED

Supporting Strong Emotions

Infant/Toddler

This book tells the story of a little boy with very big emotions and his friends' attempts to comfort him.

CORE SKILL OBJECTIVES

INTENTIONAL TEACHING PRACTICES

REGULATE



Children will:

- ◆ Use various strategies to help manage strong emotions

Teachers will:

- ◆ Acknowledge and accept strong emotions

TEACHING TIP

Young children feel strong emotions, but often they don't have the skills to manage them on their own. Sometimes adults misinterpret children's emotional expressions as purposeful 'acting out,' when children are just expressing their feelings the only way they know how. Sharing books with characters who experience strong emotions is one way to show children that their strong emotions are important and overwhelming but *can* be tamed. As you read, comment on the characters' actions and feelings to show them that everyone feels strong emotions at times. Show them you will always accept and help them cope with their feelings.

1. INTRODUCE

- ◆ "This book is called *The Rabbit Listened*. The boy hugging this rabbit looks very sad. It's okay to feel sad. Let's read to find out why the boy is so sad."

2. READ THE BOOK

- ◆ Pause occasionally to point out the illustrations in the book.
- ◆ Connect to children by asking questions and making comments that allow them to share their experiences.

Acknowledge and Accept Strong Emotions



Read: "...things came crashing down."

Acknowledge: "Oh no! Look at his face. He looks so sad because his tower fell down."

Accept: "It's okay to feel upset or sad when something falls or breaks."

Read: "...until Taylor was alone."

Acknowledge: "Taylor's friends tried to help, but I don't think Taylor was ready to try their ideas. I think he still feels sad."

Accept: "Friends can try to help us feel better. But sometimes, we still feel sad and that's okay."

Read: "'I can't wait,' Taylor said."

Acknowledge: "The rabbit didn't tell him what to do. He just listened. That helped Taylor feel better, and now he's ready to build again."

Accept: "Sometimes, we need a little time and a little help to feel better when we're sad. And that's okay."

3. REVIEW

- ◆ "Sometimes things happen that make us feel really sad or disappointed. And it's okay to feel sad. I'll always be here to listen to you and help you feel better."

4. KEEP IT GOING

- ◆ When children are experiencing strong emotions, find a way to connect with them by acknowledging their emotion and showing genuine concern (even if we do not fully understand the reason for the strong emotion). Offer support and comfort based on what you know about that child and their needs in that moment.