

PARENTS UNDER PRESSURE

Taking care of babies and young children requires a lot of time and effort. Sometimes it is very stressful, especially when there are lots of other challenges in our lives. Managing our emotions when life is stressful and being the parent we want to be can be difficult.

This module is designed to help you identify your emotions, work out what you are already doing that is helpful and provide some ideas that may add to your toolbox of emotion regulation strategies.

IDENTIFYING EMOTIONS

Keeping a monitor on how we are feeling is important if we are to learn to be calmer. Stress is a signal that we need to do something to deal with a problem or to do something that will help us feel less stressed. There are a number of things that can help a person feel less stressed. But first it is necessary to be aware of what you are feeling. Remember that we all feel stressed, but we usually feel other emotions as well.

Complete the following exercise to identify the extent to which you experience positive and negative emotions.

Rate the extent to which you experience each of six emotions:

We can experience any or all these emotions during the course of the day. We can sometimes feel sad and happy at the same time. For example, when someone dies after a distressing illness, you may feel sad the person has died, but relieved that their suffering has ended.

With this in mind rate the following on a scale of 1 to 10.

First rate the extent to which you usually feel the emotion during a day.

Second, rate the strongest you have experienced the emotion over the past 24-hours.

	How I feel right now	Strongest over past 24 hours
Emotion	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Happiness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sadness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Optimism	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Anger	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Love	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Fear/anxiety	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10