

Emotion–Thought–Action–New Emotion

The ability of children to recognize how their emotions affect their thinking contributes to each child’s self-awareness. Learning to use thoughts and actions to manage emotions effectively develops a child’s ability to self-manage.

Teach your child the Emotion–Thought–Action–New Emotion process for expressing thoughts, actions, and emotions in a positive manner:

1. **CURRENT EMOTION** Identify the difficult emotion that results from the situation.
2. **POSITIVE THOUGHT** Think about the positive outcomes for the situation.
3. **POSITIVE ACTION** Act on the positive thought.
4. **NEW EMOTION** Recognize how your emotions may have changed.

Remind your child that negative thoughts and emotions are completely natural. Using the Emotion–Thought–Action–New Emotion process helps children avoid letting those negative thoughts linger.

Building Your Child’s Social and Emotional Competence

Self-management and self-awareness are social and emotional learning competencies that help children effectively regulate their emotions, control impulses, motivate themselves, take the perspective of, and empathize with others, including those of diverse backgrounds and cultures. These activities help children build the capacity to identify emotions and practice self-discipline.

Journal It!

Ask your child to keep a journal for a week on situations that come up. Encourage your child to describe how he or she used the Emotion–Thought–Action–New Emotion process. Discuss the journal with your child if he or she chooses.

Create a Picture Story!

Invite your child to create a picture story demonstrating the Emotion–Thought–Action–New Emotion process using pictures of people expressing both positive and difficult emotions. Have your child cut and glue images to poster board or cardboard.

Many children are experiencing feelings of uncertainty, anxiety, and fear due to the onset of COVID-19. They need a chance to share their thoughts and feelings and ask questions. Make sure you are accurately informed and ready to educate your child knowing the information is evolving all the time. Get information from: The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.

