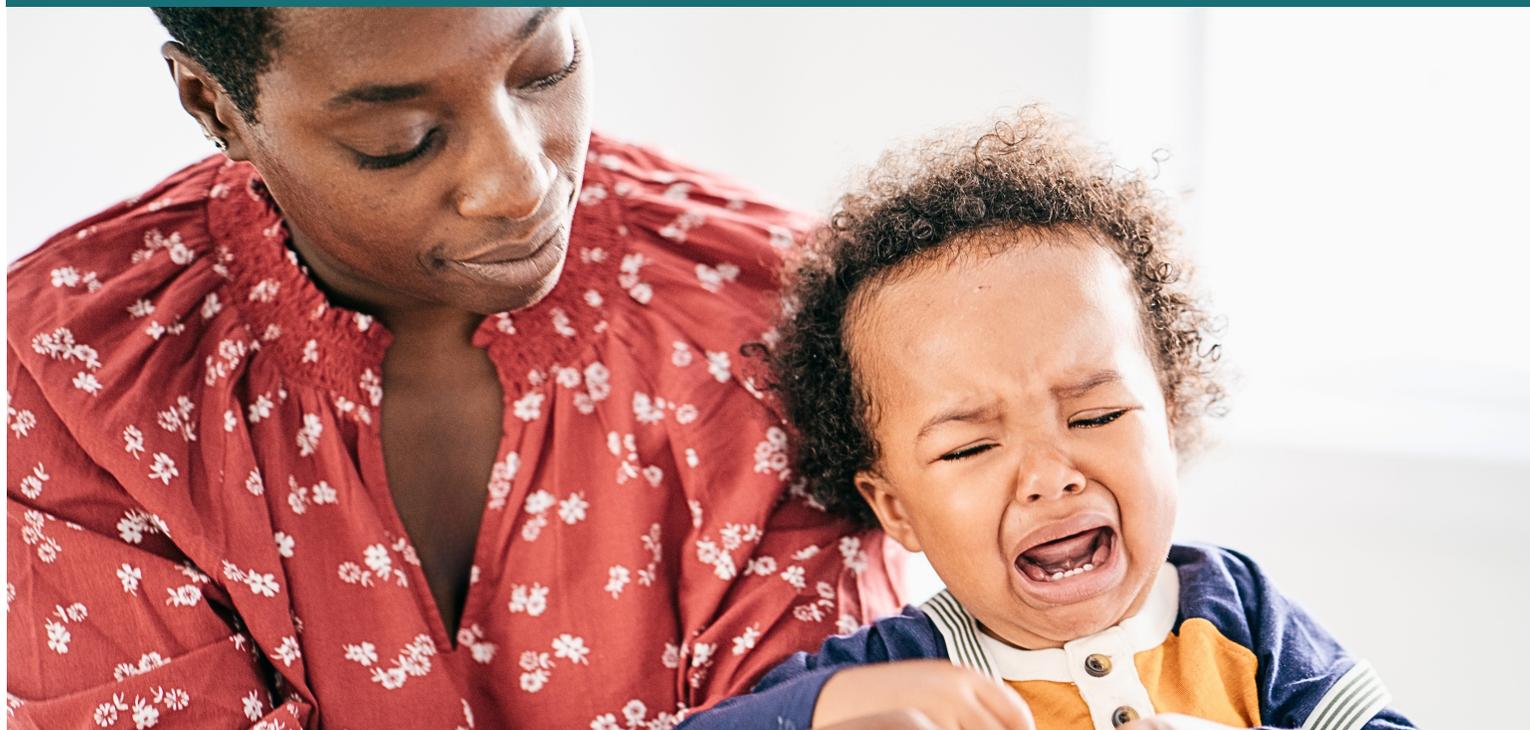


# Working With Families To Help Them Deal With Children's Big Emotions



## Explore with parents and caring adults why they may be seeing Big Emotions:

- Does the child have a regular sleeping and eating routine?
- How is the child's physical health?
- Is there a trigger (something that causes emotions to get big) ie. when they have to share, or have to leave play
- Do others around the child show big emotions, including adults?
- Explore brain development and the hand model of the brain with the family. For a video about Dr. Dan Siegel's hand model of the brain visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qFTljLo1bK8&t=61s>

## Here are examples of strategies to try or to model when Big Emotions arise:

- Relaxation techniques such as counting to 5, deep breathing
- Ensure that reminders or warnings are given before a transition - "Once you have finished that puzzle we are going to go try the bathroom."
- Have books about emotions available
- Use calming toys (fidget toys, calming jars) and a quiet space to help with calming
- Have them draw a picture about their feelings
- Listen to how the child is feeling and reflect their feeling back - "I can see that you are sad" or "I understand that you are feeling angry"
- Ask them "what do you need right now? A hug? Some alone time?"
- Model talk about all feelings - "I am excited to go swimming with you!" or "I felt a little scared to talk to that person, but I am happy I got to know them."

## Articles:



**Parenting Now** – When big emotions take over it has a lot to do with a small part of our brain acting like a watch dog. This article discusses the amygdala and how the brain is wired for connection. If everything is calm and peaceful so are we, if there is stress the amygdala is activated and we react. We need to find ways to pet and settle the watchdog (amygdala).

<https://parentingnow.ca/articles/understanding-big-emotions/>



**Sick Kids Community for Mental Health** – This article from Sick Kids Community for Mental Health digs deeper into helping children cope with their feelings while also considering your feelings as a parent or caring adult. They talk about how to help the child express themselves, calming strategies as well as the importance of providing a consistent and calm environment.

<https://www.sickkidscmh.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Big-Feelings-Final-May-2020.pdf>



**Leon Psychology** – From a team of psychologists and psychotherapists this article gives caregivers several tips on how to help a child and yourself work through some emotions.

<https://leonpsychology.ca/en/help-your-child-gain-control-of-their-emotions/>

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## Videos:



**College Of Early Childhood Educators** – Understanding how our brain works as you Identify your triggers (and helping others identify theirs).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J6R9EI3ftvY>



**Knowledge Centre** – Dr. Jean discusses the importance of Social Emotional Learning and how it is significant to build relationships, deal with feelings and make decisions.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vMdOWcpfM-k>



**Parenting Now** – From Parenting Now this video talks about the brain's role in our emotion regulation and supports how we can help our child and ourselves through connection. Simple things such as staying close and using a soothing voice will help when children's emotions overwhelm them.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4F6\\_KN0gD9k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4F6_KN0gD9k)