

Emotional literacy in churches

As churches begin to meet in person and groups relaunch, people are feeling increasingly anxious about this. It is important that we help people to express how they are feeling and acknowledge those.

As F K L O activities continue to open up, we need to consider the feelings of parents and children who may be extremely anxious about the additional contact in their lives after so long avoiding contact.



Try and be clear in the information you are sharing (e.g. sharing what will be happening in the group via a visual timetable, explaining how you will monitor contacts and what happens if someone becomes COVID positive.)

Consider how all this can affect the parents, children and young people in their emotional response, especially if they feel vulnerable and unsafe. Reassure them that your group is a safe place by making your safety measures explicit and also offering emotional support for parents and carers to talk to you about their concerns.

Active listening

Active listening is a good way to improve your communication with children and adults. It lets them know that you are interested in what they have to say.

To practice active listening:

- x * HW GRZQ RQ WKH FKLOG V OHYHO RU VLW QH[W WR WH
- x Give your full attention to the person speaking
- x Make eye contact and stop other things you are doing
- x Do not be afraid of times of silence, allow them space to think and speak
- x Reflect or repeat back what they are saying and what they may be feeling to make sure you understand.

It can be tempting to brush off children's feelings but it is important that the children in our groups know how they

- x Explore what the different feelings are, and how they would describe them.
- x Talk and take time to build relationships up and talk about how they may be feeling, especially over an activity or doing a job together side by side if they feel more comfortable that way.

Emotional literacy with the under 5s

From the time of birth, babies are getting used to the world around them and are learning to bond with and trust their main carers. Young babies smile, cry, grasp, cling, suck, make eye contact and sucking movements with their mouth, and reach out to let you know they need care and loving. They feel secure and cry less when held and cuddled. They will tell you when they need quiet time and calming by turning or looking away or when they are restless in your arms.

As a baby grows and develops, they can make connections between the face and the tone of their voice e.g. happy face and soft tone, anxious face and sharp tone. They begin to manage their feelings by soothing themselves with thumb-sucking and other habits as well as distraction through play, as they learn their main carers may

Emotional Literacy in Church Post-pandemic



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Emotional literacy with 11+

Puberty is a time when young people move through a series of significant and healthy

Intergenerational day

Spend a morning as a whole church exploring emotions over a brunch or breakfast.

Scrapbook these conversations or put together a