

Inclusive Developmental and Therapy Center

Big Feelings: Helping Your Child Manage Emotions

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✓ Can I help my child at home?

Yes, you really can. Help your child recognise their feelings, calm down more easily, and feel understood when emotions run high. This free program breaks it down into simple weekly steps, built from proven therapy techniques — things any parent can do at home, in everyday moments, at no cost. It doesn't replace a professional assessment where one is needed, but for a lot of children it makes a real difference, and it never does any harm.

Go at your own pace — a new, gentle focus each week.

Download the whole program as a printable PDF to keep.

Includes the signs that mean it's worth getting a bit of extra help.

When your child screams, sobs or shuts down over something that looks tiny from the outside, they are not being difficult. The part of the brain that puts the brakes on a strong feeling is still being built, and it is one of the last parts to finish. Managing big feelings is a skill children learn, the same way they learned to walk and talk — and you can teach it at home, in ordinary moments, without any special equipment.

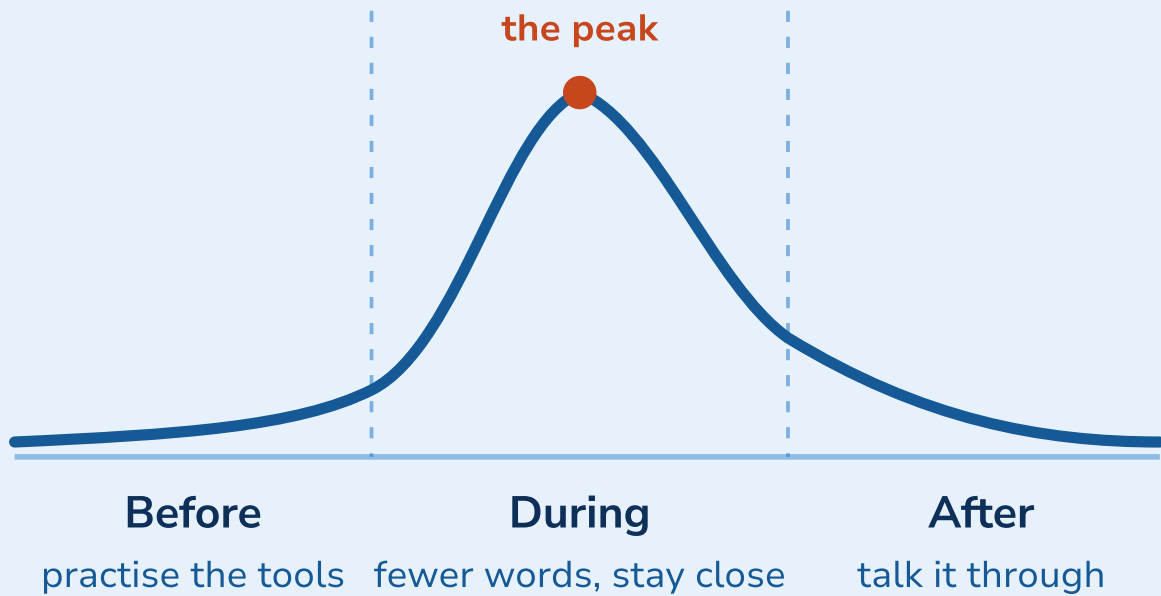
This free program — one of our **step-by-step home programs for parents** — breaks that teaching into six gentle weeks. You will learn how to put a word to what your child is feeling, how to stay steady beside them while the wave passes, and how to build a small set of calm-down tools they can reach for on their own. Each step takes minutes, not hours, and fits inside the day you already have.

What we most often see when parents bring this worry to us is that they are already doing far more right than they realise. The two pieces usually missing are timing — teaching after the storm rather than during it — and practice, rehearsing

the calm-down tools on a good day so they are familiar on a bad one. This program is supportive, not a diagnosis, and it does not replace a proper assessment where one is needed. If you are unsure whether what you are seeing needs more than a home program, our **free child development check** is a gentle two-minute place to begin.

Timing is most of it. One big feeling has three stages, and a different thing helps in each — which is why the same sentence that soothes your child afterwards makes things worse at the peak.

One big feeling, from build-up to settled



گھر پر آج یہ کریں

اردو • Urdu

بچے کو اپنے شدید جذبات کو سمجھنے اور سنبھالنے میں مدد دیں۔

بچے کے جذبے کو نام دیں ”تم غصے میں ہو“ یا ”تم اداس ہو“۔

خود پرسکون رہیں اور بچے کے پاس بیٹھے رہیں۔

گہری سانس کا کھیل کروائیں ”پھول سونگھو، موم بتی بجھاؤ“۔

بچے کو گلے لگائیں اور جب وہ پرسکون ہو جائے تو شاباش دیں۔

♥ Who this program is for

- ✓ Children who go from calm to overwhelmed in a heartbeat
- ✓ Little ones who struggle to put a feeling into words
- ✓ Children who cry, rage or withdraw when upset and just can't settle
- ✓ Children who hit, throw or lash out when a feeling gets too big — start with what to do when a child hits or bites
- ✓ Families where one hard moment can set the tone for the whole day
- ✓ Families who want to help without dismissing it or over-worrying
- ✓ Parents keen to raise an emotionally confident, resilient child

⚡ Important — when to get professional help

This is a supportive home program — it isn't a diagnosis, and it doesn't replace a proper assessment. Please speak to a professional soon if:

A low mood, sadness or withdrawal that lasts for weeks and does not lift

Worry or fear that stops your child doing normal things like school, sleep or play

Any talk of self-harm or not wanting to be here — seek help promptly, the same day

Anger that regularly leaves your child hurt, or someone else hurt

Big feelings that are getting more intense over time rather than slowly easing

Emotions that leave your child unable to enjoy the things they usually love

📍 Getting help where you live

Everything here is free to use **anywhere in the world**. If you'd like a professional to take a closer look, the best next step is someone local to you:

Work with us online, from anywhere. We offer **online sessions and parent coaching** worldwide — book an online consultation and we'll guide you and your child directly.

Talk to your child's **doctor, paediatrician, GP or health visitor** — share what you noticed.

Ask about **free early-childhood or early-intervention services** in your area — many countries offer them for young children (e.g. Early Intervention in the US, NHS referrals in the UK).

Search **“child speech & language therapist near me”**, or ask your doctor for a referral.

Near Multan, Pakistan? You're also warmly welcome in person at our centre — **contact us here.**

☆ **Your step-by-step roadmap**

Move at your child's pace, not the calendar's — the “weeks” are just a gentle order, not a race. Feel free to repeat any stage for as long as it's helping.

Week 1 – Name the feeling

Give emotions simple words.

Say your child's feeling out loud for them — “You look really cross right now.”

Name your own feelings too, so they see it's a normal thing to have them.

Use a little chart of faces so your child can point to how they feel.

Aim for four or five feeling words to start with: happy, sad, cross, scared, tired.

⚡ **Try** Naming a feeling helps to tame it — the words give a big emotion **this:** somewhere to go. Our free printable feelings chart saves you drawing the faces yourself.

Week 2 – Feelings are allowed

Accept the feeling, guide the behaviour.

Let your child know every feeling is okay, even the uncomfortable ones.

Split the feeling from the action — “It’s okay to be angry, it’s not okay to hit.”

Try not to rush in to fix it or wave it away — sometimes being heard is enough.

Skip the “but” — “You’re sad, but it’s only a toy” undoes the bit that helped.

 **Try** You can accept the feeling and still hold the boundary — both are
this: true at once.

Week 3 – Calm together

Co-regulate before you expect self-control.

Stay close and keep your voice soft when your child is overwhelmed.

Breathe slowly beside them — your steady body helps settle theirs.

Cut your words right down at the peak; long explanations land later, not now.

Set up a comfort spot with a soft toy or blanket where they can wind down.

 **Try** A child borrows your calm long before they can find their own — so
this: regulate together first.

Week 4 – A calm-down toolkit

Build simple ways to settle.

Teach one easy breathing game — blowing out slowly, as if cooling a hot bowl of soup.

Practise the tools when your child is calm, not only when they're upset.

Give the feeling somewhere physical to go — ten jumps, a run outside, squeezing a cushion.

Make a little “calm box” together, filled with things that soothe them.

 **Try** Practise the calm-down tools in the sunshine, so they're ready for the **this:** storm. Our printable calm-down card puts the steps in pictures for the calm box.

Week 5 – Talk it through

Reflect together once calm returns.

After a hard moment, once everyone's settled, gently talk over what happened.

Wonder together about what might help next time, with no blame in it.

Praise your child for any small step they took to calm themselves.

 **Try** Teach after the storm, never during it — a calm brain is the only one **this:** that can take it in.

Week 6 – Plan for the hard moments

Spot the triggers before they arrive.

Jot down the last three upsets — the time of day, what came just before, who was there.

Pick the pattern that repeats most and change one thing: an earlier snack, an earlier bedtime, a shorter trip.

Give a warning before every ending — “Two more turns, then we go.”

Say the plan out loud in advance — “Leaving the park is hard. We will wave and say bye-bye park.”

 **Try** Write down three upsets and the pattern usually appears — hunger, **this:** tiredness and endings cause more of them than anything else. If noise, crowds or scratchy clothing keep showing up instead, our calm-body sensory program works on that side of it.

Little tricks that make it work

- ✓ Steady yourself first — you can't pour calm from an empty cup.
- ✓ Skip “don't cry” and “you're fine”; name the feeling instead.
- ✓ Notice and praise the calm choices, however small.
- ✓ Keep one routine the same every day; predictability takes the edge off big feelings, and a simple visual schedule lets your child see what is coming instead of only being told.
- ✓ Get down low and make gentle eye contact when your child is upset.
- ✓ Read stories about feelings together to build up their emotion words.
- ✓ Protect sleep and snacks — a tired, hungry child has almost nothing left to cope with.
- ✓ Remember these skills take years to grow — go gently on your child, and on yourself.

How you'll know it's working

- Your child can name more of their feelings than they could before.
- They settle a little faster after getting upset — recovery time usually shortens first.
- They reach for a calm-down tool — a breath, the comfort spot, a cuddle — before you suggest it.
- They come to you for comfort instead of only exploding or shutting down.
- Big feelings feel a little less overwhelming for the whole family.



Is this based on real methods? This program draws on emotion coaching and co-regulation — well-recognised approaches in which an adult stays calm alongside the child, names the feeling, holds the boundary, and helps the child settle so they gradually learn to manage emotions themselves. The same principles sit behind parent-coaching programmes and behind the everyday advice public-health bodies such as the NHS and the CDC give parents: stay calm, name the feeling, keep the limit, teach afterwards.



Educational information, not a diagnosis. Our guidance follows standard, research-based practice (CDC, NHS, ASHA and WHO), is written by our therapy team and **medically reviewed by a GMC-registered doctor**. Every child is different, so we can't promise specific results — always use your own judgement and speak to a qualified professional about your child. **Read our full disclaimer.**

— FAQ

Managing Big Feelings: questions parents ask

