



Transition Toolkit Idea #3 Feelings.

In VPK, children are learning to identify their own feelings as well as the feelings of their friends. They are learning how to respond appropriately to their feelings and how to calm themselves after having strong emotions. Children at this age are also learning how to respond to others with empathy and compassion. These skills will serve your children well as they prepare to enter kindergarten.

My Heart is Like a Zoo is the perfect book to talk about feelings. The first time you read the book, the children will likely be excited about the animals and notice that the animals are all made of hearts, but with subsequent readings you will be able to talk about the feeling words. Many will be familiar and some will be new.

1. After reading the book the first time, talk about the different animals the children saw in the story. Ask the children what they notice on the last page. Why does the book say “tired as a zookeeper who’s had a busy day?” Brainstorm other animals that could be part of the story.
2. Put out different size heart shape cut outs. Let children experiment with putting hearts together to make different animals. Add children’s words to their heart animal and create a class book.
3. On another day, reread the book. Tell the children in the book it talks about many different ways your heart can feel. Spend some time talking about a few of the pages and the feelings on each page. Connect it to children’s lives. For example, ask “When is a time your heart might feel frightened as a rabbit?”
4. Use the language of the book to help children talk about their feelings. Throughout the day as children experience different emotions, ask them how their heart is feeling. You can also refer to the animals in the book: You look happy as a hippo this morning.



Books are great tools for helping children identify and talk about their own feelings. And you’ll be setting them up for success in kindergarten!

Happy Reading!

