



Seeds to grow **MENTAL HEALTH**

Identifying Emotions

FOR EDUCATORS VOLUME 1

MENTAL HEALTH & YOU

Many of us have had a hard time adjusting to all of the changes that have happened over the past year and a half, in both our work and personal lives. The same can be said about your students. Emotions may have seemed to intensify, and at times, our mental health has declined.

You may have felt many emotions, but most commonly, we feel sad (depressed), anxious, angry - or a combination of these! Sometimes

we know what made us upset, sometimes not, and this is normal.²

Emotions can show up in different ways such as: frequent headaches, trouble sleeping, irritability, emotional outbursts, feeling withdrawn, overly tired or restless, or eating too much or too little.

It's an important time to focus on mental health, and create mentally

healthy classrooms. This newsletter is the first step in connecting educators with resources, tools, and activities to use in their classrooms. Our hope is the information in this newsletter starts a conversation and helps staff and students identify the emotions they are feeling and better communicate these feelings.

In our next newsletter we will start the discussion on skills to help cope with these emotions and behaviours.



A PROACTIVE APPROACH

Having skills and strategies ready for stressful emotions is important, so that we can cope and feel better. These skills are like a lifejacket that keeps us afloat in rough, emotional waters.

Just as we practice fire drills to know what to do in a fire emergency, it is important to practice how to react in an emotional emergency.



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WHAT IS AN EMOTIONAL EMERGENCY?

An emotional emergency is when something tough happens in your life and your thoughts cause your body to react to what you are feeling. Your emotions or behaviours might get out of control.

What one student feels is an emotional emergency may differ from how another views the same situation, it all depends on the person.

Is an emergency forgetting your lunch, failing a test, or losing a friend?

Let's start by having your students identify emotions and being able to communicate how they are feeling. If they can identify and name the emotions they are feeling, they can begin to understand why they react the way they do. Then, they can try to stop the cycle of:



How can we start to recognize that we are in an Emotional Emergency?

The next few pages will provide some different ways of looking at emotions, and then some options for activities you can use in your classroom, staff room, or at home to help name and identify them. Choose one that works for you!

WHAT IS THE "FIZZ"?

"The Fizz"©

noun

1. a term used by the "The Decider," a program created to help people recognize, monitor, and manage their troublesome emotions.
2. The Decider describes "The FIZZ" as the physical signs of emotion in your body.¹

Sometimes, emotions overwhelm us, as well as your students. It's like we are like a carbonated beverage being shaken in a bottle. Without coping strategies, these emotions can eventually explode, much like that bottle would, resulting in a negative behaviour.

We all have experienced "the Fizz," and at some point, almost everyone has had a poor reaction to feeling an intense emotion. Taking a minute and choosing how to respond can result in a more positive outcome.

Fight..Flight..Freeze..Flop

Brain hijacked

Our focus is on the danger. Our thoughts race. We find it hard to think clearly and rationally. Feelings of being "unreal" or detached.

Mouth dries

Saliva is not required at this time.

Breathe fast & shallow

Helps us take in more oxygen, which is then transported around the blood system. We may feel short of breath

Adrenaline released

The body's alarm system stimulates the adrenal glands to release adrenaline and its effects are felt immediately throughout the body.

Muscles tense

Blood, containing vital oxygen and glucose energy, is sent to the big muscles of the arms and legs - ready for fight or escape. Can also cause aches & pains.

Digestion slows

Adrenaline reduces blood flow and relaxes muscles in stomach and intestines (blood diverted to limb muscles) causing nausea, butterflies or churning.

Eyes widen

Alert for danger.

Body sweats

Adrenaline speeds up and heats the body. Sweating cools the body.

Heart beats fast

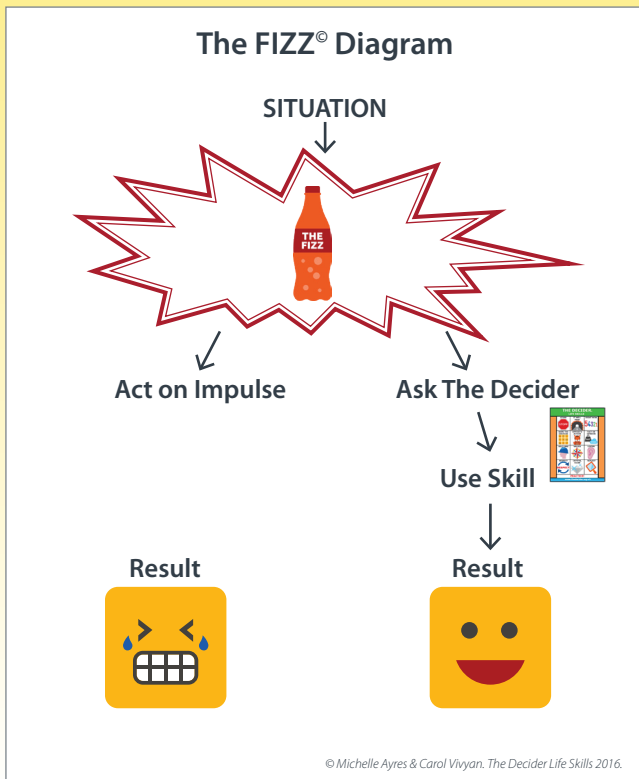
& palpitations. Blood pressure and pulse increase as the heart pumps more blood to muscles. This enables us to run or attack.

Adrenaline speeds up the body when we feel angry or scared.

The body can 'flop' due to a rapid relaxation response to danger. Sadness makes the body slow down and feel very tired.



FEELING THE FIZZ



Students who can feel when they are experiencing “the Fizz,” may be able to consider the results of an action they might take, and use a skill to help identify their emotions instead of reacting impulsively.¹

By identifying and monitoring their emotions, students might be able to catch themselves early from making a poor decision, or be able to prevent themselves from feeling more sadness or anxiety than they already do.

Every student feels emotions differently, and they may have many different emotions that are troublesome for them.

The following pages contain activities that can be used in your classroom to help students think about the emotions they feel, the signs that they experience when feeling those emotions, and how they react to those emotions.

¹ Michelle Ayres & Carol Vivyan. The Decider Lifeskills Handbook 2019

² Michelle Ayres & Carol Vivyan. The Decider Skills Manual 2019

Student Activity

WHAT DOES YOUR “FIZZ SCALE LOOK LIKE?

HAVE YOUR STUDENTS ASK THEMSELVES:

- What emotions are troublesome for me?
- Do I often feel sad or depressed?
- Am I an anxious person?
- Do I have a problem with anger?
- Are there other emotions besides anger, anxiety, or sadness that I often feel?

Have your students develop a FIZZ® Scale for an emotion(s) they feel is hard to manage.

THE FIZZ® SCALE

Make one scale for every emotion you often feel troubled by. Each emotion you feel will have its own unique physical signs on the FIZZ® Scale. What are the first signs you notice in your body? Where do you fall on the scale?

If you get stuck on naming the physical sensations, use the “Feeling the Fizz: Bubble Man” diagram on page 2 of the newsletter to help.

The FIZZ® Scale	Signs that I am feeling the FIZZ®
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	



What happens when you feel the FIZZ®?

“The Fizz - the Fizz Scale” Signs I am feeling THE FIZZ pg. 9 the Decider

IF YOU FEEL ANGRY A LOT

Your "1" may be "feeling calm," and
Your "10" might be "yelling or screaming,"
or "giving the silent treatment"

IF YOU OFTEN FEEL SAD OR DEPRESSED

Your "1" may be "no problem waking
up for school," and
Your "10" might be "not able to get
out of bed"

IT ALL DEPENDS ON THE PERSON
SO MAKE IT PERSONAL FOR YOU!

Student Activity

WHAT'S MY TEMPERATURE?

This is an activity from [School Mental Health Ontario \(SMHO\)](#), its purpose is to teach students to take their "emotional temperature," as a means to recognize and regulate their emotions.

STEPS

1 LOOKS LIKE - SOUNDS LIKE - FEELS LIKE

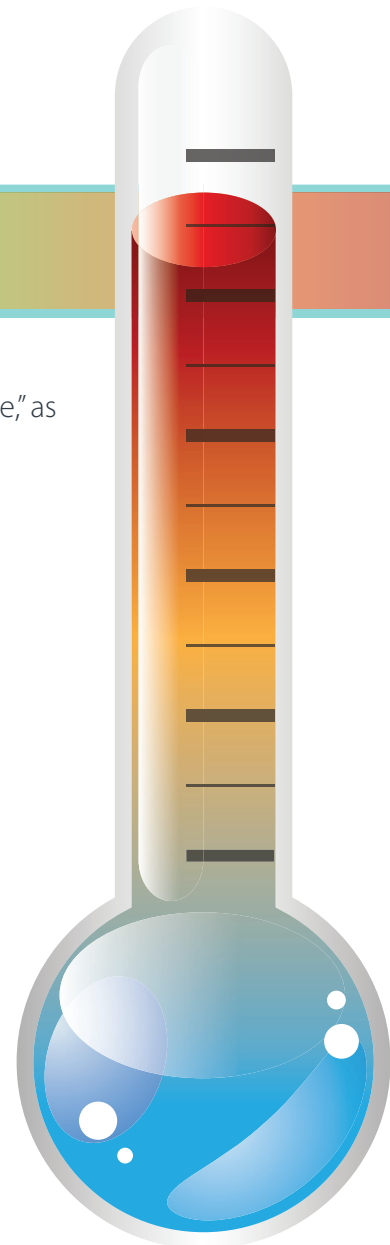
Develop an EMOTIONAL VOCABULARY, with synonyms for different emotions.

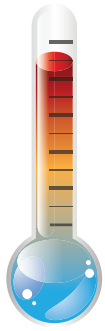
2 DO - SAY - FEEL

Use the "LOOKS LIKE - SOUNDS LIKE - FEELS LIKE" CHART to explore different emotions and each emotion specifically.*

3 Create a thermometer on paper and name the emotion they want to communicate. Rate the emotion's physical sensations from 1-5.**

**Handouts for step 2 and step 3 of this activity are provided on page 5 and 6.*





WHAT'S MY TEMPERATURE?

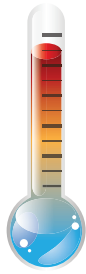
STEP 1 LOOKS LIKE - SOUNDS LIKE - FEELS LIKE

LOOKS LIKE Behaviours or actions you would observe in yourself or others

SOUNDS LIKE Things you would hear yourself or others say

FEELS LIKE Physical sensations you feel inside

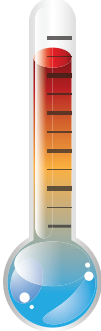
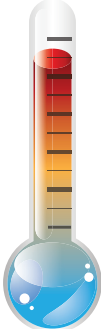
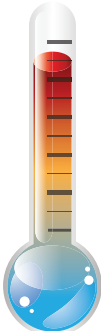
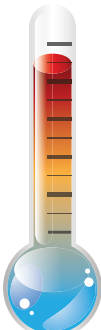
EMOTION	LOOKS LIKE	SOUNDS LIKE	FEELS LIKE
Anger	Eyes rolling	Talking back	Heart beating fast
	Arms crossed	Sarcasm	Face hot
Anxiety	Fidgeting	Backing out of plans	Sweaty
			Butterflies
Depression	Sleeping a lot	Negativity	Tired all the time
		"Nothing matters"	
Other:			



WHAT'S MY TEMPERATURE?

STEP 2 DO - SAY - FEEL

Describe the top 5 things that you **DO - SAY - FEEL**
When your temperature is **HIGH OR LOW**

EMOTION	WHAT'S MY TEMPERATURE	
Anger		High 5 _____ 4 _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ Low 1 _____
Anxiety		High 5 _____ 4 _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ Low 1 _____
Depression		High 5 _____ 4 _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ Low 1 _____
Other: _____		High 5 _____ 4 _____ 3 _____ 2 _____ Low 1 _____