

F Is for Feelings



by Goldie Millar and Lisa A. Berger • illustrated by Hazel Mitchell

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free spirit
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To my fantastic and life-changing trio:
DM, EMM, and SMM

—Goldie

Connection, learning, and laughter . . .
thank you to TT, RZYBT, and RXYBT!

—Lisa

A Letter to Caring Adults

Hello, parents, teachers, grandparents, doctors, guardians, therapists, and all members of a child's community! Welcome. We are thrilled to join with you in sharing and learning about children's feelings.

Children show their feelings in many ways, including smiling, whining, yelling, singing, hitting, hugging, and laughing. All of these behaviors are ways for kids to express and communicate how they feel. *F Is for Feelings* will help you and the children in your life start a conversation about emotions. It will also help kids develop their feeling words so they can express themselves more effectively. When children learn from an early age to share and describe their emotions in healthy and supported ways, they are more likely to grow into adults who feel capable of handling life's challenges.

Traditionally, many people think of some emotions as positive, such as joy, excitement, and pride. Other feelings, such as sadness, fear, and anger, are often thought of as negative. We invite you, as a caring adult, to view all feelings as okay. Some feelings are comfortable. Others are more difficult to experience, and can be uncomfortable. You can help children understand that all emotions, comfortable or not, give us ways to understand ourselves and the world around us.

F Is for Feelings is meant to be read aloud and discussed. It gives you a place to connect and explore together with kids. We want children to ask lots of questions and to expand the conversation with drawing and dramatic play. On pages 32–35, you'll find more ideas for sharing this book with children. When you get to the end of our feelings alphabet, things are really just beginning. We hope you will enjoy the *F Is for Feelings* journey again and again!

—Goldie and Lisa



Every day I feel all kinds of feelings,
in all kinds of places,
with all kinds of people,
in all kinds of ways.

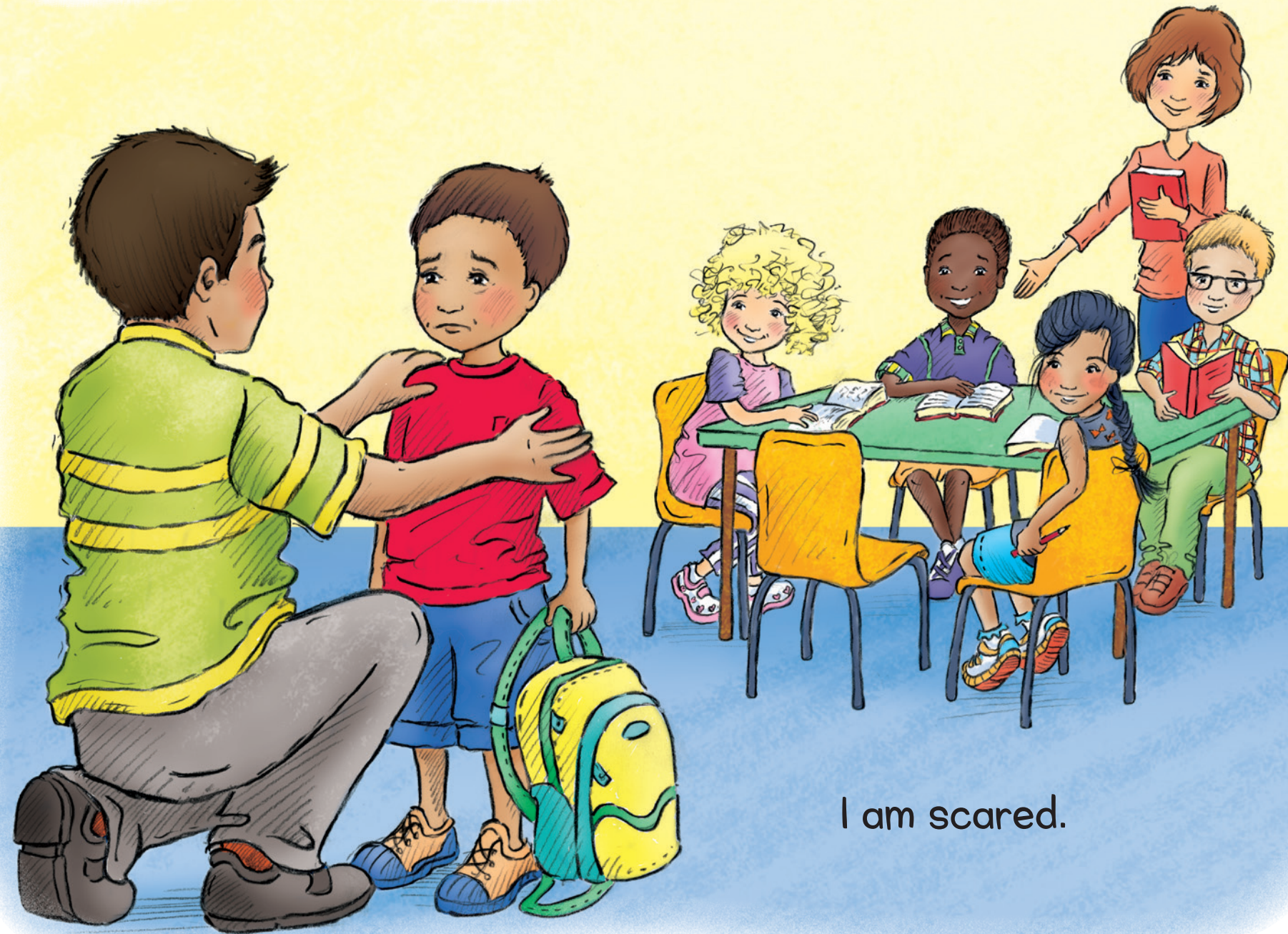


At times I feel good and
other times not-so-good.



A is for afraid.

Aa



I am scared.

B is for brave.

Bb



I am going to be strong,
even though I feel frightened.

Talking and Learning About Feelings: A Guide for Parents, Teachers, and Caregivers

Whether you are a parent, grandparent, teacher, health professional, caregiver, or other person in a child's life, you play an important role in helping children learn to identify, express, and regulate their emotions. The ability to manage emotions is linked to stronger, healthier relationships, as well as better performance in school. Knowing how to express feelings clearly is an important first step in a child's emotional development.

F Is for Feelings provides a starting point for conversations with young children about their emotions. The suggestions in this guide offer a range of ways to keep that conversation going. Some of these suggestions may be best suited for use in a classroom or with a group. Others might be better for times when you're talking with a child one-on-one. As you read and explore this book, you'll probably come up with ideas of your own. Choose, adapt, and have fun with the ones that work for you!

Read and Discuss the Book

Read the book together. Choose a picture to talk about in more detail. Ask questions about the picture and the feeling it shows. You could try these questions as a starting point:

- What do you think is happening in this picture?
- How do you think this child feels? What tells you he or she is feeling that way?
- Do you think you would feel the same as this child if you were in the same situation? Why or why not? What else might you be feeling?
- What do you think might happen next?

- Can you tell me a time when you felt the way this child does? Can you remember a time when a friend felt that way? What did you do?
- Are there pictures in the book that show how you are feeling right now? Which ones?

Follow Up with Creative Games, Songs, and Role Plays

Invite children to use their creativity as a way to explore and investigate different feelings. You can choose which suggestions to use based on the ages and interests of the child or group you're working with. Children could:

- Draw a picture of one or two of the feeling words in the book.
- Write a story using some of the book's feeling words.
- Act or physically show what one or two of the feeling words would look like (for instance, one feeling that is comfortable and one that is harder to express).
- Create a song or rhyme about one of the feelings.



- Make up a puppet show or skit telling a story about one of the feelings in the book.
- Put together their own books or collages using images from magazines to show some of the feeling words in the book.

Encourage children to share their creations. Talk about the feeling or feelings they've chosen to depict. Why did they choose that feeling? Why did they express it in the way they did?

Focus on Feelings Every Day

Children learn new skills through repetition. When you can, give them plenty of chances to practice using feeling words every day and in a variety of situations.

- Choose a feeling "word of the day" from the book and display it in a common space (such as a classroom's main board or on the family refrigerator). Each day, spend a few minutes talking about the word. Define it if needed, and discuss a few examples of times when someone might experience this feeling. Ask children about when they have felt this emotion. To build understanding further, invite children to draw faces showing expressions associated with the emotion.
- Another way to practice feeling words is to ask children at the beginning of each day to choose a word in the book that describes (or comes close to describing) how they are feeling at the moment. Thank the child for sharing and acknowledge the feeling expressed. This activity builds emotional vocabulary, and at the same time helps prepare children for learning and engaging with the day.
- Create a feelings bulletin board that displays all of the feeling words in the book, along with pictures, illustrations, and other visual representations of the different emotions.



Build a Feeling Vocabulary

F Is for Feelings introduces lots of feeling words, but there are many more. You can help children expand their emotional vocabulary by brainstorming related words and ideas.

- Ask children to come up with their own definitions of each feeling word. Encourage them to be specific and descriptive.
- Ask children to come up with similar feeling words and opposite feeling words to those in the book. For example, if you decide to talk about "H is for happy," get the brainstorming started by pointing out that a similar word to happy might be *joyful*, while an opposite word could be *sad*.
- Invite the child or the group to come up with other feeling words that begin with each letter of the alphabet. If children need a little help getting started, prompt