

**Introduction:**

Often, children who have trouble communicating also have trouble expressing their emotions and finding ways to calm themselves down when they get frustrated. We can teach kiddos to use the right kinds of communication to let others know how they feel and to get their emotions back in check.

**Instructions:**

Identifying Emotions:

The first visual aid in this pack is a “mood thermometer” which is a popular concept when working with young children or children who have trouble identifying their emotions. Show the child that a calm, happy child is at the bottom and an angry, upset child is at the top. As the child is feeling various emotions throughout his day, show him the thermometer and identify where his emotions are.

When the child gets upset, ask him to tell use the thermometer to tell you how he is feeling.

Calming Yourself Down:

Help the child understand that when he is angry or upset (at the top of the thermometer), he must find a way to calm back down so he can deal with the situation. The other pages in this pack share strategies that can be used to help the child calm himself back down. First, practice the strategies when the child is not upset so he knows how to do them. Then, once he gets upset, ask him which strategy he’d like to try and help him through it. Keep trying strategies until the child is calm.

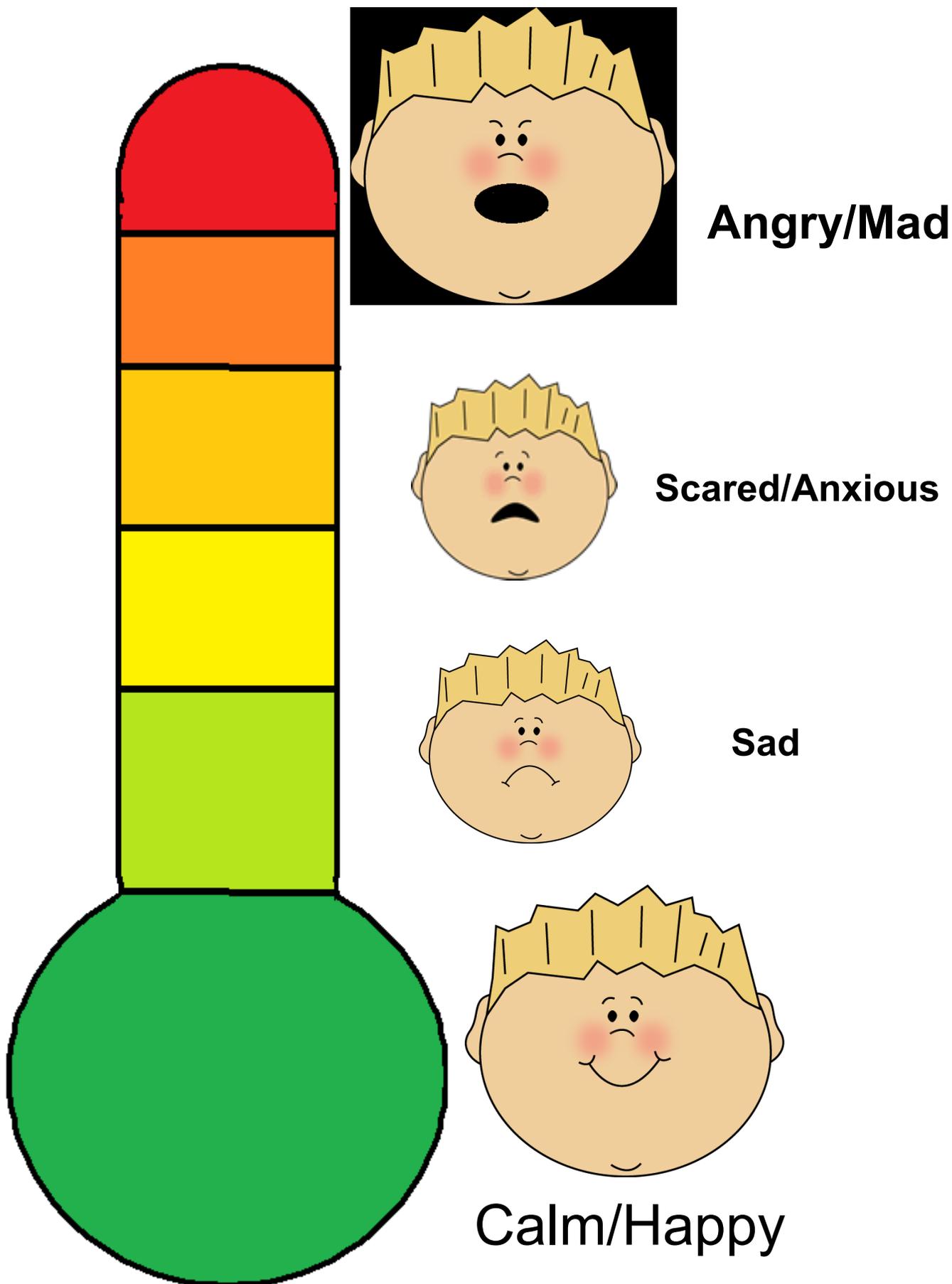
If the child is too upset to do a strategy, tell him, “I see that you are too upset to use your strategies. We can try again in a few minutes” and then give him some time and space to melt down. You may find more success once the tantrum has run its course a little more.

Eventually, we want the child to be able to go to these pages and use the strategies on his own, but he’ll need your help quite a bit at first before he’s able to do it by himself.

**More Information:**

For more information on teaching a child to self-calm, follow the link:

<https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/calming-children-self-calming-strategies/>



**Angry/Mad**

**Scared/Anxious**

**Sad**

**Calm/Happy**

Graphics From: [www.mycutegraphics.com](http://www.mycutegraphics.com)

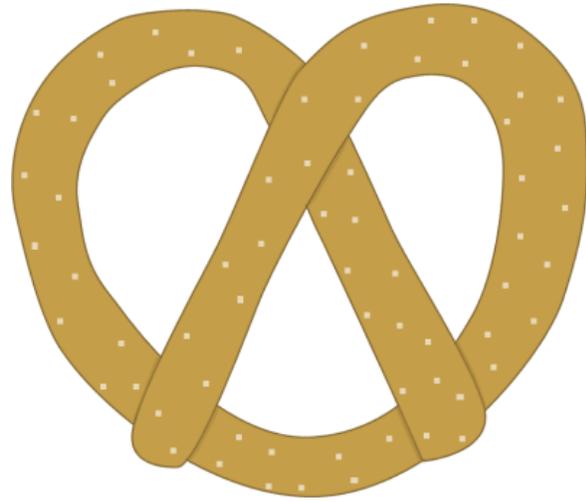
# Self-Calming Strategies

Graphics By: [www.MyCuteGraphics.com](http://www.MyCuteGraphics.com)



## The Balloon:

Have your child hold his hands in front of his mouth like holding a small balloon. Tell your child to blow up the balloon. As he blows, he spreads his hands apart to pretend the balloon is getting bigger. Once the balloon is as big as it can get, your child claps his hands together to “pop” the balloon.



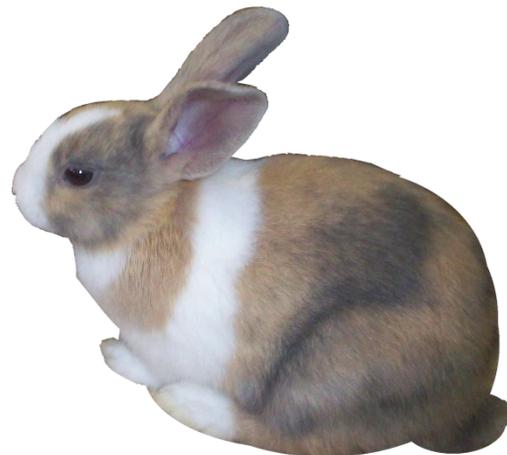
## The Pretzel:

Have your child fold herself into a pretzel and squeeze. Have her wrap her legs together and fold her arms across her chest like she’s hugging herself. When she is as twisted as she can possibly get, have her squeeze hard.



## Take A Walk:

Have your child take a walk to cool off. Sometimes just walking around a bit can help.



## Be a Bunny:

Have your child pretend to be a bunny. He can get down on the ground like a bunny or just sit on his bottom. Have him breathe like a bunny does in short, quick breaths. Don’t let your child do this too long or he might get dizzy but a little bit of shallow breathing can bring his breathing back under his control. Follow this up with some long deep breaths, like hissing like a snake.

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## Write A Letter:

Have your child “write a letter” about why she’s mad. Get out a piece of paper and a big fat crayon. Have your child scribble violently all over the paper. This should release some tension. If your child is older, you may actually be able to get her to write down why she’s mad. When she’s done, have your child read it to you or just crumple the paper and throw it away.

# A B C

# 1 2 3 4

## ABCs and 123’s

Count or Sing the ABCs: Have your child count as high as he can or sing/say the alphabet. Many times this is enough to bring the breathing back under control to quell the tantrum.



## Hug A Stuffed Animal or Pillow:

Have your child pick a pillow or stuffed animal to hug. Tell her to squeeze it hard so she can get all of that upset out. She could also tell her stuffed animal why she’s upset.