

E is for Emotional

JOY FUL

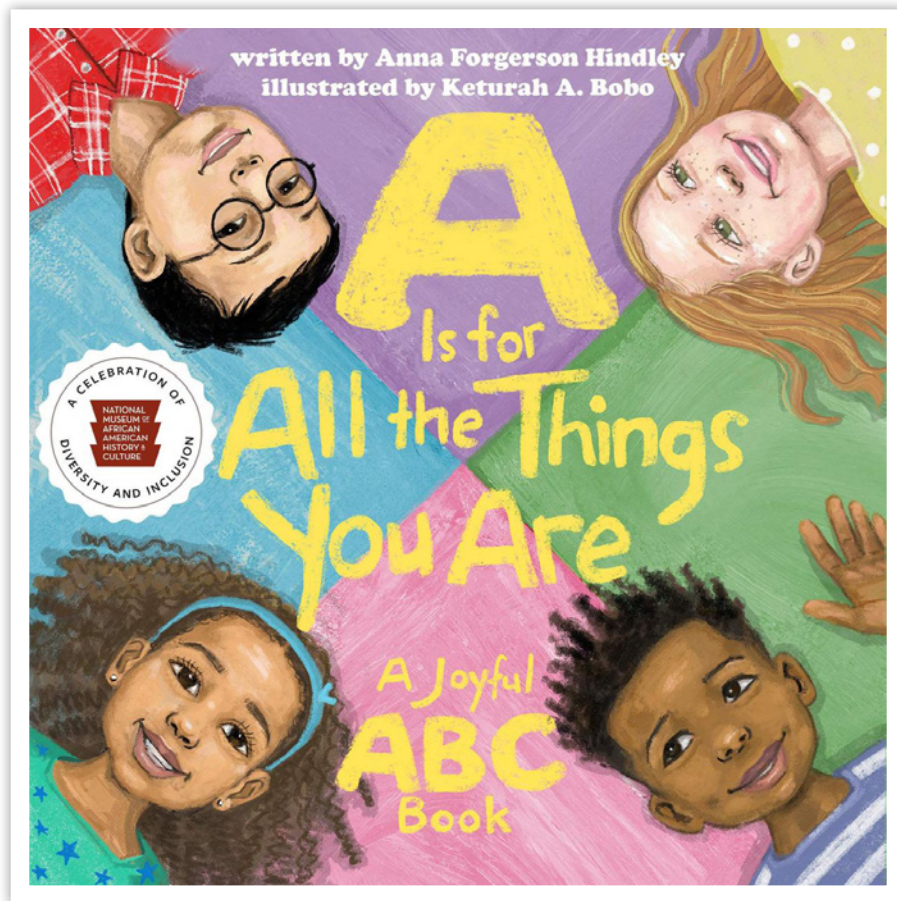


A NMAAHC KIDS ABCs ACTIVITY BOOK

INFANT AND TODDLER EDITION

Brought to you by the National Museum of African American History and Culture Early Childhood Education Initiative.
Inspired by the children's book, A is for All The Things You Are: A Joyful ABC Book written by Anna Forgerson Hindley
and illustrated by Keturah A. Bobo, ©2018 Art by Keturah Ariel LLC.

Funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.



A is for All the Things You Are was written to affirm our children and empower them to see themselves as many things at once – daring and loving, creative and just, amazing and zany – and everything in between. The book offers wonderful opportunities for conversations with children to build their vocabularies, strengthen their sense of self and deepen their joy in and acceptance of human diversity. The illustrations allow them to see not only themselves but others in the same positive light as well. By seeing positive images of children of different colors, genders, abilities, classes, and other social identities, we nurture the child's comfort and joy in human diversity so deep caring connections can be made across humanity.

Each activity booklet offers suggestions of how to begin the lifelong work of having a positive sense of self and others with your infant or toddler, how to support their language development and how to build the foundations of literacy.

A Is for All the Things You Are: A Joyful ABC Book
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E is for Emotional:

Happy, sad, angry, glad... Everybody feels lots of different emotions. Whether big or little, all feelings matter. **Emotions are what make us human.**

What emotions are you feeling today?

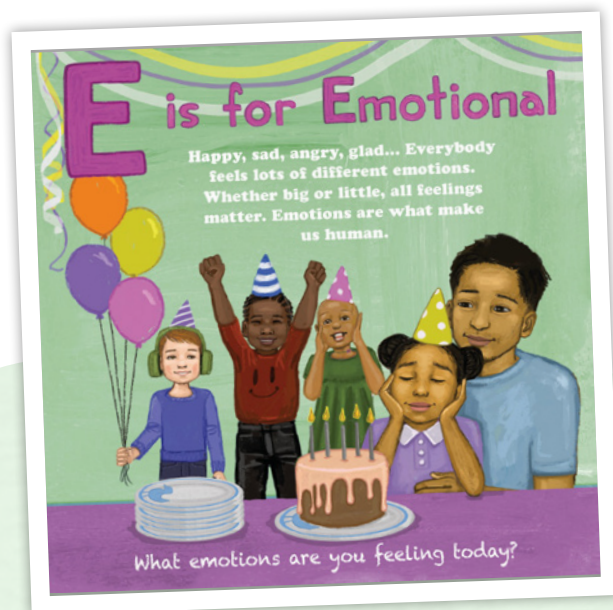
Being emotionally literate — able to read the feelings of others as well as ourselves — is an important skill for being safe and for navigating the complicated world we live in.

Long before babies or toddlers have words, they have feelings. Some of their feelings are tied to their bodies – hungry, full, tired, energized, hurt, relaxed. Others are expressions of their growing human connections and their experiences in the world. They begin to feel interest, curiosity, worry, comfort, delight, awareness of competence (*I did it!*), frustration, anger, and of course, being loved and loving. Beginning in infancy we can help children have names for all they feel, recognize feelings in others and begin to have skills to manage their own feelings. Looking at faces is foundational to children recognizing and understanding emotions. Naming feelings as children look at faces or as we decode our child's behavior (*I hear you are laughing, are you feeling happy?*) is one of the first ways we support little ones to recognize what they feel and what others feel. We support children's beginning skills in managing their feelings when we name them without judgment, recognizing that all feelings (including the unpleasant ones) are natural, human expressions of the child's experience.

What You'll Need:

The following supplies are suggested for the activities in this booklet.

- Photos of faces in books, magazines or online
- Doll or stuffed animal
- Blank pieces of paper
- Glue stick
- Tape, string or stapler



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EXPLORE

In early childhood, children learn best through doing! To explore this week's theme, try the activity below with your infant.

Introducing Emotions

Designed for: Infants

What you'll need: Picture books, magazines or online images featuring human faces

Faces fascinate infants. They're one of their favorite things to look at and one of the first things they are able to focus on and recognize. By 3 months, babies know the difference between familiar and unfamiliar faces. By 5 months, they're able to match tone of voice with emotional expressions. Around 8 to 12 months, babies begin using this ability to assess new situations. While we know as adults that faces may not always be clear reflections of a person's emotional state, babies rely on facial expressions to make sense of their environments and make decisions. Reading facial expressions is vital to their survival. Your face as their caregiver tells them what is safe or unsafe, exciting or frightful, good or bad. Showing, playing with and talking about facial expressions with your baby enables them to understand the emotions of others but also their own.



Try this:

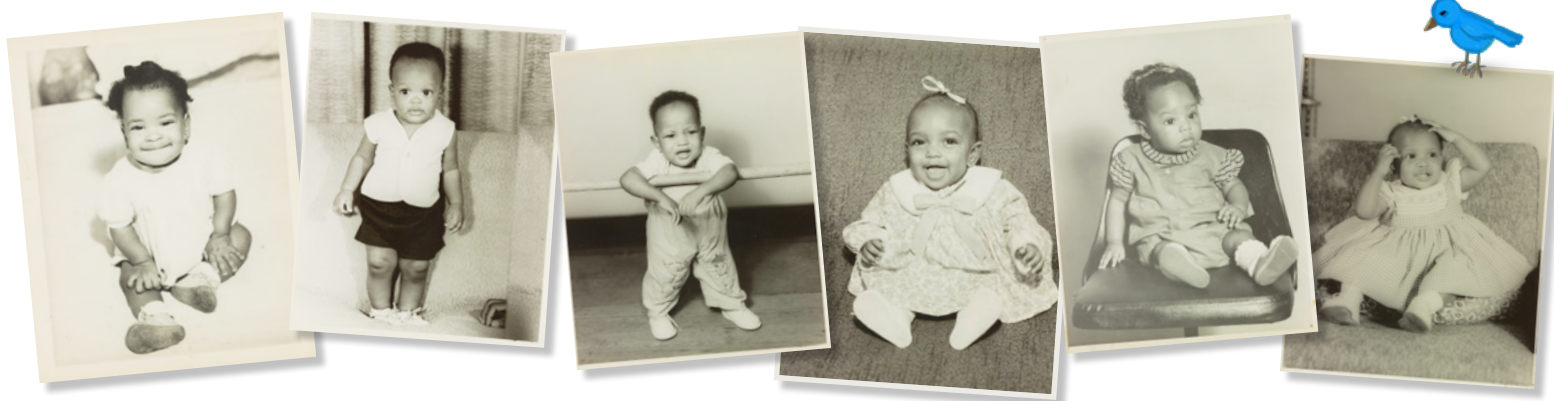
Using photos in books, magazines or from your personal photo collection, show faces to your baby and copy the expression with your own face. Hold your baby up to a mirror so that they can see their own face too!

When you talk about the different facial expressions, change the tone of your voice to match the emotion or mood that the person seems to be feeling. Talking about emotions lets your child know that all emotions are okay and human.

EXPLORE

Explore this week's theme with your child by trying this engaging experience inspired by our museum collection.

Make Your Own Emotions Book



Designed for: Infants and toddlers

What you'll need: Museum, magazine or personal photos, paper, glue, tape, staples or string, mirror

As caregivers of infants and toddlers, we learn that a child can experience an array of emotions - sometimes all in a single day! From calm or excited to frustrated or unhappy, all of your little one's emotions are welcome. Emotions are what make us human. We can work to normalize emotions of all kinds through receptive responses to a child's different feelings as well as by regularly talking about emotions. **Create your own emotions book:**

- 1 Gather photos of emotional babies from our museum collection, magazine photos or photos of your family members and friends.
- 2 Glue the images onto blank pieces of paper.
- 3 Attach the pages of pictures together with tape, staples or pieces of string.
- 4 Then, explore the pages with your baby or toddler naming the emotions as you go! Point to different facial features. Talk about how faces are the same and different.
- 5 Bring a mirror and show the little one their own face too.

Tip:

Don't feel like you have to go through your whole book at once. Your toddler may have a favorite page or a page they don't like. You will have plenty of time and experiences to name feelings and facial expressions.



EXPLORE

In early childhood, children learn best through doing! To explore this week's theme, try the activity below with your toddler.

Exploring Emotions through Doll Play

Designed for: Toddlers

What you'll need: Doll or stuffed animal

Play is a serious part of child development. Children use play to understand their world, express their thinking and safely test ideas in imagined scenarios. When it comes to better understanding the depth, importance and complexities of emotions, doll play can be a powerful tool for children of all gender identities. Doll play becomes a playful method for children to think about their own emotions and strategies for nurturing or coping with those feelings. This kind of play also develops a child's empathy requiring them to think about others' perspectives and feelings.

As you watch your child's play, you can gain insight into their beliefs about the emotional experiences of themselves and others. Work to model loving and respectful reactions to all of the emotions children express.

Sometimes your child plays alone, sometimes you can participate in your child's doll play and work together to address the doll's emotions.



- o Imagine the doll smiling. Talk about what kind of things might make the doll (and your little one) happy!
- o Imagine the doll feeling hurt or sad. Is the doll crying or pouting? How can you help make them feel better? Try singing a song or giving them a tickle!
- o Imagine the doll feeling tired. What can you do to help them rest?

Tip:

Toddlers often do not have words for what they are doing or feeling. You can “read” their behavior and faces and give them the words they need.

EXPLORE MORE

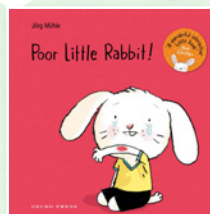
Continue learning with your little one using these recommended resources:

Books

Explore a variety of feelings with books that show other babies experiencing emotions and stories about emotional experiences that are relatable. Try these!



My Face Book
by Star Bright Books



Poor Little Rabbit!
by Jorge Muhle



Baby Faces Board Book Series
by Roberta Grobel Intrater



American Babies
by The Global Fund for
Children Books

Tip:

Use your favorite search engine to find read-aloud videos online!

Online Resources

Discover more ways to support your child's emotional expression and understanding with these online resources.

★ [Developing Social-Emotional Skills from Birth to Three - Zero To Three](#)

Learn how to support social-emotional development in age-appropriate everyday ways.

★ [Exploring Emotions - Sesame Street in Communities](#)

Discover a collection of resources that will help your little one to understand and express emotions of all kinds.

CONNECT

A Guide for Families and Caregivers

Why do these experiences matter?

A child's identity is both internally constructed and externally imposed. They learn who they are and how they are valued from the words and actions of others and from the way they do or don't make sense of those messages. Their beloved adults (that's you!) are the most important people in their world. The words you give a child to describe themselves and others have lasting power in their lives. When a child has the words to think about their strengths and their worth, they can sort through negative messages and hold on to their sense of being loveable and capable. The experiences in this booklet are invitations for you to use objects, activities and words to support your child's positive identity development, their fascination with how people are both different and the same, and their ability to read emotions and build empathy. In time, experiences like these will also support your child's ability to recognize unfairness or unkindness and to stand up for themselves and others.

What about supporting language development and getting ready to read?

Alphabets, in and of themselves, are not particularly interesting to young children. However, learning letter-filled words to describe the world around them and inside of them (their feelings, experiences and senses) are very interesting to children! Discovering new words, new ways to say things and new ways to think is exciting and essential to a child's literacy and identity development.

In the first three years of life, early language and literacy skills are best learned through everyday moments. The experiences in these booklets invite you to boost your child's literacy through talking, playing and creating together in fun and accessible ways. Some experiences will guide you in helping your infant or toddler "name the universe" with descriptive words for the actions and emotions of themselves and others. Other experiences will encourage you to point out written words and look closely at objects to provide your little one with the beginning connections between the real world, reading and talking.

Every child's path to literacy is different and valid - just like their identity. The experiences in these booklets aim to support you and your child along their unique journey to literacy and a positive sense of self. **Remember to have fun along the way!**

Credits

Objects

- Studio portraits of babies by Rev. Henry Clay Anderson, mid-20th century. Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of Charles Schwartz and Shawn Wilson, © Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture. [2012.137.15.16](#), [2012.137.15.26](#), [2012.137.16.10](#), [2012.137.16.22](#), [2012.137.17.23](#), [2012.137.17.31](#)

Program Photos

- Doug Sanford, National Museum of African American History and Culture, 2019

Original Artwork

- Bluebird (cover, page 4), Balloons (page 4); © 2018 Art by Keturah Ariel LLC