



Catholic Family Services

# School Tools

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## Developing Your Child's EQ

Dear Teachers and Parents,

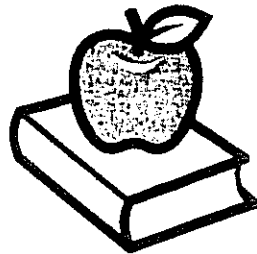
As teachers and parents, you are probably interested in raising your children to be their very best. This would include not only insuring they are academically prepared for life, but just as important is their emotional intelligence.

Developing your child's EQ (emotional quotient) is an ongoing process that contributes greatly to their overall success in life. Namely, will they be able to handle their emotions in a healthy way and will they be able to relate to others as well?

While most of us haven't gone to school or taken a

class to learn about feelings—as an adult who interacts with children, it will be important for you to model and pass on some important emotional concepts to your children.

Read on for some powerful, yet simple ideas in this area and then be sure to practice them with the young people in your life.



### Healthy vs. Harmful Ways of Expressing Feelings

As a general rule of thumb, there are three harmful ways to express emotions:

1. Don't hurt others
2. Don't hurt yourself
3. Don't hurt property

These three areas cover a lot of ground, but they are easy to remember and teach to your children. You may even post them on the refrigerator!

Some healthy ways of managing feelings include: talking about them, journaling, drawing, physical exercise and praying. Most importantly, model these healthy ways for your children.

### Emotional Assets

Search Institute publishes a list of 40 Assets that help young people to grow up to be healthy, caring and responsible. Surveys have shown that young people with the most assets are more likely to have positive attitudes and behaviors and are less likely to engage in high-risk behaviors.

The entire list of these assets can be found at: <http://www.search-institute.org/developmental-assets/lists>

Please copy and distribute to Teachers and Parents

If you would like to receive School Tools via e-mail rather than mail, contact: [mwilper@ccstl.org](mailto:mwilper@ccstl.org)

## Steps to Becoming Emotionally Strong

1. Listen to your child. Just taking time to listen to them rather than lecture, make judgments or tune out is so powerful. The feeling that they are being heard is very affirming for the child. After you have done this, repeat what the child feels back to him. For example, if the child has not won a prize in some competition, check to see if he is feeling disappointed. If he was, then share a story about your feelings in a similar situation.
2. Introduce feelings to

your child. Little children don't know how to describe emotions. Teach them various words to describe feelings and use them often when you are feeling a certain way. Help them identify their feelings when they have trouble doing so.

3. Confirm your child's feelings. Don't discount your child's feelings by saying something like, "why are you so afraid of the water?" Simply reciprocate his feelings and make him feel comfortable. Help him understand it is not wrong to be

scared, but it can be overcome.

4. Lead by example. Check out your own emotional state. Do you have a healthy way of expressing emotions? Are you being harsh to your child?

5. Be sincere regarding your own emotions. Always try to express what you are feeling rather than making up another story. If you are really upset with your child, let him know it. You may say, "I am really angry right now, but I need some time before we can discuss it."

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