

Time for a Check-up: Emotional Wellness

Your students are familiar with physical health and nutritional health, but what about emotional health? Use this lesson to introduce students the basics of being emotionally healthy.



Objective: Students will be able to articulate some of the traits of an emotionally healthy person and how to apply the traits to their own lives.

Grades: 3–8

Time: 60 minutes (or two 30-minute periods)

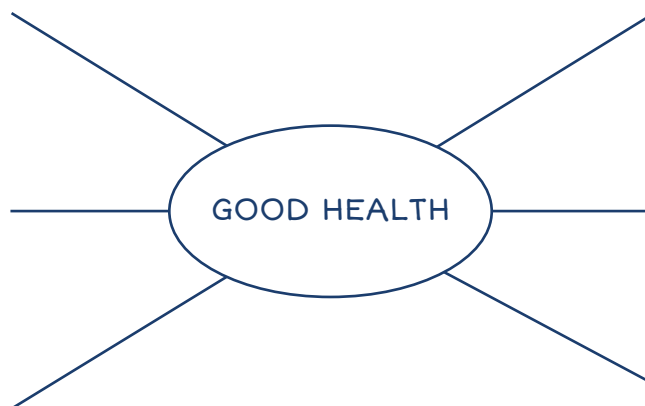
Materials: half-sheet of unlined paper for each student, copy of the “What Does an Emotionally Healthy Person Look Like?” reproducible for each pair, colored pencils

Materials for each small group: copy of the “How Am I Feeling? Emotional Grid” reproducible

DIRECTIONS

Bell-Ringer Activity

1. Before students arrive, draw the graphic organizer shown here on the board.
2. Give each student a half-sheet of unlined paper.
3. Ask each student to copy the graphic organizer on his or her paper. Then challenge the student to fill in each line on the organizer with something he or she thinks is an important component of good health or of being healthy.
4. If time allows, have each student share with a partner how he or she completed the organizer.



Whole-Group and Partner Practice

1. Explain to students that good overall health, or wellness, is not just about avoiding illness. It's about making choices that result in improved physical, nutritional, and emotional health. Ask students who listed something related to emotional health on their graphic organizers to raise their hands. Explain that many people do not realize that emotional health is as important to good health as physical or nutritional health.
2. Give each pair of students a copy of the "What Does an Emotionally Healthy Person Look Like?" page. Direct them to discuss what they think an emotionally healthy person looks like. What actions does an emotionally healthy person take? What choices does he or she typically make? What actions does an emotionally healthy person usually avoid? Have each pair of students use different colored pencils to list the actions, choices, or traits of an emotionally healthy person around the person pattern.
3. Meet as a class and have students share their work. List student responses on the board, adding any of the following items that are not mentioned:
 - Is aware of, accepts, and expresses feelings
 - Manages his or her feelings and behaviors
 - Accepts limitations
 - Accepts the feelings of others
 - Is positive and enthusiastic about one's self and life
 - Copes effectively with stress
 - Lives and works independently, but also seeks the support and assistance of others
 - Forms healthy relationships with others
 - Takes on new challenges
 - Deals positively with conflict
 - Takes responsibility for one's own actions

Point out to students that responses will vary depending on whether the person is an adolescent or an adult.

Small-Group Activity

1. Explain to students that one of the most important qualities of an emotionally healthy

person is an awareness of his or her feelings. Distribute copies of the "How Am I Feeling? Emotions Grid" reproducible. Discuss the different emotions on the grid, clarifying the meaning of terms students may not know. Ask volunteers to identify emotions from the grid that they are currently feeling or have recently experienced.

2. Divide the class into groups of three or four students each. Have each group select one emotion from the grid. Challenge the group to create a one- to two-minute skit that gives an example of when someone might feel it and a positive way to manage the emotion. Provide time for each group to share its skit with the class.
3. Point out that identifying and accepting what you are feeling is just a first step. Often, it is emotionally healthy to express that feeling clearly, either to oneself or to another person. Using a FAB (Feel/About/Because) statement is one way of doing this. Write the following sentence frame on a sentence strip and display it on the board:

I feel _____ about _____
emotion situation or issue

because _____
reason(s) for feeling

Describe a personal situation you recently experienced. Then fill in the frame's blanks to express how you felt and why you felt that way. Point out that using a FAB statement to express emotions is especially helpful if you need to express a negative emotion to another person. For example, instead of saying, "You made me angry when you interrupted me," one could say, "I felt angry when you interrupted me because I really wanted to tell you what happened to me on the bus." The second statement is less likely to cause the other person to get defensive, plus the second person gets to hear why his actions were hurtful. The result is better communication between the two parties, which leads to a better personal connection.

4. Ask two students to come to the front of the class. Have the students role-play a situation involving two friends, such as a misunderstanding about a borrowed book. Have one student use a FAB statement to express how the situation made her feel. Encourage her to use the Emotions Grid to pinpoint the specific emotion if necessary. Repeat with other students and situations as time allows.

5. At the end of the lesson, post the FAB statement sentence strip and a copy of the Emotions Grid in your classroom for students to refer to as needed.

Progress Check

Wrap up the lesson by asking each student to complete an exit ticket on paper or a sticky note that shares one thing he or she will do differently because of what the student has learned about emotional health.

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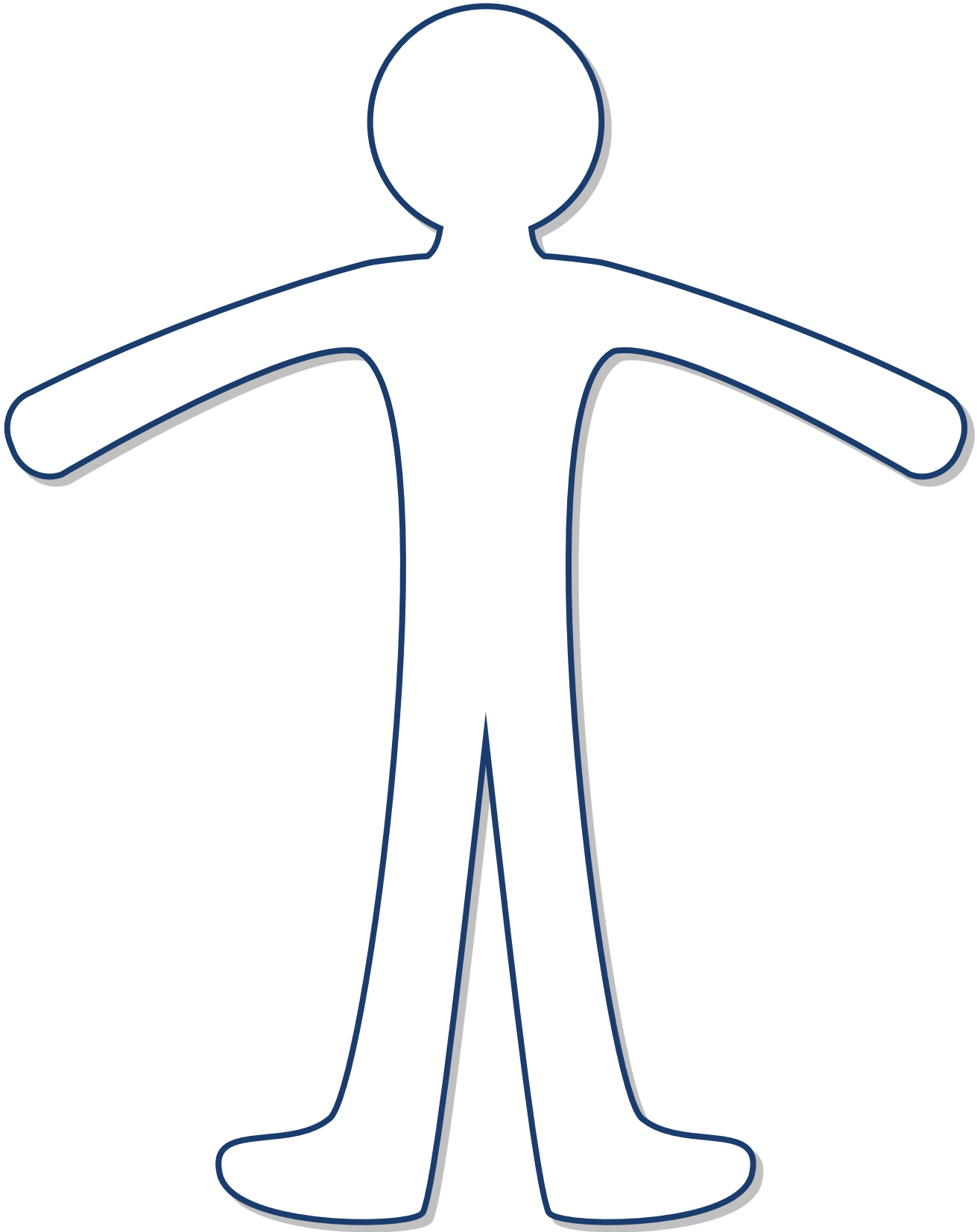
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MY NOTES

What Does an Emotionally Healthy Person Look Like?





How Am I Feeling?

Emotions Grid



accepted	bitter	crushed	frustrated	irritated	overwhelmed	shocked
affectionate	bored	determined	furious	jealous	panicky	shy
aggressive	bothered	disappointed	glad	joyful	pessimistic	sorry
alarmed	calm	embarrassed	grouchy	judged	proud	surprised
amazed	cautious	enthusiastic	guilty	lonely	quarrelsome	sympathetic
angry	concerned	excited	happy	loved	relieved	tense
anxious	confident	fed up	helpless	misunderstood	resentful	thankful
appreciated	confused	flustered	hesitant	nervous	sad	troubled
ashamed	content	foolish	hopeful	numb	satisfied	uncomfortable
awkward	cranky	frightened	impatient	optimistic	sensitive	vulnerable