

Kimochis™ in the Heat of the Moment



We all know about feelings when it comes to the classroom.

“He pushed me.”

“It’s not fair.”

“Jessica and Darlene said we can’t play.”

“Why do I have to?”

“Cameron said I can’t be the leader.”

“Charlie is bothering us.”

“I don’t like math.”

We all use time throughout the school day that was planned for academics to help students resolve feelings. Learning to get along and developing character are part of the hidden curriculum. Feelings can be inconvenient, frustrating, and overwhelming to even the most patient of educators. The following tips will help when students become emotional and you need to be there for them.

When a student seeks you out in the heat of the moment with a high level of emotion:

- Don’t react, but do connect with his feelings.
- Help calm feelings down with a long, caring pause after the student’s emotional upset.
- Model taking a deep breath. Often a student will do the same because you are reminding him it’s okay.
- Use a slow, calm rate of speech and a relaxed listening face.
- Say the student’s name, pause, and ask him if there is anything else he needs to tell you.

When the student has explained the details:

- Ask him if he knew what to say or do to make things better when he felt (name the feeling).

- Suggest that the two of you look in the Kimochis™ Bowl of Feelings to pinpoint exactly what he is feeling. This slows things down and offers comfort because the student will know that Kimochis™ are tools to help make upset feelings better.
- The student can tuck the chosen feeling pillow inside a Kimochis™ character for comfort or simply hold on to the feeling.

If the student does not seem to know what he is feeling or what to say and do:

- Tuck two feeling pillows inside a Kimochis™ character (choose one feeling he is obviously not feeling and another you think he might be feeling).
- When the student pulls out the feelings, help him decide which one makes sense.
- Put yourself into the situation.
- Use a calm face and voice, and model the exact words to make the situation better. Keep it short: “Warren, stop pushing me.”
- Reverse roles so the student can imitate your helpful model.
- Then wish him luck and send him back to the situation to use the words he practiced.

Ask the student to choose a peer:

- Help him select a peer he thinks is good at communicating when mad.
- Have the upset student put the skilled peer into the upsetting situation to model what to do.
- Reverse roles so the upset student can imitate.
- Make sure that the upset student thanks his friend and shares how it worked.