





Communicating Emotions...

Just as our words communicate our thoughts and needs, emotions are also a form of communication.

Our actions and behaviours are reflective of what we are trying to communicate emotionally. Communication can be effective or ineffective depending on how we use it and the understanding of how words affect others. Emotional communication is the same. Expressing emotions in a way that helps us to understand what we are feeling, and why we are feeling that way, can help to solve problems and deal with issues in a positive manner.

The ZONES of Regulation®

			
BLUE ZONE Sad Sick Tired Bored Moving Slowly	GREEN ZONE Happy Calm Feeling Okay Focused Ready to Learn	YELLOW ZONE Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Excited Loss of Some Control	RED ZONE Mad/Angry Terrified Yelling/Hitting Elated Out of Control

Nova's Ark is teaching our mentors and our guests how to recognize and express their emotions by using **Zones of Regulation**. The Zones are broken down into colours blue, green, yellow and red that reflect different types of emotions. Guests and mentors are learning to develop *emotional intelligence* by naming their emotions by the colour:

- **Blue** – for tired and sad emotions,
- **Green** – for calm and ready to learn
- **Yellow** – for anxious and overwhelmed
- **Red** –for anger and defensive emotions

Emotions can help us to understand what we are feeling, why we are feeling that way (our triggers) and ultimately to make good decisions that assist us to deal with emotions in a positive way.

In **Emotions Matter**, an article written by M. Brackett and D. Simmons (ASCD, Educational Leadership/ December 2015) the authors speak about *Emotional Intelligence*. Teaching emotional awareness can, according to the authors, provide students with more positive outcomes in social functioning, psychological wellbeing and higher cognitive performance.

In the article the authors ask 5 questions to discover emotional intelligence for educators:

- **Recognizing Emotion** – How often do you pay attention to your emotions. What do you do to teach students to recognize emotions in the face, body and voice.
- **Understanding Emotion** – Are you aware of your emotional triggers? What makes you feel angry worried or joyful? How do you help students understand the causes and consequences of their emotions?
- **Labelling Emotion** – How sophisticated is your emotion vocabulary? How do you infuse emotion vocabulary into your teaching?
- **Expressing Emotion** – Are you comfortable expressing the full range of emotions - including happiness, sadness, anger and calmness- with your students?
- **Regulating Emotion** – Which ineffective strategies do you use to regulate your feelings? How often do you teach your students helpful strategies to regulate emotions such as stress so that they can achieve goals.

At Nova's Ark, our goal is to instill the necessary emotional skills to reach our guests full potential at school, at home and in the community.