

WHAT EVERY EDUCATOR SHOULD KNOW ABOUT EQ

Emotional intelligence (EQ) is the measure of one's ability to handle negative situations and feelings.

While an average IQ has risen more than 20 points in the last century, children's emotional and social skills are decreasing sharply. In the past 50 years depression has increased tenfold.

To foster EQ in the children you teach, focus on the following:

1. Encourage them to be compassionate about others and to see things from someone else's perspective. Ask questions like 'how do you think he/she feels in this situation?' 'How do you think the family feels about their murdered son?'
2. The best way for children to learn to understand and control emotions is to let them express them. Listen to them, invite them to talk about themselves and encourage them to give their opinions.
3. Play a game where they describe the feelings suggested by people's expressions and body language.
4. Summarise the child's feelings aloud after you've listened to them. 'So what you're saying is that you're feeling'
5. Listen to what the child **isn't** saying and take into consideration the feelings you think are being repressed.
6. Encourage children to speak about their own feelings and their observations of others feelings.
7. With children who are always putting themselves down, emphasize their strong points. Use humour where necessary.
8. Children with a healthy EQ will try to calm, comfort or reason with an upset friend. They'll also sympathise with the one who comes last in class or suffers some setback. Encourage these behaviours.
9. It is important to determine the root causes of temper tantrums and help children take responsibility for their actions.