



# Expressing Feelings

## Objectives

The student will be able to:

- Identify and express a variety of feelings.
- Demonstrate verbal and non-verbal expressions of feelings.
- Demonstrate the use of I-messages as a way to express feelings honestly and effectively.
- Develop self-discipline by using I-messages instead of You-messages.

## Character Education Traits

This lesson promotes the following character traits:

- Honesty
- Self-discipline

## Activities

- 1 Fun with Feelings .....15 min.
- 2 Telling Others How We Feel .....10 min.
- 3 You-messages .....5 min.
- 4 I-messages .....15 min.

## Materials

- Wagner puppet (in your kit)
- I-message bone
- Workbook page 3
- Student handouts—I-messages
- Students' puppets

## Home Workout

See curriculum page 30.

## Rationale

Research shows that children who learn to express their feelings appropriately are less likely to become involved with violence, drug use and other problem behaviors when they are adolescents.

## ♥ Before You Start...

Prepare one copy of the student handout on page 28 for each student to use with the activity on workbook page 3.

Make a copy of the I-message bone on page 29. Make one copy of the Home Workout,

curriculum page 30, for each child in your class to share with a parent.

Be sure to familiarize yourself with I-messages before teaching this lesson. The I-message is basic to effective communication and a key to identifying problems in a neutral way. Eventually, students should learn to use this formula:

**I feel** (name the feeling) **when you** (name the action that is bothering you) **because** (state the effect on you). **I want** (state what you would like to have happen).

It is not necessary for very young children to use the whole formula, but they can learn a simplified form of the I-message. This lesson introduces basic I-messages in a fun way that encourages children to want to use them.

# 1 Fun with Feelings

Some of you have pet dogs at home, don't you? If you don't have a dog, you probably have friends who do. Have you seen your own or a friend's pet do something like eat a slipper, or dig a hole in the flower bed, or grab a hamburger right off the kitchen table? Did the dog look or act differently afterwards?

Wagner chewed up my pencil last week. He knew he wasn't supposed to do it, and when I saw what he had done, he knew he was in trouble. He whimpered and put both of his paws over his face like this.

💡 *Demonstrate.*

What do you think he was trying to tell me? 🐶 He was trying to say he was sorry, and he felt bad.

That's right. Wagner knew he was "in the doghouse," and he felt sorry for what he had done. Dogs can tell us how they are feeling without using words, can't they? What is Wagner telling us when he wags his tail? 🐶 He's happy to see us. What if the hair stands up straight on his back and he shows his teeth? 🐶 He's angry or mad.

Do people do the same thing? Not exactly. We don't wag our tails, but we do smile when we're happy. Our hair doesn't stand up, and we don't growl, either, but we can show with our faces when we feel angry, can't we? Show me how your face looks when you are angry.

You can show angry feelings with a scowl, just as you can show happy feelings with a smile.

People, and dogs, too, may be different in many ways, but there is one very important way that we are all the same—we all have feelings.

Sometimes you can tell someone how you feel without saying a word. You can tell them what you feel by the expression on your face or the way that you sit or stand. Let's play a game to practice showing and identifying our feelings. This game is called "Simon Says It With Feeling." Let's stand in a circle so that we can see each other's faces.

🐾 *The object of this game is to give children practice communicating non-verbally through facial expressions. You may use the preface, "Simon Says..." every time you give instructions. Or, if you like, leave it out a time or two and try to catch someone following the instructions anyway, as in the traditional game. If that happens, don't eliminate those players, just say, "Gotcha!" and keep playing.*

**Simon Says...**

- Show that you are surprised to see a present on your bed.
- Show that you feel afraid when a bad storm makes the lights go out.
- Show that you are excited about going to the circus.
- Show that you feel angry when someone ignores you.
- Show that you feel sorry when you hurt someone's feelings.
- Show that you feel worried when you think you might be lost.
- Show that you feel happy because it's your birthday.

That was fun, and you did a great job of showing your feelings with your faces and bodies.

## 2 Telling Others How We Feel

Sometimes other people don't know what we are feeling just by looking at our faces. Then we need to find other ways to tell them how we feel.



*Wagner:* Yeah. I know how to tell people I'm glad to see them. I jump up on their laps and lick their faces! And when I'm mad, I bite them on the leg! Then they know exactly how I feel. You do the same thing, don't you?

🐾 *This usually prompts laughter.*

Boys and girls, isn't it a good thing that Wagner has joined our class? There is so much we can teach him about getting along with others. We can show him how to tell others how he feels with "feeling words." Let's take our puppets out now so we can show Wagner how to express his feelings without licking people or biting them.

Wagner, you may go back to your seat now.

🐾 Put Wagner in his seat.

I'm going to describe a scene, and I want you to raise your hand if your puppet can tell the class with words how he or she would feel. 🐾 Read each scene. Some possible answers are listed after the student puppet icon.

- When the other dogs won't let me join their Frisbee game, I feel...  sad
- When my friends ask me to play tag, I feel...  happy
- When a stranger comes into my yard, I feel...  afraid
- When I get to go swimming, I feel...  excited, afraid
- When I've been running down a long sidewalk, I feel...  tired
- When I accidentally break something important, I feel...  sad, sorry
- When my mother has a new puppy, I feel...  excited, happy, jealous
- When my best friend growls at me, I feel...  hurt, mad

Good job, everybody! Now raise your hand if you would like to tell the class how you feel about raising such a smart puppy. 🐾 I feel proud to have a puppy who is so smart.

### 3 You-messages

🐾 Pick up the Wagner puppet again and have him approach a student.



Wagner: Hey, you. You're sitting in my chair. You took my seat. And you stole my doggie bag, too. It has a big juicy steak bone in it, and it's mine. You mangy mutt! You dirty dog!

Oh, no. This looks like trouble! I can see that we have a lot more to learn if our class is going to stay on the trail to a peaceable place. SIT, Wagner!

🐾 Place the Wagner puppet in his seat.

Wagner, that's not the way to get along peaceably with others. I can see that you have a lot more to learn.

🐾 Turn to the student Wagner confronted and ask, How do you feel about what Wagner said to you? 🐾 Angry, upset.

Do you get mad when someone calls you names and blames you for things? What do you feel like doing when they blame you? 🗣️ *I feel like doing the same thing to them.*

Of course, you do. Wagner, you're starting out on the wrong foot when you start with a YOU.

Words like “You mangy mutt! You dirty dog! You took my seat,” are fighting words that will lead to all kinds of trouble. I have something here that can help to get you back on the right foot again.

## 4 I-messages

🗣️ *Take out the I-message bone and show it to the class (horizontally).*

Does this look like an ordinary bone to you? It's not. It's a very special bone.

🗣️ *Hold the bone in a vertical position so that it looks like the letter “I.” Turn it like this, and it will send you an important message.*

Does this look like one of the letters in the alphabet? Which one? 🗣️ *It looks like the letter “I.”*

Whenever I have “a bone to pick” with someone—in other words, when I have a problem with someone—I use this bone to remind myself to use an I-message to tell that person how I feel. Here's how.

Instead of starting with the word “you,” start with the word “I.” Use an “I” to tell the other person how you feel.

“I feel upset when you sit in my chair.”


Then use an “I” to tell the other person what you want.

“I want you to move, please.”


🗣️ *Turn to the student who was in Wagner's chair. Would you feel better if Wagner talked to you that way instead of calling you a mangy mutt and a dirty dog?*


🗣️ *Yes. Sure you would. An I-message tells the other person how you feel and what you want without blaming anyone or calling them names. An I-message helps you to say how you feel honestly and clearly.*


Let's try some I-messages now. An I-message starts with the words “I feel.” Suppose that your sister picked a flower for you. What could you say to her that starts with “I feel...?” 🗣️ *I feel happy when you bring me a flower.*


Suppose your neighbor borrowed your bike without asking and forgot to bring it back? What could you say to your neighbor that starts with “I feel...?”  I feel mad when you take my bike without asking.

Good. You’re getting the idea. Now let’s learn more about I-messages by doing a workbook page together. Remember, when you have a problem with someone, start out by saying, “I feel.”


 Pick up the Wagner puppet and have him create several humorous conflict situations with some of the students in your class. Do this with a smile and a twinkle in your eye, and be sure to select students who have a good sense of humor. You might have Wagner scribble on students’ papers, mess up their hair, take their lunch boxes, or bump them on the shoulders. The object of this is to create situations in which the students will probably react with You-messages, giving you the opportunity to say, **Remember, start with “I feel.”**

 Have students open their workbooks to page 3. Distribute one copy of the student handout—Pick Out the I-messages—on page 28 to each child. Select a student to read the directions from the student handout aloud:

 Cut out the I-messages, paste them on the bones in your workbook, and throw the You-messages away.

 You may want to have the students read the following sentences from the student handout aloud:

1. I feel mad when you take my bone. I want you to give it back.
2. I feel happy when you ask me to play in your yard.
3. I feel angry when you chew up my toy. I want you to get me a new one.
4. You are selfish when you drink out of my bowl. Get your own bowl!
5. I feel happy when you help me pick up my toys.
6. You are a dirty dog! Quit digging holes in my yard!

 Answer Key: Numbers 1, 2, 3 and 5 are I-messages. They should be pasted onto workbook page 3. Numbers 4 and 6 are You-messages. They should be thrown away.

Now, Wagner, let’s see if you have learned anything. Earlier today, you thought someone was sitting in your chair. Instead of attacking that person with a You-message, what could you say? Remember that bone, and start with an “I.”



Wagner: I feel angry when you sit in my chair. I want you to sit somewhere else, please. How was that, kids? Did I get it right?

 You sure did, Wagner. That was terrific.

 Encourage the class to applaud Wagner’s I-message.

Boys and girls, you and Wagner have learned an important peace-making skill today. No bones about it. I-messages will help you get along better with other people and help you stay on the trail to A Peaceable Place.

• Give each child one copy of the Home Workout, curriculum page 30, to take home to share with a parent.



**Teacher Tip:** Keep the I-message bone displayed in the classroom, and use it all year to remind students to communicate with I-messages. Children tend to use the kinds of messages they hear most often. If you use I-messages when speaking to your class, your students will be more likely to use them.

## Looking for More?

### Supplemental Activities & Resources

#### Physical Education Extender

Doggie, Doggie, Where's My Bone?

*The popular game, "Doggie, Doggie, Where's My Bone?" may be adapted to reinforce the use of I-messages. In this game, the student who is the "doggie" sits in front of the class with her/his eyes closed and with her/his back to the other students. A chalkboard eraser, the "bone," is placed immediately behind the "doggie's" back.*

*The teacher points silently to select a student to steal the bone, and that student tip-toes up to the front of the room, takes the eraser and hides it in his/her desk.*

*The class then says in unison, "Doggie, Doggie, where's your bone? Somebody stole it from your home!"*

*This signals the "doggie" to turn and face the class in order to find out who has the missing bone. The doggie must do this by choosing the student that she/he believes to be the bone-snatcher, and using an I-message: "Student's name, I feel sad when I don't have my bone. I want my bone back. Do you have it?"*

*If the student is the bone-snatcher, he/she must give the bone back, and become the dog. If the student is **not** the bone-snatcher, they should say, "No, doggie, I do not have your bone."*

#### Music Extender

*"When You're Angry and You Know It," an adaptation of the song "If You're Happy and You Know It," can be used to reinforce the concept of self-discipline or impulse control. The song was included in Too Good For Violence curriculum for kindergarten and grade 1. Students who have had Too Good For Violence in earlier grade levels will be familiar with the song. Add accompanying gestures if you like—they add quite a bit to the fun!*



**When you're angry and you know it, Stop and think!  
When you're angry and you know it, Stop and think!  
When you're angry and you know it,  
Then your face will surely show it,  
When you're angry and you know it, Stop and think!**



**When you're calmer and you know it, Tell a friend!  
When you're calmer and you know it, Tell a friend!  
When you're calmer and you know it,  
Then your face will surely show it,  
When you're calmer and you know it, Tell a friend!**





**When you're peaceful and you know it, Share a smile!  
When you're peaceful and you know it, Share a smile!  
When you're peaceful and you know it,  
Then your face will surely show it,  
When you're peaceful and you know it, Share a smile!**

### **Recommended Reading**

*Football Friends*, (Hello Reader Series) by Jean Marzallo. Scholastic, 1997. Freddy is a very competitive guy, especially when he plays football. Through the help of his friends and his principal, Freddy learns to express his anger productively.

*Ronald Morgan Goes to Bat*, by Patricia Reilly Giff. Penguin Putnam Books for Young Readers, 1990. An awkward but enthusiastic beginning ball player is discouraged because he cannot hit the ball. This book helps children to deal with difficult feelings and to overcome challenges.

*Today I Feel Silly and Other Moods That Make My Day*, by Jamie Lee Curtis. Harper Collins Publishers, 1998. A rhyming verse illustrated in bright, colorful drawings of different feelings.

*Feeling Jealous*, by Sarah Levite. Millbrook Press, 1999. Five children discuss experiences they have had.

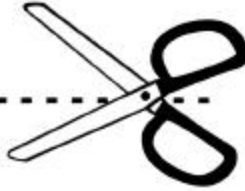
*Ira Says Goodbye*, by Bernard Waber. Houghton Mifflin, 1991. Ira's best friend Reggie is moving out of town. This book portrays Ira's fears, anger and jealousy with honesty and humor.

# Pick out the I - messages

## Student Handout

Directions:

1. Cut out the I-messages... ..

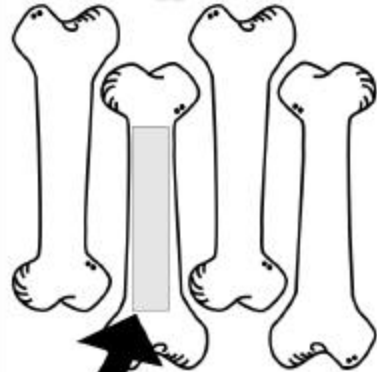


2. Paste them on the bones in your workbook.

1. I feel mad when you take my bone. I want you to give it back.
2. I feel happy when you ask me to play in your yard.
3. I feel angry when you chew up my toy. I want you to get me a new one.
4. You are selfish when you drink out of my bowl. Get your own bowl!
5. I feel happy when you help me pick up my toys.
6. You are a dirty dog! Quit digging holes in my yard!

If you have a bone to pick with someone...

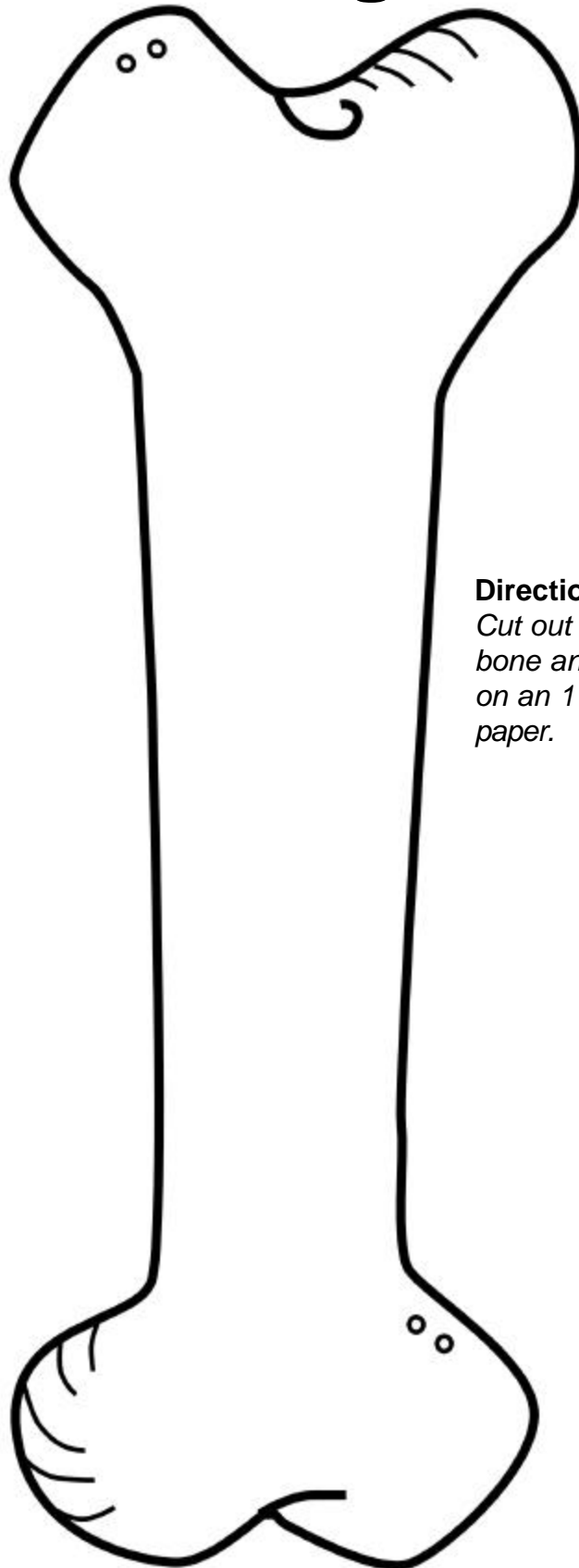
use an I - message



3. Throw the You-messages away.



# The I-Message Bone



**Directions:**

*Cut out the image of the bone and make one copy on an 11"x17" piece of paper.*



# Too Good for Violence

# Home Workout

Exercises for Parents and Kids

### Address

601 S. Magnolia Ave.  
Tampa, Florida 33606

### Phone

(813) 251-3600

### Toll Free

(800) 750-0986

### Fax

(813) 251-3237

### Website

[www.mendezfoundation.org](http://www.mendezfoundation.org)

Today we learned what to do when we have a “bone to pick” with someone else: use an I-message. Using an I-message sends a clear, honest message without blaming or name-calling. I-messages go like this:

**I feel** (name a feeling)

**when** (name what happens)

**I want** (name what you want to happen).

Starting a message with “you” and blaming another person is **not** a way to get along peaceably.

We are helping Wagner learn to use I-messages so that he can communicate well with others. Read the messages below. Cut out the I-messages and glue them onto Wagner’s bones so that he can remember to use them. Put the You-message in the trash can.

Remember, when you have a bone to pick, start out by saying, “I feel \_\_\_\_\_.”

**A** “I feel happy when you ask me to play in your yard.”

**B** “You are a dirty dog! Quit digging holes in my yard!”

**C** “I feel mad when you take my bone. I want you to give it back.”

