

LANGUAGE AND CHILDREN'S EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Importance of Language

The language we use is important to shape children's understanding of the world, as well as compassion and sensitivity towards themselves and others.



Thoughtful Language

Understanding the impact that our words have leads to more thoughtful, and also more meaningful use of language.



Positive Language

Using positive language to highlight a child's vibrant and free-spirited nature can have a positive impact on their self-esteem. It is better to say "They are an enthusiastic, energetic child" instead of "They are so crazy!" to avoid negative labeling.



Negative Language

Describing positive, energetic behavior in children as "crazy" or "loony" may lead to confusion and upset later on when they understand the negative connotations of these words.



Stigma

While overtly discriminatory language is now largely unacceptable, everyday language still contains words and terms that can have unintended negative effects on those living with mental health problems.

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LANGUAGE ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH



Phrases to Avoid

Avoid using terms such as "crazy," "insane," or "psycho" as they can change views of the self and others, and unintentionally link negative experiences to mental health.



Alternative Language

Use words like "wild" or "unbelievable" to express disbelief or negative behaviors, instead of using mental-health related language. For instance, you can use "This is wild because..." to convey surprise.



Conscious Effort

Making a conscious effort to remove these terms from everyday language is important. It may take time, but it is necessary to create a more inclusive and understanding environment.



Teachers

Teachers have a vital role in shaping children's understanding of language and behavior. Being mindful of the language we use promotes a more respectful and inclusive community.



Resources

On the next page are resources that explain more about using language about mental health, and suggestions for how to talk to children and young people about mental health.

RESOURCES



Mind Charity

<https://bit.ly/MindChildrenMH>



MentalHealth.org

<https://bit.ly/MentalHealthlang>



Guardian Blog

<https://bit.ly/GuardianPsychlang>

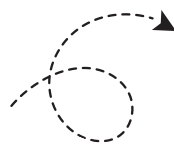


Alternative words

Mental/Insane

Crazy

Psycho



wild, exciting

unexpected, unbelievable

acting oddly or unusually



Contact

Feel free to contact me for more information, explainers or resources:

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