



ALLiES eGuide

Smiley instructions

The Smiley screening tool is aimed for 5-8-year-old children to establish their emotions related to their daily environments. It provides information about the child's wellbeing and enables an early intervention in possible mistreatment of the child.

Different versions of the Smiley:

- *Paper version* is usually more suitable for daily use with small children than the electronic version. Every child has her/his own Smiley paper for each week in a personal folder. The child can make an entry on her/his feelings in the morning when arriving (reflections related to home and/or trip) and also in the afternoon when leaving (reflections related to daycare/school). The children's answers are checked once a week and possibly discussed with the child in question and, if necessary, with the child's parents as well.
- *Poster Smiley* is a bigger version of Paper Smiley on which every child has her/his name and records her/his feelings. The poster is easy to fill in and always available, but everybody can see each other's feelings. This can provide an opportunity to launch a discussion on feelings. On the other hand, it needs to be noted that some children do not want to show their real feelings to everybody by filling in the Smiley poster.
- *E-Smiley* should be used regularly, for example once a week over a longer period. The idea is that the child chooses prevalent emotions related to home, daycare/school and the school trip. The information is sent electronically to the teacher or daycare worker who checks the children's answers once a week and intervenes if there is cause for concern with some of the children.

If some child is continually choosing an emotion of fear or sadness in relation to a certain environment, the teacher can discuss the issue with the child and evaluate the need for cooperation with the child's parents.

Regular charting of children's emotions enables an early intervention if needed, and also helps in emotional education when the children are learning to recognize their emotions. Children might have questions about emotions lacking in this tool. These are good discussion openers to widen the awareness and meanings of different feelings together with the class. Children will learn how to deal with different feelings. For example, if the icon "being afraid" is often chosen by someone, it is crucial to explore what causes the fear and whether there is some emotional need behind the feeling that should be satisfied (e.g. a need for security or a need for respect). It can then be discussed what could be done to change the child's experience of emotion in a more positive direction.

