



# MY MOOD STAR ACTIVITIES

These activities are designed for ages 3-5 years old. Activities are inclusive in nature and designed to benefit all children in this age group. Activities marked with an (\*) will greatly benefit younger children, non-verbal children, and children with special needs.

The activities target personal, social, and emotional development. All activities have been sorted into the corresponding Early Learning Goals (**ELG**) of self-regulation, managing self, and building relationships. The activities under each section will primarily focus on improving skills in that area, but as with most activities for young children, many activities work on multiple areas of development. The main **ELG** is listed after each activity.

Repeat these games – and new activities – regularly as your child’s emotions develop. You will find it fascinating to see how the conversations develop along with their personal, social, and emotional skills.

**My Mood Stars** are designed for children to carry around just as they would other soft toys. They can be taken to preschool/school, on long car journeys, or to bed as a comforter. The **Mood Stars** shape is perfect for small hands, and they make ideal fidget toys.

## Self-Regulation

- With the **My Mood Stars** on their board, name an emotion and ask your child to select the correct star. Take turns – and feel free to make the occasional mistake to see if your child picks up on it!

**ELG** – Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly;

- \*With the Stars off the board, make a face that reflects a **My Mood Star** emotion and ask your child to put the corresponding Star back on the board.

**ELG** – Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly;

## Self-Regulation cont.

- \*Show your child a **Mood Star** at random and ask them to copy its face, and then name the emotion. Taking turns really helps parent/child bonding.

**ELG** – Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly;

- \*Use the **Mood Stars** to discuss your feelings. Hold one up and use the emotion in a statement. For example:

“I’m so happy today that it’s not raining and that we can go to the park.”

“I’m sad my watch broke.”

“I’m surprised to see it’s snowing!”

Or whatever scenario comes up. Keep the phrases short.

**ELG** – Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly;

- \*Teach your child to copy your expression and/or that of a **Mood Star**. Be silly with Silly Star. Get your child’s attention with unexpected actions. Talk about how they may be feeling, for example, “You look happy/surprised/sleepy. Can you find Happy Star/Surprised Star/Sleepy Star?”

**ELG** – Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly; Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions

- \*With the **Mood Stars** as a visual, use the same emotion words in daily routines. Make more statements than questions. When you do ask questions, make sure that they are open ended and can’t be answered with a nod or a shake of the head.

**ELG** – Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly;

- \***My Mood Stars** can be attached securely with Velcro to a badge, which can be worn safely by over-3s and pinned to jackets, T-shirts and jumpers. They can choose their favourite **Mood Star**, or they can pick the one that shows how they are feeling.

**ELG** – Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly;

## Self-Regulation cont.

- \*To encourage imagination and storytelling, choose a **Mood Star** at random and describe a situation that it may have been in that caused the particular emotion.

**ELG** – Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly;

- \*Choose a **Mood Star** and talk to your child about a time they felt that way, what happened and what it was like.

**ELG** – Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly;

- \*Children love to throw, and the soft and squidgy **My Mood Stars** can be thrown safely onto the board or into a basket from a distance. Have the child choose a **Mood Star**, identify the emotion, and give it a toss. This is great practice for hand-eye coordination, balance, and timing. Adjust the distance based on the age and skill level of the child. (Note: For younger or less coordinated children, a basket is an easier target.)

**ELG** – Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly;

- With the **Mood Stars**, ask your child to pick the emotion that they are feeling right now – this gives your child an opportunity to open up about any worries or tell you how happy they were to win at games, or to be given a role in the school play.

**ELG** – Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly; Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

- Ask your child not to look as you remove a **Mood Star** from the pile. Keep the Mood Star hidden until your child can mimic the emotion of the missing Star.

**ELG** – Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly;

- Encourage your child to talk to the **Mood Stars** and invent different scenarios. They will project their own feelings onto the Stars which will help them process their own emotions.

**ELG** – Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly; Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

## Self-Regulation cont.

- Pick a **Mood Star**, and mimic either the same emotion or a different one. Have the child tell you whether your expression matches the **Mood Star**. If the child answers correctly, ask them how they knew whether the expressions matched.

**ELG** – Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly;

- Frozen Faces. This is a variation of Freeze Dance. Have your child(ren) dance to music. When you turn the music off, instead of saying, “freeze,” say, “Frozen \_\_\_\_\_ faces,” while holding up the corresponding **Mood Star**. The child(ren) will freeze in place and make a face to go with the **Mood Star**.

**ELG** – Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly;

- \*Find pictures of people with facial expressions that correspond to the **Mood Stars**, or take pictures of your child making those facial expressions. Tape those pictures to the floor. Toss the matching **Mood Star** onto the picture.

**ELG** – Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly;

- Set up an obstacle course in which hopping over the **Mood Star** and naming the emotion is a component.

**ELG** – Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly;

- Children may want to explore other emotions. They can draw any emotion they like in the outlines provided on the following page.

**ELG** – Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly;

## Managing Self

- Using the **Mood Stars** to support, ask your child about a time they tried something new, like starting nursery, getting dressed by themselves, tying their shoe, climbing to the top of a tall slide, etc. Ask them how they felt when they first tried it. Ask them if it was hard or easy. Ask them how they felt after they did it. Ask them what new thing they want to try next.

**ELG** – Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge;

- Using the **Mood Stars** to support, ask your child about a time they didn't follow a rule. Ask what happened. Ask how they felt. Ask how other people that may have been involved felt. Ask them what they did to try to make things better.

**ELG** – Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly; Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly; Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

- Using the **Mood Stars** to support, ask your child about a time they followed a rule. Ask what happened. Ask how they felt. Ask how other people that may have been involved felt.

**ELG** – Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly; Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly; Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

- Create a Happy Choice / Sad Choice Jar. Fill the jar with slips of paper of common examples of behaviours that children do, both positive and negative. Some examples would be: helping a friend with their jacket, asking for help if I need it, comforting a friend who is sad, saying please, pushing, running inside, dumping out toys and then choosing a different activity, etc.

Using Happy Star and Sad Star to help sort, have a child choose a slip of paper from the jar. Read and discuss the behaviour with the child (ren). Have them decide whether it is a happy choice or a sad choice and place it by the correct star.

As you see new behaviours, either positive or negative, add them to the jar to play again another day.

**ELG** – Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly;

## Managing Self cont.

- \*Use the **Mood Stars** like puppets to act out common problem scenarios children encounter, such as wanting a toy someone else is playing with or being scared of the dark. Have the **Mood Stars** ask the children for advice.

**ELG** – Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly; Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly; Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

## Building Relationships

- \*Choose a **Mood Star**, name the emotion, and discuss what they could do if Someone around them was feeling this way.

**ELG** – Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers; Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

- \*Set out several stuffed animals and dolls and put a **Mood Star** next to each one. Next, you and your child speak to the figures as if they were feeling those emotions. This will help your child practice responding to different emotional situations thus helping to develop empathy.

**ELG** – Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers; Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

- If you have a group of children, have everyone sit in a circle. Pick a **Mood Star**. Each person takes a turn telling about something that makes them feel that way, and then passes it to the next person. (Good activities for families, too)

**ELG** – Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others; Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly

- **Mood Star** relay race. Divide children and **Mood Stars** into teams/sets of 4, or equal teams/sets if you have less than 8 children playing. (Do multiple rounds if you have more than 8 children.)
  1. Line your two team up at the start line. Each team has a bowl or basket with 4 **Mood Stars** in it.
  2. When you say go, the first child on each team picks up a **Mood Star**, identifies the emotion, and balances the **Mood Star** on their head as they walk/run to the finish line. If the **Mood Star** falls, they must pick it up and start over.

## Building Relationships

3. After the first person on a team crosses the finish line, the next person goes.
4. The first team to get all of their players across the finish line wins.
5. Encourage them to cheer on their peers.

You can vary this activity by changing the body part you balance the **Mood Star** on or how they move from the start to the finish line.

**ELG** – Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others; Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate

- Print, colour, and cut out two sets of the paper **Mood Stars** with the pre-drawn faces. (You can do it, or you can let the children do it depending on skill level.) Teach children how to play a memory match game with a partner. When they get a match, they have to tell their partner what emotion it is and make a corresponding face to express that emotion.

**ELG** – Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others;

- Musical **Mood Stars**. This is a variation on musical chairs, except no one is out and no stars are removed from play.

Sit in a circle. Pass out the **Mood Stars** to the children. Put on music. As the music plays, have the children pass the **Mood Stars** around the circle. When the music stops, children holding **Mood Stars** should identify the emotion.

**ELG** – Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others;

- **Mood Star** Charades. Have one child pick a **Mood Star**, but don't let anyone else see it. Have that child act out that emotion for everyone else to guess.

**ELG** – Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others; Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly;

- \*Using the **Mood Star** outlines provided, have each child design a **Mood Star** for someone special in their lives. When they give their star to that person, have them tell that person what they like best about them and how it makes them feel.

**ELG** – Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers



## MORE INFORMATION

I hope that you find these activities useful and that **My Mood Stars** helps with the emotional development of your children or the children in your care. Please do email me with your feedback and suggestions at [wendy@wendywoo.uk](mailto:wendy@wendywoo.uk)

For more information, please visit [www.mymoodstars.co.uk](http://www.mymoodstars.co.uk)  
**My Mood Stars** and their creator, Wendy White, can be followed on:



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