



# TCI – Module Nine Emotional First Aid



## Emotional First Aid

Emotional first aid can be provided to a child or young person when they are involved in an activity or situation and are struggling to manage their frustration or stress. Emotional first aid can be provided to allow them the ability and time to regroup and keep going with the activity. More often than not the child or young person will be able get back in charge of their emotions and continue with the activity if we listen to child or young person and help them regain focus.

### Goals of Emotional First Aid

1. Provide immediate support to reduce emotional intensity (co-regulation)
2. Identify and resolve the underlining concerns causing distress
3. Keep the child in the activity

### Strategies for Emotional First Aid

#### Co-regulate emotions – be a calm presence

When children and young people are unable to regulate their emotions they need a caring adult to help support them and calm them down so they can think rationally. Active listening and empathic responses are skills necessary to help children co-regulate. Self-awareness and self-regulation are skills that are needed by the adult in order to ensure that the adult does not get angry if children or young people say hurtful things. It is important to remember that these are displays of pain based behaviours.

#### Maintain the relationship and lines of communication

Adults can prevent a total breakdown of communication when they use active listening, share perceptions, are supportive and stay attuned. To lessen the likelihood that a young person or child will refuse to talk the adult needs to supportively engage the young person or child.

#### Plan and Anticipate – be a coach

When the child or young person is ready to return back to the activity and is in control of their emotions we can give them encouragement and support and help them to anticipate challenges. If there has been a conflict between children, you may need to help repair the relationship or help negotiate the problem. The child or young person may have a distorted view of the situation or of the other's intentions and they may find it helpful to examine what happened and clarify any misconceptions.



Emotional first aid is a quick intervention designed to get the child or young person through a tough situation so they can stay in the activity. It is an opportunity for the adult to help the child/ young person use the strengths they have to manage the situation with support.



**Details of this topic are covered in the Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) Student Workbook 7<sup>th</sup> Edition. Refer to Module Three pages S43 – S45**