Understanding Facial Expressions

What is a facial expression?

- The result of the **motion of five key facial features** that can be used to show a certain emotion
- Features are scanned in order: eyes, eyebrows, mouth, forehead, tilt of head
- Example of a facial expression:
  - Wide open eyes, eyebrows up, mouth open, forehead wrinkled, tilt of head slightly back (surprised)
- Importance of facial expressions:
  - **In ourselves:** To match your facial expression to what you are saying and the emotion you are trying to show
  - **In others:** To know what emotion they are showing and how to talk to them

The 7 Basic Emotions (what facial expressions can show):

- The 7 basic emotions: calm, happy, sad, angry, fear, disgust, and surprise
- Students often need support to remember the importance of a match between a **facial expression and their emotion**

What are the 3 Clues?

- There are **three clues** needed to show and read an emotion. These clues should match, so others can read your emotion
  - Facial Expressions
  - Body Language/Gestures (result of changes of one or more parts of body to show an emotion)
  - Volume/Tone (the way you change your voice (including pitch and the degree or level of loudness) to help show a certain emotion

How to support students:

Recognizing their own clues:	Possible Strategies:
• Showing a variety of facial expressions (e.g., only shows angry) • Matching their facial expression, body language/gestures, and volume/tone to the emotion they are experiencing (e.g., looking angry, but is actually calm)	• Use statements such as "I'm not sure if you're facial expression matches your emotion" or "what is your body language/gestures telling me about your emotion towards the situation?" • How do you think your peers are reading your clues? • How can you change your facial expression, body language, and/or volume/tone to better match your current emotion? • Provide specific and immediate feedback when the student shows clues that matches their emotion • If needed, discuss additional strategies with the SCI-A teacher
Reading the clues of others:	Possible Strategies:
• Identifying the facial expressions, body language/gestures, and volume/tone of others • Using these clues to identify which emotion others are feeling	• Ask students to identify what your facial expression (i.e., the teachers face) is showing them • Encourage students to accurately read the facial expressions, body language/gestures, and volume/tone of others • Provide specific, immediate, and possibly discrete feedback when the student reads the clues of others • If needed, discuss additional strategies with the SCI-A teacher

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