HOW TO USE THE EARLY CHILDHOOD FEELINGS THERMOMETER

For some, identifying feelings is not easy. Encouraging children to identify feelings is good. It may take some practice for them to connect the feeling with words to describe it. If they can't do it right away, take a break and come back to it later.

Help children identify emotions:

- Help the child notice and identify what feeling is present, using emotion faces and/or words.
- Consider using "feelings check-ins" at the beginning of each day as part of the daily routine for everyone.

Identify whether the child needs to relax or release their energy:

- Some children may need quiet/calming activities (e.g., roll up in a ball) and others may need to actively release their energy to calm (e.g., jumping jacks).
- Help the child try different things to see what helps most for that moment.

Notice whether the child seeks out space alone or is open to having support from an adult:

- Self-regulation – some children may prefer to have space alone to calm.
- Co-regulation – some children may respond better to having a supportive adult physically near to help soothe or calm them (e.g., sitting close by, engaging in a calming activity together, talking or singing together).

Optimize the quiet space in the room:

- Soft lighting, calming music.
- Pillows, soft chair, stuffed animals.
- Avoid adding too many toys or activities (e.g., select a few soft books, squishy balls).