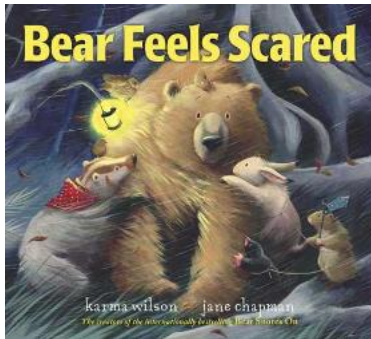


Children's Lit Kit

Supporting Social Emotional Development through Literature

BOOK SELECTION



Bear Feels Scared

By Karma Wilson & Jane Chapman

Margaret K. McElderry Books

There is a storm brewing in Strawberry Vale and Bear hasn't made it home yet! The storm causes Bear to lose his way in the forest and he feels scared! Will he ever make it back home? Meanwhile, at his lair, Bear's friends are starting to become worried about their friend. He should have been home by now

and it's starting to storm! They plan a search party to rescue Bear. When they find him, Bear is wet and afraid. His friends calm his fears with big hugs and take him back to his lair. There, they make a fire, tell stories, and cuddle up asleep. Bear feels safe again.

This story teaches children that everyone, even big strong bears, feel scared sometimes. This book describes to children what feeling scared looks like using words such as "shakes" and "shivers" and illustrations showing Bear covering his eyes and crying. This book shows children that scared is a feeling, and when we know what it is we are feeling, we can take steps to make ourselves feel better. We can also depend upon our family and friends to help us feel calm and safe again. This book also teaches children how to be a good friend by recognizing when someone is feeling scared or sad and how they can take steps to make that person feel better.

A copy of the book is available by following this link to [Amazon](#) or an online version can be found [here](#).

BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER READING

Examples of activities that can be used before, during, and after reading *Bear Feels Scared* to promote social and emotional development:

BEFORE – Have the children look at the cover of the book, but don't tell them the title yet. Ask them what they think is going on in the picture and how they think Bear is feeling. How do you know he's feeling that way? What are Bear's friends doing? Why might they be doing that?

BEFORE – Tell the children the title of the story and ask them the following questions. What does being scared mean? What are some other words for scared? What might your face look like when you are scared? What might your body do? Have children make a face or act out what their body might look like when they are feeling scared.

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DURING – While reading the story ask the children why Bear might be feeling scared. How can they tell he is feeling scared? Ask them what his face looks like and what his body is doing.

DURING – Bear's friends are back at the lair and Bear should be home by now. Ask the children how his friends might be feeling? What does it mean to be worried? Explain to the children that worried means being upset or scared about what is happening or what might happen. Ask the children why Bear's friends are worried?

DURING – When Bear's friends find him, he feels relieved or happy now because he knows he is going to be safe. Ask children how Bear's friends made him feel safe again.

AFTER – Talk to the children about how everyone feels afraid sometimes. Being afraid can be good because it protects us from things that might hurt us. Ask the children to name some things that they are afraid of.

AFTER – Ask the children what their bodies and faces look like when they are scared and have them act it out. Tell them that one of the worst things about being scared is not knowing what to do. Ask them what they do when they feel scared. Give them ideas for things they can do when they feel scared, including talking to an adult they trust (e.g., a parent, family member, or teacher) who can help them feel safe again.

AFTER – Talk to the children about how Bear's friends made him feel safe. Talk with the children about being a good friend and that being a good friend means not teasing or making fun of someone when they are feeling scared. Ask them for ideas of what they can do to make a friend feel better.

COPING WITH FEELING SCARED

Whole Group or Circle Time – It is important for children to know that not everyone is afraid of the same things. During your circle time, have children vote on whether they like common things that may cause fear in some children but not others (ex. roller coasters, pet snakes, or fire trucks). Talk about how everyone is different and what may scare one person, might not be scary to another. Talk about the importance of not teasing someone because of what they are afraid of and that everyone is afraid of something.

Art – Have children create Scared Bears like the ones found [here](#). Talk to the children about giving their bears facial features that a bear might have when they are scared (e.g., big eyes, an open mouth, or a sad mouth). Ask the children why their bear is scared and what the bear is going to do to feel better. Write down or have the child attempt to write down what they say about their bear.

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Music – Songs are a great way for children to learn about emotions. The Emotions Action song found [here](#) teaches children about a variety of emotions and what a person might physically do when they are feeling that emotion (ex: “If you’re scared and you know it, hide your face!”). Then help the children come up with variations to “If you’re scared and you know it” such as “hug a bear” or “find a friend”. There is also a StoryBots animated music video called “I’m Scared” that can be found on YouTube [here](#).

Library – Read other books about being afraid or include them in your classroom library. Other great books about feeling scared include the following:

[*I'm Not Scared Book*](#) by Todd Parr

[*When I Feel Scared*](#) by Cornelia Maude Spelman

[*What Was I Scared Of?*](#) by Dr. Seuss

[*When I'm Feeling Scared*](#) by Trace Moroney

Dramatic Play Center – Pretend that one of the baby dolls in the center is feeling scared. Describe to the children how you know the baby is scared (ex: he’s shaking, his eyes are wide, etc.). Ask the child what the baby might be afraid of. Then help the child think of ways to make the baby feel better (ex: rock him, sing to him, give him a hug, etc.) If you’re feeling crafty, you can get directions on how to make your own miniature dolls and give them different expressions [here](#).

Block Center – Help children build a place that makes them feel safe. This might be home, school, or another location. Help the children decide what they should put in this space. If you have a dollhouse in the classroom, you may want to borrow some furniture to help the children build their safe place. Ask the children what should be in there and why? Ask them who should be in there and why.

ENGAGING FAMILIES AND CAREGIVERS

Parents and caregivers play an important role in teaching children to recognize emotions and manage them appropriately. There are some easy activities that parents and caregivers can do at home to teach and talk with children about emotions. The National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations has two handouts that can be sent home to parents. The first is an article explaining to parents and caregivers the why and how of teaching children to identify and express emotions found [here](#). The other is a handout of fun activities that parents can do at home with their children found [here](#).

Take home bags can also be made for children to read books and do fun activities related to emotions. Each bag can have a different book and activity for the child to do at home and can

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be rotated among the children. A list of great books about emotions can be found [here](#). Easy activities can include a [Feelings Cube](#), [Feelings Bingo](#), and [more!](#)

USING THE PYRAMID MODEL TO REFLECT

Emotional Literacy is a Targeted Social Emotional Strategy in Tier 2 of the Pyramid Model for Promoting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children. When Tier 1 strategies are in place and used with fidelity, teachers can make informed decisions about which students can benefit from additional, targeted social emotional supports such as Emotional Literacy and Emotional Regulation. The following checklists can be used to reflect on your classroom practices and identify areas of strength and areas for growth.

[Emotions and Emotional Regulation Implementation Guide Checklist](#)

[Practice Implementation Checklist: Social Emotional Teaching Strategies](#)

This Children's Lit Kit was assembled by Sara Smouse.

