



ESCALATORS/ DEESCALATORS

When things are going poorly, should you try to make it better or make it worse? Do we all automatically know how to calm ourselves down and make ourselves feel better? How can we do that?



Steps:

When you're upset or angry or frustrated, you have two choices. You can make it better or you can make it worse. The same thing goes for when others are upset or angry or frustrated. You can either escalate (make the bad feelings go up) or deescalate (calm the bad feelings down). How do we deescalate?

When you're upset, when you're angry, you have to find those things to calm yourself back down before you act. Have you ever said or done something when you were angry that you wish you hadn't? What if you had calmed down before you spoke or acted? What are some things that help you feel better when you're mad? Sad? Think about how your body feels when you're angry or upset. Can you calm down by changing how your body feels?

Make a list with the kids of things that help- things they can try. Practice breathing exercises (five second inhale, hold for three seconds, five second exhale). Help them loosen muscles, reminding them to lower their shoulders, unclench their jaw, etc. Practice "I feel" statements ("I feel _____ when people _____").

Make posters of the feel-better lists for the walls and encourage kids to use them!