

# Make a "Mood Meter" Sign

In kindergarten, kids spend a lot of time learning how to work in groups, whether that means doing projects, joining in during circle time, or playing outdoors together. This goes great when everyone is feeling happy, but it's also important to teach kids how to recognize when they are upset and when others are upset. Teach your child at home with this tool that borrows the famous color coding of the U.S. Fire Service. Have your kindergartener help you create a family sign that warns other family members if she's feeling stressed or upset. This is a tool the entire family can use. She'll learn to decode her moods (and yours) and will improve her reading and writing skills at the same time!



## What You Need:

- Piece of posterboard, 22"x 13"
- Compass and Ruler
- Heavy construction paper in red, orange, yellow, green, and black
- Metal paper fastener ("brad")
- Markers

## What You Do:

1. Place the posterboard horizontally on a table surface.
2. On the top, write a title (or help your kindergartener write it herself) such as, "Right Now, I Feel..."
3. Use your compass to make a large half-circle in the middle of your poster.
4. Then, use your ruler to divide the half-circle in half, and then divide each of the halves in half, so that you have four "slices" marked off.
5. Help your kindergartener cut out a pie shape the same size as the "slices" on the half-circle using each color of construction paper—one green, one yellow, one orange, and one red.
6. Help your kindergartener glue the colors from left to right across the half-circle in this order: green, yellow, orange, and red.
7. If she's comfortable writing words, have her do the next step. If not, let her dictate. On the green slice, write "Calm and happy." For the yellow, have her write "A little upset." In the orange section, "Very upset." In the red, she can write, "Exploding!" or any word that indicates she's extremely upset. Get creative!
8. Together with your child, cut out a 6" long arrow from the black construction paper, and attach it to the posterboard with the metal fastener. The arrow should be attached to the center of the flat side on the half-circle.
9. If she wants, have your child use markers to add any other decorations on the poster.
10. Put the "mood fire safety" meter in a prominent place at home, like the kitchen or the living room, and encourage your family to use it whenever the time seems right.
11. Invite your child to pay attention to how she's feeling and to talk about it. With luck, you'll have many happy days ahead, safely in that nice green zone.