

EMDR Explanation for Kids
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Humans have a really amazing way of dealing with things in life, good things and bad things. Our brains are made to help us feel better by digesting what happens in life. Sometimes we do this by talking to someone we care about and that helps. Sometimes just crying helps us digest our feelings. So things are upsetting then we feel better.

But sometimes things are too big or there are too many things at once, and our brains get stuck. And we end up feeling like that thing is happening even though it is over. Or we might have bad dreams or just feel scared or sad and not know why. Or we might even be stuck with thoughts or yucky feelings in our body. Even if we try really hard to be happy or try to forget what happened, sometimes if things are stuck we can't. We might get mad easy or cry easy and not even know why.

I have had lots of other kids who had this happen to them and I was able to help them feel better. Would you like to hear about what we did?

I do a therapy called EMDR. EMDR helps the bad things that happen move through your brain so your brain knows the bad thing is in the past and over. Once the bad things move in your brain there is more room for feeling happy again.

The cool thing about EMDR is it seems to help the bad stuff move out and the good stuff stays. It works by following with your eyes as I move my fingers back and forth. When your eyes move it helps the bad stuff move in your brain. (Or you could talk about tappers, as they buzz back and forth in your hands... or as the tones go back and forth in your ears....)

I will just be asking you to tell me what happens and whatever you think, feel in your body or see in your mind is okay. Even if what you are thinking or feeling seems funny or surprising, it is okay. There is no way for you to do EMDR wrong.

If you start to have feelings or thought that bother you that actually means EMDR is working and moving the bad stuff in your brain. So you can just tell me what you are feeling and we will keep going. The more you move your eyes and

After we start, if you have feelings that are too big or you want to stop for any reason, you can just raise your hand like this (show stop signal) and I will stop. Remember, any time you need to stop we can. Even if you just want to take a break for a few minutes.

Sometimes when we start to help the brain move the bad stuff, you feel it even more. But I will help remind you that you are here in this office and you are safe and we will keep going to try to help it move.

If it doesn't all move out before we stop, we will do something to try to help until you come back. Like we might use the container box or imagine the safe place.