



# Flying Colours

Educational Psychology Service

*Promoting Growth, Wellbeing & Achievement*

[www.flyingcoloureducationalpsychology.co.uk](http://www.flyingcoloureducationalpsychology.co.uk)

## Understanding & Managing Feelings: The Body Map

Young people with Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) often benefit from activities designed to increase their understanding of emotions. This activity focuses on their own emotions.

The **body map** activity can be a fun visual way for young people to develop these skills. You can either:

1. Encourage the young person to lie on top of A2/A3 sheets of paper stuck together whilst you use a felt pen to draw an outline around them.

Or

2. Use an outline of a person already drawn on a piece of paper (see overleaf for an example)

Next, the young person picks **different colour pens** for each of the basic emotions (i.e. happy, sad, angry, worried) and colours in on the outline where in their body they feel each emotion (e.g. in their stomach, fists, head). Do not comment on the colours chosen for each emotion, it is important that the young person picks the colour that best represents the feeling for them.

The aim is for the young person to start to recognise when certain emotions are starting to rise, this then gives them the opportunity to use regulating strategies before becoming overly anxious/angry; beginning to recognise how they are feeling is the first step in learning to manage these feelings.

Once the young person is able to recognise their feelings they can be supported to learn strategies to feel calmer. Strategies such as **square breathing** and/or **mindfulness** activities may be helpful ways to regulate emotions (for examples visit: [www.flyingcoloureducationalpsychology.co.uk/resources](http://www.flyingcoloureducationalpsychology.co.uk/resources)).

Access to a **calm box** is helpful for some young people. This can just be a shoe box that the young person decorates to make their own, then with adult support, it is filled it with objects/activities that the young person thinks will help them to feel calm. Following some body map work, the young person can then be supported to learn when they are beginning to feel anxious or angry for example and to go to the calm box.

