

# STOMP IT OUT!™

## Feeling Identification, Communication, and Problem Solving

### INTRODUCTION

STOMP IT OUT!™ is an educational game that helps children between the ages of 5-12 build feeling identification, communication, and problem-solving skills. Physical movement is a principal factor in the game to improve participation, address diverse learning styles, and help motivate children to learn.

For regularly updated free information, printables, and resources, visit [www.stomp-it-out.com](http://www.stomp-it-out.com) and follow the educational psychologist behind Feelings in Motion on Instagram @stomp.it.out.

### REQUIREMENTS

STOMP IT OUT!™ should be played with an adult (parent, educator, psychologist, or professional) and 1-5 children. In groups over 5, the physical movement may be overly stimulating. You'll need a large, open space to play. To avoid injury, play on carpeted surfaces only.

### GOALS OF STOMP IT OUT!™

- Stomp It Out!™ promotes the building of **feeling identification, emotional vocabulary, communication skills, perspective taking, spatial awareness, and problem-solving skills.**
- Stomp It Out creates a space for children to understand their experiences more fully, build on their ability to express themselves, and problem solve with guidance.
- With regular use, children should be able to identify and relate the following emotions to various personal experiences: **Anger, Sadness, Happiness/Excitement, Disappointment, Worry/Anxiety, Confusion, Embarrassment, Pride, Comfort, and Loneliness/Jealousy/Discomfort.**
- Those who participate regularly in the problem-solving component of Stomp It Out!™ will learn **physical, mental, and connection based problem-solving strategies.**

## **GAME CONTENTS**

Directions

Feeling Mats (10)

- Anger/Frustration
- Sadness
- Happiness/Excitement
- Pride
- Worry/Anxiety
- Disappointment
- Confusion
- Embarrassment
- Comfort
- Loneliness/Jealousy/Discomfort

Situation Cards (110)

- Categories include:
  - Social experiences
  - Academic experiences
  - Responsibility/limits
  - Changes/Transitions/Loss
  - Positive experiences

Blank Situation Cards (25)

Problem Solving Cards (15)

Tokens

Dry Erase Marker

## SCHOOL & CLINICIAN INSTRUCTIONS & SET UP

- Players need to be taught the meaning of the feelings on the 10 Feeling Mats before game play. If players are under 6, you can begin by teaching 4-5 primary Feeling Mats noted below.
- Introduce your children to the four characters. Some Feeling Mats allow children to use background information as a cue to identify the feeling presented and others require that children evaluate the character's expression and/or body language.
- **Questions you can ask players to build understanding:**  
(Optional: Pass a soft ball or stuffed animal (not included) to each child when they show they would like to share.)
  - What is going on in this picture? What do you think happened?
  - What do you think this child is feeling? (Help them identify the feeling if needed). The Happy/Joyful Feeling Mat can be perceived as Excited or Strong, and the Uncomfortable mat may also be perceived as Jealous or Lonely.
  - Have you ever felt that way before?
  - What did that feeling feel like in your body? Describe some of the physical sensations that commonly go along with each emotion.
  - For further examples, please download material available at [www.stomp-it-out.com](http://www.stomp-it-out.com).

## DIRECTIONS

1. **Choose Situation Cards that are relevant and appropriate to your players. Pull those out for game play and leave the rest behind. Always include positive purple Situation Cards in game play.** Your first Situation Card should be a positive one.
2. Blank Situation Cards are available in each section to tailor situations to your Players.
3. For children under 6, you may wish to use 5 or fewer Feeling Mats. The 5 primary Feeling Mats include: **Happy/Excited, Proud, Sad, Angry and Comfortable.** For older children, use as many as desired.

4. Set up the Feeling Mats in a wide circle around the room. Walk around the Feeling Mats together to review where the feelings have been placed in the room.
5. Players begin by standing in the center of the circle.
6. **Players should be instructed to move in silly or creative ways to the Feeling Mat that indicates how they would feel based on the Situation Card read aloud.**
7. **\*Provide players with movement ideas including: crab walking, skipping, hopping, jumping, slithering, tip toeing, dancing, etc.** Some players may like to pretend to be an animal or act out the feeling while moving.
8. After each turn, players should be asked to move back to the center of the circle.
9. Show players how to land on the Feeling Mats, with toes on the black corners and space between each other's bodies.
10. Read the first positive Situation Card aloud, turn on music of your choosing (if desired, not provided), and tell the players to move in any way they desire to the Feeling Mat that shows how they would feel.
11. **You may need to remind the players not to touch each other's bodies while moving.** This is great practice in body control and spatial awareness. If using music to cue when kids should move or land, turn off the music to signal when the children need to land on the Feeling Mat of their choice. Younger players benefit from this additional cue to stop moving.
12. For verbal children, ask why each child landed where they did. Adults can play the first couple rounds to model this.
  - a. **Validate your players' feelings** with statements such as: "That does sound like a frustrating situation. I might feel that way also." This will help them to feel safe sharing.
  - b. If applicable, you can discuss how Players landed on different Feeling Mats even though the situation was the same. This helps to draw attention to the idea that others have different feelings and perspectives, which is important in the development of perspective taking skills and empathy.
13. For nonverbal children, acknowledge each player participating. Provide the language you would use to describe the emotion they chose, which gives voice and language to their experience.
  - a. For example, you might say, "You landed on Worried. I understand. I might feel worried in that situation also."
  - b. You can expand to talk about worry and how everyone has those feelings so that players understand their experiences are normal.
14. **Typical game length for ages 5-6: 15 minutes.**
15. **Typical game length for ages 7-12: 20-30 minutes.**

There are no incorrect answers, but players should be directed to be honest about how they would feel. If they feel more than one emotion, they can choose one Feeling Mat to go to and say both feelings when their turn arises. **All players can be permitted to skip the talking section of the game if they wish.**

The players' responses generally reveal their understanding of their emotional selves as well as their understanding of how to handle various feelings and situations. Psychological issues are likely to be presented in the way a child responds to situation and feeling cards. **The therapist, practitioner or teacher can pinpoint need areas through game play and address the child's needs/concerns in an individualized manner.**

The parent, teacher, or therapist and the players communicate indirectly, through the game, and as such, **players are often able to discuss sensitive issues or feelings that they would be less willing or unable to discuss independently.**

Stomp It Out! has been tested with a general education and special education population of elementary and middle school aged children attending various schools in Santa Monica, California. It is used world-wide to support emotional wellness, feeling identification, communication and problem solving skills in elementary aged children.

## PROBLEM SOLVING:

Review the black card Problem Solving Strategy Cards. Talk about any strategies that are unfamiliar. For free guided examples and suggestions for teaching any unfamiliar strategies, please visit [www.stomp-it-out.com/gameinstructions](http://www.stomp-it-out.com/gameinstructions).

Play the beginning of Stomp It Out normally, **keeping to the side any Situation Cards you would like your players to problem solve through at the end.** Bring the Problem Solving Cards and the chosen Situation Cards to the center of the circle. Face the Situation Cards problem side down. Players can take turns choosing situations to solve. Ask the players to choose the most effective strategy or strategies to manage the situation at hand. They can work in teams or all together. Tokens can be given for participation or for convincing arguments for why a particular strategy would be supportive. There may be more than one Problem Solving answer.

You can help players to think about situations they have experienced in the past, what has worked well for them, as well as what hasn't. This helps them to begin using their experiences as information to solve future problems.