7 FILMS THAT HELP CHILDREN UNDERSTAND BIG, CONFUSING FEELINGS



How to use everyday films as a simple tool to open up conversations about confusing or unkind behaviour

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How to use movies to support your child

Sometimes children don’t have the words to explain how something feels.

But they notice how they feel it in their body.

And they try to make sense of it.

Using films or books gives them a safe way to explore those feelings.

It takes the pressure away from a direct conversation and turns it into a shared moment instead.

You’re not asking them to talk about themselves.

You’re simply noticing something together.





What helps:

Watch together when you can
Make small, gentle comments
Let them lead if they want to say more

What not to do:

Don’t pause and analyse
Don’t ask lots of questions
Don’t push for a conversation

This is an opportunity to talk...
not an obligation.

Best suited for primary-aged children, but you can adapt the conversations depending on your child

1 Tangled



What your child might notice

Rapunzel is told she isn’t safe without one person.

What this can help them understand

Sometimes children are given messages that make them feel unsure or dependent.

Key moment to watch

~03:00–05:00
“Mother Knows Best”
Rapunzel is told the world is dangerous and she can’t trust herself

~35:00
Rapunzel feels guilty and confused after leaving

Try saying:

- “That’s a bit confusing, isn’t it.”
- “She’s being told she can’t do things on her own.”
- “That would make you doubt yourself a bit.”
- “She’s being made to feel like she needs her.”

Gentle questions:

- “What do you think about that?”
- “Does that feel a bit confusing?”

2 The Lion King



What your child might notice

Simba is made to believe something is his fault.

What this can help them understand

Children can sometimes carry blame that doesn’t belong to them.

Key moment to watch

~30:00–35:00
Scar tells Simba he caused Mufasa’s death

Try saying:

- “He’s being made to feel like it’s his fault.”
- “That would make you feel really bad.”
- “He looks really upset there.”
- “That would stick in your head, wouldn’t it.”

Gentle questions:

- “What do you think he’s feeling?”
- “Does that seem fair?”

3 The Hunchback of Notre Dame



What your child might notice

Quasimodo is told the world is dangerous and he should stay hidden.

What this can help them understand

Sometimes children are made to feel afraid or ashamed.

Key moment to watch

~10:00–15:00
Frollo tells Quasimodo he must stay inside and fear the outside world

Try saying:

- “That’s quite scary to hear.”
- “He’s being told he can’t go out.”
- “That would make you feel nervous.”
- “That’s a lot of fear to give someone.”
- “He’s being kept away from everything.”
- “That would make you unsure about things.”

Gentle questions:

- “How do you think that feels?”
- “Would that feel a bit scary?”

4 Matilda



What your child might notice

Matilda isn’t listened to or understood by the grown-ups around her.

What this can help them understand

Children need to feel heard and valued.

Key moment to watch

~10:00
Parents dismiss her completely

~25:00–35:00
Miss Trunchbull uses fear and control

Try saying:

- “She’s not really being listened to there.”
- “That’s not very kind, is it.”
- “That would feel a bit lonely.”
- “No one’s really helping her.”

Gentle questions:

- “What do you notice there?”
- “How do you think she feels?”
- “Would that feel nice or not really?”

5 Frozen



What your child might notice

Anna trusts someone very quickly and doesn’t really know them.

What this can help them understand

It’s okay to take time to feel safe with people.

Key moment to watch

~20:00–30:00
Anna meets Hans and quickly decides to trust him

~1:20:00
His true intentions are revealed

Try saying:

- “She trusted him very quickly.”
- “She doesn’t really know him yet.”
- “Sometimes it takes time to know someone.”
- “Things can change, can’t they.”

Gentle questions:

- “What do you think about that?”
- “Does that seem quite quick?”
- “Do you think he changed?”

6 Cinderella



What your child might notice

Cinderella is treated unfairly compared to others.

What this can help them understand

Children notice when things feel unequal or unkind.

Key moment to watch

~15:00–25:00
She is given all the chores and treated differently

Try saying:

- “That doesn’t seem very fair.”
- “She’s being treated differently.”
- “That would feel a bit upsetting.”
- “That’s a lot for her to do.”
- “They’re not being very kind.”

Gentle questions:

- “Does that seem fair?”
- “What would be a more fair way to do it?”
- “How do you think she feels?”

7 Toy Story



What your child might notice

Some toys are treated with care, others are treated roughly.

What this can help them understand

The way someone treats you matters.

Key moment to watch

~20:00–30:00
Sid mistreats toys

~end scenes
Andy shows care and kindness

Try saying:

- “That’s a bit of a rough way to play.”
- “That looks a bit scary.”
- “That’s not very gentle.”
- “He’s not being very careful.”

Gentle questions:

- “Which toy would you rather be? Which way of playing feels nicer?”
- “How do you think the toys feel?”

Hi, I'm Ashling



ABOUT ME

I'm a parent, just like you.

Everything I create has come from **wanting to support my own children** through moments that felt confusing, overwhelming, and sometimes really hard to explain.

Over time, I realised something important...
children don't always open up through direct conversations.

That's why I started using simple, everyday moments like films, stories, and shared experiences to gently help them make sense of what they were feeling.

That's exactly what this guide is about.

Why this guide matters

Sometimes children notice things they don't understand.

They feel it in their body... but don't have the words.

This guide gives you a simple way to:

- notice those moments together
- take the pressure off
- and gently open up conversations without force

No long talks.

No perfect words needed.

Just small, natural moments that help your child feel safe and understood.

My approach

I keep everything:

- simple
- practical
- easy to use in real life

Because as parents, we don't need more information.

We need something that actually works in the moment.

Explore the books:

https://www.amazon.com/author/ashlingpodmore

Register your interest in the course:

https://ashlingpodmore.systeme.io/coursewaitlistbonus

My books

My books were created for my own children first.

They help children understand confusing behaviours and feelings in a way that feels safe and not overwhelming.

They're designed to support the same kinds of moments you'll notice in this guide just in a way children can relate to and revisit in their own time.

If you're thinking... "but what do I actually say?"

That's where my course comes in:

Say It Right (Course)

From confused to confident: how to tackle tricky topics with your child.

Inside, I go deeper into:

- what to say in those moments
- how to respond without making things bigger
- how to feel more confident having these conversations

Because noticing is the first step...but knowing what to say next makes all the difference.

My goal

To help you feel:

- more confident
- more reassured
- and more connected to your child

Without complicated strategies or long explanations.
Just simple tools you can actually use in your day-to-day life.