

Zach apologizes is a book about a typical child who has hurt his brother when feeling angry. It goes through a 4 step process that helps children to develop empathy, talk about their feelings and come up with solutions to everyday problems.

Young children can say “sorry” when prompted, but most are not capable of truly understanding this verbal apology. Young children are still developing the cognitive and emotional ability to feel remorse. Remorse requires the ability to take another person’s perspective and fully understand cause and effect. These skills are still emerging in young children. Expecting young kids to say “sorry” teaches them nothing more than a misguided lesson in sequence: hit, say “sorry,” and move on.

Additionally, a verbal apology may not be what the other person needs to truly feel that they have made amends with their peer.

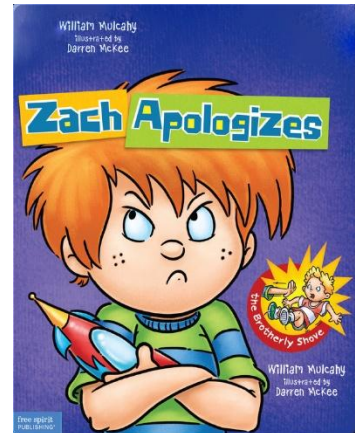
For everyday accidents, try this strategy with young children:

1. Bring the children together.
2. State what you saw happen and be specific.
3. Acknowledge each child’s emotions.
4. Model empathy for the hurt child.
5. Take Action: While young children may not fully understand remorse, they are good at taking action! They can go and fetch a Band-Aid or an ice-pack, or help clean up the mess they made. Help them take responsibility—in the end, this is a truer way to make amends.

Art/Craft

Draw pictures of things that make you feel happy, sad, angry etc.

Make stick puppets out of Popsicle sticks for children to role play with.



Centers

Have a center with a variety of items that could be used to help someone feel better if they were hurt or upset. Items could include Band-Aids, tissues, a small stuffy, cold compresses and books. Have children create a “Feel Better” basket for their friends filled with items they think would help their friends feel better.

Dramatic Play

Children can role play a situation where a peer is hurt and practice what to do. OR act out different scenarios using puppets.

Literacy

After reading the story, ask children to share experiences where they have been upset and someone helped them feel better.

Music

Children can dance to a variety of music to act out different emotions.

Sensory

Using face templates to make emotion faces out playdough- use loose parts/pom-poms/ googly eyes etc.

Include Families!

Send a note home letting families know that you are talking about saying sorry and practicing the 4 steps included in the book. Print or email a copy of the 4 steps that you use in the playroom home for families to use with their children at home. Document instances of children using the 4 steps in the playroom as a learning story for families to respond to.



Zach's 4 Step Square Solution!

Apologizing can be hard! You can use the squares below to help you decide how you can help someone you may have hurt or upset feel better. You can either write or draw your answers to the questions.

1. What did I do that hurt or upset somebody?	2. How did that person feel?
3. What can I do differently next time?	4. How can I help that person feel better?

