

# EMOTIKNIT

Pattern designed and kindly donated to Knit-for-Nowt by Val Holmes of East Yorkshire.

**Emotiknit is a set of three identical double sided therapy puppets** that are race, age and gender neutral. They are all the same person, but each face shows a different emotion: happy, sad, scared, confused, worried and angry.



This pattern has been trialled with Social Workers, and is a great success. It would be wonderful if you could make some of these sets – the pictures show the 6 expressions, but you only knit 3 puppets (putting expressions on both sides.) And of course they'll be much quicker to knit than the families, as all in one colour.

The innovation which designer Val has brought to these is that, on discovering that it is really difficult to get a good facial expression when embroidering onto yarn, she has cunningly introduced a vilene backing, which makes the stitching so much easier.

The facial expressions on this set of puppets are really important. They are designed to help children who don't read body language and other people's feelings very well, and for children to explain their own emotions when they may not have the verbal skills to do so. **If you are not confident that your sewing or artistic skills are as good as your knitting skills, or if you can't access the buttons or the vilene lining, you can still knit Emotiknit for us in sets of six matching puppet halves, leaving the faces blank and don't sew up the puppets. Please make sure to leave a long tail at cast on and cast off so that there is enough matching yarn to sew up the bodies after the faces have been added. As a guide please measure all around the outside of the puppet and then double it. Then please just send in the unfinished puppets to Knit-for-Nowt.**

## Materials:

4mm knitting needles

Double knitting yarn in a bright colour that will contrast clearly with the black features. A 100g ball will make about 9 puppet sides, a set and a half of Emotiknits, so if you plan to go into production buy two balls the same to make 3 sets, or make one set from one ball and use the left-overs to make family puppets.

A tapestry needle and an embroidery needle

Black stranded embroidery silk

Middle weight non iron-on Vilene. You need a rectangle about 7cm x 6cms for each face, so a metre of Vilene goes a very long way.

White sewing cotton

Ten small black buttons for eyes (optional, you can embroider these) for each face

Two white buttons and black sewing cotton for scared face

**Abbreviations:** **k**, knit; **p**, purl; **rs**, right side; **ws**, wrong side; **st**, stitch; **sts**, stitches; **ss**, stocking stitch knit one row purl one row; **inc**, increase by knitting into the front and back of the next stitch; **dec**, decrease by knitting two stitches together; **kfbf**, increase from one stitch to three stitches by knitting into the front, back and front again of the same stitch; **kfbfb**, increase from one stitch to four stitches by knitting into the front, back, front, back of the same stitch; **k2tog**, knit the next two stitches together; **p2tog**, purl the next two stitches together; **tbl**, through back of loops.

### **Pattern:**

**Feet.** Cast on 22 sts using the long tail method and leaving a long tail for sewing up.

K 4 rows

### **Legs:**

Row 5: k22sts

Row 6: p10, k2, p10.

Row 7: k10, p2, k10.

Repeat rows 6 and 7 until the legs are 12 rows long.

**Lower body:** Work 5 rows in ss

**Upper body:** beginning on the ws, k1 row, ss 8 rows starting with a k row, (the illustrations show a patterned jumper. Be creative if you want to, but make all puppets in a set identical)

**Arms:** cast on 10 sts (using the cable cast on method: needle *between* the previous two sts rather than *in* the next st), k to end of row (32 sts)

Next row: (ws) cast on 10 sts, k4, p to last 4 sts, k4. (42 sts)

Knit 8 more rows in ss but k4 at beginning and end of every ws row for the hands

### **Shoulders:**

Next row: Cast off 15 sts, k to end (27sts)

Next row: Cast off 15sts knitwise. Knit to end. (12 sts) This gives a purl row on the rs to divide the jumper from the neck

**Neck:** work 2 rows in ss starting with a k row

**Face:** Continuing in ss, inc 1 st at each end of every row until there are 20 sts.

**Nose:** (optional, you can just work 5 more rows in ss and embroider a nose with three or four straight stitches before tacking on the Vilene when sewing up)

Next row: p9, k2, p9.

Next row: k8, p1, (inc twice in next st(kfbf)) twice, p1, k8 (24sts)

Next row: p8, k1, p6, k1, p8

Next row: k8, p1, k2togtbl, k2, k2tog, p1, k8

Next row: p8, k1, p2tog, p2togtbl, k1, p8 (20sts)

**Hairline:**

Next row: p3, k14, p3.

Next row: p

Next row: p5, k10, p5

**Begin head shaping:**

Next row and every following ws row: p2tog, p to last 2 sts, p2tog.

Next rs row: p6, k2, p2, k2, p6.

Continue in purl throughout, decreasing as before on ws rows until 12 sts remain, and then on every row until 6 sts remain.

Cast off (still p2tog at beg and end of cast off row). Break off yarn leaving a good long tail for sewing up.

**Features:**

On the rs of each face mark two dots where you want the eyes to be. An angry or a worried face have the eyes closer together than a happy face. A scared face needs a wide eyed look. Place another dot for the nose if necessary.

If you have not used the knitted nose sew three or four straight stitches in matching yarn over the nose dot.

Cut a rectangle of Vilene interfacing about 7x 6cms and tack it to the ws of the face, keeping the stitches to the outer edges so that they will not get sewn in to the features and will be easy to remove afterwards. There is no need to knot or oversew the ends of the tacking, just leave a couple of inches of loose thread to make it easy to remove later.

Sew button eyes **very firmly** in place through knitted fabric and interfacing using white thread. White thread brings black button eyes to life. For the 'fear' face use white buttons, preferably with four holes and use black thread both crossways and in a square to make the pupil. This is to give the wide-eyed look.

Eyebrows and mouths are sewn with three strands of embroidery silk. Silk can be carried from one eyebrow to the other across the back of the interfacing being careful not to stitch in to the knitted fabric. The expressions are as follows: **happy, sad, scared, confused, worried and angry.**

Remove tacking stitches from around Vilene and trim it around the edge, not too close to the features, before sewing the puppet together.

### **Alternative upper body:**

If you think Emotiknit might like a woolly jumper, make the upper body in garter stitch (knit every row) remembering to purl 4 sts at each end of the arms on the ws to make the hands. Garter stitch has a different tension from stocking stitch so you may want to do an extra couple of rows on both body and arms of jumper. The stocking stitch hands will be wider than the arms, but that's as it should be.

Note from Knit-for-Nowt: All puppets have to be tested this end for safety before being sent out, so please ensure that **all the buttons for eyes are extra firmly fixed on.** Thank you.

On the next pages are the expressions in close up so that you can see clearly how the eyebrows, eyes and mouths vary in each one. Please place carefully the direction of the eyebrows, which makes all the difference to the expression.









