



[KidsHealth.org/classroom](http://KidsHealth.org/classroom)

## Teacher's Guide

This guide includes:

- Standards
- Related Links
- Discussion Questions
- Activities for Students
- Reproducible Materials

## Standards

This guide correlates with the following National Health Education Standards:

Students will:

- Comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to access valid information and products and services to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.
- Demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to use goal-setting skills to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.
- Demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

Your state's school health policies:  
[nasbe.org/HealthySchools/States/State\\_Policy.asp](http://nasbe.org/HealthySchools/States/State_Policy.asp)

Can we teach kids to care? Well, it's a big job, but we can start by fostering empathy in our students. To develop empathy, students must be encouraged to become aware of others' feelings and to see situations from alternate points of view. The following discussion questions and activities will help your students explore how to reach out to others, in words and actions.

## Related KidsHealth Links

### Articles for Kids:

#### Talking About Your Feelings

[KidsHealth.org/kid/feeling/thought/talk\\_feelings.html](http://KidsHealth.org/kid/feeling/thought/talk_feelings.html)

#### How Cliques Make Kids Feel Left Out

[KidsHealth.org/kid/feeling/school/clique.html](http://KidsHealth.org/kid/feeling/school/clique.html)

#### Dealing With Bullies

[KidsHealth.org/kid/feeling/emotion/bullies.html](http://KidsHealth.org/kid/feeling/emotion/bullies.html)

#### Someone in My Friend's Family Died: What Should I Do?

[KidsHealth.org/kid/feeling/friend/family\\_friend\\_died.html](http://KidsHealth.org/kid/feeling/friend/family_friend_died.html)

#### The Scoop on Gossip

[KidsHealth.org/kid/feeling/friend/gossip.html](http://KidsHealth.org/kid/feeling/friend/gossip.html)

## Discussion Questions

*Note: The following questions are written in language appropriate for sharing with your students.*

1. What is empathy? Why is it important to show empathy toward others? What does it mean to "put yourself in someone else's shoes"? What does that have to do with empathy?
2. What can you do to show empathy toward another person? Brainstorm a list of ways that you can reach out to others.
3. Think of a time when you hurt someone's feelings. Describe what happened. How did you know you hurt the person's feelings? How did you feel about the situation? What did you do to make the situation better?
4. Discuss how you think your school would change if all of the students showed empathy toward each other. Do you think it would be a big change or a small change? Why do you think so?



## Activities for Students

*Note: The following activities are written in language appropriate for sharing with your students.*

### Deciding On Empathy

#### Objectives:

Students will:

- Generate empathic and non-empathic responses to a situation
- Explore possible positive and negative outcomes of their responses
- Enhance their decision-making skills

#### Materials:

- Computer with Internet access
- Deciding on Empathy handout (available at: [KidsHealth.org/classroom/3to5/personal/growing/empathy\\_handout1.pdf](http://KidsHealth.org/classroom/3to5/personal/growing/empathy_handout1.pdf))

#### Class Time:

40 minutes

#### Activity:

It seems so obvious. If a person is sad, you'd try to make him or her feel better, right? Well, in real life, it can be more complicated than that. Showing empathy is not always an easy decision to make. Read the Deciding on Empathy handout to find three tricky situations involving your best friend. Pick one of the situations to focus on. Before you get started, check out KidsHealth to get some ideas. Then you're ready to figure out how you would respond in the situation. Use the chart on the handout to help you record your thoughts about whether you would show empathy in the situation and what outcomes your decision might have.

#### Extensions:

1. Choose one of the situations to role-play with your friends. Take turns acting out the different roles. How did it feel to be each character? Which character was the most difficult to be? Why do you think so?
2. Every day, you are faced with a decision to show empathy or not. Think about how much empathy you show to the people around you. Come up with one way that you could show more empathy to your family and friends. Write down your goal for showing more empathy. How will you meet this goal?
3. Plant some seeds and help your plant grow. Keep a journal recording details about the plant's growth. How does caring for the plant make you feel? Discuss how caring for a plant is similar to and different from caring for people.



## Empathy Award

### Objectives:

Students will:

- Identify a public figure who has demonstrated empathy

### Materials:

- Empathy Award handout (available at: [KidsHealth.org/classroom/3to5/personal/growing/empathy\\_handout2.pdf](http://KidsHealth.org/classroom/3to5/personal/growing/empathy_handout2.pdf))
- Computer with Internet access and/or library access

### Class Time:

1 hour

### Activity:

The president has decided to give an Empathy Award to the person who's shown the most empathy. It's up to you to nominate someone for this important award. First, check out biographies of famous people (from the past or present) on the Internet or in the library to figure out who you'd like to nominate. Then, fill out the nomination form on the Empathy Award handout. You will be asked to supply the following information:

- The name of your nominee
- A brief description of the person
- The reason for your nomination (why you think this person deserves the award)
- What you can learn about empathy from your nominee

### Extensions:

1. Your nominee has won the Empathy Award! The president wants to dedicate a postage stamp to the winner. Sketch what you think the postage stamp should look like. How can you show the person's empathy on the stamp?
2. Famous people aren't the only ones who show empathy. Think of someone in your own life who has reached out to you when you were feeling bad. Write a thank-you note, thanking the person for the empathy that he or she has shown toward you.

## Reproducible Materials

### Handout: Deciding on Empathy

[KidsHealth.org/classroom/3to5/personal/growing/empathy\\_handout1.pdf](http://KidsHealth.org/classroom/3to5/personal/growing/empathy_handout1.pdf)

### Handout: Empathy Award

[KidsHealth.org/classroom/3to5/personal/growing/empathy\\_handout2.pdf](http://KidsHealth.org/classroom/3to5/personal/growing/empathy_handout2.pdf)



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Deciding on Empathy

Instructions: Here are three tricky situations involving your best friend. Pick one of the situations to focus on, and use the chart below to help you record your thoughts about whether you would show empathy in the situation and what outcomes your decision might have.

- 1 You've been best friends with Sam since kindergarten. Since the start of school this year, you've become good friends with Taylor, too. But Sam told you yesterday that she's not going to be friends with Taylor anymore and neither should you. Now Taylor is sitting all alone in the cafeteria, looking really sad. What should you do?
- 2 Your best friend, Dan, has started to pick on Peter, a quiet kid in your class. You thought it was funny in the beginning, but now Dan's getting meaner and meaner. Peter tries to stay away from Dan during the day, but Dan just picks on him more. Peter is becoming more and more upset. Other kids in the class still think it's funny. What should you do?
- 3 Your best friend's grandmother just died. She wants you to come over on Saturday night to spend time with her after the funeral because she's been so sad. Your dad bought you tickets to go see your favorite team play on Saturday night. Besides that, you're not really sure what to say to your friend. What should you do?



### Show Empathy:

Possible Good Outcomes:

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Possible Bad Outcomes:

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### Don't Show Empathy:

Possible Good Outcomes:

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Possible Bad Outcomes:

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Empathy Award

Instructions: The president has decided to give an Empathy Award to the person who's shown the most empathy. It's up to you to nominate someone for this important award. First, check out biographies of famous people (from the past or present) on the Internet or in the library to figure out who you'd like to nominate. Then, fill out the nomination form below.

Who would you like to nominate for the Empathy Award?

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Tell about your nominee.

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How has your nominee shown empathy?

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What can you learn about empathy from your nominee?

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