



KidsHealth.org/classroom

Teacher's Guide

This guide includes:

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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 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

Whether it's helping someone who dropped her books or listening to someone who's feeling down, empathy is an important part of your students' lives. The following discussion questions and activities will help your students understand what empathy is and how they can be more compassionate toward others.

Related KidsHealth Links

Articles for Kids:

Talking About Your Feelings

KidsHealth.org/kid/feeling/thought/talk_feelings.html

How Cliques Make Kids Feel Left Out

KidsHealth.org/kid/feeling/school/clique.html

Dealing With Bullies

KidsHealth.org/kid/feeling/emotion/bullies.html

Saying You're Sorry

KidsHealth.org/kid/feeling/home_family/sorry.html

Taking Charge of Anger

KidsHealth.org/kid/feeling/emotion/anger.html

Articles for Teens:

What Does It Mean To Be a Friend?

KidsHealth.org/teen/your_mind/relationships/friend_comments.html

Coping With Cliques

KidsHealth.org/teen/your_mind/relationships/cliques.html

Dealing With Bullying

KidsHealth.org/teen/your_mind/problems/bullies.html

Discussion Questions

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

1. When you show empathy for people, you're being sensitive to their feelings. List some actions that show empathy.
2. How does it make you feel when people show they understand what you're going through? How does it feel to help someone by showing compassion?
3. Why do you think it's important for people to empathize with others?



Activities for Students

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

Acts of Kindness

Objectives:

Students will:

- Identify actions that show empathy
- Discover ways to empathize with others during conflict

Materials:

- Computer with Internet access
- Acts of Kindness handout (available at: KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/personal/growing/empathy_handout1.pdf)
- TV
- Pen

Class Time:

45 minutes

Activity:

Showing empathy toward others can be tough to do, especially when you're experiencing strong emotions yourself. Read the articles at KidsHealth to learn about actions that show empathy and those that don't. Next, watch a TV show and use the handout to examine the ways characters on the show are sensitive to one another and ways that they aren't. Once you've completed the chart, pick one situation from the TV episode and determine how the characters might have acted more empathetically. Rewrite the scene with these revisions.

Extensions:

1. Now it's time to reflect on how compassionate you are toward others. In what ways do you already show empathy toward others? List five ways you can improve in this area.
2. You get into an argument with your friend because she wants to borrow your MP3 player – for the second time this week. Role-play the scenario in which you handle the situation with empathy rather than with anger.
3. Your brother is having a bad day and is yelling at you and everyone else in your house. Role-play a scenario in which you show empathy toward your brother instead of yelling back.
4. Your friend invites you to swim in her pool, but not your other friend, who is standing right with you. Role-play a scenario in which you show empathy toward your friend who was not invited to go swimming.



Compassion is in Fashion!

Objectives:

Students will:

- Recognize ways to show empathy
- Promote empathy among their classmates

Materials:

- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Art supplies (colored pencils, markers, crayons)

Class Time:

1½ to 2 hours

Activity:

Life can be so hectic that we may not always take the time we should to be sensitive to other people's feelings and experiences. That's why your school is promoting empathy among students and is asking you to help. Now that you know what empathy looks like, create a bulletin board encouraging empathy among your peers. First, come up with ideas about what empathy is and how people can be more sensitive to other people's feelings and experiences. Next, design your bulletin board with words, phrases, and images that will convey your ideas, catch your classmates' attention, and get the word out that it's cool to show compassion for others.

Extensions:

1. Create a list of ways that students can show compassion for people in their community. In what ways can your friends help others who need it?
2. Think about ways you can be kind to others and show empathy to your family and friends. Keep an empathy journal, recording the things you do for people and it makes you feel.
3. Write a thank-you letter to someone who has shown compassion to you. Describe how you felt and why his or her kindness was so important to you.

Reproducible Materials

Handout: Acts of Kindness

KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/personal/growing/empathy_handout1.pdf

