

EMPATHY

Parent Resource

What is empathy?

Empathy means understanding how and why others think, feel and act.

In grades six through eight, children begin:

- ✓ Demonstrating effective and respectful communication skills and strategies.
- ✓ Identifying the perspectives, circumstances and experiences of others.
- ✓ Applying active listening in order to respond with empathy.

Below are ways you can help your child learn, practice and demonstrate empathy:

DISCUSS EMPATHY IN LEADERSHIP



Discuss how important empathy is in leadership roles. Ask your child when he or she has seen a leader demonstrate empathy. Continue the discussion with your child to talk about instances when the leader did not demonstrate empathy.

THINK OF OTHERS



Discuss what it means to “walk a mile in someone else’s shoes.” Your child can practice empathy by discussing what it would feel like to be in a different person’s situation.



BY PRACTICING EMPATHY,
YOUR CHILD WILL IMPROVE
COMMUNICATION SKILLS
AND LEARN TO REFLECT,
OBSERVE AND THINK
ABOUT HIS OR HER OWN
BEHAVIORS.

SKILLS TO CONSIDER PRACTICING WITH YOUR CHILD:



Responding with empathy in a variety of contexts and situations.



Describing the importance of empathy, kindness, honesty and trust in building and sustaining relationships.



ACTIVITY TO DO WITH YOUR CHILD

Think of a situation where you and your child can work together to help someone. For example, your child can donate clothing or other items to a charity, help a neighbor or collect canned goods for a local food bank. Discuss how you are showing empathy by helping in the community.