

## MINDFUL MENTALITY

# EMPATHY

### TIPS FOR CAREGIVERS

Social and emotional learning (SEL) helps children connect with their emotions and gain a better understanding of themselves. Mindfulness can support this learning and help them develop a kind and inclusive mentality. By incorporating mindfulness and SEL into early learning, students can establish this mentality early and be better equipped to build strong connections and communities.

#### BEFORE READING

Talk to the student about considering the feelings of others.

**Discuss:** Do you ever imagine how other people are feeling? Does it ever make you want to help them or ask them questions about why they are feeling a certain way?

#### AFTER READING

Talk to the student about practicing empathy.

**Discuss:** Do you ever imagine how other people are feeling? Does it ever make you want to help them or ask them questions about why they are feeling a certain way?

#### SEL GOAL

One way to help students become more empathetic is to help them learn to notice and listen. Try giving students a topic to discuss with each other in small groups. Those with colored popsicle sticks are the "listeners," while those with plain sticks are "sharers." Ask the listeners to repeat what they heard from the sharers. Allow each child the opportunity to practice sharing his or her opinion and listening to his or her peers.

### GOALS AND TOOLS

#### GROW WITH GOALS

There are many ways we can learn to be more empathetic. Try these goals to practice!

**Goal:** Read a story about someone who is different than you. Your librarian can help you find a book you'll like.

**Goal:** Ask someone how they are feeling today. Listen closely to his or her words. Ask him or her questions about their feelings.

**Goal:** When you have a feeling, write it down. Then make a list of other words that describe that feeling.

#### MINDFULNESS EXERCISE

We all have similarities and differences. Identifying them and being mindful of them can help us be more empathetic.

1. On a piece of paper, make two circles that overlap in the middle. Write your name above one of them. Then write a friend's name above the other.
2. In the space where the circles overlap, write ways in which you and your friend are similar.
3. Write things that are unique to you in your circle. Then write things that are unique to your friend in the other.
4. Reflect on your similarities and differences. How can you be mindful of these? How can you be empathetic to your friend?



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