

5 Ways To Teach Our Children Empathy in These Challenging Times

This thoughtfully written article offers evidence-based strategies for building the capacity to understand and demonstrate empathy. Using headings like “develop your child’s empathy muscle” and “expand your child’s circle of concern beyond family and friends,” the author sorts suggestions into meaningful chunks.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/on-parenting/5-ways-to-teach-our-children-empathy-in-these-challenging-times/2020/05/04/a5670cda-895a-11ea-ac8a-fe9b8088e101_story.html

How To Help Your Child Develop Empathy

A terrific feature of this ZERO TO THREE article is the section on milestones in empathy, which highlights what it might be reasonable to expect from infants, young toddlers, and older toddlers. In addition, there are suggestions for nurturing empathy and examples of stories that can promote concepts related to empathy and feelings.

<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/5-how-to-help-your-child-develop-empathy>

How Empathetic Are You? Take The Empathy Quiz To Find Out!

Research suggests that people differ in the extent to which they experience empathy. The 28-item Empathy Quiz is based on three scientifically validated scales that researchers have created to measure empathy. Take the quiz and you’ll receive your empathy score, along with feedback and tips for strengthening your empathy skills. I took it and found the results to be very informative. https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/quizzes/take_quiz/empathy

Tiny Teachers: Empathy Experiences To Break the Cycle of Violence

A teacher in Canada became concerned about alarming rates of domestic violence, child abuse, and neglect. She identified an absence of empathy as a common thread through the violence and decided to do something about it. She created Roots of Empathy, an award winning program that systematically builds empathy in young children. The secret? Babies. The “tiny teachers” are 2- to 4-month-olds who, along with a parent, visit early childhood programs throughout the year. Trained instructors guide participating children in watching and deciphering how the babies communicate what they need or want to their parents, and how the parents respond. The children learn to articulate and label the emotions of the baby, their own emotions, and to recognize those emotions in others. Read more at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/00094056.2020.1733858?needAccess=true>

These Kids Do NOT Like This Lemonade – a gumdrop¹

Watch this delightful video to see how children’s empathy is put to the test when they are asked to try some lemonade spiked with salt. The experiment reveals some interesting differences in empathy between boys and girls. Watch at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KD9-jnLD4IY>

Teaching Empathy To Children Starts With Us

In 2014, a report from Harvard’s Making Caring Common project revealed that nearly 80% of youth surveyed ranked achievement and happiness above helping others. The same publication shared that nearly 80% of youth report that their parents are more concerned with achievement and happiness than helping others. This article highlights examples of what families can do, starting in early childhood, to close that rhetoric/reality gap. Access the article at <https://sparkandstitchinstitute.com/teaching-empathy-to-kids/> and the report at <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b7c56e255b02c683659fe43/t/5bae774424a694b5feb2b05f/1538160453604/report-children-raise.pdf>

Natural Resources is a free, one-way listserv that is distributed monthly. Each issue features high quality, readily available, and free resources on a specific topic related to children from birth through Grade 3, their families, and the professionals and systems that serve and support them. Resources in both Spanish and English are highlighted in yellow. Natural Resources is compiled and distributed by Camille Catlett, and past issues are archived at <https://scriptnc.fpg.unc.edu/natural-resources-monthly-newsletter> To subscribe or unsubscribe, suggest resources, or get more information, please contact Camille Catlett at camille.catlett@unc.edu

¹ I call short, engaging videos that pack a content punch “gumdrops.”