

February UNCRC focus - Empathy Month

Article 12 - Respect for Children's Views Article 2 - Best Interests of child

Activity 1 - Stories to Support Empathy

Select a story which explores or provokes feelings of empathy. This supports children to understand others' feelings, accepting differences, and sharing experiences which helps to build a more caring and connected community.

Resources - 'The Smartest Giant in Town' 'Elmer' / 'Elmer' or 'Kind.' Story. Role play/ dress up clothing to re-enact story

Things to think about - Ask children thought provoking questions - If you were them how might you feel? Think about the physical impact of walking in someone else's shoes and what effect it may have.

Activity 2 - Puppet Problems to Foster Empathy

In a small group or 1:1, act out a moral dilemma with puppets. Select from a series of scenarios to support children displaying acts of empathy. This will allow children to safely explore, label, and resolve complex emotions.

The Sharing Dilemma: A puppet has a special toy and doesn't want to share it with a friend, resulting in conflict.

The Excluded Friend: A puppet is sad because no one will let them play. The child is asked to figure out how to include the puppet.

The Broken Toy/Oops Scenario: The puppet breaks a toy or accidentally hurts someone and feels guilty or sad.

The First Day Nervousness: A puppet is too scared to enter a new classroom or join a group.

Resources - Puppets, a small ball or toy (as a sharing prop) Optional - emotion cards

Things to think about - **Model Emotional Regulation** by having the puppet show how to calm down when angry or disappointed, such as taking deep breath, **Encourage Comforting**: Encourage children to soothe, talk to, or hug the puppet when it is sad, scared, or lonely. **Role-Play Solutions**: "What should the puppet do?"

Activity 4 - Animal Empathy - Jen and Laurie (ECO)

Build a suitable habitat for a polar bear from construction, loose part materials or ice blocks. The more nurturing children are to their surroundings, the more their environment has an effect of them. Regular interactions within nature can help children develop respect and a caring attitude for the environment.

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Resources - Milk bottles, material, blocks, polar bears

Things to think about - ECO - Is the structure strong, sheltered and comfortable enough?
What would your home look like to make you feel safe and secure?

What would it be like to be a polar bear? What needs does she have? How does the bear get their food, water, and shelter? Focus on the needs vs. the wants: How might the polar bear find food if some of the ice starts to disappear vs. what will happen to the polar bear if it can't find food?

ECO - Environmental Impact: Children learn that melting sea ice due to climate change threatens their survival, making them a key symbol for conservation.

What could we do proactively in our centre/Largs community to care for the environment?

UNCRC - We have the right to a safe and secure home.