

Empathy

This book is about a friend's attempts to make his friend happy.

CORE SKILL OBJECTIVES

INTENTIONAL TEACHING PRACTICES

RELATE



Children will:

- ◆ With adult support, describe book characters' feelings

Teachers will:

- ◆ Narrate empathy

TEACHING TIP

Children typically begin developing empathy skills when they're toddlers. Just like other developmental skills, empathy is developed through exposure and practice. One way to support children's growth in this skill is to by reading books with characters that demonstrate various feelings/needs and empathy towards others through kind and caring acts. Focusing children's attention like this prompts them to consider how others may be thinking or feeling and the ways in which people can be there for each other when help is needed. This supports children's growing understanding that others, including themselves, experience various emotions and there are ways to make others feel better.

1. INTRODUCE

- ◆ "This book is called *My Friend is Sad*. It's okay to be sad sometimes. Show me a sad face. I wonder why this friend is sad. I think their friend will be kind and it might make them feel better. Let's read to find out."

2. READ THE BOOK

- ◆ Pause occasionally to narrate characters' feelings and how the others show kindness.
- ◆ Narrate acts of kindness and point out how empathy helps each character feel better.

Narrate Empathy



Read: "My friend is sad."

Narrate: "Look at Elephant's mouth. It's turned down and there's no smile. Piggie sees Elephant and is worried. Piggie wants to help his friend."

Read: "A cowboy!"

Ask: "How do you think Elephant feels now? What did Piggie do?"

Read: "Gerald loves cowboys. But he is still sad."

Narrate: "Now Elephant looks different. How do you think he feels? His friend tried to make him happy by being a cowboy. It worked for a little while."

Read: "I am not sad now. I am happy."

Narrate: "Piggie was kind. He tried to make Elephant happy, but it only worked for a little while. Elephant looks happy now. He's smiling. His eyes are big, and his arms are in the air."

Ask: "Why do you think Elephant is happy now?"

3. REVIEW

- ◆ "Piggie was kind and tried to do things to make Elephant happy. He pretended to be a cowboy, a clown, and a robot. But what made Elephant happy was spending time with his best friend."

4. KEEP IT GOING

- ◆ When appropriate focus children's attention what others may be feeling. Encourage them to consider ways to provide support through acts of caring or kindness. For example, if a child is sad, say, "Our friend fell down. They're crying. It looks like they feel sad." Then, prompt children to show empathy by saying, "Let's see how we can help them feel better. Maybe a pat on the back or a hug will help."