HOW TO TEACH KIDS ABOUT EMPATHY

Finding things in common with other people can be a powerful way to help kids learn to appreciate and care about people who are different from them.

TALK ABOUT DIFFERENCES

Whether it’s someone your child knows in person or a character from a favorite TV show, pay attention to how your child responds to (or acts towards) people who are different from them. Talk together about how it’s normal for people to be different in lots of ways.

LOOK FOR THINGS IN COMMON

Encourage kids to look for things they have in common with other people by using “just like me” language. For example, if your child says, “He likes to go down the slide,” encourage them to say, “He likes to go down the slide — just like me.”.

REFLECT TOGETHER

Ask questions like, “Were you surprised by anything you have in common with this person?” or “Have your feelings about this person changed?” Set an example by sharing what you have in common with someone you don’t know well and how it feels good to focus on things in common instead of differences.

MAKE IT A HABIT

Work quick conversations into daily or weekly activities like mealtime or bedtime. During these conversations, encourage your child to try to get to know someone better. This may help them build an authentic connection in the future.