HOW TO USE STORIES TO TEACH EMPATHY

Looking for an easy way to help kids practice talking about their feelings and the feelings of others? Use their favorite stories!

FIND A STORY
Ask your child what their favorite story is right now, whether that’s a book, TV show, movie, podcast, or something else.

TALK ABOUT THE CHARACTERS
Ask your child questions about the story characters. For example: How do they seem to be feeling? How do you think they’re really feeling? Why do you think they feel that way? What happened to make them feel that way? What are some different words you can use to describe their feelings?

DIG DEEPER INTO THE STORY
Ask questions that take the story further. For example: What is [the character] doing or saying that makes you think you know how they’re feeling? If you were there, what would you say or do? How do you think they would want to be treated? How would you help them or make them feel better? Have you ever felt that way, too?

MAKE IT A HABIT
Don’t worry if your child isn’t very talkative. Talking about feelings takes practice! Simply try talking about stories once a week. During these conversations, pause and give your child time to respond, encourage them to answer the questions, listen carefully to what they say, and avoid filling in the blanks for them.