

May 4, 2020

## HCS Social Emotional Newsletter- Empathy & Perspective-Taking

### WHAT IS SOCIAL AWARENESS?

Hi Highland Students & Families,

There are five core social emotional learning competencies- self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Over the past few weeks, we have focused mainly on self-awareness and self-management with our themes of growth mindset, coping with worries and mindfulness. We also tapped into some relationship skills with our week focused on kindness.

This week, we will be focusing on two aspects of social awareness - empathy and perspective-taking. Understanding perspectives different from our own and showing empathy to others are two very important skills to have! This newsletter is packed with resources to teach and reinforce these concepts to your children at home.

Hope you enjoy!

Ms. Alexis, School Social Worker



Are you having difficulty meeting basic needs at this time?

Please reach out to me directly at [akramschuster@hcsmlake.org](mailto:akramschuster@hcsmlake.org) or at 414-376-0655 for local resources and assistance.

### WHAT IS EMPATHY & HOW DO I TEACH IT TO MY KIDS AT HOME?

*Empathy is the awareness of and ability to understand and share the feelings of others.*

Having empathy requires a child to understand his/her own emotions on a daily basis and appreciate that other people may feel differently. Empathy takes a certain amount of maturity to fully comprehend, so don't fret if you have a little one who isn't quite there yet! Recognizing the feelings of others can be challenging! Here are five tips to reinforce empathy at home:

#### Teach Simple Emotions

When a child recognizes their own emotions, they are more likely to recognize emotions in others. Teach your child words for what they are feeling.

#### Model Empathetic Behavior

Be a good role model by showing your kids how to be kind to others in everyday life - sibling in a bad mood? Grouchy man at the grocery store? These are all opportunities!

#### Teach Compassion

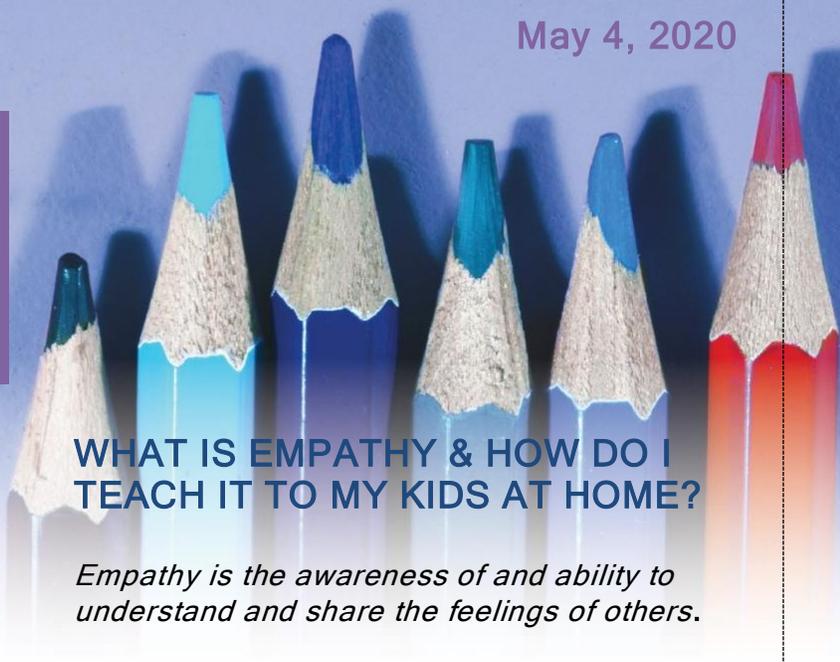
Show your kid(s) what it's like to be kind to someone when they're upset. Model compassion by listening, giving a hug or just being there. You're probably already doing it!

#### Let Them Help

Put your kid(s) in situations that allow them to be empathetic. Visit [www.dosomething.org](http://www.dosomething.org) for some great ideas!

#### Positively Reinforce Empathetic Behavior

Try to catch your child in an act of kindness and let them know they made a great choice.



## Social Awareness Resources

### Videos

#### [Sesame Street - Empathy](#)

Aimed for younger audiences, but I know some 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> graders who were laughing by the end, so I say it's for all ages!

#### [Joy & Heron - Perspective-Taking](#)

Think about how Joy's perspective changed at the end of the video.

### Activities

#### [Perspective -Taking Activity for Upper EI](#)

-Optical illusion worksheet and opinion worksheets for kids to share their perspective and understand that it may differ from others.

## Book Recommendations: Empathy & Perspective-Taking

Here are some great books to read if you want to learn more about empathy & perspective-taking:

#### [The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs](#) by Jon Scieszka

-Before reading have your child tell you the story of the 3 little pigs as they remember it.

-What parts of the pigs' point of view and the wolf's point of view were the same? Which were different?

#### [Recess Queen](#) by Alexis O'Neill

-What was the problem at recess?

-If someone was acting like Mean Jean, what could you do to help?

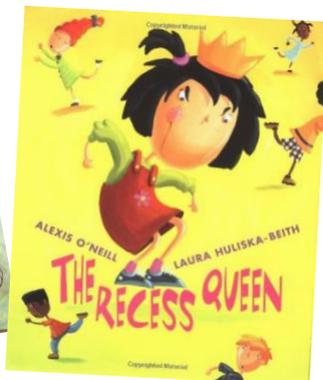
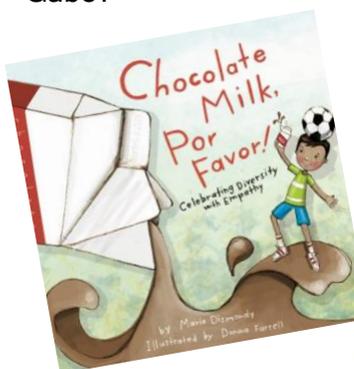
-How did Katie Sue show empathy?

#### [Chocolate Milk, Por Favor!](#) by Maria Desmond

-How would you treat Gabe if he was a new student in your class?

-How do Johnny's feelings about Gabe change at the end of the story?

-When in the story does Johnny have empathy for Gabe?



## What is Perspective-Taking?

I believe that perspective-taking goes “hand-in-hand” with empathy. Empathy is understanding emotions of others, while perspective-taking is understanding thoughts of others.

Perspective taking is the ability to understand another person's point of view other than your own. When perspective taking, you consider someone else's thoughts and feelings about something to see things from their perspective.

## Featured Family Activity: Be a Social Spy or Emotions Scavenger Hunt

This week, we have two family activities - one for Children's' House/Lower Elementary and one for Upper Elementary.

### Be a Social Spy (Older)

Materials Needed: [Social Spy Worksheet](#), Device to watch TV show

Tell your child it is their job to be a social spy. You can go to the park and be a social spy or you can watch a TV and answer the questions while staying at home.

### Emotions Scavenger Hunt (Younger)

Materials Needed: [Emotions Scavenger Hunt](#)

Since we can't go out and observe people, there is a different version to do at home:

Print out two copies of the first page of the Emotions Scavenger Hunt and one copy of the rest of the packet. Cut out the feelings emojis. Fold in half and put in a jar. Each family member chooses an emotion in the jar and pretends to have that emotion for the next 30 minutes/hour.

When players notice they check off that feeling on their scavenger hunt list. Once someone guesses a feeling, the other player picks a new feeling.

Finally, talk about what cues helped to show the feeling. Voice? Facial Expression? Whoever has the most crossed off, wins! Visit

<https://mosswoodconnections.com/activity/emotions-scavenger-hunt/> for more!