



December Counseling News



Check out resources for the "Pillar of the Month" on the back →

DECEMBER IS... Safe Toys and Gifts Month

Monthly Focus

car*ing: displaying kindness and concern for others.
→ synonyms: kind, kind-hearted, tender

Be kind; Be compassionate and show you care; Express gratitude; Forgive others; and Help people in need.

Character Counts!

- This month our TTRFCC ACES students will learn all about being a caring person of good character. The caring pillar is represented by the color red, like a heart.

How to be a caring person:

- Treat people with kindness and generosity
- Help people in need
- Be sensitive to people's feelings
- Never be mean or hurtful
- Think about how your actions will affect others
- Forgive others

Classroom Lessons

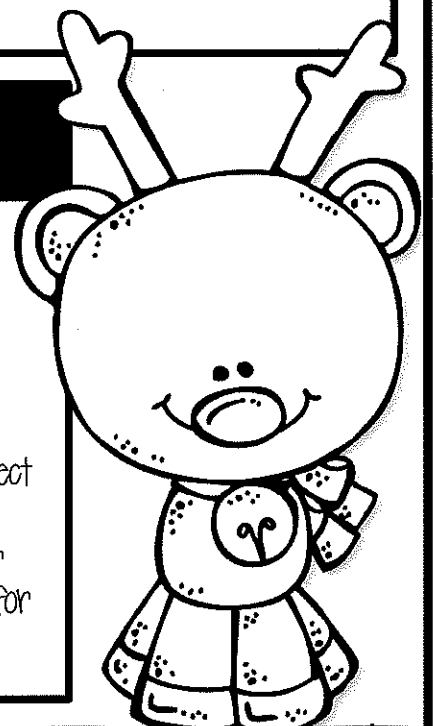
"Digital December"

All classroom lessons will be delivered digitally, through the use of Windows Media Player and the classroom Promethean boards!

All Grades: Caring

Personal/Social Development Goal: Students will acquire an understanding of, and respect for, self and others, and the skills to be a responsible citizen.

EPI. Exhibit the principles of character, including honesty, trustworthiness, respect for the rights and properties of others, respect for rules and laws, taking responsibility for one's own actions, fairness, caring and citizenship





EMPATHY

helping our kids feel for others



WHAT IS IT?

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?



"Empathy is really the opposite of spiritual meanness. It's the capacity to understand that every war is both won and lost. And that someone else's pain is as meaningful as your own."

-Barbara Kingsolver



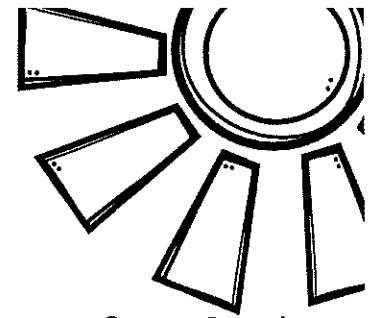
A person who has the ability to empathize with others will be able to more effectively communicate with them. Empathy allows us to predict what others may be thinking and feeling and then to react to those feeling appropriately. A person with empathy is a better leader, employee, and friend.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

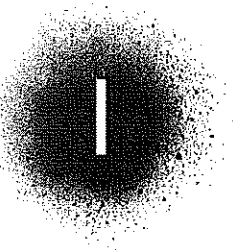
- actively listens while others are speaking
- focuses on surroundings
(notices the body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice of the people around them)
- refrains from judgment
(instead, finds ways to connect to the person and looks deeper for ways to understand them)



EMPATHY



how you can help your child



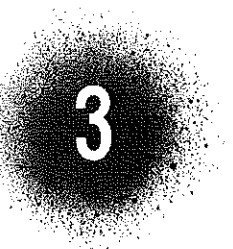
TALK ABOUT YOUR FEELINGS

Helping your child understand his feelings will better enable him to recognize those feelings in others. Naming your child's feelings can be a helpful strategy. You can say something like, "I know you're probably feeling disappointed that we couldn't go to the movies today. I am sad, too." Naming your own feelings for your child is important, too. Then, model the appropriate way to respond to these feelings.

AND OTHER PEOPLE'S FEELINGS, TOO



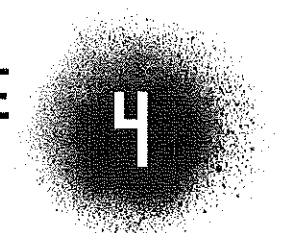
Whenever possible, name other people's feelings for your child. Discuss situations in TV and movies where a character needs empathy from other characters. Talk about how that character must feel, and **how you know** they are feeling a certain way (ex: I see she's feeling sad because she has tears in her eyes and she is looking down at the floor)



CARE FOR OTHERS

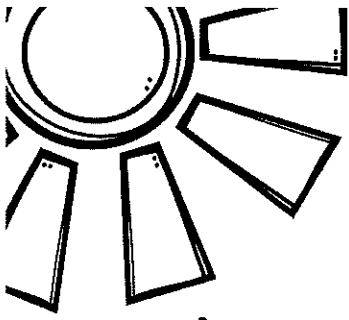
Model empathy for your child by going out of your way to care for others. Reach out to others when they are struggling (due to a death in the family, an illness, etc.). Consider volunteering with your child. Lastly, help your child see the importance of caring for others by asking, "How were you kind to someone today?"

HELP THEM STEP OUT OF THEIR COMFORT ZONE



Most children are able to care about their immediate family and close friends, but it is important that we help them extend those caring feelings beyond the people closest to them. Encourage your child to look for children who are vulnerable or alone on the playground. Discuss how this child may be feeling and what your child could do to help.





EMPATHY

resources to help your child



ROLE PLAY TO BUILD EMPATHY:

Use role play to help your child develop empathy for others. You can blindfold your child to help them understand how a blind person may be feeling. Put your child's arm in a sling or wrap to help them develop empathy for a friend with a broken arm. Skip a meal together to role play what it would feel like to be a person who doesn't have enough food to eat.

All of these role plays are good experiences, but they are elevated to great teaching moments when they are discussed with an adult afterwards. Questions like, "How were these situations frustrating or difficult?" and "What are you going to do the next time you see a person who is hungry? Someone with a broken arm? Someone who is blind" These are the conversations that build empathy.

BOOKS THAT TALK BUILD EMPATHY:

- Stand in My Shoes by Bob Sornson, Ph.D.
- Each Kindness by Jacqueline Woodson
- How to Heal a Broken Wing by Bob Graham
- The Invisible Boy by Trudy Ludwig
- Out of My Mind by Sharon M. Draper
- Wonder by R. J. Palacio

