



IMAGINE STEPPING INTO  
YOUR CHILD'S WORLD AND  
SEEING THINGS FROM HIS  
OR HER POINT OF VIEW.

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## In times of crisis

### How can I teach my child to be kind to the other children in her class?

#### Demonstrate

Be a role model for your child. She will learn a lot about how to act with others by seeing how you treat other people. Here are some suggestions:

- Tell your child the many things you love about her.
- Ask her to help you deliver flowers and treats to a nursing home.
- Take her with you to the new neighbors when you go to introduce yourself and welcome them to the neighborhood.

#### Communicate

Talk with your child about her own behaviors. Ask your child to talk with you when she feels she has been kind or unkind to another person. Talk about the feelings involved—both hers and the other person's. Consider the following examples:

- Your daughter tells you, "Some of my friends and I were playing kick ball today. Maria wanted to play, too, but no one wanted her on their team because she's not very good." Ask your daughter how Maria seemed to feel about that. How would your daughter feel if she were the one left out?
- Your daughter tells you that she helped the teacher straighten the bookshelves after school, even though it wasn't her job. Ask her how the teacher reacted. How did it feel to be a helper without even being asked?

Ask your child about her classmates. Talk with her about the children that don't seem to "fit in" as well. Ask her why she thinks that is. For example, she may tell you:

- Anya wears funny clothes.
- Tommy is hyper and he is always in trouble.
- Jenny can't say the Pledge of Allegiance because of her religion.

Ask her how she thinks these children feel when they are teased or left out. Help her to think of ways to reach out to them.

#### Practice

After thinking of ways to reach out, your daughter may decide to:

- Ask Jenny about her religion so she can understand it better. Invite Jenny over one day after school to play.
- Sit by Maria at lunch or play together at recess.
- Stand up for Anya when she's being picked on.

Your daughter may need help practicing. She may want to role play with you. Ask her what she thinks will be difficult about reaching out to other children.

- She may say that other children are going to make fun of her too if she invites Jenny to her house or sits by Maria at lunch.
- She may wonder how to stand up for Anya.

Practice general responses

When she stands up for Anya, she might say:

- It's not fair to make fun of someone just because they dress differently.
- I don't like what you just said. It sounds like you are making assumptions about someone you don't even know.

If children tease her about sitting with Maria or playing with Jenny, she might say:

- I can have many different friends.
- Everyone is important and special, not just the popular kids.
- I am glad there are many different people in our school. It's fun to have different types of friends.

Reaching out can be a little scary. It requires courage for a child not to join in the teasing when there is pressure to do so. A child must be especially brave to speak out when she feels someone is being treated unfairly. Practice is important so that your child can feel confident when the time comes. Remember to let your child know how proud of her you are. As she watches you reach out to people and treat them kindly, she will learn from your example, and she will be proud of you.