

JANUARY 2017

PARENTS PERCH

EMPATHY



Young students: "I can imagine how you feel!"

Older students/teens/adults: "Reading, understanding and responding to other people's feelings."

WEEK 1 Empathy defined: How do we read & understand other people's feelings?

WEEK 2 Predicting/communicating emotions: Educated guesses & "I feel" statements

WEEK 3 The impact of emotions: How do our actions impact others?

WEEK 4 Listening & expressing concern: Showing people that their feelings matter

**POWERFUL
WORDS**
CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

Dear Family,

This month we will focus on the Powerful Word, "empathy."

Empathy refers to our ability to "take a walk in someone else's shoes." With empathy, we can imagine how others feel and respond appropriately. A crucial social skill, empathy allows people to problem solve together as well as to make and retain friends. Without the ability to read emotions and take the perspective of others, children may choose to act in many self-serving ways.

Young children can have trouble with perspective-taking even though empathy, according to the research, is inborn. Through experience, learning and good parenting (as

empathy must be nurtured!), young children learn that others have feelings and that their own actions can impact another person's emotions.

As children get older, they learn to recognize emotions and causes of emotions. They get better at inferring other people's feelings. While society tends to emphasize empathy skills for girls more than boys, all humans need empathy to nurture relationships.

Empathy is not only one of the single most important factors in fostering successful leaders, entrepreneurs, managers, and businesses but it also delivers a dose of happiness to everyone involved. It enhances relationships, reduces bullying, increases forgiveness between

people, improves relationships and increases feelings of connection. Kids who are empathetic also tend to be more successful because they are purpose-driven rather than narcissistic (See: Alexander & Sandahl; *The Atlantic*, 2016). Concentrating on instilling empathy skills in children is good for everyone!

We look forward to partnering with you on discussing empathy this month.

Here's to your success!

Best Regards,

—Your Motivated and
Dedicated Instructors

UPCOMING POWERFUL WORDS

FEBRUARY	Impulse Control
MARCH	Anger Management
APRIL	Generosity