

## LEARNING GUIDE

# EMPATHY

## FINDING OUT

Have you heard the word 'empathy' before? Does it remind you of any other words you know?

Empathy is a very good trait to have. It means you notice and understand how other people are feeling and you recognise their feelings as important. Showing empathy makes you a caring, compassionate person who can be kind, thoughtful and forgiving of others. How do you feel about people who do this for others?

What words can you think of that describe feelings or emotions? Make a list with your classmates. Think about which of these feelings you have experienced today, or this week. Which of these feelings are positive (good) and which are negative (bad)?

Can you think of some different ways to help someone who is feeling sad or lonely? It might help if you recall the last time you were feeling this way. Who or what made you feel better?

People aren't always able to explain how they are feeling. Sometimes emotions are hard to put into words. Or people may like to keep their feelings private. But there are other ways you can tell how someone is feeling. How can you tell how someone feels, even if they don't tell you? Act out a feeling or emotion for your partner and see if they can guess what you are trying to show. Do you think everyone shows their feelings in the same way? Talk about this with your classmates.

## SORTING OUT

Brad Skinner is an advocate for RSL Queensland. RSL Queensland is an organisation that supports men and women who have served or currently serve in the Australian Defence Force. In this video, Brad talks about empathy and explains how he works to recognise other people's feelings and offer them support. Why do you think it can be difficult for people to ask for help when they need it?

What does Brad mean when he says, "We take a walk in that other person's shoes"? Talk about this with your classmates.

Listen carefully when Brad explains how to demonstrate empathy in three steps. Write these steps down when the video finishes.

### Related content:

- Video [rsleducation.com.au/themes/health-and-wellbeing/years-3---6/empathy](https://rsleducation.com.au/themes/health-and-wellbeing/years-3---6/empathy)
- Empathy card game and die activity [rsleducation.com.au/themes/health-and-wellbeing/years-3---6/empathy](https://rsleducation.com.au/themes/health-and-wellbeing/years-3---6/empathy)



How does Brad define “active listening”? Draw what you think this looks like.

As you watch the video a second time, think about how empathy helps us to be kind, tolerant and helpful towards others. Consider how RSL Queensland provides support for people in the Defence family. How can you support others in your own family when they need it? How can you help people in your school or neighbourhood?

## TAKING ACTION

Try to practise empathy with your friends and family by actively listening and finding ways to support them during their challenging times. Think of some ways you can connect with people and show you care, for example:

- Ask ‘Are you OK?’ if you see someone looking sad
- Ask someone to tell you about their day. Practise active listening
- If you see someone on their own at play time, ask if they’d like to join your group
- Make a cheerful card to tell someone the things you appreciate about them
- Talk to someone you don’t know well and look for things you might have in common
- Offer to do a job for someone at home
- When someone disagrees with you about something, practise empathy by thinking about the issue from their point of view. Tell yourself it’s OK to disagree but it’s important to work towards understanding how the other person thinks.

Download the Empathy Card Game and Die Template ([rsleducation.com.au/themes/health-and-wellbeing/years-3---6/empathy](https://rsleducation.com.au/themes/health-and-wellbeing/years-3---6/empathy)) to see how you can use empathy in different situations. Play the game in a group and talk about your answers.

Keep a ‘feelings diary’ for a week. Use it to record how you feel, in words or pictures. Were there times you felt negative emotions? What did you do, by yourself, that helped you to feel better at these times? Were there times when you needed help to feel better? Who offered you support and how did they show empathy? A feelings diary can help you to be more aware of your own feelings and to know when you need to look for support, from others and within yourself.

