



### ACTIVITY 5: WALK A MILE

**AGE:** K – 3rd Grade

**WHAT YOU'LL NEED:** Nothing is needed for this activity.

#### PURPOSE

Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another. When children learn empathy for others, they can understand how others feel in different situations and how to change their behavior when needed. As your child learns more about how his or her behaviors affect others, then he/she is learning how to be empathetic. This is especially important in elementary school, when your child may experience unkind behavior from others; by teaching your child how to identify unkind behavior (theirs or someone else's) and to use problem-solving skills effectively.

This activity relates to the Play and Exploration element in the **Approaches to Learning** domain of the VELs and the following elements in the **Social and Emotional Learning and Development** domain of the VELs:

- Emotions and Self-Regulation
- Self-Awareness
- Relationships with Adults and Peers

#### HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO!

Begin by teaching your child that aggressive behaviors like name-calling, teasing or threatening, are unkind and are not ok. You might see and point out examples in a book, or in media (like a movie or TV show). Talk with your child about the behavior and give it a name.

When you see your child showing unkind behavior:

1. Calmly point out the unkind behavior you have seen. For instance, "You were teasing your friend, and that is unkind."



2. Talk with your child about how the other child seems to feel. If the other child is still in the situation, you can ask them how they feel. If they are no longer involved, ask your child how they think the other child is feeling.
3. Ask your child to share how he/she feels when the same thing happens to him or her, for example, "How do you feel when you are teased?"
4. Together, problem-solve a different way for the next time the same thing happens. You may ask your child what he/she would do differently; try to guide him or her to a solution that is more than just, "I won't tease them again." Give example words to say and practice.
5. Ask your child "What would happen if..." and give your child different ideas that would help the situation go better the next time.



Note: It's important to stay calm when you are doing this activity. If you or your child needs to some time to calm down, or you need time to address inappropriate behavior, do this first, then come back to problem-solving.

**CHECK IT OUT!**

The following children's books might be helpful to check out from your public library. Not only are they fun to read with your child, but they may help give you some ideas about how to address situations as a parent.

- *The Juice Box Bully* by Kathryn Otoshi
- *What Were You Thinking* by Bryan Smith
- *Tough!* By Erin Frankel
- *Weird!* By Erin Frankel
- *Stop Picking on Me* by Pat Thomas



*Activity adapted from:*

- *Stop Bullying: Walking a Mile in Another Kid's Shoes* (2012). Wingspan, LLC.

**NOTES**

---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---