

Behaviour Strategies and Tools

EMPATHETIC RESPONSE

Purpose: In order for children to develop empathy, they need to experience being empathized with.

What is Empathy?

It is being able to understand and respect another person's experience. Empathy allows us to put ourselves in the other person's shoes and understand their point of view.

Strategy	What You Can Say
EMPATHIZE Let the child know their emotions are recognized and understood.	"You feel frustrated when your friends take the boxes without asking you."
VALIDATE The child's feelings, desires and needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "You feel frustrated and I can see why you feel that way." • "You wanted to be in the first group to go outside." • "Thanks for using the hand signal to let me know you were going to the bathroom."
ASK <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarifying questions. • How the child is feeling. • Use communication starters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "What happened?" • "Are you upset about that?" • "Are you doing anything special this weekend?"
DESCRIBE What emotions do you see in the child's face and body? Or hear in their tone of voice?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Your face and voice tell me you are very happy that the new Star Wars movie starts tomorrow." • "Your face and body tell me that you are frustrated that you don't get to go outside first."
INTERPRET Paraphrase what the child has said about their feelings and emotions.	"So, you put those boxes aside to play with later and you didn't think that anyone would take them."
EXPLAIN Explain to the child that their feelings are a reaction to a trigger.	"You got scared when the fire alarm went off and that's why you tried to run away."
REASSURE AND RELATE Let the child know that their reaction is normal and that they are not alone. Share a personal experience or the experience of someone you know.	"A lot of kids are scared of loud noises. I also get spooked by loud noises and jump."

Check out these videos on Empathy. You can also watch them with your children and have a discussion.

- A demonstration in fair play (Barcelona vs Japan)
<https://youtu.be/tbvIM4Higy4>
- What is Empathy?
<https://youtu.be/icIIUdTEQnU>
- Rogue One: A Star Wars Story
<https://youtu.be/nZC4mXaosxM>