

**Learn. Disrupt. Rebuild@HWDSB: Building a Community of Care  
Module 1 – Physical Safety, Mental Health and Wellness**

**Topic/Title: Listen & Empathize**

**Lesson #8** – Listen and Empathize (Primary)

**Learning Goal:** To show empathy by listening to others in order to understand their feelings and experiences.

**Key Vocabulary:**

**Empathy** - the understanding of or the ability to identify with another person's feelings or experiences.

**Mental health** - Mental health is characterized by an individual's ability to cope with the stresses of everyday life, work productively and contribute positively to society all while recognizing their own abilities.

**Emotions** – Emotions are a normal and necessary part of the human life. Emotions motivate us to act or behave in certain ways that ensure our own survival.

**SEL** - “Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.” – [The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning \(CASEL\)](#)

**Curriculum Links:**

**Language:**

**Oral Communication**

- Clarity and Coherence 2.3 communicate ideas, opinions, and information orally in a clear, coherent manner using simple but appropriate organizational patterns

**Reading**

- Demonstrating Understanding 1.4 demonstrate understanding of a text by retelling the story or restating information from the text, with the inclusion of a few interesting details

**Writing**

- Point of View 2.5 identify, initially with support and direction, their point of view and one or more possible different points of view about the topic

**FDK**

- Belonging and Contributing. This frame encompasses children’s learning and development with respect to their sense of connectedness to others;
- Self-Regulation and Well-Being. This frame encompasses children’s learning and development with respect to their own thinking and feelings, and their recognition of and respect for differences in the thinking and feelings of others;

**Tools and Materials:**

- YouTube video about empathy: [https://youtu.be/9\\_1Rt1R4xbM](https://youtu.be/9_1Rt1R4xbM)
- [How Would You Feel Scenarios - Learning for Justice](#)
- [Emoji Feelings Template](#) (a few cut up for each student or display on screen for the whole class)

## Educator Pre-Reflection:

Before engaging in this lesson, consider:

Reviewing the [Emotion Coaching Cheat Sheet](#) (from Emotion Coaching Module 1) may be helpful in supporting conversations during this lesson.

Given the current situation, many students and staff will be feeling a wide range of emotions, such as worry, sadness, happiness, relief, nervousness, excitement, fear, anger and frustration. We must ensure that these feelings are normalized for everyone and that they are not seen as disordered. It is normal to have certain emotions currently and those emotions are not necessarily indicative of a mental health disorder. The following sentence starter example may help validate emotions:

“It makes sense that you are having lots of different feelings right now because you are adjusting to a lot of changes at school and at home.”

Some guides to talking about trauma and stress:

- Some students may have faced trauma over the quarantine, here are some tips in talking through trauma from Berkley College: <https://gsi.berkeley.edu/gsi-guide-contents/discussion-intro/discussion-resources/n>
- This video provides a good overview of the difference between mental health mental distress and mental disorder

## Student Pre-Reflection:

Before you begin, think about...

When you are hurt or upset who do you talk to?

When you talk to a friend or loved one when you are upset how does it feel?

When you talk about your emotions with someone else and they ignore your feelings how does it make you feel?

## Provocation:

As a class, discuss the meaning of the word “empathy” as understanding someone else’s feelings or experiences.

To solidify the concept, watch the following YouTube video regarding empathy:

[https://youtu.be/9\\_1Rt1R4xbM](https://youtu.be/9_1Rt1R4xbM).

Discuss the video and explain that they will be practicing using empathy in the lesson today.

## Learning Task/Activity:

- Using the emoji feelings pictures that were cut up or displayed students will be choosing a face that reflects how they would feel if they were involved in each scenario.
- Read aloud - [How Would You Feel Scenarios](#)

- Students are responding to the italicized questions with their facial expression pictures. Students show their selection by raising their hands to vote, displaying their choice on their desks.
- Students may choose more than one facial expression if they think that their feelings would have changed throughout the situation.
- Discuss responses.

Discuss Prompts (As quoted from Learning for Justice)– Discuss the following with the class:

- “Finn thinks Jacob is bragging, but if he stopped to think about how he might feel in Jacob’s situation, what might he realize about how Jacob is feeling? When we try to understand other people’s feelings, we’re putting ourselves in that person’s shoes. If Finn was really listening to Jacob, he might have better understood that Jacob is proud to have gotten his first A+ after having studied all weekend.
- Durrell thinks that Mike is being mean to him, but if Durrell put himself in Mike’s place, what might he realize? If you got into trouble for something a friend did, you might be angry. The same is probably true for Durrell.
- Does Tina show Suri any understanding? What might have been a better way to talk to Suri? If Tina had thought about how, she would feel if her best friend had moved, maybe she would have realized that Suri was feeling sad and she would have treated her more nicely.
- Valerie gets annoyed with Meegan because she is acting silly. If Valerie had thought about how Meegan might be feeling about her trip, she might have realized what was causing Meegan’s “weird” behavior. Why do you think Meegan was acting that way? Would you be happy and excited if you were the one going on vacation?”

Discussion Prompts & Lesson adapted from– [Learning for Justice](#)

### Consolidation:

Read aloud: *The Rabbit Listened* by Cori Doerrfeld - Available on HWDSB Virtual Library (Emax/Sora)

Discuss with the class:

- How does this book demonstrate empathy?
- Which characters chose to show empathy?
- How would the story have been different if certain animals had have behaved differently?

### Educator Post-Reflection:

The main idea I want to remember or take away from this lesson is..

My next step is...

I need to learn more about...

I am feeling...

**Student Post-Reflection:**

The main idea I want to remember or take away from this lesson is

Who found it difficult, why?

Who thought it was easy, why?

**Ideas for Going Deeper/Further Resources:**

- Thinking about your story, make a poster that shows how to be more understanding. Hang the posters around school to teach others about empathy and understanding other people's feelings.

Lesson ideas and activities adapted from:

- How Would You Feel Scenarios ([Learning for Justice](#))
- Discussion Prompts ( ([Learning for Justice](#)))
- [School Mental Health Ontario \(Educator/Your Role\)](#)
- [Be There Basics](#)
- [Covid 19 – Youth Mental Health](#)