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School Social Work Service

# Social Work Service for Pre-Primary Institutions

Parents'  
Newsletter  
Issue 22

## Children's Corner

# Developing Children's Empathy

### What is empathy?

Put yourself  
in others  
shoes

Imagine what another  
person is thinking  
from their perspective  
as well as to try  
to understand and  
respect their feeling

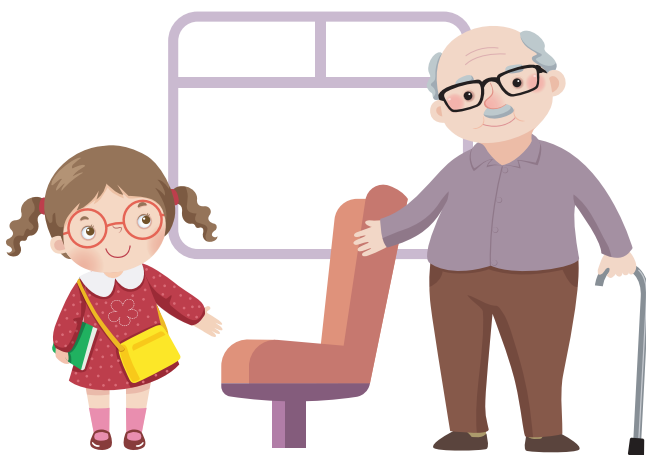
### The importance of establishing children's empathy

Easier for them to  
establish the social  
relationships with  
their companions

Enhance  
children's  
problem-solving  
skills

Help the children understand  
and control their own  
emotions and thus improve  
their emotional management  
when they are aware of  
others' feelings

### Parents can develop children's empathy in daily life in the following ways:



#### Learning opportunities in daily life

First of all, parents have to demonstrate how to show empathy through modeling e.g. giving seats to those in needs. Children learn that by observing and imitating adults' behaviours and further develop the value of empathy. Parents can also teach their children to understand others' thoughts and feelings with the experience in daily life, and subsequently, how to react to that.

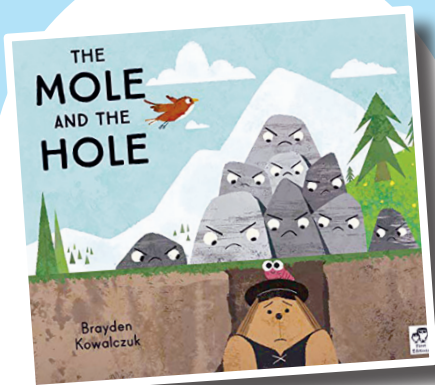
#### Learning empathy through illustration books

The stories in the illustration books can help children walk in the character's shoes and understand their feelings. Through these stories, parents can raise questions about the character's feeling to the children when they are reading illustration books together. This will strengthen their perspective-taking practice.



# The Mole and The Hole

Let's read the book "The Mole and The Hole" together! Parents can use the following questions as reference to encourage children to talk about the illustration characters' thoughts and feelings, and also how to resolve their conflicts.



## Story outline:

A mole is an animal living in the hole on the ground. He likes digging up the ground. He likes to do whatever he likes such as pooing and digging on the tree. The stones are angry with the mole's behaviours and do not want the mole to dig up the ground. But the mole has no clue why they do not like him doing that.



## The Story

## Parents could ask...

Encourage the children to describe the character's facial expression to guess their emotions

What is the facial expression of the stone?

Ask the children to guess the thoughts, experience and motivation of the characters

What do you think about their feelings?

Why do you think that the stones were so angry?

How would you feel if you were the stones?

What would you do if you were the stones?

Guide the children to think about others needs

What do the stones want?

Help the children think about how to resolve the conflict

What can we do to help the mole and the stones to be happy?

Parents can also invite the children to think about the mole's feelings and thoughts. They can also praise the children for being considerate and encourage them to practise empathizing with others. For instance, "That's such a good idea! Mum appreciates that you're so considerate and trying to solve the problem of the mole and the stones."

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