

What Is My Child Learning?

Unit Themes

Your child is learning how empathy and kindness can help them strengthen friendships as well as make new friends. Third graders learn the meaning of empathy—feeling or understanding what someone else is feeling—and how it can help them be kind in ways their friends will appreciate. They practice empathy in action by asking questions to learn more about what someone might want or need and then following up with an act of kindness.

Why is it important?

Research shows that children who learn the skills in this unit are more likely to:

- ▲ **Build stronger relationships**
- ▲ **Resolve conflicts more effectively**
- ▲ **Exhibit positive behaviors**
- ▲ **Develop increased empathy**



Practice at Home

What to Look For

Notice and praise your child when they talk about how other people might be feeling. For example, your child might say, “Marco broke his ankle. During recess, he seemed sad that he couldn’t run around with us.” You can say, **It’s nice to hear you’re thinking about your friend’s feelings.**

Try This!

Discuss: Talk about kind things that friends can do for each other. Take turns naming something kind that you did for a friend to show you care about them, and then talk about a time a friend did something nice for you.

Practice: Look for opportunities for your child to show kindness. If you hear your child mention a friend who’s going through a hard time, encourage them to think of something they could do to show they care. For example, your child could make a get-well card for a friend who stayed home sick. Likewise, if a friend has something to celebrate, your child could tell them, “I’m so happy for you!”