

We are ONE
(Overcoming Negativity with Empathy)

Targeting grades 4 and 6

Adaptation of “Roots of Empathy” program used in school in Canada and New Zealand as a means to nurture empathy and create a vision of citizenship within the school.

Lessons include:

Brain Development
Temperament
Attachment
Emotional Literacy
Authentic Communication
Social Inclusion

Each lesson has 2 parts. The first is an overview of the concept. There is no baby on this visit. The lesson helps the children to understand the language and the expectations that result in a subsequent visit with the parent and baby.

The second visit in each of the lessons includes the mother/father and the baby. We formulate questions at the pre-visit and propose anticipated responses as we predict what the mother might say... or what the baby will do. For example:

As we explore “Temperament” we have met the baby already. We take cues from the baby’s response to all the children, the new environment, the noise etc. This inevitably results in a discussion of the students’ own temperaments and how each of us reacts differently to stimuli. The result is a greater understanding of the classroom community and a tolerance of individuality.

The lessons conclude with a discussion of social inclusion, the heart of living well in a community.

It is our hope that through the eyes of a baby, we can allow students to view the world from a simpler perspective through authentic communication we can model the value of inclusion and take on the topic of bullying. Take opportunities to talk about examples of unfair or unkind treatment of people, focusing on the feelings of those involved. Discuss with students that the pain caused by bullying can last much longer than those few seconds it takes to say the harsh words. The effects of bullying can be devastating and long lasting.