



**CIRCLE OF
COMPASSION**

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Directions:

1. Read the *Compassionate Kid Stories* one at a time. After each story, discuss what the problem was and how the main character showed compassion to take action.
2. As a family discuss empathy and compassion by following the *Circle of Compassion* activity provided below.

COMPASSIONATE KID STORIES

Trey and the Birds

Trey loved birds and he really enjoyed watching them. He was devastated when he saw how many flew into the glass windows at his school and injured themselves or died. He researched solutions and helped install nets around the windows prone to bird collisions. The netting helped the birds see the solid surface better, and fewer flew into the windows as a result.

Maria and the Bees

Maria was always fascinated with bees. She had recently noticed there were fewer bees around and began to ask why. After some research, she started to think it had something to do with the chemicals her parents and neighbors were using on their lawns. She convinced her parents to stop using the chemicals and made flyers to teach her neighbors about the problem as well. Maria hoped that her efforts would help to bring the bees back.

Julian and Friendship

Julian was really upset that some of the kids at his school were being mean and bullying other students. He decided to do something about it. He began asking kids who looked lonely to sit with him at lunch and included them in games on the playground. He also gave a speech to his class about why being mean to others is such a harmful thing to do. Many of the kids at his school became concerned and made friends with kids who were often left out. They also started to speak up when they heard their peers being unkind to one another.

Himiko and the Orangutans

Himiko loved orangutans. She had never seen one in real life, but read about them and even watched movies about them. She worried that she couldn't help them because she lived in the United States, far from the Asian rainforests where most wild orangutans live. Then, she learned that one of the problems facing orangutans is that their forests are being destroyed to make room to grow palm fruit trees for palm oil. She was surprised to learn how much of her food contained palm oil. Himiko decided to boycott products that contained palm oil and encouraged others to do the same. One of her favorite brands of cookies even replied after she sent them a letter explaining her decision to boycott their product. The company said that it would take the palm oil out of its cookies.



CIRCLE OF COMPASSION

TIME

15 minutes

SEL COMPETENCY

Social Awareness

PURPOSE

To reflect on who we care about,
and who we would stand up for
if they were in need

ACTIVITY:

- Discuss what empathy means. Explain: **Empathy is about feeling what someone else feels and understanding their feelings. Compassion is *having an awareness of another's suffering (empathy) and a willingness to help address it.*** In other words, compassion is **empathy in action.**
- Draw a circle and label it "Circle of Compassion" (or use the *Circle of Compassion* worksheet provided below.)
- Say the following: **This circle represents our compassion. Share who you care about and who you would stand up for or help if they were in need.** (Write down your responses in the circle.)
- After everyone has shared, ask:
 - **Are there any other people, animals, plants, or even parts of the natural world that you think deserve to be in the circle?**
 - **Is there anyone who you would not include in your Circle of Compassion? Why or why not?**
 - **Do you think everyone deserves to be in our circles of compassion? Why or why not?**
- Now, go around the circle one at a time and respond to the following: **Can you share an example of what showing compassion looks like? For example, speaking up for someone who has been bullied.** (Explain that it can be any example of compassion, and if anyone is stuck, ask them to think of something they have done before or an act of compassion they have seen someone else do.)

Reflection: Was it difficult to think of examples of compassion? Why is it important to discuss what compassion looks like? Which agreement includes compassion?

CIRCLE OF COMPASSION

Directions: Add (in pictures or words) any people, groups, animals, or natural places that you have compassion for.

