

## Empathy

### What is empathy?

The ability to understand and care about how others feel.

Empathy is a complex part of development that can be a struggle for a child to grasp. But learning to feel and show empathy is an important part of your toddler's growth into a responsible and caring person.

Your toddler can start to learn empathy by watching you. Try:

- ✓ responding to their needs and the needs of others in a caring and fair way
- ✓ helping them name their feelings and understand why these feelings are happening, and talking about what to do about them
- ✓ helping them understand how their actions can affect people in positive or negative ways
- ✓ using positive discipline to help them grow and develop (see [Positive Discipline](#))
- ✓ showing them how to share and be kind
- ✓ showing them how to apologize when it's appropriate



### BRAIN BUILDER

Point out when your child has done something kind (“Look how happy you made Jessica by sharing your toy”) or not so kind (“When you hit your sibling, it made her sad”). By helping them understand how their actions affect others, you're building their social and emotional skills.

