

December: Compassion – Caring enough to do something about someone else’s need

SAY IT: It’s easy to get wrapped up in yourself during the holidays—your own wish list, your own to-do list, your own traditions. So this month, we are focusing on a Big Idea that will remind us all to see the bigger picture.

So this week, set aside a few minutes to help us talk about compassion with your child. See if your child can tell you what the new value is and (even better) the definition. Then, gather the whole family and your favorite bouncy ball. Stand in a large circle and say the new value and definition while holding the bouncy ball (“Compassion—caring enough to do something about someone else’s need”). When you have correctly recited it, bounce the ball to your child to say the value and definition while holding the ball. If he or she doesn’t get it quite right, that’s okay! Just bounce the ball back to the person who started and say it again. Bounce the ball to your child until he or she can say the definition correctly and bounce it to the next person. Play continues like this until everyone in the family is able to say it correctly!

KNOW IT: Dig a little deeper this week with these discussion starters about compassion:

- What are some of the needs you see in the people around you every day?
- What can you do to help with some of these needs?
- Describe a time when someone gave up something in order to meet one of your needs.
- Have you ever given something up or overlooked your own needs to help someone else?
- When was the last time you saw someone showing compassion?

SEE IT: Now that you know what we say compassion means, and you know what compassion means to you, read the info below and SEE what other kinds of animals show compassion.

The orca whale is a magnificent creature, weighing as much as 18,000 pounds and growing as long as 32 feet—that’s almost as long as a school bus! Despite their large size and their strength, these whales look out for each other. If one whale is injured, the other orcas will lift it to the surface so it can breathe. And if one whale gets stuck on the beach, the others will even risk their own lives to try and save their friend. Now, you may not be as big as a whale but you can definitely show compassion in ways that are just as BIG!

BE IT: Okay, you know just about all there is to know about compassion. Now, let’s take what we know and put it into practice.

Malaria is a curable disease, yet nearly 3,000 children in Africa die from Malaria every year. It’s easy to forget about people who are suffering from a disease thousands of miles away because we don’t see them. But when we take the time to stop and remember and do something about their needs, we are demonstrating compassion. One way you can help prevent malaria is by purchasing a simple mosquito net.

Open up the web search engine on your family computer, smartphone or tablet and go to biteback.net to learn more about how your family can help prevent Malaria in Africa.