

# Empathy for the Family

## Sensing the emotions of others

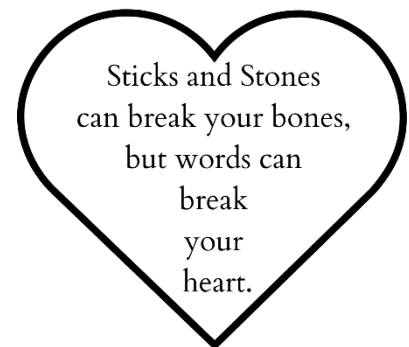
To practice **Empathy**, I will:

- See things from the point of view of others.
- Imagine how I would feel in the situation of others.
- Assume the best reasons for others' actions.
- Look for common traits with others.
- Appreciate the differences of others.



### Family Activity: Sticks and Stones

To prep for this activity, make a red heart with words from the graphic. You can also download a pdf on the website. Printing it on red paper is best, but you can also print it on standard white. You or a child can color it, ensuring the words are still readable. Cut out the heart for use in the activity.



Start by asking them to finish the phrase Sticks and Stones... The childhood rhyme is “Sticks and Stones can break my bones, but words can never hurt me.” Ask them if it is true. If they agree, ask if anyone has ever said anything that hurt how they felt. Explain that those types of hurts may not break a bone or draw blood, but they can hurt your heart. This exercise will teach an alternate ending: “Sticks and Stones can break my bones, but words can break my heart.”

Bring out the heart cut-out. Ask them for examples of things people could say that would break your heart. You can come up with examples, too. For each suggestion, place a fold in the heart. When the heart is completely folded, you can stop the suggestions.

Now, ask for suggestions of what you should do if you say something that breaks someone's heart. Take suggestions until you get one for apologizing. Ask someone to pretend to apologize to someone they may have hurt. Unfold the heart. Show that hurtful words can leave a mark that a simple apology cannot undo. Ask for suggestions of what comes after an apology – changed behavior. You may want to end the session by suggesting what to do and what not to do when someone hurts them.

Download is at [www.charactercincinnati.org/in-community/fam-activity/sticks-and-stones/](http://www.charactercincinnati.org/in-community/fam-activity/sticks-and-stones/)