A child wearing a backpack and a striped shirt is the central focus of the image. The child is seen from the back, looking slightly to the right. The background is a soft-focus indoor setting. A white rectangular frame is superimposed over the child's torso, containing the title text. At the bottom center of the image, there is a circular logo with the text 'RAISING' at the top, 'COMMUNITY' at the bottom, and '/S/' in the center.

Raising Empathy School Program



Contents

PART 1 Physical & Emotional Needs

PART2 Our Brain and Body on Stress

PART 3 Our Emotions and Empathy

PART 4 Back pack filling



DEAR EDUCATOR:

THANK YOU FOR INVESTING TIME INTO SHARING THIS CONTENT WITH YOUR STUDENTS AS YOU PREPARE TO FILL A BACKPACK FOR CHILDREN WHO, OTHERWISE, WOULDN'T GET ONE.

THIS GUIDE FOCUSES ON CONNECTING US TO OUR SIMILARITIES AS HUMANS WHILE CELEBRATING THE DIFFERENCES THAT MAKE US UNIQUE.

MOST IMPORTANTLY, IT WILL DEMONSTRATE HOW, TOGETHER, WE CAN SUPPORT EACH OTHER TO GROW WITH STRONG AND HEALTHY BRAINS AND BODIES THAT WILL ENABLE EACH OF US TO REACH OUR FULL POTENTIAL AND CONTRIBUTE TO STRONG AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES.

HOW TO USE THIS CURRICULUM:

THERE ARE FOUR SECTIONS, AND EACH SECTION INCLUDES TEACHER INFO, STUDENT, AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES.

THE FOUR SECTIONS ARE:

1. PHYSICAL & EMOTIONAL NEEDS
2. OUR BRAIN AND BODY ON STRESS
3. THE POWER OF COMMUNITY
4. BACKPACK FILLING

THE CURRICULUM IS BEST COMPLETE OVER 4 WEEKS, ALLOWING FOR TIME TO REINFORCE IDEAS LEARNINGS THROUGHOUT EACH WEEK.

**WITH GRATITUDE,
STARLINGS COMMUNITY X IBELONGBAGS**

ABOUT STARLINGS COMMUNITY INC:
SUPPORTING FAMILIES IMPACTED BY ADDICTIONS & STIGMA TO
RISE RESILIENT & HEAL

**APPROX. 1 IN 6 CHILDREN IN CANADA
HAVE A PARENT WITH AN ADDICTION.**



**PARENTAL ADDICTION
& COMMUNITY STIGMA**

intergenerational
transmission of
toxic stress

decreased emotional and
physical support for child



TOXIC STRESS IN CHILD

**INCREASED RISK FOR MENTAL
ILLNESS & ADDICTION AS ADULTS**

without supports there is an
increased risk for untreated
childhood trauma

4+ ACEs

Parental addiction is an ACE & increases risk for more ACEs. 4+ ACEs increases a child's risk for mental illness & addiction

STIGMA

Children are in a unique position to support their parents, but do so against a stigma & at a cost to their own mental health

\$46B

Substance use costs Canada \$46 billion/ year in healthcare, justice system. & lost productivity

HEALING IN COMMUNITY

**TOGETHER, WE CAN SUPPORT CHILDREN TO HEAL &
END THE CYCLE OF TOXIC STRESS IN FAMILIES.**



EDUCATION:

**EMPOWER FIRST
RESPONDERS & HEALTH
PROFESSIONALS**



CONNECTION:

**EMPOWER PARENTS
& CONNECT FAMILY TO
COMMUNITY**



PEER SUPPORT:

**EMPOWER CHILDREN TO
USE THEIR STRENGTH &
RESILIENCE TO HEAL.**

ABOUT AGNES

ABOUT AGNES:

AGNES CHEN IS A PROUD MOM OF 4, A REGISTERED NURSE, A SOCIAL JUSTICE ADVOCATE, AND THE FOUNDER OF STARLINGS COMMUNITY, A NOT-FOR-PROFIT ADVOCATING FOR HEALING SUPPORTS FOR CHILDREN IMPACTED BY THE STIGMA OF A PARENT'S SUBSTANCE USE. AS A CHILD, AGNES GREW UP IN A HOME WHERE UNHEALED TRAUMA AND ADDICTIONS EXISTED, EXPOSING HER TO THE DEEPLY ROOTED WAYS STIGMA EXISTS IN OUR SOCIETY AND WITHIN OUR CURRENT CARE SYSTEMS. TODAY, SHE USES HER PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES TO INSPIRE A COMMUNITY THAT CAN OFFER IMPACTED FAMILIES COMPASSION AND HOPE WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY ENABLING A FAMILY'S HEALING.

EMAIL: AGNESCHEN@STARLINGS.CA

WEBSITE: WWW.STARLINGS.CA

I BELONG BAGS FOUNDATION

I Belong Bags helps children and youth know they belong; are brave and are connected and a valuable part of society no matter their circumstances. We provide children and youth in crisis with a backpack filled with essential and comfort items such as a toothbrush, pajamas, a plush animal and blanket, coloring and reading books, and a toy. Sometimes, kids can leave home suddenly without anything to take with them. A backpack like this can help them get through the first few days knowing someone cares as they transition into a scary and unexpected journey.

To find out more about our organization and what we've been up to, how you can volunteer or support our mission, visit our website and Facebook pages:

www.facebook.com/ibelongbags
www.ibelongbags.com

*interconnected
belonging
bravery*



ABOUT TANYA

THIS CURRICULUM WAS CREATED BY AGNES CHEN AND TANYA FORBES.

ABOUT TANYA

I BELONG BAGS STARTED AS A SMALL COMMUNITY PROJECT IN MY DAUGHTER'S GRADE 1 CLASSROOM IN 2018.

IT STARTED OUT WITH A GOAL TO PROVIDE 10 BACKPACKS FILLED WITH ESSENTIAL AND COMFORT ITEMS TO CHILDREN ENTERING FOSTER CARE. THE ITEMS INCLUDED SOFT PAJAMAS, A STUFFY AND WARM BLANKET FOR THEIR FIRST NIGHT AWAY FROM HOME AND A BOOK AND TOOTHBRUSH AND A TOY. IT WAS MEANT TO REPLACE THAT GARBAGE BAG THEY OFTEN RECEIVED IN THAT MOMENT OR BE GIVEN WHEN THEY HAD TO LEAVE HOME WITH NOTHING AT ALL. THE BAG COULD BE FILLED WITH WONDEROUS THINGS TO COMFORT THEM AND LET THEM KNOW SOMEONE CARED ABOUT WHAT THEY WERE GOING THROUGH. THAT MOMENT OF BEING HANDED A GARBAGE HAS SUCH A DAMAGING PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT ON A CHILD THAT THEY MAY NEVER OVERCOME. THE STORY THEY CAN MAKE THAT MOMENT MEAN ABOUT THEMSELVES, WILL LAST A LIFETIME. THAT WAS THE MOMENT I WAS TRYING TO CHANGE – MAKE SURE NEVER HAPPENS.

I HAVE MY OWN EXPERIENCE WITH FOSTER CARE AND ALTHOUGH IT DIDN'T BEGIN WITH A GARBAGE BAG IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT, I AM NO STRANGER TO FEELING ALONE, LIKE I DIDN'T BELONG ANYWHERE AND NOBODY CARED ABOUT ME OR WHAT I WAS GOING THROUGH. I KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO MAKE MEANING OUT OF A TRAUMATIC EVENT AND HAVE THAT BE A FOUNDATION FROM WHERE I LIVED MY LIFE AND PERCEIVED MY WORTHINESS AND POTENTIAL. ALL CHILDREN BELONG EXACTLY WHEREVER THEIR TWO FEET CARRY THEM AND THEY SHOULD FEEL AND KNOW THAT FROM THE PEOPLE AROUND THEM, EVEN IF IT'S NOT THEIR PARENTS OR GUARDIANS AT THE TIME.

SINCE 2018, WE HAVE EXPANDED TO INCLUDE ALL CHILDREN IN CRISIS AND NOT JUST FOSTER CHILDREN. UNFORTUNATELY, WE CANNOT GET OUR BACKPACKS DIRECTLY INTO THE HANDS OF FOSTER CHILDREN FOR VARIOUS POLITICAL REASONS AND REGULATIONS, THEREFORE; WE CONTINUE TO WORK OUR MAGIC OUTSIDE THE SYSTEM FOR NOW, HELPING HOWEVER AND WHEREVER WE CAN

I SHARE MY PASSION AND VISION AND HOPE THAT IT SPARKS SOMETHING IN SOMEONE. HOPE THAT IT RALLIES PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES AROUND ME INTO TAKING ACTION TOWARDS A CAUSE NO MATTER HOW SMALL AND BEING A STAND FOR SOMETHING GREATER THAN THEMSELVES ALONE.

TANYA@IBELONGBAGS.COM
WWW.IBELONGBAGS.COM

A photograph of four diverse school children walking in a hallway. From left to right: a boy with short blonde hair, a girl with long dark hair and a red headband, a boy with short dark hair wearing a striped shirt, and a girl with long blonde hair in a braid. They are all smiling and wearing backpacks. The background shows a hallway with white columns and brick walls.

PART 1:
GROWING
HEALTHY
BRAINS
AND
BODIES.

ACTIVITY 1 SUMMARY:

THIS SECTION WILL EXPLORE WHAT MAKES US UNIQUE (OUR EXTERNAL APPEARANCES, CULTURAL DIFFERENCES, EXPERIENCES) WHILE CONNECTING OUR SIMILARITIES (WE ALL HAVE FEELINGS AND NEED COMMUNITY, LOVE, AND BELONGING).

TOPICS DISCUSSED INCLUDE:

- SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH, MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS*

TEACHER PREP:

1. FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS AND THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH.

A. SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH:

I. [HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=8PH4JYFF4NS](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8PH4JYFF4NS)

B. MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS:

I. [HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=O-4ITHG_07Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-4ITHG_07Q)

II. CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE: [HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=H25YQRY89TY&T=189S](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H25YQRY89TY&T=189S)

NOTE: MASLOW'S WORK WAS INFORMED BY HIS TIME WITH THE BLACKFOOT INDIANS IN CANADA. IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT MASLOW DID NOT FULLY INCORPORATE BLOOD FIRST NATION UNDERSTANDINGS OF ANCESTRAL KNOWLEDGE, SPIRITUALITY, AND MULTIPLE DIMENSIONS OF REALITY. HE DID NOT FULLY SITUATE THE INDIVIDUAL WITHIN THE COMMUNITY CONTEXT, WHICH IS AN ESSENTIAL NEED TO THE BLOOD FIRST NATION.

- SEE [DR. CINDY BLACKSTOCK BREATH OF LIFE THEORY](#) FOR MORE DETAILS.

2. PREP MATERIALS:

FOR SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES, YOU WILL NEED:

A. ONE SELF PORTRAIT PER STUDENT (SEE NEXT PAGE)

I. FOLD SHEETS IN HALF, SO THE PORTRAIT IS ON THE OUTSIDE

II. PRINT ENOUGH "BRAIN" IMAGES FOR EACH STUDENT (SEE NEXT PAGE)

III. CUT OUT AND GLUE ONE BRAIN INSIDE EACH FOLDED PAPER.

B. WHITE BOARD, OR LARGE PAPER TO TRACE ONE OF THE STUDENTS ON:

C. PRINT 1 "[HIERARCHY OF NEEDS](#)" PER STUDENT.

D. INTERNET FOR VIDEO

E. LISTED BOOKS OR ALTERNATIVES.

ACTIVITY 1: SELF PORTRAIT

Part 1 of 2:

Materials:

- Pass out 1 pre-folded person outline with brain to each student. Alternatively, fold a paper in half and students can draw themselves completely on the front, as well as draw a brain on the inside.
- Draw an outline of a person on the white board (will be used in discussion after 1st activity)

Step 1: Inform the students to create a self-portrait using the pre-folded sheets. They can add as much or as little detail as they like. Twenty minutes should be enough time, but use more or less based on your time frame and how elaborate you would like students to get.

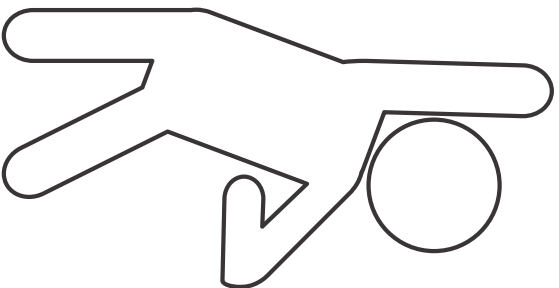
Step 2: Once they are done, have a conversation about all of the incredible differences they see about each other (hair color, clothing style, eyes, etc)



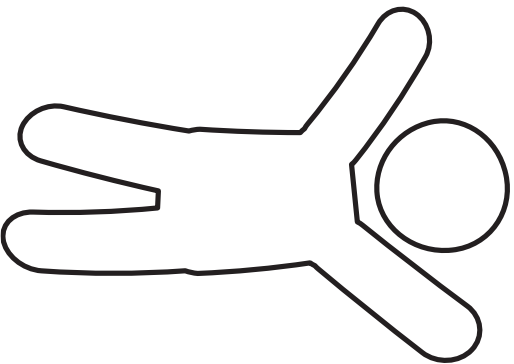
SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITY

SUPPLEMENTAL BOOK:

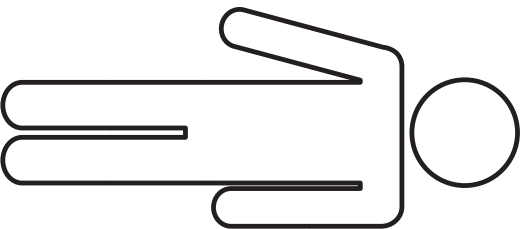
All Are Welcome (or watch her read it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mwS3FOn4-Ow>)



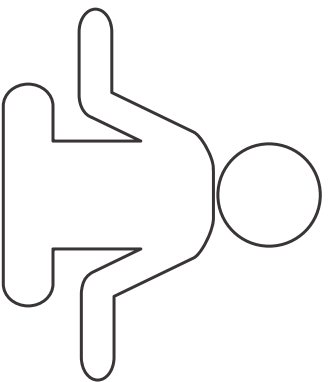
NAME:



NAME:



NAME:



NAME:

ACTIVITY 2: EXPLORE WHAT MAKES US HEALTHY

Set aside the self-portrait & trace the outline of one of the students on a large paper. Alternatively, you can draw a person on the whiteboard. Next, ask the students: **WHAT DOES A PERSON NEED TO GROW TO BE STRONG AND HEALTHY (to survive)**. Have students answer aloud or write down ALL the needs they believe a person has to grow a healthy brain and body on top of the drawing.



note: if the students do not mention love / kindness or similar need, ask them if they think being shown love and kindness is important to growing healthy brains and bodies. If they answer no, prompt them to consider what makes them feel better when they are mad, sad, or scared?

also consider other cultures and what they might see as a need including praying, nature, and Ceremony.

ACTIVITY 2 SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES:

SUPPLEMENTAL VIDEO: SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8PH4JYff4Ns>

SUPPLEMENTAL BOOK:

- When we are kind, by Monique Grey Smith (or watch her read it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VtJuM6loljc>)

ACTIVITY 2 CONTINUED : TRACE & EXPLORE NEEDS

Part 2 of 2: **Class Conversation:** Once the students are done writing all the needs they believe a person has, use the questions below to guide the class in a conversation about how to meet these needs.

Q: how might a child get these things: a house, bed, food, clothing

A: caregiver (parents), money

- Q: What if the child doesn't have a mom or dad? Who else could help?
- A: grandparents, friends, community, Leaders (Government)

Q: How might a caregiver/ person get money?

A: a job, working, help from families

Q: Does everyone have the same amount of money?

A: No. Some people make a lot more, and others make a lot less.

Q: Why might someone make a lot less money than others, or not be able to work (therefore, make no money)?

A: they cannot work because of a physical or mental illness; the job doesn't need a worker anymore so they lose their job; they can't find a job; they do not have anyone to help take care of their kids so cannot work

Q: if a caregiver can't work or make very little money, how might that affect their kids/ family?

A: not enough food to eat, no lunch at school, no home to live in (**stress**)

Q: How might a parent **feel** if they do not have enough money for the above things?

A: sad, angry, worried (**stress**)

Q: how do you think that might make the **kids feel** if the caregiver was always sad, angry, or worried?

A: sad, mad, lonely (**stress**)

a bed

a house

clean clothes

vegetable

hugs

love

kindness

Q: how does a child get these things: love, hugs, toys

A: parents, friends, family, teachers, school

Q: How would it feel to NOT have love, hugs, kindness?

A: sad, bad (**stressful**)

Q: So do you think that love and hugs are pretty important to building healthy brains and bodies?

A: YES!

We are going to talk a lot more about feelings later;

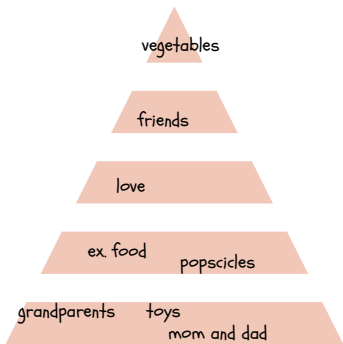
ACTIVITY 3: HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

Provide each student with a hierarchy chart (see next page). Ask the class to order the needs they wrote down in the previous activity in order of importance to THEM, placing the needs they think are most important at the bottom, and work their way up. Thus, the class can work through each need together, with students writing where THEY think the need fits on their chart.

Students' answers will likely vary: Encourage this variety.

Students will have different answers and perspectives based on their own families, culture, and spiritual practices, and it is essential to incorporate this into the conversation.

NOTE: If the students did not list the following needs in the previous activity, ask them where they believe these needs belong on their hierarchy: prayer, connecting to culture, being in nature, community, love, belonging.



NOTE: In some literature and some cultures, love, community, and belonging is considered equally or more important to food, water, and shelter.

MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS



Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a motivational theory in western psychology made of hierarchical levels within a pyramid. Maslow stated that our needs are interconnected, and that needs lower down in the hierarchy must be satisfied before individuals can attend to needs higher up. He says our most basic need is for physical survival, which will be the first thing that motivates our behavior.

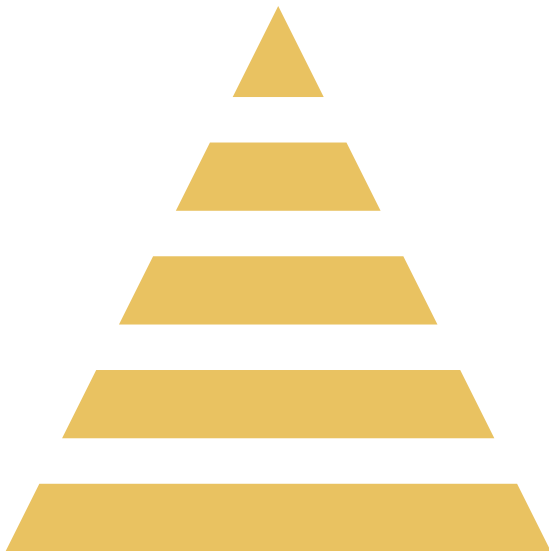
Maslow's work was informed by his time with the Blackfoot Indians in Canada. It is important to note that Maslow did not fully incorporate Blood First Nation understandings of ancestral knowledge, spirituality, and multiple dimensions of reality, nor did he fully situate the individual within the context of community.

It is essential to highlight that different cultures in Canada value different needs, such as spirituality, nature, and community.

MY HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

NAME: _____

DATE: _____





PART 2:

Exploring my
brain and
emotions.

PART 2 SUMMARY:OUR BRAIN

REVIEW:

UP UNTIL NOW, WE HAVE DISCUSSED OUR NEEDS, INCLUDING HOW NOT HAVING SPECIFIC NEEDS MET MIGHT MAKE US FEEL.

THIS SECTION WILL EXPLORE OUR BRAIN, INCLUDING ITS JOB, HOW NOT HAVING OUR NEEDS MET MIGHT IMPACT HOW WE FEEL, AND HOW WHAT WE FEEL (STRESS) CAN IMPACT HOW OUR BRAIN DOES SOME OF ITS JOBS.

TOPICS DISCUSSED INCLUDE:

- WHAT DOES OUR BRAIN DO?
- OUR BRAIN ON STRESS
- OUR EMOTIONS AND OUR BRAIN.

TEACHER PREP:

1. PRE-WATCH ALBERTA FAMILY WELLNESSES VIDEO: "BRAINS JOURNEY TO RESILIENCE."

◦ [HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=HJVDRt6N-MW&t=186s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HJVDRt6N-MW&t=186s)

2. FOR SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES, YOU WILL NEED:

A. SELF-PORTRAIT CREATED PREVIOUSLY IN SECTION 1 WITH BRAIN IMAGE ON THE INSIDE

B. FIVE DIFFERENT MARKERS, OR SMALL CIRCLE STICKERS IN DIFFERENT COLOURS, OR POMPOMS.

NOTE: WILL BE USED TO REPRESENT THE EMOTIONS SAD, MAD, HAPPY, FEAR, CALM

PREVIOUSLY, WE DREW OUR SELF-PORTRAITS AND CELEBRATED OUR DIFFERENCES: WHAT WE LOOK LIKE AND SOUND LIKE.

TODAY, WE WILL RECONNECT ON OUR SIMILARITIES- THAT WE ALL HAVE A BRAIN, AND WE ALL FEEL THEN, THROUGH DISCUSSION AND READING, WE WILL REFLECT ON WHAT OTHERS MIGHT BE FEELING BASED ON THEIR WORDS AND EXPRESSIONS, WHY THEY MIGHT BE FEELING IT, AND HOW THESE FEELINGS MIGHT IMPACT HOW THEY BEHAVE.

ACTIVITY 1: MY BRAIN.

STEP 1:

1. Have the students pull out the self portrait they created previously, and quickly remind them of all their amazing differences that make them unique: hair colour, their different languages, clothing style, and eye colour.
2. Next, have them open up the page to where the brain is, commenting that our brain is something we all have.
3. With the students, review some of the things the students decided people need to grow **healthy brains** and bodies, such as food, water, shelter, love, and belonging.



USE THE BELOW QUESTIONS TO GUIDE THE DISCUSSION ABOUT THE BRAIN:

Q: What is something that we ALL have in common?

A: we all have a brain!

Q: what does our brain allow us to do?

A: breath, heart beat, move our body, think, and **FEEL**.

NOTE: If the students do not mention feel or emotions, let them know that we have emotions because of our brain. That's how important our emotions are!

Q: Why are emotions and feelings an important part of our bodies?

A: Because they give us information about our environment, such as are we safe? (remind them we already discussed some of our needs that tell us we are safe such as food, love, and belonging).

INFORM THE STUDENTS: DID YOU KNOW THAT OUR EXPERIENCES IMPACT HOW OUR BRAINS GROW? & OUR EXPERIENCES CREATE CERTAIN EMOTIONS IN US.

Q: What are some feelings each and every single one of us has?

A: sad, mad, love, calm, happy, joy, nervous, jealous, shame, anxious.

SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITY:

- READ THE BOOK (OR WATCH THE AUTHOR READ IT ON YOUTUBE):
- THE COLOUR MONSTER BY ANNA LLENAS: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M-6W6yk5gb4>



- **WATCH THE VIDEOS:**
 - "Emotions" - StoryBots Super Songs Episode 8 | Netflix Jr 11 MINUTES
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=akTRWJZMks0>

ACTIVITY 2: MY BRAIN & EMOTIONS

- Have the students pull out the markers, stickers, or pompoms they are using for this activity.
- Pick 5 emotions (or more if colours allow), with the main 5 emotions being:
 - Anger (red), Scared (black), Sad (blue), Happy (orange), and calm (green)
- Go through each emotion, asking the students if they have felt it:
 - "WHO HERE HAS EVER FELT SAD? IF YES, COLOUR A BLUE CIRCLE UNDER YOUR BRAIN."
 - HAVE A DISCUSS ABOUT WHAT THAT EMOTION FEELS LIKE TO THEM.
 - GO THROUGH EACH EMOTION THIS WAY.
 - **Note: everyone should be saying yes to every emotion**

Once everyone has filled in the emotions, have them all show their "insides", asking, "do we all look the same or different?" The answer, of course, will be "the same".



ACTIVITY 3: WHAT WOULD THAT FEEL LIKE?

DISCUSSION ON EMPATHY

WE ALL LOOK THE SAME ON THE INSIDE BECAUSE WE HAVE ALL FELT SADNESS, ANGER, FEAR, HAPPY, AND CALM, AND WE ALL KNOW WHAT IT FEELS LIKE. THIS IS CALLED EMPATHY: WHEN YOU CAN UNDERSTAND WHAT ANOTHER PERSON IS EXPERIENCING OR FEELING. EVEN IF WE HAVEN'T HAD THE SAME EXPERIENCE, IF SOMEONE FEELS SAD, WE CAN UNDERSTAND HOW SADNESS FEELS.

SESAME STREET: MARK RUFFALO: EMPATHY

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_1Rt1R4xbM

PRACTICING EMPATHY

LITERATURE TELLS US THAT UP TO 93% OF OUR COMMUNICATION IS NON-VERBAL, MEANING: THROUGH OUR FACIAL EXPRESSIONS, BODY LANGUAGE, AND TONE OF VOICE.

WATCH THIS YOUTUBE VIDEO AND ASSESS WHAT THE CHARACTER MIGHT BE FEELING?

INSIDE OUT: GUESSING THE FEELINGS.

- [HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=DOKYKYVFNSS](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DOKYKYVFNSS)

PICK A BOOK THE STUDENTS LIKE: IN THIS ACTIVITY, YOU WILL READ A BOOK OUT LOUD, AND AFTER READING EACH PAGE, YOU WILL ASSESS WHAT EACH PERSON MIGHT BE FEELING BASED ON WHAT THEY ARE SAYING THEIR BODY LANGUAGE AND THEIR FACIAL EXPRESSION.



ACTIVITY 4: OUR EMOTIONS IMPACT OUR BRAIN.

DISCUSSION: **ASK THE CLASS THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:**

WHEN YOU FEEL SAD, IS IT EASY OR HARD TO PLAY WITH YOUR FRIENDS?

- WHAT OR WHO HELPS YOU FEEL BETTER WHEN YOU FEEL SAD?

WHEN YOU FEEL MAD, IS IT EASY OR HARD TO FOCUS ON YOUR SCHOOL WORK?

- WHAT OR WHO HELPS YOU FEEL BETTER WHEN YOU FEEL MAD?

WHEN YOU FEEL SCARED, IS IT EASY OR HARD TO TRY NEW THINGS?

- WHAT OR WHO HELPS YOU FEEL BETTER WHEN YOU FEEL SCARED?

WHEN YOU FEEL ANXIOUS, IS IT EASY OR HARD TO LISTEN TO YOUR TEACHER?

- WHAT OR WHO MAKES YOU FEEL BETTER WHEN YOU FEEL ANXIOUS?

PEOPLE/COMMUNITY:

THE ANSWERS ARE OFTEN: MY MOM, MY GRANDMA, MY DAD, MY FRIENDS ETC.

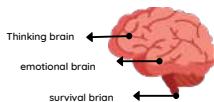


HOW DO OUR EMOTIONS IMPACT HOW OUR BRAIN GROWS?

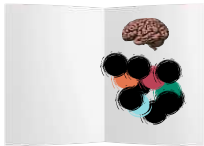
WE NEED SAFE PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES TO GROW HEALTHY BRAINS.

Being a part of a community is important to our survival. That is why we feel sad when we aren't included in a game with friends, and why we feel lonely when we aren't noticed at home or school. Feeling too much fear or sadness makes it hard for us to grow to be strong and healthy (remember we had a hard time listening in class and learning when we felt angry, sad, or anxious?)

When someone doesn't have their needs met, they may feel a lot of fear, anxiety, or sadness. And feeling too much fear, anxiety, or sadness can make it really hard to learn, to listen, and to play. This can make it hard for people to then make friends, go to school, or find or keep a job.



DYK: WHEN OUR NEEDS AREN'T MET OR WE ARE IN DANGER, WE EXPERIENCE **STRESS** TO HELP US RUN AWAY FROM THE DANGER OR GO GET OUR NEED MET- THIS IS FOR PROTECTION AND TO HELP KEEP US ALIVE. WHEN WE EXPERIENCE STRESS, OUR "THINKING BRAIN" TURNS OFF. THAT IS WHY IT IS HARD TO THINK, LEARN, PAY ATTENTION OR PLAY WHEN WE FEEL MAD, SAD, OR WORRIED.



AS A VISUAL, YOU CAN USE THEIR SELF PORTRAIT AS AN EXAMPLE: COLOUR IN MORE BLACK, FOR FEELING AFRAID, AND VISUALLY SHOW HOW HARD IT WOULD BE FOR HAPPY OR CALM TO SHOW UP WHEN THERE IS SO MUCH BLACK (FEAR).

SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES:

SUPPLEMENTAL VIDEO:

BRAINS JOURNEY TO RESILIENCE (8 MINUTES)

[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=HJVDRT6N-MW](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HJVDRT6N-MW)

A yellow backpack is shown, partially open, revealing various school supplies. Inside, there are several pens and pencils in different colors (blue, pink, white), a pair of pink scissors, and a yellow pencil sharpener. The backpack has a white checkered pattern on the front pocket. The background is a plain, light gray surface.

I belong
bags
backpack

ITEMS IN THE I BELONG BACKPACKS

BABY 0-2 yrs
All Genders

backpack
pajamas
baby blanket
diapers
baby shampoo, conditioner,
lotion, ointment & wipes
baby bottles, bibs &
washcloths
toddler safe toy & plush
animal
baby board book

YOUTH 2-9 yrs
All Genders

backpack
pajamas
plush or fleece blanket
toothbrush, paste & floss
shampoo, conditioner,
lotion, body wash
plush animal
coloring books & crayons
small toy or game
Empowering and fun book

YOUTH 10-18 yrs
All Genders

large backpack
pajamas
plush or fleece blanket
adult toothbrush, paste & floss
shampoo, conditioner,
lotion, body wash
deodorants
feminine hygiene products
plush animal
teen coloring books, markers, pens,
journal
age-appropriate toy or game
ear buds
gift cards: Walmart, Tim Hortons
Empowering and fun book



TIPS FOR PACKING

Our backpacks are filled with comfort and essential items designed to help kids know they matter and belong during difficult times.

Think of how you might be feeling in a difficult situation and imagine how this bag may help you feel better, know you belong and that someone cares about you and your future. Fold Pajamas neatly and organize the items into pockets or flaps. Don't worry if you couldn't buy all the items for each bag. We will add whatever is missing! Thank you for caring and giving back!

- Always keep bottles upright if possible or place in a separate Ziploc bag just in case they leak.
- If toothbrushes are loose and not in a package, please place in a sandwich sized baggie to keep them clean.
- When choosing a toy or game, remember it needs to fit into the backpack. Game cards and fidget items work well.
- Place the stuffed animal last into the bag so it is the first thing a child sees when they open the bag. This always brings a smile.



THANK YOU.

WITH IMMENSE GRATITUDE, WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME IN SHARING THIS CURRICULUM WITH YOUR STUDENTS. WE HOPE IT INVITED A CONVERSATION ON EMPATHY AND COMPASSION THAT INSPIRES EACH STUDENT AND STAFF TO BE A PART OF THE COMMUNITY THAT RAISES HEALTHY PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES.

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