



Roots of Empathy

Racines de l'empathie

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MARY GORDON

President and Founder
Roots of Empathy

“Every human being has a deep need to be heard, to be seen, to belong. A fundamental value in Roots of Empathy is inclusion. We create an environment where everyone has a voice, where every contribution has a meaning. We work with children to break down barriers, encourage communication and acceptance, and create in the classroom a microcosm of democracy and collaboration. The lessons – on respect for individual temperament, to the feelings of others, seeing the world from another person’s perspective – come together to build community within the classroom.”

Grandview Public School

Volunteer instructor, Mary Wright, has been working with grade 2 classes at Grandview this year. Mrs. Ambrose’s class has welcomed baby Isabelle and mom Sheree. Mrs. Warren’s class has welcomed baby Aiden and mom Melissa.



Physical changes are readily observed but personality traits or changes in temperament are discussed with parents as well. Students learn that each baby has their own unique temperament. The uniqueness of all individuals is a core theme of Roots of Empathy and is reflected in the literature and discussions between the Roots of Empathy instructors, the families and the students and teachers.



Volunteer instructor Carol Acres is teaching ROE in kindergarten classes this year. Mrs. Sayers' classes have observed mom Kaeli and baby Abby as well as mom Michelle and baby Brice. Mrs. Mitton's class has observed mom Meredith and baby Leena. Through questions and observations, students have learned to identify their babies' feelings. Mrs. Acres has worked to develop the literacy of feelings that will help students when they are talking about themselves or others. Instead of saying they are sad they might use words like "disappointed" or "frustrated". If they were happy they might say "proud" or "excited".



Roots of Empathy Newsletter

Volunteer instructor Natalia Antunes has been teaching Roots of Empathy in Mrs. Simm's class. Mom Sarah and baby Everleigh have volunteered every 3-4 weeks. Students have learned to see their surroundings from Everleigh's perspective.



As they learn to empathize with others they are less likely to hurt each other and may advocate for friends who are experiencing difficulty. As parents discuss how they problem solve to help their babies, students may also learn problem solving skills to help others.





Student Artwork

Grandview Public School in Cambridge, Ontario has proudly hosted 6 Roots of Empathy classes this year. Principal, Rob Rebellato, has made Roots of Empathy an integral part of his school philosophy:

"The Roots of Empathy program represents a proactive approach to teaching children that caring for others results in a happier and more quality environment for their peers and for themselves. It results in a stronger bond amongst students and greater tolerance for the differences we all have."



LYLE S. HALLMAN FOUNDATION

THE KITCHENER AND WATERLOO COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Are you a proud parent with a baby who will be 2 - 4 months old in October?

You and your baby could be a Roots of Empathy family!

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