



You Hold Me Up

Educator Activity Guide

You Hold Me Up is a quiet story about the simplicity of love, the importance of respect and the cultivation of compassion. There is a spell that happens when a book is read for the first time and it is helpful if the first reading flows smoothly.

With this book, the second and subsequent readings are for stopping, exploring the illustrations and asking questions. Whenever possible, please consider reading together outside.

Woven into this pamphlet are reflective questions and activities to support you as a classroom community to interact, discuss, draw, build and create what the 9 values mean to the children in your class.

You are encouraged to explore nature and collect materials that could be used to enhance the drawings and art you and your child create. There are examples of activities that involve bringing a cultural knowledge holder, such as an elder and/or a member of the Indigenous staff in your school/district, into your classroom.

Everyday, families are encouraged to talk, read, sing, and play.

1. Talk about what kindness feels like, sounds like, looks like.
2. Why is kindness important to our classroom community?
3. Who is responsible for kindness in a classroom community?
4. What are examples of acts of kindness that have happened in your classroom? Invite the children to share stories of when they have seen kindness in their classroom community.
5. Can you think of one person who needs your kindness? What actions will you take to make sure they feel that you care?

Kindness



Activities:

- Go for a walk; collect materials along the way that they can use to create a classroom board that symbolizes kindness to each child. If weather does not cooperate, have the students draw, build, or cut-out pictures about a time that answers the first 2 questions.
- At your creative exploratory centre during your daily centre time, have a variety of drawing and collaging materials available including those the class collected from your nature walks. Ask the children to create a picture about kindness. Have a starter idea on the table such as: I am being kind to others.
- You may wish to have a **You Hold Me Up** wall where the children's pictures can be displayed for each of the 9 values.

In classrooms, it is important that sharing is part of what creates a sense of community. In **You Hold Me Up** the page about sharing has an illustration that looks like a brother, cousin, or friend sharing an apple. Sharing can be of an object, like the apple, and it can also be sharing our unique gifts as members of the class. Our gifts are the things about each of us that makes us unique. For example, a hug, a story, a song, knowledge, and wisdom.

Sharing



1. What does it mean to share gifts with others?
2. What gifts do you have that you can share with others today? Eg.: playing sports, going fishing, singing together, giving someone a hug, sharing stories or sharing your favourite teddy bear when someone feels frightened.

Activities:

- Ask the children to:
 - Think of a time when you shared a piece of yourself and it made another person happy. Draw what it was that you shared.
 - Think of a time you shared something you owned with another person. Draw, paint or cut-out pictures to show how it made you and the other person feel?
- Ask the children to draw or cut out pictures about the value of sharing. You may wish to have a starter idea such as: I am sharing with my friend and I am feeling _____.

Have the children think of someone they love and how they laugh.

Laughing



- What does the laugh sound like? How does their face change? How does it make them feel to think of their laugh?
- Are there different types of laughter? Describe a giggle, a chuckle, or a laughing fit. What makes them different?
- What kinds of laughter are respectful of others? Give examples.
- What kinds of laughter are disrespectful of others? Give examples.
- What happens to your face and your energy when we laugh with others?

Activities:

- As a classroom community, share different types of laughter. See questions above.
- Have the children tell a story or draw a picture of someone whose laugh fills their heart with happiness. You may wish to have a starter idea such as: _____ laugh fills my heart with happiness. These pictures or recorded stories could be added to your **You Hold Me Up** classroom wall display.

Playing



1. When you are playing with people you love, how do you feel?
2. What happens to a classroom/school when people of all ages play together?

Activities:

- Invite children to think about and share their favourite thing to play. Are there some games that children play culturally or with their family that other children may not be familiar with? This is a great opportunity to share and learn more about each other.
- Invite a cultural knowledge holder/elder/Indigenous education staff member to come in and share a trickster story with the children. Every nation has tricksters and they are known for the tricks they play and their playfulness.
- Have the class draw, paint, build or cut-out pictures of all the different kinds of play that makes them happy? You may wish to have a starter idea such as: I am happy as I play and learn. These pictures could be added to your **You Hold Me Up** classroom wall.

1. Have the children think about how they learn best? E.g. listening with your ears (e.g. the listening to instructions or stories), smelling with your nose, tasting with your tongue, touching with your hands, seeing with your eyes, all of your senses together?
2. What happens when a classroom community learns together? How do you create a balance of the different ways of learning for the children in your class?

Learning



Activities:

- Invite a cultural knowledge holder/elder/Indigenous education staff member to come in and share a story with the children. Have the children reflect on what they learned from the story.
- After reading this book, spend time together and finish the sentences. I learn best when I feel_____.
- Have the children go through the book and identify how many hearts they can find. Encourage them to count them. Give them clues to look in places they might not normally see hearts, ie. the lips. Ask them what they think might come out of a mouth that has a heart for lips?
- Invite children to think about a time when they were learning something and it was fun. Then invite them to think about when they were learning something and they felt afraid. What was the difference for them and how did it impact their ability to learn?
- Ask the children to draw a picture about the value of learning. You may wish to have a starter idea such as: Here is how I learn best. These pictures could be added to your **You Hold Me Up** classroom wall.

1. How do different songs and music change the energy of children?
2. How does singing together change the way we work together?
3. Do all cultures sing together? Can you find examples?

Singing



Activities:

- Have children share a song that makes them feel loved. Is it a lullaby? A cultural song? Instrumental?
- Invite a cultural knowledge holder/elder/Indigenous education staff member to come in and teach the children a song from the nation your school is on. If this is done over a number of weeks, the children can share this song at an assembly and invite the elders from the local First Nation/Friendship Centre/Metis community to come for the assembly. Record the song presentation.
- Play a song from the Welcome to Kindergarten app such as Listen to the Water and download the lyrics found on the The Learning Partnership website. Sing the song and do the playful corresponding actions.
- Have the children draw a picture of themselves singing and doing actions. To stimulate their thinking you may wish to have a starter idea such as: I am singing and doing actions to my favourite song.
- These pictures and the recorded song could also be added to your **You Hold Me Up** classroom wall to demonstrate the value of singing.

Comforting



Ask the children to:

- Close your eyes. Name one sound that makes you feel comforted. Is it the sound of someone's voice? Your cat purring or your dog snoring? The ocean or river? The wind through the trees? The rain outside your window?
- Open your eyes. Name one thing you see around you that makes you feel comforted. Is it a person? An animal? An object? Or something in nature?
- Describe a time you felt comforted by someone. What did they say or do?
- Think of one person who could use comforting today. What will you say or do to make them feel that you care?

Activities:

- Ask the children to draw or paint a picture: I am comforting my friend. Create a classroom "comfort wall" with a drawing from everyone in your classroom.

Listening



1. What is the difference between listening and hearing?
2. What do our bodies do when we are really listening to someone?
3. When was the last time you felt that someone was really listening to you? What did they say or not say? What did their body language say?
4. How is listening to others a healing action?

Activities:

- Ask the children to build or create a drawing of a whole person listening. You may wish to have a starter idea: This is my body ready for listening. Post it in the class.
- Try and point out moments everyday when others are listening in a whole person way.

Respecting



1. What does respect look like? Sound like? Feel like?
2. Describe a time you felt really respected by a classmate.
3. What happens to people when we respect our differences?
4. What does respect look like when shown to cultural knowledge holders/elders, siblings, family members, friends. Examples?

Activities:

- Create a Respect Scrapbook for your class. Include photos, pictures, gestures, poems and stories about moments where respect was shared.
- Ask the children to create a picture or collage of being respectful to someone in your class. They could title the picture **I am being respectful.**

Welcome to Kindergarten is a program of The Learning Partnership, a Canadian charity that prepares students to thrive in a diverse, connected and changing world. We leverage the best thinking from educators, business, and government to deliver experiential programs for students that cultivate entrepreneurial thinking and support social emotional learning. Since 1993, we have been helping build the foundations for students to solve tomorrow's challenges.

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