

Get Well Soon

This lesson focuses on caring through the act of compassion. This subconcept can be difficult to explain in isolation, so the two are presented together to increase applicability within this age group. Students will explore the concept of illness and create get well cards for other children experiencing sickness in the local children's hospital (or children's floor, if an entire hospital dedicated to children is not nearby).

Caring Sub-Concept(s)

Compassion, Helpfulness, Kindness

Lesson Timeframe

45 minutes

Required Materials

- Cardstock
- Art Supplies (your choice)
- Large Manila Envelope
- Stamps (if you mail it)

Standards Map

This lesson aligns with CASEL Competencies, National Health Education Standards, and Common Core State Standards. Please refer to the [Standards Map](#) for more information.



DESIGNATED BY CASEL
AS A RECOMMENDED PROGRAM
FOR SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING.
See last page for details.

Lesson Objective

Students will be able to:

- Show compassion by creating get well cards for ill children in the hospital.
- Explain compassion through art.

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

Introduce yourself to a new teacher/staff at school today. Remember what it felt like to be new. Friendly faces make it easier.

Tips for Diverse Learners

- Pair students up and have one draw the picture for the card while the other adds text.
- Use magazine pictures or precut clipart for students with dexterity struggles.
- Create get well cards in children's native languages to share with other sick children that share their language.
- Create a "picture-based" card for students that are not writing yet.



Share

3-5 minutes

Have the students gather in your circle time or community area.

Use the following prompts to have students generate ideas for how to show caring:

- *A girl is on the playground without a hat or gloves and it is cold. You are wearing both a hat and gloves.*
- *Your teacher has nowhere to sit during the class movie. There is space next to you.*
- *A boy in your class doesn't know how to tie his shoes. You learned last week.*



Inspire

What is Compassion?

7-10 minutes

Explain that Compassion is a feeling which can be hard to describe! It is the feeling you get inside you when you want to help someone that is in need. This person could be a friend, your teacher, your parents, a sibling, or maybe even someone you have never even met! When a person is sad or in pain or needs help, we naturally feel compassion for them. Our hearts tell us to help. Sometimes we don't even stop to think about giving this help because the feeling of compassion is so strong. Let's list some times that we have felt compassion and were able to show caring and kindness to our friends and family:

- Write down these answers on the board as they are listed.
- Highlight HOW compassion was felt during each example given (I feel compassion when I see my friend get hurt, etc.).
- After you felt that compassion, how were you able to show caring for your friend/family/etc.?

Explain that compassion can be felt for people we have never even seen or met. Explain the difference between being sick for a few days and being sick in the hospital. (You can use examples of grandparents, cancer, etc. to help students understand the difference). Discuss how some children stay in the hospital for very long periods of time - a week, a month, even a whole year - because of their illness.

- How does that make you feel inside when you think about these children?
- This feeling is compassion!
- Today we will use this feeling of compassion to show caring and kindness to other children who happen to be sick and in the hospital right now.



Empower

20 minutes

Each child will create a get well card for another child currently receiving inpatient treatment at the local children's hospital (or children's floor, if you don't have a dedicated hospital just for children). Use the following prompts to guide the cards:

- Write the phrase, "Get Well Soon!" on the board. This phrase must be included somewhere.
- Ask for suggestions on what types of pictures could be included in the cards (friendship themes, popular superheroes, etc.)
- Emphasize that these cards are often hung up in the child's room so pride is very important! You are caring for another child through your act of compassion. Do your very best and take your time.
- When everyone is done, have all the students put their cards in one giant envelope and either mail or hand deliver your package to the Child Life Specialist or Social Worker for the Oncology/Hematology floor (these children are the ones that spend the most consistent time at the hospital due to their illnesses and treatments).
- You could incorporate more fancy art supplies like glitter, stickers, scrapbooking, magazines, etc. to emphasize your role in caring for your get well card recipients. This is not a quick and simple card.



Reflect

3-5 minutes

Not every student in this age group will be familiar with chronic illness, cancer, and sick children in general. However, it is a conversation that needs to start now so the children in their world that are affected by these struggles can feel compassion and acceptance during their time of need. If you approach it from an angle of kindness and compassion, children this age will feel excited and honored to care for their peers in such a personal way.



Extension Ideas

- Team up with your Art teacher and create a giant card using multimedia art supplies to hold all of the smaller get well cards
- Reach out to the Child Life Specialist or Social Worker of the Oncology/Hematology floor and see if any specific patients would enjoy receiving more personalized cards (with name, etc.)



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LEARNING.

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has been reviewing evidence-based SEL programs since 2003. Kindness in the Classroom® meets CASEL's SElect Program and is included in the CASEL Guide to Effective Social and Emotional Learning Programs.

Kindness in the Classroom® met or exceeded all of CASEL's criteria for high-quality SEL programming. Kindness in the Classroom® received CASEL's highest designation for high-quality SEL programming.

<https://casel.org/guide/kindness-in-the-classroom/>