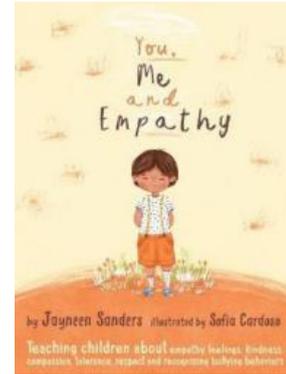




PINK SHIRT DAY



You, Me and Empathy: Teaching children about empathy, feelings, kindness, compassion, tolerance and recognising bullying behaviours Jayneen Sanders, Illustrated by Sofia Cardoso (2017). Educate2Empower Publishing

The title is catchy, almost like empathy is a friend among us. It is clear it is a teaching tool as it notes on the front cover a long list of objectives it hopes to cover – ‘Teaching children about empathy, feelings, kindness, compassion, tolerance, respect and recognizing bullying behaviours’. I think it does accomplish the majority of this, as in terms of a picture book, it is fairly long and covers a range of concepts. The end has teaching tools with a list of discussions questions and activities designed to work on developing empathy, so you can build on learnings from the book in the classroom or as a family.

I feel this book would help children recognise what empathy is (understanding what someone is feeling as you have felt the same) and in what scenarios this quality might have a positive outcome. I can imagine to a child at times using empathy as a tool could be like having a superpower to transform relationships.

My 9 year-old son, while he was not keen on ‘adopting an older person’ if that mean he had to share his room, did inform me that sometimes I don’t show him enough empathy when he is hurt. This made me reflect on my kiwi rural attitude that you brush yourself off and get on with things. While bouncing back is important, I can see I need to make more time to sit with my son’s experience.

Reviewed by Kim Higginson, Information Management Specialist, MHF

The Mental Health Foundation's Information Service brings you reviews this Pink Shirt Day on books with bullying prevention themes. To view the full Book Review section go to www.pinkshirtday.org.nz/good-reads

