

Ages
2-6

SOPHIA DAY'S®

instill®
SEL

with MVPkids®

Instill Character®
GAME PLAN PREVIEW



Social and Emotional Learning That . . .



Adapts to student needs.

Concepts taught through music, creative art, movement, puppets, and pretend play create strong habits that form long-term thought patterns, attitudes, and actions.



Celebrates diversity.

MVP Kids provides a world where children can see themselves and also learn from others who are different.



Enhances your curriculum.

Instill SEL is built on the theories and research behind CASEL's five core competencies, making it easily integrated into your current core/comprehensive curriculum.



Reduces prep time.

Instill SEL requires very minimal prep time for educators who want to spend more time teaching and less time planning.



Transfers year to year.

Instill SEL is a one-time purchase, allowing educators to implement the curriculum year after year without additional cost.



Builds strong relationships.

Instill SEL equips teachers and families with social-emotional learning tools and through provided parent letters, families can practice specific lessons at home.

Has no hidden sexual, political, social, or religious agenda.





Welcome to the World of MVP Kids®!

We feel honored to be your partner in supporting children's social, emotional, and academic success through our Instill SEL program. As educators like you, we understand the importance of social and emotional learning (SEL) and how these foundational skills lay the groundwork for a lifetime of personal achievement and positive well-being.

At MVP Kids, our mission is to inspire honorable character in young people through healthy mentoring relationships, preparing Real MVP Kids to live responsible and meaningful lives. We started this mission through our ever-growing library of books for infants through middle school, starring our MVP Kids.

Our MVP Kids characters provide a unique approach to honoring and celebrating our diverse world. They represent a wide variety of ethnic and cultural heritage, life experience, abilities, and interests. Our goal is to create familiarity and friendships for readers, forming a basis of trust to address serious life issues and challenges as they mature, while also connecting with others who may look or think differently from them. In Instill SEL, you will get to know eight of our 16 MVP Kids, who act as positive peer role models for SEL.

Our focus with Instill SEL is to positively impact the lives of young children by providing them with skills to understand and manage their emotions; respect themselves, others, and the environment; show compassion for others; have positive relationships; and make confident choices.

As educators, we struggle to find fun and engaging SEL tools and programs that can be implemented easily and consistently without embedded social, political, or religious influences. Using our knowledge, direct classroom experience, and feedback from teachers across the globe, we thoughtfully designed Instill SEL to overcome common challenges of effective implementation. Available in English or Spanish, Instill SEL adds a robust SEL component to your current curriculum and the research-based content is CASEL aligned to support common assessments. Implementation is easy and flexible to differentiate for the unique needs of your children or adapt to your classroom routine. Instill SEL includes everything you need to support SEL year after year, and the activities use materials found in most classrooms. There is no requirement to attend costly, lengthy training or purchase specialized items. Instill SEL encourages strong family relationships with information and products to support SEL at home.

Teachers using Instill SEL have shared that activities are easily incorporated into daily routines and require very little time to prepare. We hear how children connect with the MVP Kids and engage with the activities. We feel overjoyed as administrators report significant increases of students who meet or exceed social emotional development objectives! We look forward to hearing your Instill SEL success story. Thank you for what you do. You are an MVP (most valuable person) for helping us instill character in the hearts and minds of children.

It is a joy to learn and grow with you,

Sophia Day



What is Instill® SEL?

Instill SEL is designed to provide relevant social and emotional learning (SEL) tools for most children ages two to six years old (preschool through kindergarten). Some children may benefit from more intensive or individualized SEL instruction not addressed in this program. These supports can often be found by contacting your local school district, early intervention program, or mental health agency.

Instill SEL takes a multi-disciplinary approach using music, creative art, movement, puppets, and pretend play. Teaching the concepts in a variety of ways can create strong habits that form long-term thought patterns, attitudes, and actions. It also includes a clear plan of implementation and resources to aid teachers in laying a foundation for children's social-emotional health and well being.

Our activities support child-caregiver bonds, healthy parent-child relationships, and a unique approach to positive peer role models through the use of MVP Kids characters. Pair your Instill SEL with a collection of MVP Kids books to see how relationships with our MVP Kids impact SEL through clear, consistent messages from trusted friends.





What is an MVP?

Just as the MVP (most valuable player) in a sports game is recognized for their valuable contribution to the team, Real MVP Kids® are recognized for the positive impact they bring to their learning environments, families, and communities.

Our “MVP” stands for “most valuable person.” The more value children place on themselves, others, and their world, the more they develop the character traits that make them successful in leading responsible, meaningful lives. Our Instill SEL curriculum will equip you to support character development in your children as they become Real MVP Kids!

Meet the MVP Kids



Keon LeBron Miller



Yong Chen



Miriam Nasser



Aanya Patel



Leo Russo



Gabby González



Julia Rojas



Lucas Miller



Curriculum Scope



The curriculum scope lists all the competencies addressed in the learning goals, which are included on the activity cards. These core competencies are a portion of the Framework for Systemic Social and Emotional Learning from the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL, 2017).

CASEL's Five Core Competencies –

1. Responsible decision-making
2. Self-awareness
3. Self-management
4. Social awareness
5. Relationship skills





Curriculum Contents



Game Plan: This is your teacher guide for curriculum implementation and success!



Lesson activities: Each activity is easy to implement with learning goals, materials, preparation, instructions, puppet scripts, songs, and/or poems for each lesson.



Family Messages: Foster the home-school connection by providing families with information about each activity and how they can reinforce the lessons at home.



Reflection journal pages: Create individual journals for student reflections with our reproducible forms.



Audio tracks: songs featured in the activity cards which are shared with families for home use



MVP Kids books: We have included the titles mentioned in specific activities, which provide teaching tips and questions within the pages. Explore our whole library for more character-building content.



Puppets: Eight plush puppets represent our MVP Kids and are integral to activities. (Included in Gold Package)



Positivity posters: Eight posters feature our MVP Kids. A template is provided to create personalized posters that foster self-confidence and provide a means of encouraging others.



Values display: Six individual title display cards provide a basis of classroom expectations and are reinforced in the activities. (bilingual: English and Spanish)



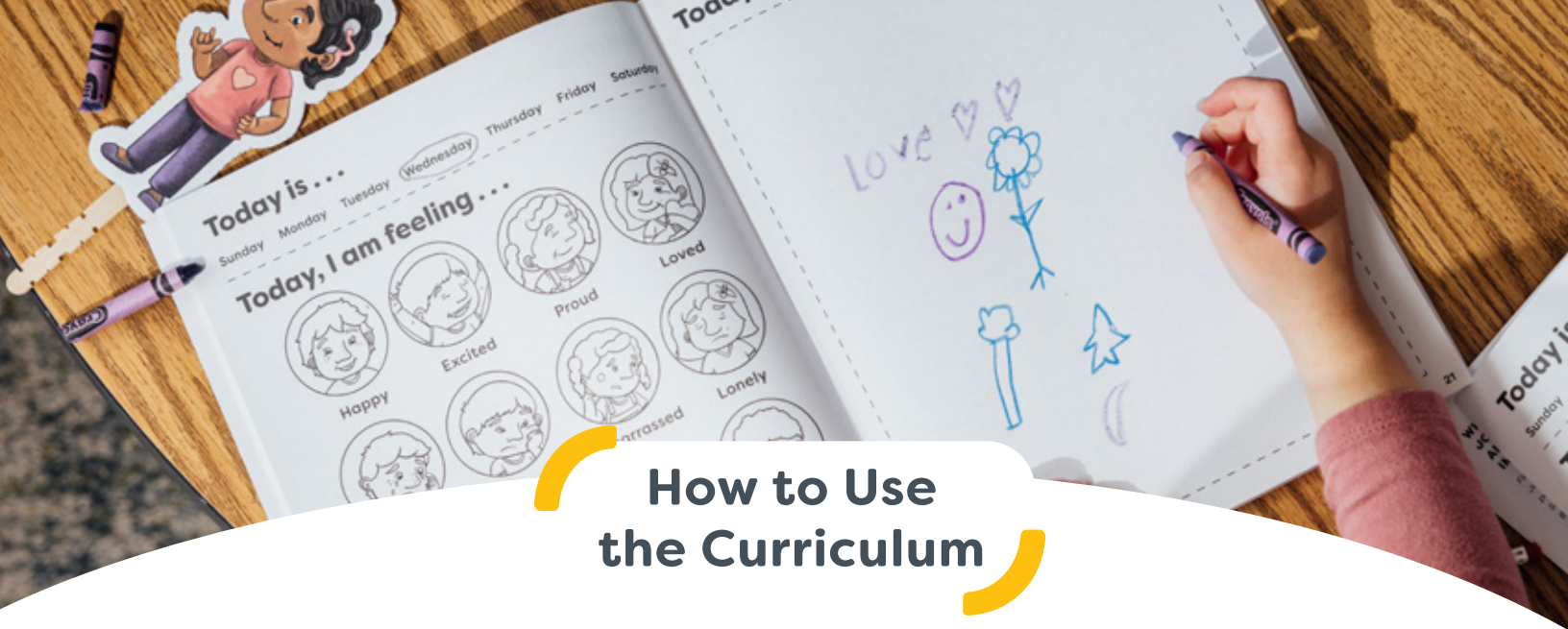
Emotion cards: Sixteen cards feature our MVP Kids characters displaying a variety of emotions. (bilingual: English and Spanish)



Solve it! Cards: Action cards provide children with ideas for solving conflict. (bilingual: English and Spanish)



Assessment tool: Gauge children's progress in social and emotional competencies and provide clear feedback.



How to Use the Curriculum

There is no structured sequence for when to use each activity card. Families and educators are the best resource to know when, how, and what SEL to teach. You can begin with the first activity card and move through them sequentially; however, we recommend that you choose activities which apply to your children or learning environment and rotate through each of the three sections to ensure children are taught a variety of concepts.

Choose:

Decide which activity cards you will focus on according to the skills, needs, or interests of children, and whether the activity will be for the whole group, small group, or individual.

Plan:

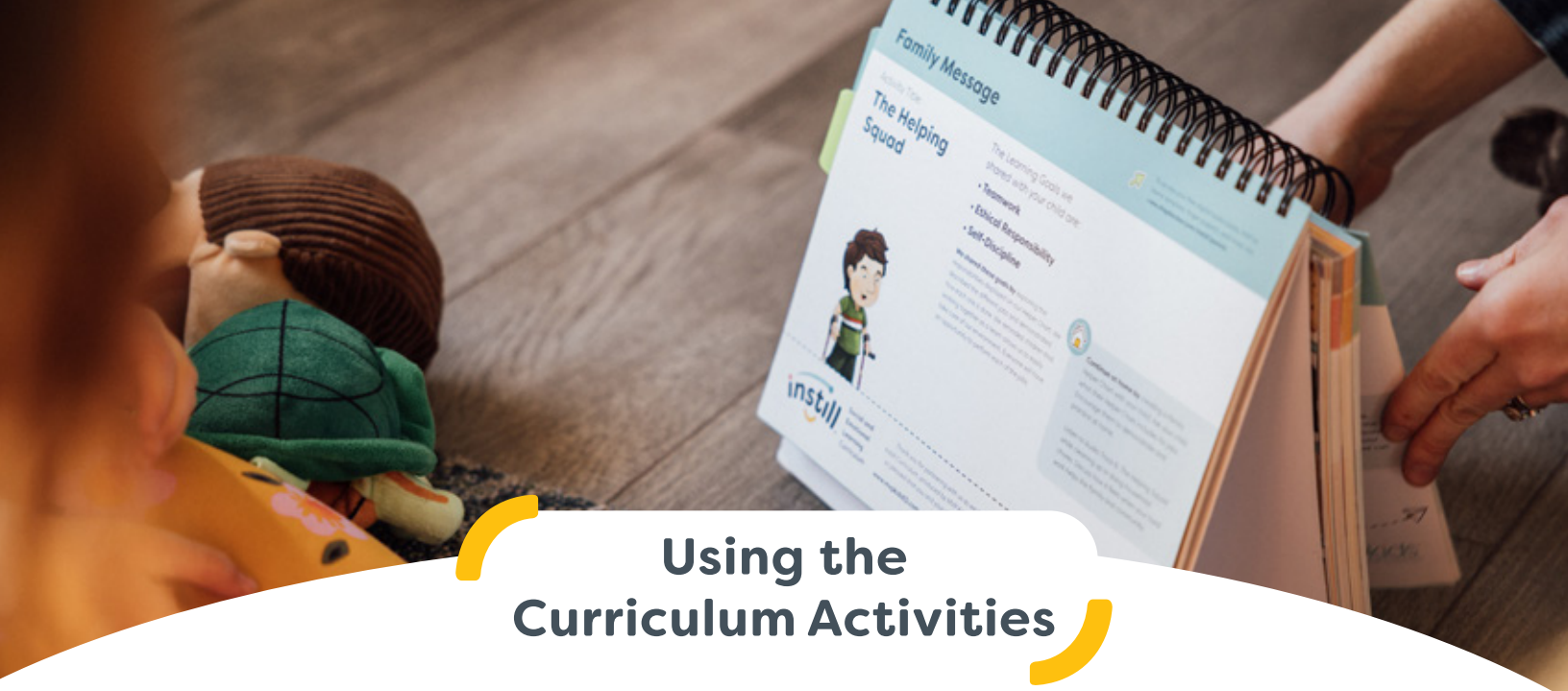
Select activity cards that compliment your core lessons or theme. Keep the contents handy in order to implement impromptu activities as needed or when appropriate.

Repeat:

Provide children with the practice they need to master new skills. Repetition increases confidence and strengthens the connections in the brain that help children learn and retain information. You can repeat activities over a course of time (day/week/month), revisit lessons as needed (after extended breaks, when new students are attending, to meet an identified need), or until children master the activity goals.

Activity cards EMW #1-7 are helpful in establishing environments and routines which increase mastery and academic success. We recommend that these activity cards are repeated at the beginning of a new school year (or the establishment of a new learning environment), with the arrival of a new leader, when a new child joins your group, after an extended break in attendance, when a child or learning environment has an identified need, or when behavior challenges are observed.

Many of the included SEL tools introduced in activity cards EMW #1-7 are used as a part of your daily classroom routines.



Using the Curriculum Activities

Activity Cards:

The Curriculum Activities are designed to be used in classrooms, homes, and mental health settings to introduce children to important social-emotional skills. Each activity card reinforces specific CASEL competencies and includes a materials list and clear, concise instructions. The activity card content can be used for group or individual instruction. It can be completed in one SEL lesson or adapted to complete in sections over a period of time.

Family Messages:

The home-school relationship plays a vital role in children's SEL. Using consistent language, singing the same songs, and talking about stories and lessons children are exploring in Instill SEL provides families with the opportunity to play important roles in their children's SEL. Each activity card has a corresponding family message which provides information and specific lessons which families can practice with their children at home. Some cards use the MVP at Home template to foster these essential relationships. The curriculum includes hard copy and digital versions of these resources.

Reflection:

Each lesson is concluded with a time of reflection. The reflection can confirm active listening and connection to information. It provides an opportunity for children to internalize what they have learned and apply these lessons to themselves and their world. The reflections can be used to complete individual child assessments.



Frustration Station

Learning Goals:

- Stress Management
- Impulse Control
- Identifying Emotions

Materials Needed:

- MVP Kids puppet: any
- A basket of small, colorful pom-poms
- Basket, large
- Bean bags
- Bubble wrap
- Child's toy hammer
- Clay
- Paper
- Stress balls
- Tray
- Writing utensils

*Note: Ensure items are safe for the developmental age of the children.

Preparation:

Create a space where children can safely work through strong emotions. Label the space "Frustration Station."

*Note: Repeat this activity to replenish the frustration station materials. (see Game Plan: How to Use the Curriculum).

Start Strong:

With the help of the puppet, gather the children for the MVP Moment. Use the puppet to welcome the children and lead the following breathing exercise:

- Demonstrate breathing deeply, holding for one second, and then slowly exhaling. Repeat with the class two to three more times to support focus.

MVP Moment:

1. Explain that it is okay to feel frustrated or angry. We learn to recognize frustration and practice healthy ways to overcome it so we don't do something that hurts others or causes them to feel uncomfortable. Define "frustration" as feeling upset or annoyed when we are unable to change or achieve something.
2. Place the pom-poms, bubble wrap, hammer, clay, paper, stress balls, and writing utensils on a tray.
3. Explain to the children they can come to the frustration station if they are feeling mad, frustrated, or stressed. Demonstrate how children can use the items when they feel stressed, frustrated, mad, or upset. Children can:
 - Pop bubble wrap by pinching, squeezing, or stomping
 - Squish, squeeze, and pound clay
 - Pound pom-poms with a small hammer
 - Tear or draw on paper
 - Squeeze soft balls
 - Throw bean bags at a wall, target, or into a basket

Connect:

1. Provide time for the children to explore the items as time permits.
2. Place the tray of items on a table in the frustration station. Encourage children to explore this area when they are feeling frustrated.
3. Refresh or add items to the frustration station periodically. Some ideas include:
 - Bubble timers
 - Scarves
 - Fidgets
 - Noise-canceling headphones

Reflect:

After the materials have been put away, gather the children to create a journal page about how they can use the frustration station. As children work in their journals, ask:

- *How can you use the clay when you are feeling frustrated?*
- *When will you visit the frustration station?*
- *What item would be helpful when you feel mad?*



Exploring My World

We Care!

Learning Goals:

- Perspective-Taking
- Empathy
- Identifying Emotions

Materials Needed:

- MVP Kids puppet:
- Bag for child to carry
- Items to place in a We Care Bag, such as adhesive bandages, tissues, stickers, books, plush toy, blanket, etc.



Gabby

Preparation:

Place items to include in your We Care Bag within your reach.

*Note: Ensure items are safe for the developmental age of the children.

Start Strong:

With the help of the puppet, gather the children for the MVP Moment. Use the puppet to welcome the children and lead the following breathing exercise:

- Demonstrate breathing deeply, holding for one second, and then slowly exhaling. Repeat with the class two to three more times to support focus.

MVP Moment:

1. Explain the importance of recognizing how others are feeling. If we see our friends are feeling sad, we can talk to them and show them compassion and understanding. Showing we care can help others feel valued.
2. Explain that they will make a **We Care Bag**. The We Care Bag is used to help someone who is feeling hurt or sad.
3. Place the items in front of the children. Ask them how each of the items can show our friends we care (e.g., tissues to dry tears, adhesive bandages for scratches, stickers and books to help them smile, a plush toy to hug).
4. Use the puppet to describe situations and emotions where the children may use the We Care Bag. Ask children which item from the We Care Bag could help.
 - *It is really stormy outside, and the clouds are really dark. How do you think I am feeling? (scared, a soft toy to hug)*
 - *I lost my favorite book about animals. How do you think I am feeling? (sad, a tissue)*
 - *I fell off my bike and hurt my knee. How do you think I am feeling? (sad, an adhesive bandage)*

Connect:

1. Invite children to help fill the bag and ask how they will use it to help their friends. Give time for children to use the items to help the puppet feel better.
2. Provide time for children to role-play additional We Care Bag scenarios with the puppets of their choice. Some ideas:
 - *How can you use the We Care Bag when someone misses their family?*
 - *What items in the We Care Bag could help someone who doesn't feel well?*
 - *What We Care Bag item would you choose if you were feeling sad? Why?*
3. Place the We Care Bag where it is easily accessed by children. Encourage children to use the We Care Bag any time someone needs care or comfort.

Reflect:

After the materials have been put away, gather the children to create a journal page about using the We Care Bag. As children work in their journals, ask:

- *How will you use the We Care Bag ?*
- *How does the We Care Bag show that we value others?*
- *How does helping others show you are friendly (safe, a hard worker)?*



Knowing Myself

All About Us

Learning Goals:

- Appreciating Diversity
- Perspective-Taking
- Evaluating



Gabby

Leo

Materials Needed:

- MVP Kids puppets:
- MVP Kids book, *We're More Alike Than Different*, by Sophia Day
- Audio track 4: "Marvelous Me"
- Instill SEL at Home template
- Construction paper
- Music player
- Paint

Preparation:

Make copies of the **Instill SEL at Home template** (*Activity Resources*) and send with the Family Message to complete Part Two.

Start Strong:

With the help of a puppet, gather the children for the MVP Moment. Use the puppet to welcome the children and lead the following breathing exercise:

- Demonstrate breathing deeply, holding for one second, and then slowly exhaling. Repeat with the class two to three more times to support focus.

MVP Moment (Part One):

1. Define "being similar" as being alike, and "being different" as not being the same. Explain to children that we all have similarities. There are also many things about us that make us different, such as the color of our hair and skin, the things we like and dislike, and how we celebrate family traditions.
2. Puppet Script (Use the puppets to have a discussion about similarities and differences.)

Gabby: I am different because I have a really big family! My friend, Anya, doesn't have any siblings at all.

Leo: I am different from you because I am a boy and you are a girl.

Gabby: I am different from some people because I ride horses.

Leo: I ride horses, too!

Gabby: Wow, you are different from me because you use canes to get around, but the same because you ride horses!

Leo: We are all different, but everyone is similar, too. Some things that make us similar are that we are all people and we all have feelings and we all have eyes.

Adult: (*looks to the children*) Can you think of other ways we are similar to and different from each other?

3. Have a puppet close the discussion by thanking the children for sharing, then leading them in singing track 4: "Marvelous Me."

4. Invite children and their families to create 'All About Me' collages at home using pictures, drawings, and words.

Connect (Part Two):

1. Allow time for children to share their "All About Me" collage. As children share, ask the others:
 - *Is this the same as you? Why?*
 - *Is this different than you? Why?*
2. Display the collages at children's eye level or make a class book.
3. Gather children to read the book. Pause on the pages and invite children to identify similarities (and differences) between them and the children on the pages (e.g., hair color, skin tone, abilities, pets, siblings, etc.).

Reflect:

After the materials have been put away, gather the children to create a journal page about their family.

As children work in their journals, ask:

- *How is your family unique?*
- *How is your family the same as another family?*
- *How are you the same as someone else? How are you different from them?*



Knowing Myself

Take Five

Learning Goals:

- Stress Management
- Impulse Control
- Self-Efficacy



Julia

Materials Needed:

- MVP Kids puppet:
- Audio track 10: "Breathe With Me (with instructions)"
- Audio track 11: "Breathe With Me (with instrumentals)" (optional)
- Camera
- Music player
- Poster board or chart paper
- Tape or glue
- Writing utensils

Preparation:

Title the poster board "Take Five!" Then make three columns by drawing two evenly spaced lines down the paper. Label the first column "Stop," the middle column "Be Still," and the last column "Take Five Breaths."

Start Strong:

With the help of the puppet, gather the children for the MVP Moment. Use the puppet to welcome the children and lead the following breathing exercise:

- Demonstrate breathing deeply, holding for one second, and then slowly exhaling. Repeat with the class two to three more times to support focus.

MVP Moment:

1. Puppet Script (Use the puppets to act out the following scenario to show children how to self-calm when experiencing strong emotions.)

Julia: I'm feeling angry. I wanted to play with the red ball and LeBron took it from me. I feel like grabbing it back.

Adult: Julia, when you are feeling angry or upset, you can try taking five. It's easy. I'm going to have you wait over there while I show you.

Julia: Okay. Give me five, then we can learn to take five! (*High five and set puppet aside.*)

- Stop (*push hand forward to mime "stop"*)
- Be still (*lift other hand to meet it and point up*)
- Take five breaths (*use pointed finger to trace the fingers on the opposite hand. Breathe in when tracing up and breathe out when tracing down*)

Connect:

1. Have children practice how to stop, be still, and take five breaths. Encourage children to use a finger to trace the fingers on the opposite hand. Breathe in as they trace up a finger and breathe out when they trace down a finger.
2. Play track 10 or 11 as children practice.
3. Use the camera to take pictures of the children as they practice.
4. Encourage children to "Take Five" when you notice they are feeling frustrated, upset, mad, nervous, or angry.
5. Use the pictures to create a "Take Five!" poster. Hang it in the Frustration Station at children's eye level.

Reflect:

After the materials have been put away, gather the children to create a journal page about how they can use Take Five.



Share your success stories!

Use **#instillSEL** on social media to show how Instill SEL curriculum is impacting your children and to see what others are doing!



Same on the Inside

Learning Goals:

- Perspective-Taking
- Empathy
- Evaluating

Materials Needed:

- MVP Kids puppet: any
- Audio track 5: “Will You Be Friends with Me?”
- Apples (red, yellow, green)
(*Note: check allergy list)
- Poster board or chart paper
- Knife (adult use only)
- Music player
- Writing utensil

Preparation:

Take one apple and bruise it by dropping it or pounding it against a hard surface, then place aside. Create a Venn diagram on the chart paper (see Activity Resources). Before starting the activity, have children wash their hands before handling food.

Start Strong:

With the help of the puppet, gather the children for the MVP Moment. Use the puppet to welcome the children and lead the following breathing exercise:

- Demonstrate breathing deeply, holding for one second, and then slowly exhaling. Repeat with the class two to three more times to support focus.

MVP Moment:

1. Show children the apples. Ask children to describe how they are different and record responses on the Venn diagram (e.g., they are different colors and sizes, some may have stems, etc.)
2. Cut each apple in half. Show children the white flesh and brown seeds, guide them in understanding how the insides of the apples are similar, and record responses onto the Venn diagram.
3. Pick up the bruised apple and one unblemished apple of the same color. Explain that we show that we value others when we use words that are respectful and friendly. “Respect” is a feeling that someone is valued or important. Say something like, “Words can be helpful or hurtful, and they can help us feel happy or sad inside.”
4. Pass around the unblemished apple, and encourage the children to say kind and respectful words to it. Examples:
 - *I like your red skin.*
 - *Thank you for helping my body grow strong.*
 - *I like you.*
5. Pass around the bruised apple and ask children to use words that are hurtful or unkind. Examples:
 - *You’re not my friend.*
 - *You taste funny.*
 - *I don’t like red apples*

Connect:

1. Cut the apples in half and show how the apples are different inside (the flesh of the unblemished apple looks crisp and good to eat; the blemished apple flesh looks bruised and unhealthy). Say something like, “Even though we can’t see it, words may cause others to feel hurt inside. We use words that are helpful, respectful, and friendly so we can help our friends feel safe and valued.”
2. Cut remaining apples into slices for children to taste. Ask if the apples taste the same or different. For example, some may be sweet while others may be tart. Record responses on the Venn diagram.
3. Sing track 5: “Will You Be Friends with Me?” Remind children that just like it is exciting to taste different kinds of apples, having different kinds of friends makes our community exciting, too.

Reflect:

After the materials have been put away, gather the children to create a journal page about similarities and differences. As children work in their journals, ask:

- *What are some ways we can use our words to be helpful?*
- *What was similar about the apples? What was different?*



Caring
for Others

Why Does Aanya Feel Sad?

Learning Goals:

- Relationship-Building
- Identifying Emotions
- Teamwork

Materials Needed:

- MVP Kids puppet:
- Audio track 9: “The Helping Squad”
- Books with torn pages/covers (or paper made into torn books)
- Music player
- Tape, clear

Start Strong:

With the help of the puppet, gather the children for the MVP Moment. Use the puppet to welcome the children and lead the following breathing exercise:

- Demonstrate breathing deeply, holding for one second, and then slowly exhaling. Repeat with the class two to three more times to support focus.



Aanya

MVP Moment:

1. Explain that when we feel another friend’s sadness, we are feeling compassion and empathy for them. When we have compassion and empathy, we have interest in the feelings of others.
2. Puppet Script (Use the puppet to lead children to understand why they are feeling sad.)

Aanya: (*sobbing*) I’m feeling so sad.

Adult: (*to the class*) Oh, no. Aanya is feeling sad. What should we do? Let’s ask why Aanya feels sad. (*to Aanya*) Why do you feel sad, Aanya?

Aanya: Someone wasn’t being safe with the books and some have ripped pages. Now I can’t read these. What should I do?

Adult: Oh, I understand why you are feeling sad. I’m really sorry that happened. (*to children*) Let’s ask if we can help Aanya feel better. (*Invite children to ask, “How can we help?”*)

Aanya: Would you help me fix the books?

*Note: You can adapt this script to reflect other broken items or materials put away incorrectly.

3. Have children work together to fix the books using the tape.
4. Explain that we show that we value others when we listen to and help others and when we care for our shared belongings.

Connect:

1. Provide time for children to role-play additional scenarios with the puppets (or other children) of their choice. Encourage children to work in pairs (or small groups) while one child pretends to feel sad and the other child(ren) offers to help or comfort them.
2. Conclude by praising children for showing how they value others by helping. Use the puppet to lead children in singing track 9: “The Helping Squad.”
3. Repeat this activity with other torn books or repairable broken items as needed.

Reflect:

After the materials have been put away, gather the children to create a journal page about helping when friends feel sad. As children work in their journals, ask:

- When have you felt sad and someone was helpful to you?
- How have you helped a friend who was feeling sad?
- How did we help Aanya today?
- How does caring for our classroom supplies show that we value others?



MVP Kids Character Puppets

Young children learn best through play, and they should have plenty of opportunities to do so each day. Because puppet play helps promote a wide range of developmental aspects, it is an integral part of Instill SEL. Playing with puppets can help build children’s language, cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development.

Social and emotional development is encouraged during puppet play in two ways: through activity card lessons and during free play. When children engage with puppets they learn to take turns, be patient, control impulses, recognize and manage their emotions, and recognize and relate to the emotions of others.

MVP Kids puppets are recommended as part of Instill SEL and should be kept in a prominent place in the classroom for children to use throughout the day. You can use the optional MVP Kids plush puppets, the included MVP Kids stick puppets (see Resources), or any other purchased or made puppets.

The activity cards that include puppets feature scripts for adults and children to use while teaching social and emotional skills. The scripts are written to reflect our MVP Kids and to teach the lesson goals. Scripts can be modified to reflect any scenarios or puppets.

Adults and children are encouraged to use the puppets in the way which makes the most sense to them. The adult can act out the puppet scripts alone, a child can assist the adult, or multiple children can perform a scenario themselves.



MVP KIDS STICK PUPPETS



MVP KIDS STICK PUPPETS

