



Suggested Programming	Actions / Supplies
<p>1. Theme: How to develop empathy in your kids?</p> <p>a) Opener: What's do you think is best single day on the calendar?</p> <p>b) Announcements (social or fundraising)</p> <p>c) How to encourage empathy in your child Author Michele Borba book "UnSelfie: Why Empathic Kids Succeed in Our All-About-Me World" offers research-based tips for encouraging children to be empathic. https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/seven_ways_to_foster_empathy_in_kids Below is a summary of Borba's suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help kids develop a moral identity – don't just praise kids for helping others but praise them for being a helpful person. Kids need to develop a moral identity and not just be praised for good deeds. • Allow kids "do-overs" – when a child speaks or acts insensitively, it can be helpful to offer kids the chance to have a "do-over" rather than just punishing them. • Encourage empathy through stories – casual stories that allow a child to reflect on how others are feeling in a given situation can help build the skills needed for moral action. • Support empathy education in school – such as having a teacher implement a kindness board for listing kind acts performed by students. • Examine your values – Don't just praise achievements your child has say academically or athletically, but praise and place value on acts of kindness and compassion. • Be mindful of social media use – be careful of how much time your child spends online and ensure that they are getting ample time having real meaningful interactions with people with a focus on caring. • Help kids find their inner hero – teach your kids to stand up for themselves, to be courageous and to diffuse difficult situations. It's important in this day and age of bullying that kids learn to support their peers and mobilize together. <p>d) Closer: What is something your friends would consider "so you"?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No supplied needed
<p>2. Theme: How to survive a family road trip?</p> <p>a) Opener: What's rocking your world lately?</p> <p>b) Announcements (social, fundraising etc.)</p> <p>c) Road Trip! Surviving a family road trip with small children can be a trip in itself! As a group, discuss what's worked best for you and your family and what hasn't worked. To start or grow the discussion, here are some road trip tips to make life a little easier:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fill a backpack – if your kids are old enough, have them help you fill their own backpack with travel games, colouring books, crayons and their favorite snacks. For older kids, consider adding a travel journal so they can keep track of favorite places along the way. Don't forgot to pack their favorite, can't leave home without it item(s)! • Bring snacks – pack a cooler full of them. Include a mix of healthy choices but also include a few special treats as well and don't forget to pack drinks. Make sure your kids can access the cooler easily, so you don't have to stop the car each time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No supplies needed



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<p>somebody wants a snack or drink.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather the gadgets – make sure to have a variety of different gadgets that can help entertain your kids such as a tablet with some fun kid friendly apps and their favorite movies ready to play. Don't forget to fully charge everything before leaving and to bring a car charger as well. Also, plan to play some good old fashion games such as "I spy with my little eye" and the "License plate game". • Make the road to your destination fun - learn about the destination you are travelling to and any cool stops along the way. Pick up some maps and teach your kids how to read a map. Also, if your child is old enough let them have a camera so they can document the trip, encourage them to collect things like brochures and postcards and draw pictures of their journey and make it into a fun scrap booking activity once you get home. d) Closer: Where is the most relaxing place that you have ever been? 	
<p>a. Theme: How to advocate for your child in-school</p> <p>a) Opener: Why did you decide to do the job you are doing now?</p> <p>b) Announcements (social, fundraising, etc.)</p> <p>c) Advocating for your child</p> <p>Until your child is old enough and informed enough to speak up for themselves, you are your child's best advocate in all aspects of their lives, and especially in the school environment where they spend a great deal of their time. However, it's important to find the right balance of advocacy in the school setting as educators have an important and tough job to do and they don't just have one of you to deal with but often 20 plus parents! Here are some ways you can make advocating for your child in a school setting a little easier for everybody involved. Also, as a group, if people are willing to share their own personal experiences, discuss some real-life examples of what's worked and what hasn't worked when it comes to advocating for your child.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication - if you don't already know the answer to this question, ask your child's teacher what the best method is (such as email or phone) to reach out to them if you have a question or concern and if there is a preferred time of day to contact them. Don't just show up at their classroom unannounced and expect that they will be available to talk to you. Try to respect their time and space. • Keep your cool - even if something has happened that has really angered you, do your best to keep your cool when talking to the teacher, principal or admin staff. Nothing is going to be gained by coming in with anger and threats, especially when it's directed at somebody that you want something from. You need for the educator to be a willing participant in helping to solve the problem and not on the defense or upset because of how you may have approached the situation. • Know your child's rights - if your child is having challenges in school, be sure to be informed about what your child's rights are and what opportunities might exist to support your child better. • Identify the problem - if you notice your child is having challenges, your first step should always be to connect with your child and talk to them and try to get a better understanding of what the root of the problem is. You may not be successful in getting the answers you hope for, but it's important that your child is given the opportunity to express themselves and provide you with some insight to better equip you for a discussion with their educator. Also, depending on what the issue is at hand, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No supplies needed

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<p>if it's a smaller challenge and you feel like your child is mature enough, you may want to start teaching them the skills to advocate for themselves. Allowing your child to do so will help them build their confidence and will help teach them from a young age how to be their own advocate.</p> <p>d) Closer: What's your favourite activity to do locally and why?</p>	
<p>b. Theme: Host a swap party</p> <p>a) Opener: If all the jobs had the same pay and hours, what job would you like to have?</p> <p>b) Announcements (socials, fundraising, etc.)</p> <p>c) Swap Party Not only is a swap party a good way to clean out your house and your closet but it's also economical, fun and eco friendly!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a group decide on what goods you want to bring in to swap, you could include clothing, shoes, jewellery, purses, board games, books, CDs' and even kids clothing and toys. Members should bring in clean goods that are in gently used condition. Members should bring in some totes and/or garbage bags to bring home their desired items. If you want to be really organized, you can bring in coloured stickers and give out one colour to each member so when they see an item they want they can put a sticker on it identifying it as theirs. You can also have members draw straws to see who gets to pick first, depending on the size of the group. To start, organize all the goods in categories, and display on tables or even on the floor ensuring that everything is visible, so it makes it easy for people to see what's available. At the end if you are left with unwanted goods, have 1 or 2 people gather everything and drop them off at a local Salvation Army or Value Village. <p>d) Closer: What are some of the events in your life that has made you who you are?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each member to bring in their own items to swap and a tote or garbage bags to bring items home with them. If you want to get really organized, bring in coloured stickers and straws (see instructions to the left)
<p>3. Theme: Best D.I.Y crafts for kids</p> <p>a) Opener: How different was your life 1 year ago?</p> <p>b) Announcements (social, fundraising etc.)</p> <p>c) Kids crafts As a group, discuss your favorite D.I.Y. crafts to do with your kids. The following websites contain some fun ideas that you can also share with your group if you want. https://www.buzzfeed.com/mallorymcinnis/we-oughta-give-it-a-try?utm_term=.pjV6rrdOx#.ytVVBakZ https://www.parents.com/fun/arts-crafts/kid/ https://www.buzzfeed.com/mikespohr/diy-projects-that-will-blow-your-kids-minds?utm_term=.kj4jggKDp#.hwQ3VVPKb https://diyprojects.com/diy-kids-crafts-under-hour/ Consider making a fun craft with your group that can be given to your kids such as homemade slime – https://littlebinsforlittlehands.com/how-to-make-saline-solution-slime-recipe/ or make a dream catcher for your child or yourself! https://diyprojects.com/bohemian-gypsy-dreamcatchers-ideas-homemade-gifts/</p> <p>d) Closer: If you could join any present or past music group, who would it be?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No supplies needed unless you decide to a craft as a group.
<p>c. Theme: Make your own snack mix (a.k.a. trail mix) as a group</p> <p>a) Opener: What are the three things that you think of daily?</p> <p>b) Announcements (social, fundraising etc.)</p> <p>c) Make your own snack mix Below is a link to 10 lighter snack mix recipes that the whole family can enjoy. The</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ingredients as per recipes. Tupperware containers or



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<p>week prior pick a few recipes as a group that you want to make and have a few people pick up the ingredients needed. Modify the recipes as needed to address any nut allergies. You can also ask group members if they have their own favorite recipes they would like to make.</p> <p>http://www.cookinglight.com/food/recipe-finder/snack-mix-recipes#sweet-snack-mix</p> <p>d) Closer: What's your favorite local restaurant and what's your favorite meal to eat there?</p>	<p>zip lock bags to store the trail mix in.</p>
<p>d. Theme: DIY colourful bulletin boards</p> <p>a) Opener: What do you wish you could tell yourself 10 years ago? What do you think you'll want to tell your current self 10 years from now?</p> <p>b) Announcements (social, fundraising)</p> <p>c) Make your own fabric bulletin board http://sewmuchsunshine.blogspot.ca/2011/10/ikea-hack-fabric-covered-cork-board.html Get as many supplies as needed depending on size of the group and how many bulletin boards each group member wants to make. Instructions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place your circular cork board on the fabric with the nice side of the fabric facing out. On the fabric trace around the cork leaving about an inch of room all the way around. • Plug the hot glue gun in and allow it to warm up. Cut fabric. Turn upside down and place the cork on the fabric. • Spread a strip of glue along the edge of the cork. Pull fabric and smooch onto the glue with your fingers. • Allow it to dry! <p>d) Closer: If money was not a consideration, how would you spend the days of your life?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hot glue gun, scissors, fabric (of your groups choice), a pen or fabric marker • Packages of 3 circular corkboards from Ikea (get as many as you need depending on group size. • 3M Command Strips