

Family Viewing Guide

Character and Life Skills: **Caring**

Grade Level: **3-5**

The Facts

The organization The Pursuit of Happiness (www.pursuit-of-happiness.org) focuses on scientific research about the emotions of happiness in lives. Their findings on caring include:

1. People who practice acts of caring for extended periods of time lead happier lives.
2. Caring benefits everyone: the volunteers who offer the caring and those on the receiving end.
 - People who voluntarily care for others are more satisfied with their lives.
 - People who receive caring support “are more protected from disease and even death.”
3. Different cultures practice caring in different ways, but all have the same results: life with more contentment and less depression.

Start a Conversation with Your Kids

1. How has someone showed you they care? How did that feel?
2. How have you showed you care about someone or something? How did that feel?
3. What is the difference between caring for things and caring for people?
4. How can we be more caring at home? In our community?

Advice from the Experts

PBS Parents gives the following advice for raising caring children:

1. **Help children manage their own emotions.** To respond in caring ways to the emotions of others, children first need to be able to cope with their own feelings. When we comfort our children and teach them to comfort themselves, we help them develop enough “emotional space” to care about others.
2. **Address empathy blind spots.** Empathy blind spots allow kids to make excuses for unkind behavior, such as “He’s annoying” or “She’s weird”. The key to addressing empathy blind spots is to help your child imagine the other child’s feelings.
3. **Show children they’re capable of helping.** One of the best ways of encouraging kind behavior is to help our children see that they can have a positive impact.
4. **Volunteer together.** Volunteering as a family is a great way of teaching kids to care about their broader community. Doing this regularly communicates important values to kids about the importance of service.

Notes
