



Roots of Empathy
Racines de l'empathie

Are you a proud parent with a new baby?
Will your baby be 2 - 4 months old in October?

You and your baby could be a Roots of Empathy family



What We Do

Roots of Empathy is an award-winning program for elementary school children.

The program helps children to learn about a baby's needs and development, and lets children see the best model of empathy—the relationship between parent and baby.

Classes are taught by a Roots of Empathy Instructor trained to give lessons on how a baby grows, naming and talking about feelings, and thinking about the feelings of others—empathy.



What a Roots of Empathy Family Does

At the heart of the program are a neighbourhood infant and parent who visit the classroom every three weeks over the school year for a total of 9 visits, each about 30 minutes long. A trained Roots of Empathy Instructor coaches students to observe the baby's development and to label the baby's feelings. In this experiential learning, the baby is the "Teacher" and a lever, which the Instructor uses to help children identify and reflect on their own feelings and understand the feelings of others.

This "emotional literacy" taught in the program lays the foundation for more safe and caring classrooms, where children are the "Changers". They are more competent in understanding their own feelings and the feelings of others (empathy) and are therefore less likely to physically, psychologically and emotionally hurt each other through bullying and other cruelties.

During Family Visits, students will have lots of questions about your baby and about what it takes to be a parent. They will be coached to take the perspective of your baby, to understand what your baby is feeling.



Our Commitment to You

At the start of the year, the Instructor will come to your home to talk about how the program will run and answer any questions you may have.

The Instructor will call before each of the 9 classroom Family Visits to talk about the theme for the visit. The Instructor will tell you about questions the students asked since the last Family Visit.

Your baby will be loved by every student and be a star in the school and your family will be helping to build empathy in children. Parents from each province in Canada and 10 countries participate in building empathy around our green blankets. Research has proven that the program reduces bullying and aggression in children and they become kinder, more cooperative and caring.

For more information:

www.rootsofempathy.org

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Roots of Empathy Family Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How will I know what we are doing in class at each Family Visit? Do I have to answer questions or teach anything to the class?

A. The Instructor will tell you in advance what the class will be talking about each theme and will lead all of the lessons. Parents are asked to talk about their baby and answer any questions the students may have.

Q. Can I bring my other children to the Family Visit?

A. It is best if only the parent(s) and baby come to the class without older children so that the students focus on the baby. Sometimes arrangements might be made with the teacher to have the sibling accompany the family on an occasion when babysitting is unavailable.

Q. If I can't come to a visit, can I send someone else with the baby?

A. Only a parent can bring the baby to a classroom visit. The focus of the program is to see the bond between the parent and the baby. We need to know before you volunteer if you plan to return to work during the school year. If you do, your Instructor can give you a letter for your workplace explaining the program and asking if you can have the time off to finish the classes.

Q. Are parents paid to come to the class?

A. No. Roots of Empathy parents are volunteers.

Q. What about twins?

A. When Roots of Empathy parents have twins we ask that they only participate with one of the infants. The fascination of the interaction of two babies takes the focus off the miracle of the attachment and attunement between an infant human being and his or her parents. Some parents of twins participate in two different classrooms, one class per baby.

To volunteer as a Roots of Empathy family — contact: