



Effortless Empathy

Create The Moment

6 Real-Life Experiences That Build Life Skills

Simple experiences you can create today
to help your child practice the skills
they'll need as an adult.



Real-Life Experience
Card Sampler



Effortless Empathy

The Big Idea

Parenting gives us thousands of teachable moments, but we don't always have to wait for one.

Create the Moment experiences help children practice skills across six areas:
Empathy & Perspective-Taking • Responsibility & Independence • Confidence & Communication • Problem-Solving & Adaptability • Self-Management & Perseverance • Generosity, Contribution & Character.

They are built around the Effortless Empathy 3-Step Method:



Connect

Share an enjoyable experience together.



Extend

Gently nudge your child's attention beyond themselves and let them take action.



Reflect

Talk about what happened and how it felt.

This resource is part of the Create the Moment™ collection from Effortless Empathy.

The full collection includes experiences across six core life-skill areas

Make the activities age-appropriate and adjust where needed.



Give them safe, real-world practice before life demands the skill.





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Real-Life Experience Card

Category: **Empathy & Perspective-Taking**

Experience Type: **At Home * Social * Low-Cost**

1 The Cookie Delivery

Bake cookies together and bring some to someone who might enjoy a surprise.

CONNECT



Bake cookies together because it's fun. Let your child help choose, measure, mix, and decorate.

EXTEND



Ask: "Who else might enjoy some of these?" "Who would be surprised to get them?" Let your child help package the cookies and deliver them.

REFLECT



Ask: "How do you think they felt?" "What did you notice?" "How did that make you feel?"



Life Skills

Generosity • Empathy
Perspective-Taking •
Thoughtful Decision-Making



Parent Reminder

Ask open questions.
There may be more than one thoughtful response.



Adult Bridge

Noticing others' needs and acting thoughtfully supports empathy, strong relationships, and consideration for others throughout life.



Real-Life Experience Card

Category: **Responsibility & Independence**

Experience Type: **At Home * Family * Low-Cost**

6 Be in Charge of Breakfast

Give your child responsibility for one breakfast for the family. Make sure it's age-appropriate.

CONNECT



Talk about the meal together and why their contribution matters to the family.

EXTEND



Ask: "What do we need?" "What has to happen first?" "What's your plan?" Let your child make choices, prepare what they safely can, and follow the task through to completion.

REFLECT



Ask: "What went well?" "What was harder than you expected?" "How do you feel about how you handled it?"



Life Skills

Responsibility •
Planning • Self-
Management •
Independence



Parent Reminder

Resist the urge to take over. Support where needed, but keep your child in charge of the parts they can handle.



Adult Bridge

Taking responsibility for a real outcome builds reliability, practical competence, independence, and confidence that carry into adulthood.





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Real-Life Experience Card

Category: **Confidence & Communication**

Experience Type: **Errand • Social • Quick • No-Cost**

12 Ask the Store Employee for Help

Give your child an opportunity to ask a store employee where to find something or get simple information.

CONNECT



Beforehand, talk about what they need to ask and reassure them that you will stay nearby.

EXTEND



Ask: "What could you say?" "Who looks like the right person to ask?" "How can I support you?" Let your child approach, ask the question, and listen to the answer.

REFLECT



Ask: "How did that feel?" "What was hard?" "What did you notice about yourself?" "What would you try again next time?"



Life Skills

- Confidence •
- Communication •
- Initiative •
- Help-Seeking



Parent Reminder

- Do not jump in the moment your child hesitates. Give them enough time to try before offering support.



Adult Bridge

- Asking for help appropriately supports self-advocacy, independence, workplace communication, and confidence in unfamiliar situations.





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Real-Life Experience Card

Category: **Problem-Solving & Adaptability**

Experience Type: **At Home * Family * No-Cost**

16 Plan Dinner With What We Have

Present a real-life dinner challenge with ingredients you already have at home and solve it together.

CONNECT



Introduce the challenge as a team. "Let's figure this out together."

EXTEND



Ask: "What are our options?" "What might happen?" "What's the best idea and why?" Let your child help choose and try a solution.

REFLECT



Ask: "What worked?" "What didn't?" "What would we try next time?"



Life Skills

- Problem-Solving
- Critical Thinking
- Perseverance



Parent Reminder

- Guide the process, not the solution.
- Curiosity unlocks creativity.



Adult Bridge

- Problem-solvers become adaptable, resourceful adults who can handle real-world challenges.





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Real-Life Experience Card

Category: **Generosity, Contribution & Character**

Experience Type: **At Home * Social * Low-Cost**

26 Plan a Surprise

Let your child plan a surprise, treat, or activity for someone they love.

CONNECT



Talk about the person and something they enjoy doing.

EXTEND



Ask: "What do they like?" "What would make them happy?" "What would be meaningful?" Let your child help plan, prepare, or create something special.

REFLECT



Ask: "How do you think they felt?" "How did it feel to plan that for them?" "What did you learn about being thoughtful?"



Life Skills

Perspective-Taking •
Empathy •
Generosity



Parent Reminder

Encourage their
ideas. Let it be their
choice.



Adult Bridge

Thinking of others builds
empathy and helps
children develop the
thoughtfulness that
strengthens
relationships throughout
their lives.





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Real-Life Experience Card

Category: **Self-Management & Perseverance**

Experience Type: **At Home • Family • No-Cost**

25 Set a Small Goal and Track It

Help your child choose a small, achievable goal and create a simple way to track their progress over several days.

CONNECT



Talk about something your child wants to accomplish, such as reading a book, learning a new skill, or completing a personal project.

EXTEND



Ask: "What is one small step you could take each day?" "How will you remember?" "How could you track your progress?" Let your child create a chart, checklist, or other simple system and use it.

REFLECT



Ask: "What helped you stay consistent?" "What did you do when you missed a day?" "What did you learn about reaching a goal?"



Life Skills

Goal-Setting • Consistency • Self-Management • Responsibility



Parent Reminder

Progress doesn't have to be perfect. Help your child adjust the goal or system when needed rather than treating a missed day as failure.



Adult Bridge

Setting realistic goals, tracking progress, and adjusting plans are skills adults use to manage work, finances, learning, health, and personal responsibilities.

