

More Alike than Different

(Target audience: children in grades 3 - 6)

This is an 8-minute video designed to support children and teens with non-visible health differences. It focuses on differences rather than handicaps or disabilities.

“More Alike than Different” features children with epilepsy, diabetes, neurofibromatosis, hearing loss and asthma. It shows them enjoying all types of activities and sports, such as karate, soccer, playing the piano, scouting, camping, playing games and generally having a good time. The children talk openly about their lives and their differences.

Goals

- To increase awareness and understanding of children with non-visible health differences.
- To increase acceptance of children with non-visible health differences.

How to prepare a class or group to view the video

Talk briefly about how each of us is different in some way. Explain that some differences can be caused by illness, injury or genetic problems (the way we are born). Say that this video shows kids who have some of these health differences and it shows that they enjoy doing the same things as all kids do. Mention that we probably all know kids with these types of differences, but maybe didn't even notice their differences. That's because the most important thing is that they're just great kids and friends.

Important learning concepts

- We are all different in some ways.
- We are all alike in many ways.
- We are all more alike than different.
- Even though we are all different, we have the same feelings and enjoy the same things.
- It is okay to be different. Differences make us who we are.
- Kids with differences, like all kids, just want to be themselves and have fun.

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- Kids with differences, like all kids, just want to be themselves and have fun.

Suggested discussion questions

- What differences did you learn about in the video?
- How are you different from kids in the video?
- How are you the same as kids in the video? (Enjoy the same activities, have the same feelings, share some physical traits, etc.)
- Why is it okay to be different?
- How do you treat kids with differences? (Like everyone else.)
- Why is it okay to ask about differences? (It is better to ask questions than to point to stare.)

Vocabulary

Asthma: Asthma is a long-term (chronic) disease of the respiratory system. It causes inflammation in the bronchial tubes, which carry air to the lungs. At times asthma blocks or narrows the airways, making it difficult to breathe.

Diabetes mellitus: a condition characterized by hyperglycemia (high sugar levels) resulting from the body's inability to use blood glucose for energy. In Type 1 diabetes, the pancreas no longer makes insulin, so blood glucose cannot enter the cells to be used for energy. In Type 2 diabetes, either the pancreas does not make enough insulin or the body is unable to use insulin correctly.

Epilepsy: A condition characterized by recurrent seizures that are caused by abnormal electrical activity in the brain. Seizures can occur for many reasons, including damage to the brain due to infection, injury, birth trauma, tumor, stroke, drug intoxication, and chemical imbalance.

Hearing loss: Hearing loss is a sudden or gradual decrease in a person's ability to hear. Depending on the cause, including illness, trauma and genetic disorders, it can range from mild to severe and can be temporary or permanent.

Neurofibromatosis: Type 1 (NF-1) is a rare genetic disorder characterized by the development of multiple noncancerous (benign) tumors of nerves and skin (neurofibromas) and areas of abnormally decreased or increased coloration of the skin, such as cafe-au-lait spots on skin. Type 2 (NF-2) is a rare genetic disorder that is primarily characterized by benign (noncancerous) tumors of the nerves that transmit sound impulses from the inner ears to the brain. This may include disturbances of balance and walking, dizziness, headache or progressive hearing loss.

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