

# The Differences Iceberg

## Building Empathy and Acceptance In Kids by exploring “Below the Surface?”

This tool provides kids and adults a framework for perspective taking and recognizing that someone’s experience might be very different from your own—and that’s ok!

### What We See

We can see someone’s behavior, but that is just “the tip of the iceberg” of their experience. We can’t see what’s “below the surface.” Since every body and brain is different, what’s “below the surface” might be very different from our own experience. We don’t need to know what’s going on to show them empathy and understanding.

### What’s “Below the Surface?”

#### Different ways to show emotion

Sometimes people have a tough day. Have you ever had a tough day?

There are lots of ways to express joy, some people might laugh, some might jump or flap.

How do you show you’re happy? Sad? Tired?

#### Different sensory experiences

Some find crowds of people are too loud so they might need to take a break in a quiet place.

Some people love how spinning feels in their bodies. Do you like to spin?

Some people need to move their bodies a lot to feel good and some sit still. What does your body like?

#### Different ways of communicating

Some people use their voices to talk and some people use their bodies, hands, iPad, pictures, etc.

Some people look at your face when they’re listening and other people like to look away, but they’re still listening.

Sometimes someone might not want to talk and that’s ok.

#### Different ways to make friends

Some people like to share about their favorite things. What are your favorite things to talk about?

Some people like to play by themselves and some people like to play with lots of people.

Some people might not know how to join a game. Maybe you could ask them if they want to play?

There are so many different ways to play with a toy; there’s no right or wrong way.