



Big Heart World Parent & Caregiver Guide

Identity and Belonging

Released April 2021



PRESENTED BY

sparkler

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH **noggin**

What is Big Heart World?

Big Heart World will help families learn together about social and emotional skills — what it means to have a *big heart* and how to grow one. This means:

- ★ Learning about me (self)
- ★ Learning about you (others)
- ★ Learning about us (relationships)

Learning social and emotional skills is *a/ways* important to children's development. From the time babies are born, they are learning about who they are, developing confidence, compassion, and a sense of what is right and what is wrong.

Parents are particularly concerned about their children's social and emotional development now due to transitions and school closures brought about by COVID-19.

If you're wondering how to help your child express their feelings, figure out friendships, share, enter a classroom environment, or learn what makes them special, Big Heart World is for you.

If you're feeling overwhelmed by the pandemic and endless change and transition, Big Heart World is for you.

If you feel like you can't handle one more tantrum and you want to know what your child is really trying to tell you when they act out, Big Heart World is for you.

How wonderful would it be if everyone lived in a Big Heart World?

Big Heart World is produced by Sparkler Learning with support from Noggin, the Walton Family Foundation, and many non-profit partner organizations.

Learn more: <https://bigheartworld.org/about-us/>

All About Me:

The First Unit of Big Heart



The question, “Who am I?” is deceptively simple, but it can take a lifetime to answer!

Learning about yourself — who you are — starts when children are tiny. They wiggle their fingers! They touch their feet! They develop loving relationships with family members, which help them develop a sense of belonging! By around their first birthday, babies realize that the person looking back at them in the mirror is “me,” and by about two, they can recognize themselves in photos. Children learn more and more about who they are and how they fit into the world as they grow — and their parents and caregivers can help them along.

Your identity makes you who you are: your skills, your passions and preferences, your physical traits, culture, language, and more. Developing a strong sense of self can help children grow their self-esteem, self-awareness, and confidence. Later, it can enable them to learn how to interact with others to make friends and solve problems together.

This is the first Big Heart unit for parents and caregivers to use with their children. In the coming months, Big Heart World effort will cover many important skills and themes in social and emotional learning, including the ideas of self, others, and relationships. Here’s a visual overview of all the content you will find on Big Heart World so you know what to expect:



AWARENESS OF SELF

All About Me

Feelings

Similarities &
Differences



AWARENESS OF OTHERS

Friendship

Empathy

Problem Solving

RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS



Helping

Upstanding

Global
Citizenship

Let's Learn Some Big Heart Words!



When you introduce new vocabulary words, you help your child learn the words they'll need to express their big ideas. Here are some words you can share related to identity and belonging.

- ★ **Identity** - who I am, what makes me “me”
- ★ **Similar** - alike, having qualities in common (you may be similar to someone else in some ways and different in others!)
- ★ **Different** - not like something or someone else, or not like before
- ★ **Family** - people who are related to each other, like parents and children
- ★ **Feelings** - how you think about something; what you believe
- ★ **Community** - a group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common
- ★ **Respect** - to think about the feelings of others
- ★ **Language** - way of communicating with others by written or spoken words, used by the people of a certain country or area
- ★ **Ethnicity** - the fact or state of belonging to a social group that has a common national or cultural tradition
- ★ **Culture** - the beliefs, way of life, art, language, and customs that are shared and accepted by people in a particular society or group
- ★ **Heritage** - something you inherited from your ancestors
- ★ **Belonging** - to be a member or part of a group or community
- ★ **Unique** - one of a kind, unlike anything else, special
- ★ **Independent** - able to do things by yourself





Activities





“Like Nobody Else”

Song

“Like Nobody Else” is a song by Alex Geringas and William J. Fuller. It’s the first song in Noggin’s Big Heart Beats album. The lyrics celebrate identity, individuality, and self respect:

Feel so good about myself (yeah)
I’m like nobody else (*like nobody else*)
I’m like nobody else (*like nobody else*)

Hold my head high
Feeling so alive
Got my own vibe
And it’s so nice

Welcome to my world
Yeah this is my life
When I look in the mirror
Feeling so right

I know I can make life better
Just being myself brings us all together
I’ll show this world who I am (Mmm-hmm)

Feel so good about myself (yeah)
I’m like nobody else (*like nobody else*)
I’m like nobody else (*like nobody else*)
Feel so good about myself
I’m like nobody else (*like nobody else*)
I’m like nobody else (*like nobody else*)

I love my skin
Love who I am
I never say can’t
Because I know I can

I love my big smile
I like my hairstyle
I wear colorful shoes
I feel so cool

My happy shines bright
Mmm-hmm
I’m living loving life
Oh yeah
So wear your smile loud
Never forget - **Everybody say it proud**

I feel good
So good
I feel great
Great
Yeah, that’s me
That’s me
Walking with my own vibe (yeah-yeah)

I feel so good about myself (*I feel so good*)
I’m like nobody else (*like nobody else*)
I’m like nobody else (*like nobody else, yeah*)
I feel so good about myself (*I feel so good*)
I’m like nobody else (*like nobody else*)
I’m like nobody else (*I’m like nobody else*)
Like nobody else





5 Ways to Explore Identity & Belonging Using “Like Nobody Else”



- 1. Dance Like Nobody Else** (Physical Development, Social and Emotional)
Go to <https://BigHeartWorld.org> to play “Like Nobody Else” from Noggin’s Big Heart Beats album and have a dance party break at home! Does your child want to add it to their regular dance party playlist? (Share a homemade dance video with us on Social Media.)
- 2. Behind the Tune** (Learn About: Social and Emotional Development)
Talk about the big idea of “Like Nobody Else.” What does it mean to be unique? What does it mean to be proud of yourself for who you are? What makes US who we are as a family? What makes your child special?
- 3. Play Like Nobody Else!** (Learn About: Social and Emotional Development, Arts)
After discussing the “Like Nobody Else” song, do one of our identity and belonging activities together to explore the ideas of the song off-screen, with paper and crayons! The activities we share on <https://bigheartworld.org/big-heart-playroom> include:
 - ★ **Mirror Play** — Three related activities to help babies, toddlers, and big kids explore ideas of identity and belonging. (See below for a sample of this activity.)
 - ★ **Family Flag** — Design a family flag to explore your family’s identity and understand how everyone belongs! This is meant for toddlers and big kids.
 - ★ **My Book About Me** — Who IS your child? What matters to them? What makes them special? Developing a strong sense of self helps children become confident. You can help your child explore their identity with a special book about them. There are different versions of this activity for babies, toddlers, and big kids.
 - ★ **Real Life Superhero** — What is your little one’s BIG power? When your child thinks about what they’re great at, they boost their self-confidence and learn how they can help others. This activity is for little and big kids!
 - ★ **Four fun ways to calm down** — Calming down can be hard to do, but learning to control our feelings and bodies is an important step in developing other skills — from learning to read to solving problems with friends. With your little kid or big kid, create a special calming space or try our recommended breathing exercises.
- 4. Like Nobody Else Game** (Learn About: Literacy, Social and Emotional Development, Focus & Problem Solving)
Everyone in the family can write or draw three things that make them special. Put everyone’s responses into a bag and then draw the responses out one by one. Can members of the family guess correctly?
- 5. Like Nobody Else Freeze Dance** (Learn About: Social and Emotional, Focus & Problem Solving, Arts)
Help your child build rhythm and self-regulation skills with a game of freeze dance. Play the song, which you can find at <https://bigheartworld.org/the-big-heart-album>. Players should stop dancing when the music stops!



On Further Reflection:

Mirror Play

WHO is that person in the mirror? That question means a different thing to a baby and a big kid!

Parents and caregivers can use mirrors as a tool to help children explore their identity. Becoming familiar with and appreciating their eyes, skin, freckles, and smile helps build self-confidence and self-awareness. Early on, babies won't recognize the person in the mirror as "me," but will enjoy exploring a friendly face. Over time, children will recognize themselves in the mirror. Bigger kids can create self-portraits to keep growing their sense of self.

Here are some activities that will help you and your child use the mirror to learn *all about you!*

Peek-A-Boo Me!

Ages: 0-1.5

Skills: Identity, Comprehension

Vocabulary Words:

Look: to try to see

Mirror: a looking glass

Materials: Child-safe mirror, small blanket or other cloth

Recipe for Play:

1. Let's look in the mirror together. I see myself, and I see you!
2. Tap on the mirror to keep baby's attention. Let baby touch and explore the mirror with their hands. For older babies, you can make silly faces and wave at your reflections and say, "Hi!" Encourage them to do it, too!
3. Tuck or tape a small cloth to the top of the mirror so that your reflections are hidden. Now you're ready to play peek-a-boo. When you use your baby's name as you play, you're helping them understand that it is **THEM** in the mirror!



Find this and other Big Heart World co-play activities online at: <https://bigheartworld.org/big-heart-playroom>

Is it still YOU?

Ages: 1.5-3

Skills: Identity, Comprehension

Vocabulary Words:

Mirror: a looking glass

Change: to make different

Costume: a disguise

Materials: Child-safe mirror, dress-up clothes and other things to wear



Recipe for Play:

1. Who's that in the mirror? Why, it's YOU!
2. Let's change how you look: You can wear a red fire hat like Marshall, goggles on your head like Rusty, red barrettes like Kai-Lan, or we can use makeup to draw jewels like Shimmer and Shine. We can even make puppy ears with two grown-up socks to look like Blue!
3. Let's look in the mirror again. How do you look in costume? Is it still you?

Self Portrait

Ages: 3-10

Skills: Identity, Fine Motor

Vocabulary Words:

Mirror: a looking glass

Portrait: a formal picture of a person, or group of people

Shape: the outline of something

Materials: Child-safe mirror, white paper, felt-tip pen or pencil



Recipe for Play:

1. Who do you see when you look in the mirror? Have your child look into the mirror at their face. What shape is their head? Help them use a pen or pencil to draw that shape on the paper — using a grown-up pen or pencil helps this feel like a very important project, which it is!
2. What else do they notice about their face? What shape is their nose? Their eyes? Encourage them to draw their features how THEY see them. They're the artist, after all!
3. Do they notice anything else? Do they have freckles? Glasses? What texture is their hair? Use the pen or pencil to draw these features!
4. Children may use crayons, colored pencils, or watercolor paints to add color to their self-portrait.

A challenge for bigger kids: If you have an older child, add another layer of self-reflection to this activity. Think about the characteristics of the person in the mirror. Are they kind? Creative? Strong? Shy? Ask them to share their ideas aloud, or incorporate words into the picture.

Big Heart World Highlights



Interview

When Alex Geringas was a kid, he was bullied for being “too fat.” When Wil Fuller was a kid, he was too shy to start conversations with other kids. Now, they’re the stars behind “Like Nobody Else,” a song from Noggin’s *Big Heart Beats* album that’s all about self love and confidence — and they’re sharing advice with today’s big hearted kids.

“Always give it your best even if you fail sometimes,” Wil, a Los Angeles-based writer-producer-rapper-composer, advised. “Keep trying and never give up. I felt good about myself as a kid when I tried things that I didn’t think I could do and accomplished them. It gave me a ton of confidence.”

Alex — an award-winning songwriter and composer who plays a stylish hot pink piano — also urges today’s kids to follow their passions: “Try to find your passion and go for it! You are perfect as you are.”

Read the whole article and see a clip of the duo’s recording session at Big Heart World:
<https://bigheartworld.org/the-big-heart-album>.



Little Kids, Big Hearts

An original podcast highlighting kids’ big questions, designed to help families explore ideas around social and emotional learning.

The first episode features a discussion of the big idea of the Big Heart initiative: What DOES it mean to have a big heart?

Find it where you listen or on <https://bigheartworld.org/podcast>.

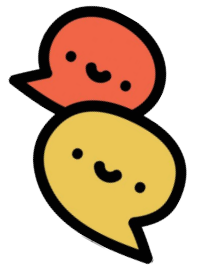
Big Heart Identity and Belonging Book: A Creative Coloring Book

Draw a self-portrait! Describe your family! Pick your adjectives! Complete this creative coloring book together to help your child learn about themselves, their family — and what makes them special!

Find it at <https://bigheartworld.org>.



Books to Spark Big Heart to Heart Conversations



Here are special books you can share and discuss with your child. Find more ideas for amazing books on <https://bigheartworld.org/the-big-heart-book-list>.

★ **Giraffes Can't Dance** by Giles Andreae

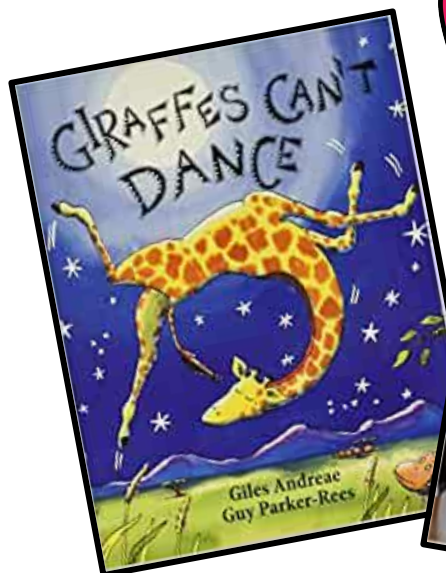
Gerald the giraffe longs to dance like everyone else, but his legs are too long and skinny, and he just can't seem to get it right.

For Discussion: In the story, the other animals laughed at Gerald. They even called him names. How did that make Gerald feel? What could they have done instead of laugh at him?

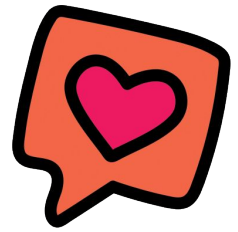
★ **Hair Love** By Matthew A. Cherry and Vashti Harrison

It's up to Daddy to give his daughter Zuri an extra-special hair style in this ode to self-confidence and the love between fathers and daughters.

For Discussion: What makes Zuri feel like a superhero? Is there anything that makes YOU feel like a superhero? What's your favorite way to do your hair?



Books to Spark Big Heart Conversations



★ **Julián Is a Mermaid** by Jessica Love

While riding the subway home from the pool with his abuela one day, Julián notices three women dressed up as mermaids. Julián is inspired! This is a book about being yourself.

For Discussion: How did Julián feel when his abuela left the room after she saw his homemade mermaid costume? Have you ever felt that way? How did he feel when she came back? Why? Have you ever felt that way?

★ **Bob the Artist** by Marion Deuchars

★ Bob the bird is just like all his friends, except for his skinny red legs! Bob learns that he's great — just the way he is.

For Discussion: What made Bob special in the story? What makes YOU special?

★ **Little Blue and Little Yellow** by Leo Lionni

★ Little Blue and Little Yellow are best friends. Join them as they become green and then find their true colors again.

For Discussion: What makes YOU who you are? What are some ways you've changed over time? What are some ways you've stayed the same?



How wonderful would it be if we lived in a big heart world?

Join us!★



For more tools and resources, please visit us
online at <https://bigheartworld.org>