

# MATES Junior Activity

## Resource Guide

Goal: **Prosocial Competency**

Activity Type: Individual,  
small group  
Relationship Stage: Mid-late

### Activity Name:

"Different Shoes"

### Objective:

To practice empathy by thinking about "being in someone else's shoes"

### Preparation Time:

15 minutes to make cards

### Activity Duration:

20-40 minutes, depending on size of the group

### Required Material:

- Shoe cards

### Instructions:

- On blank cards, draw different kinds of shoes on one side (e.g., sneakers, high heels, jandals, slippers, using different colours) and on the other side, write up a perspective for the mentee to take (e.g., poor, rich, girl, boy, old, young, physically disabled, different ethnicity, different religion, immigrant, sick, LGBT). You can make any number of cards – anywhere from four (for one-on-one use) to a dozen (for small group use).
- Ask your mentee whether they know what empathy is. Have a short discussion about what it means.
- Lay the cards out with the shoes facing up. Each player will take a turn selecting a "shoe", then taking a minute or two to think about what life is like from the perspective on the other side of card. For example, what is it like being old? What things might be hard? What things might be easier? What needs might they have?
- After independent thinking, share which perspective you each had and what you thought about. If they found it difficult, work through the perspective together. If they missed something important, discuss it with them.
- If you are playing in a small group, mentees may work in pairs on a perspective and then report back to the group.

### Further Notes:

- This may be a difficult activity for some mentees. Maintain a safe, open environment where they can share honestly.