

## **We are accepting, generous & kind**

Activities and resources to help support the mission of GiGi's Playhouse to your school:

### **GiGi's Playhouse Background**

GiGi's was started by a mom, Nancy Gianni, who made a promise to her infant daughter GiGi: "I made a promise to her that I would change the way the world looked at a person with Down syndrome; that I would help people understand that her and all of her friends were so much more than a diagnosis." That promise has led to the opening of over 60 Playhouses Locations around the country and reaching thousand more around the world through GiGi's At Home, virtual programming.

GiGi's provides free educational, therapeutic-based and career development programs for individuals with Down syndrome of all ages, their families, and the community. Its goal? To change the way the world views Down syndrome and send a global message of ACCEPTANCE FOR ALL. GiGi's has programs for infants through adults, as well as math and literacy tutoring. Individuals with a variety of disABILITIES attend our free FUN programs. Everyone is welcome at GiGi's Playhouse!

### **Options for classroom and or school**

Presentation from GiGi's Playhouse Representative! Contact your local GiGi's Playhouse to arrange a visit.

### **Before the visit**

Are you ready to be a part of the Generation G Community? Setting the stage and getting students excited is key. Prior to a visit from a GiGi's Playhouse representative, the following are possible activities that can be completed:

Generation G posters can be placed around the school. This will get students thinking and talking about acceptance.

Books! What better way to introduce a topic to children of all ages! Below is a list of book titles that introduce the different aspects of being accepting, generous and kind. Additional activities that correspond to some of the books are also provided. Books with additional activities are marked with a \*.

Title	Author
<a href="#">The Girl Who Thought in Pictures: The Story of Dr. Temple Grandin</a>	Mosca, Julia Finley
<a href="#">*Meet Maya Cat-A Story of Acceptance</a>	Beader, Lauren
<a href="#">47 Strings: Tessa's Special Code</a>	Carey, Becky
<a href="#">Why is He Doing That?</a>	Cuellar, Rachael
<a href="#">This is Ella</a>	Ewert, Krista
<a href="#">A Friend Like Simon</a>	Gaynor, Kate
<a href="#">More Alike Than Different</a>	Hamblin, Gail
<a href="#">Different, A Great Thing To Be</a>	Heather Avis
So many more incredible books can be found on Amazon!	

Acceptance starts with understanding, and kids need to feel safe in asking questions

Have "Acceptance Thought Box" in the classroom. Have students think about questions they have about peers who might learn, play and communicate differently than they do. Teachers can then review the responses and share common themes, and even misconceptions that students may have, in an anonymous way. The Acceptance Thought Box can then remain in the classroom and students can add questions and comments to it throughout the year.

Create an environment that allows questions and celebrates a student's curiosity to understand friends who may be different than them.

Create Conversation Around Differences – Conversation Starter Samples

Difference is not bad!

What makes you different from your best friend

What do you like to eat that some people might think is "weird"

Do you have the same favorite toy, song, color and ice cream flavor as all your friends?

What other ways are you different that makes you cool!

## **Day of visit**

Classroom/School Presentation Template (link to PowerPoint)

## **After the Visit**

Time to reflect on what it means to be Generation G! On a large heart (can be drawn on the board or on large paper), have students brainstorm words and phrases that stood out to them during the speaker's presentation.

Student Writing Prompt: What does it mean to be #GenerationG?

While older students are able to write an essay, younger students are provided sentence starters (ex: I can be accepting when...) and an area to draw a picture.

Kindergarten: "I am accepting when I" This writing prompt could be used as an opportunity to recognize students for their writing and reflections. Student writings can be read/shared at an assembly, on morning announcements, can be compiled in a book and shared with GiGi's Playhouse.

[Older Student Writing Sheet](#)

[Younger Student Writing Sheet](#)

All students who take the Generation G pledge can make a hand that shows off their uniqueness, as well as their commitment to being accepting, generous and kind. All hearts can be combined into a large heart. The following picture includes over 450 hand-prints made by students grades K-5!





Acceptance through Art: There are other opportunities to spread the message of #GenerationG throughout the school. The following are art projects completed by students in the classroom of Joan Zacharias, art teacher at Granger Elementary in Medina, Ohio.



### Book Activity

**Book Title: Greatness is My Superpower**

**Author: Sarah How, PSY. S**

In this book, students are presented with a variety of everyday school situations. Students are then encouraged to “Cape Up” and “Activate” different superpowers in order to handle the situation. Superpowers include: concern, helpfulness, determination, courage, bravery, etc. These superpowers allow them to handle the situation and earn their cape!

Granger Elementary 2nd grade teacher, Julie Spaite, created a school-wide activity, in which students were tasked with “Filling the Cape with Kindness.” Students were given kindness coupons at the start of the week. Each coupon had a task that they were to complete at some point during the week (ex. Help handle a situation at recess. Play with someone new at recess. Write a kind note to a friend or staff member.) At the end of the week, students turned in their coupons and they were used to FILL THE CAPE. [Kindness coupon printable](#)




## Book Activity

**Book Title:** Meet MAYA Cat: A Story of Acceptance

**Author:** Lauren Beader

As the book reads, "She may not look or act like other cats, but that doesn't mean she doesn't want to be treated like one." This easy picture book illustrates the life of Instagram's @meetmayacat. She loves to climb, loves treats, loves to play, loves to purr, and sometimes needs a little extra love. Don't we all?

As an activity, little ones can complete a T-Chart on which they can draw a picture of things they love to do and then draw a picture of something that they can do with a little extra love and practice. Displaying these pictures can show all children that we are all similar, yet we all have different things that we need a bit more practice to complete! Response sheet attached!

<b>Name:</b> _____	
<b>Meet MAYA Cat</b> Response Activity	
	
SOMETHING I CAN DO!	SOMETHING I CAN DO WITH EXTRA LOVE AND PRACTICE!

