

AWARENESS

PARENT TAKE HOME PACKET

**Part 1: Zink Activities
With Your Child**

**Part 2: Awareness Handouts
for Parents**



Dear Parents,

Part 1:

This week at school, your child heard a story about Zink, a zebra who has spots instead of stripes. Zink wonders why she is the only one with spots and her parents reassure her that: 1) being **different** makes us **special** and 2) we all are more alike than we are different. At school, the class talked about kindness, compassion, and acceptance of differences, whether due to body size/shape, illness, background, or beliefs.

We have included 3 Zink activities to do at home with your child:

- 1) "I Am Special" song
- 2) Make your own zebra
- 3) Suggested story books

Part 2:

We also included 5 **parent-only** (not to be shared with your child) handouts about cancer. The Zink story is not about cancer and **cancer will not be mentioned in your child's classroom**. However, Kelly Weil wrote the ZINK story when she was 11 years old and undergoing treatment for cancer. Kelly felt alone because she was different.

As adults, we know the importance of reducing cancer in our community and therefore we included these **parent-only handouts** to increase awareness of cancer – as a first step in eliminating it.

- 1) Differences in Adult and Childhood Cancers
- 2) Possible Signs of Childhood Cancer
- 3) Important Points
- 4) Did You Know?
- 5) Did You Know You Can Help?

We hope you enjoy completing the 3 Zink activities with your child. In addition, we hope you find the 5 parent-only handouts helpful in raising awareness of cancer. **Included in this packet is an evaluation that we ask you to complete and return to your child's teacher**. If you have questions or would like more information at any time, please contact A-B-C-1-2-3 project director, Cindy Chafin at (615) 898-5493 or cindy_chafin@comcast.net or cynthia.chafin@mtsu.edu

Thank you,
A-B-C-1-2-3 Healthy Kids in Tennessee

Song: "I Am Special"

(Sing to the tune of "Are You Sleeping, Are You Sleeping, Brother John?")

I am special
I am special
If you look
You will see
Someone very special
Someone very special
Look at me
Look at me

*Zink the Zebra Foundation Inc. Copyright 2000 Pre-School
Health Education Center of Wisconsin*

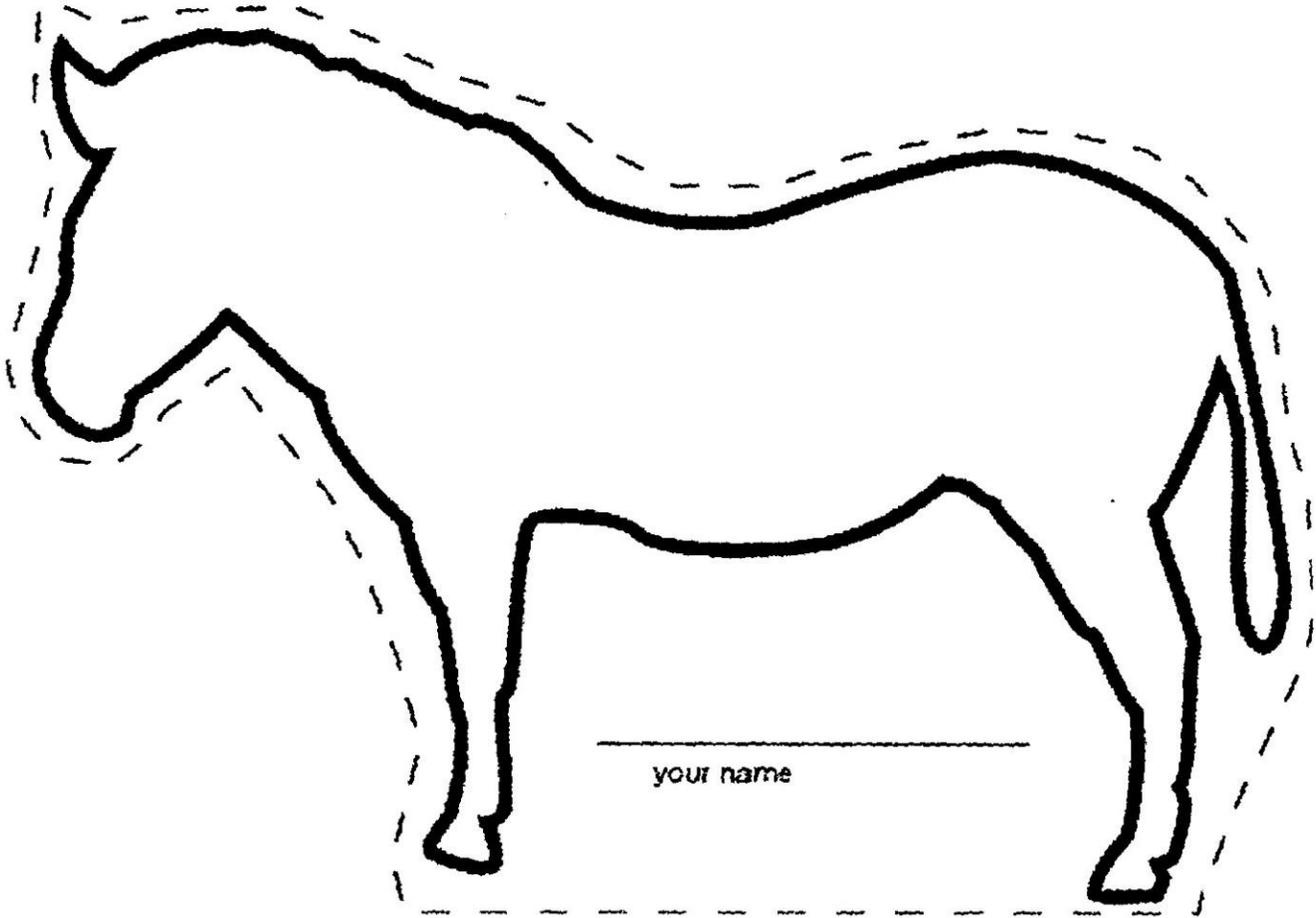
Dear Parents,

Your child learned this song at school. Here are some activities to enjoy with your child:

- 1) Ask your child to teach you the song so that you can sing it together.
- 2) Talk with your child about how each person is different (your appearance, what you like to do, what you believe) and how being different makes each person special.
- 3) Ask your child in what ways he/she feels different/special.

If you have questions or would like further information, please contact your child's teacher.

Thank you,
A-B-C-123 Healthy Kids in Tennessee



Make Your Own Zebra

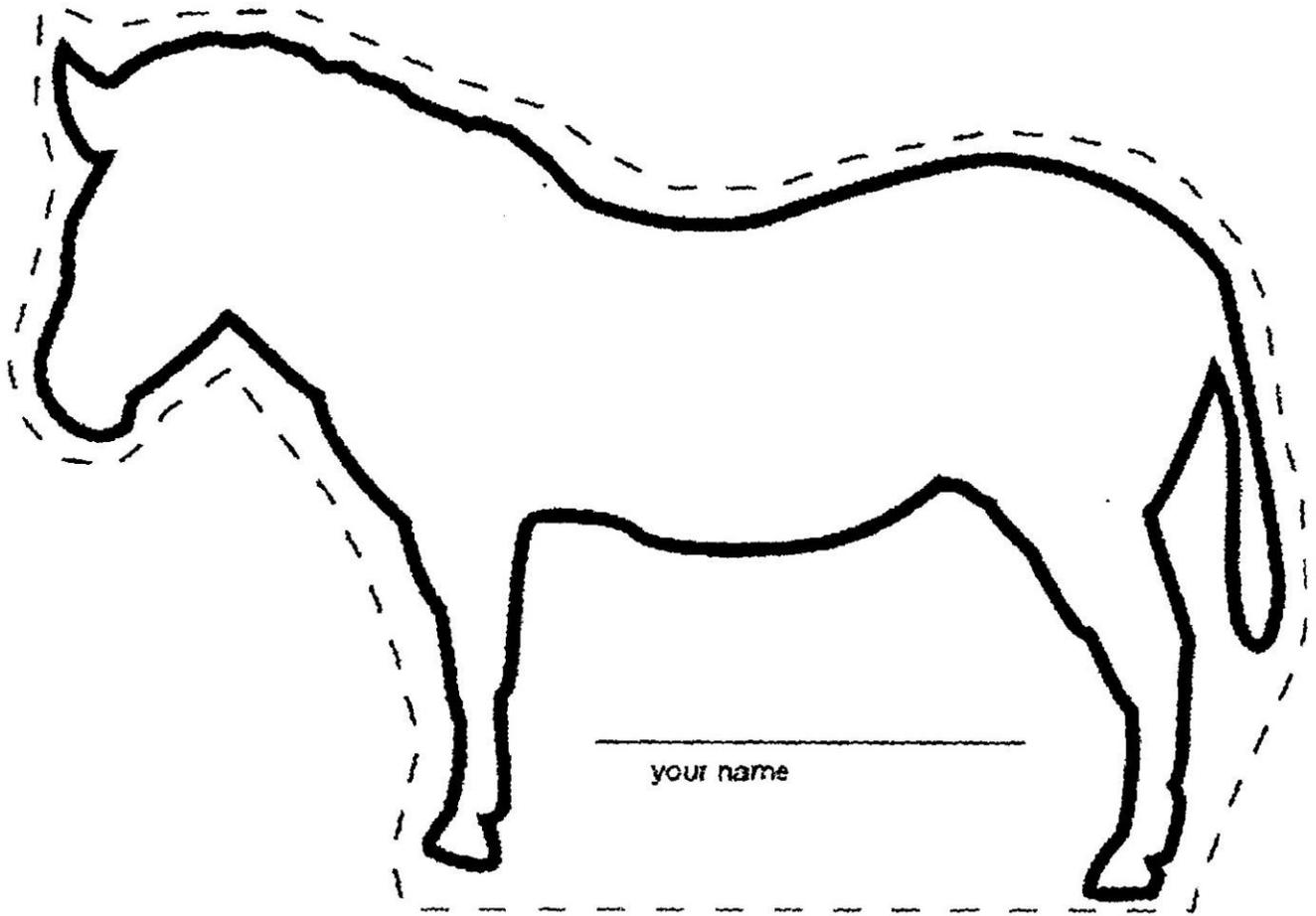
Dear Parents,

Your child filled-in this Zebra at school and we talked about how each drawing is **different** and that is what makes each drawing **special**. Here are some activities to enjoy with your child:

- 1) Ask your child about Zink – the zebra who has spots instead of stripes. We included 2 copies of this page so that you and your child can also complete zebra drawings at home, if you wish.
- 2) Talk with your child about how people are alike. For example, we all have 2 eyes, 2 arms, and a nose. Through Zink your child learned that we all are more alike than we are different. We can accept that what makes us different is not “good” or “bad,” it is simply what makes us special.

If you have questions or would like further information, please contact your child’s teacher.

Thank you,
A-B-C-123 Healthy Kids in Tennessee



Make Your Own Zebra

Dear Parents,

Your child filled-in this Zebra at school and we talked about how each drawing is **different** and that is what makes each drawing **special**. Here are some activities to enjoy with your child:

- 1) Ask your child about Zink – the zebra who has spots instead of stripes. We included 2 copies of this page so that you and your child can also complete zebra drawings at home, if you wish.
- 2) Talk with your child about how people are alike. For example, we all have 2 eyes, 2 arms, and a nose. Through Zink your child learned that we all are more alike than we are different. We can accept that what makes us different is not “good” or “bad,” it is simply what makes us special.

If you have questions or would like further information, please contact your child’s teacher.

Thank you,
A-B-C-123 Healthy Kids in Tennessee

Story Books

Dear Parents,

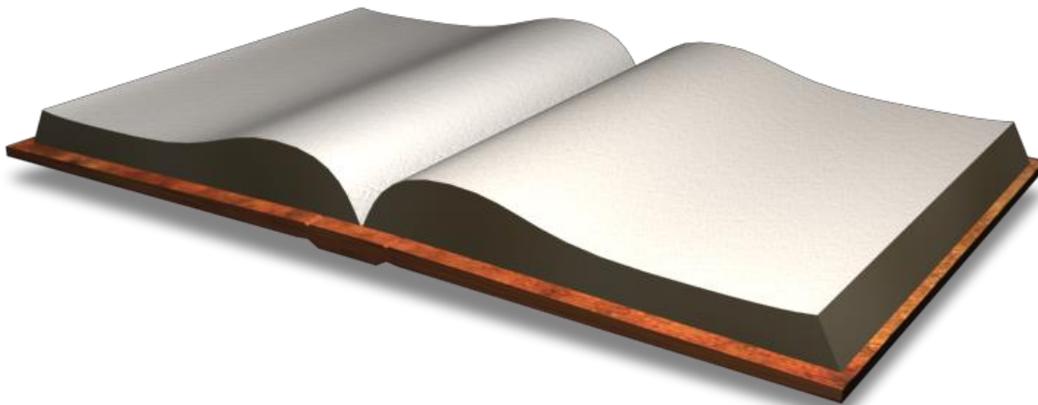
You can continue to expand on the Zink the Zebra lessons of understanding, respect, acceptance, and compassion by choosing some of these books to read with your child:

- 1) **“It’s Okay To Be Different”** by Todd Parr
- 2) **“The Little Engine That Could”** (any edition)
- 3) **“ABC I Like Me”** by Nancy Carlson
- 4) **“Play”** by Ann Morris
- 5) **“Chester’s Way”** by Kevin Henkes
- 6) **“Please and Thank You Book”** by Richard Scarry

These books are available at the public library and a librarian can request copies for you if the books are not at your local branch of the library.

If you have questions or would like further information, please contact your child’s teacher.

Thank you,
A-B-C-123 Healthy Kids in Tennessee



Differences in Adult and Childhood Cancers

	Adult	Childhood
Prevention/Early Detection	No tobacco use Diet/exercise Sun Safety Screening Tests (mammogram, colonoscopy, etc.)	None- causes of childhood cancer are unknown. However, good habits to prevent adult cancers start at birth.
Frequent Types	Lung, Breast, Colon, Prostate, Skin	Leukemia, Lymphoma, Brain, Bone
Incidence Per Yr.	1,000,000	12,500
~ 5 Yr. Survival Rate	50%	80%
% of Patients in Clinical Trials	3%	70%
~ Length of Treatment	6 months to 1 year	Up to 3 years
Long Term Effects of Treatment	Typically less severe- varies based on treatment	70% of survivors suffer serious long term effects (heart failure, learning disabilities, increased risk of other cancers)

Possible Signs of Childhood Cancer

Continued weight loss

Headaches

Increased swelling or pain in bones, joints, etc.

Lump in abdomen, neck, chest, pelvis, or armpits

Development of excessive bruising, bleeding, or rash

Constant infections

A whitish color in the pupil (middle, dark area of the eye)

Nausea/vomiting

Constant tiredness or paleness

Eye or vision changes

Recurrent or persistent fevers

Important Points

- o Childhood cancer is rare.
- o It is unlikely that a child will develop cancer.
- o As a parent or teacher, being aware of possible signs can result in a faster diagnosis.
- o Children need regularly scheduled well-baby/well-child check ups.

Did You Know?



- o ... that childhood cancer is the number one cause of death by disease in children and causes more deaths than cystic fibrosis, muscular dystrophy, diabetes, asthma, and AIDS, combined?
- o ... 46 children (equal to 2 classrooms) per day are diagnosed with childhood cancer and of those patients, 9 will not survive?
- o ... 40,000 thousand children are currently being treated for cancer and there are now over 300,000 childhood cancer survivors?
- o ... that while survival rates are steadily increasing, the number of children diagnosed each year is also increasing?
- o ... that cancer is not contagious?

Did You Know You Can Help?

- o By being aware, you could be the person who identifies a child in need.
- o You can be a leader in your community for cancer issues and information.
- o You can help neighbors and families facing cancer.
- o You can promote understanding and compassion, as illustrated in Zink the Zebra.



Parent Evaluation Form

Please complete and return to your child's teacher.

Please circle the appropriate response (Yes/No) next to each statement.

Zink Activities

- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| I enjoyed singing the "I Am Special" song with my child. | Yes | No |
| Making our own zebras helped my child understand that differences are what make us special. | Yes | No |
| Reading suggested books with my child reinforced the ideas of kindness, understanding and acceptance of differences. | Yes | No |

Parent Only Handouts- Awareness

- | | | |
|--|-----|----|
| <u>Before</u> reading the handouts, were you aware that childhood cancer is the leading cause of death by disease in children? | Yes | No |
| <u>Before</u> reading the handouts, did you know there are major differences between childhood cancers and adult cancers? | Yes | No |
| <u>Before</u> reading the handouts, did you know the possible signs of childhood cancer? | Yes | No |
| <u>After</u> reading the handouts, do you know 3 differences between childhood cancers and adult cancers? | Yes | No |
| <u>After</u> reading the handouts, do you know 3 possible signs of childhood cancer? | Yes | No |
| Was the information about cancer clearly stated? | Yes | No |
| Was it clear that information about cancer was for parents/teachers ONLY and cancer was NOT mentioned to the children? | Yes | No |

Please add any additional comments, questions, suggestions here: