

KINDNESS

There are many ways to show kindness. They often involve doing things to be helpful, to make others feel good, or to be friendly. However, kindness isn't just about "being nice"; it's about understanding others, genuinely caring about how they feel, and choosing to treat them with respect and compassion. Helping children learn to be kind supports their personal well-being, their social connections, and strengthens their sense of community. Children learn kindness by watching the adults in their lives. Kindness grows when it's modelled, practiced, and recognized rather than being demanded.

Kindness Is Not Always Easy or Simple

Kindness isn't just about being nice or keeping the peace. Sometimes kindness means:

- Standing up for someone who is being mistreated or left out.
- Saying no when something doesn't feel right.
- Giving space when someone needs it.
- Accepting differences.

Children may need help understanding these different sides of kindness. These more complex ways of being kind can feel uncomfortable for caregivers, too. Take time to reflect on your own ideas about kindness, both the ways you practice it and the times you struggle with it.

Supporting Children to Grow Kindness

- Model it. Show kindness in your daily actions (e.g., how you talk to a cashier, how you treat a pet, how you respond when a child is acting in a way that challenges you). Children learn by seeing what you do more than hearing what you teach.
- Notice it. When you notice a kind act, point it out.
- Practice it together. Empower children to perform small acts of kindness (e.g., sending someone a card, baking cookies for someone, saying hello to new people at the park).
- Practice self-kindness. Model and talk about how being kind includes kindness to ourselves (e.g., going easy on ourselves when we make mistakes).
- Be kind to the child. Thank the child, delight in them, and try not to use physical actions or a tone of voice that you wouldn't want them to use with others.
- Give opportunities for children to help each other (e.g., helping put clothes on, cleaning up together, getting a spoon).

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Need More Support?

Podcasts:

- [Helping Kids with Peer Relationships – Janet Lansbury](#)

Resources Available at WKCCRR Library:

- Finding Kindness by Deborah Underwood
- Kindness Makes Us Strong by Sophie Beer
- It's OK to Be Different: by Sharon Purtill and Sujata Saha
- Will You Fill My Bucket Book Pack
- Stories That Explore Emotional Wellbeing and Kindness by Carol McCloud
- Mindfulness/Kindness Provocation Kit

Online Resources:

- [Kindness & Empathy in Kids – BC Parent](#)
- [American Psychological Association – Navigating Friendships](#)