

NEWSLETTER

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parenting with KINDNESS

FEBRUARY
2024

“Kindness” is a bit trendy right now — maybe not the action, but the word. People share posts about kindness, shirts declare “Be the I in Kind” and farmhouse decorations declare it as a family motto. But how much kindness do we actually see in the world? Depends on where you look. On the news and in the headlines, maybe not so much. But in families, schools, in conversations with friends and loved ones, you’ll find a lot more. Talking to your teens about being kind can be difficult when they watch other adults (and us) struggle to show kindness ourselves. Giving lip service to kindness won’t help our kids be actually kind — they need examples of kindness, opportunities to practice kindness, and reminders of what kindness looks like. So maybe your decorations, shirts, and posts can be a part of helping your kids to remember that kindness is an expectation of your family — it is a way of life.

- **Be kind even when arguing with siblings; don’t go for the jugular.**
- **Be kind when you disagree with someone; you’ll likely have a better chance of convincing them of your point of view when it’s done with kindness.**
- **Be kind when you see someone who is in need, even if you can’t personally make their hurt go away, you can certainly try not to make it worse.**

Questions for parents to consider:

- When is kindness natural for you? When are you less kind?
- How does your child hear you speak with kindness?
- How can you own up when you do something or say something unkind?

Questions to ask your child:

- What does kindness look like at school?
- What does being kind cost you? What do you gain?

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KINDNESS:

Showing others they are valuable by how you treat them

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WEEK ONE:

What is kindness?

How do we show kindness with our words? How do we show kindness with our actions? Kindness is about extending grace, worth, value, respect, and compassion to others at every opportunity. It may take the form of a smile or a kind word, quick forgiveness over a minor slight, empathy during a painful time, or an uplifting text or Instagram post.

ANTI-BULLYING FOCUS

WEEK TWO:

The easy button

Kindness doesn't allow the assumptions we sometimes make about others to take away the value that belongs to them. It means that despite our differences and disagreements, we approach each other with understanding and empathy. You may have seen stickers, shirts, hats, or notebook covers that say, "Be Kind." It makes it sound so simple. But it's not, because if being kind was so simple, we wouldn't need shirts and stickers to remind us to do it.

ANTI-BULLYING FOCUS

WEEK THREE:

Being nice and kind

Did you know there's a difference between being kind and being nice? These are two words we often use interchangeably but in real life relationships, they don't mean the same thing. Being "nice" isn't necessarily the healthiest thing for our relationships. Being kind actually is the thing we want to be. Being kind means bringing up the hard stuff.

MENTAL HEALTH FOCUS

WEEK FOUR:

Behind someone's back

Showing kindness as an upstander takes a lot of courage, but says so much about who we are as people. The challenge this week is to work together to think of ways you can show kindness towards another person, even when they aren't there, and even when you feel alone.

ANTI-BULLYING FOCUS