

Kindness Advisory Curriculum

BUILD ON THE SPIRIT & LESSONS OF THE RETREAT

“Watch your thoughts; they become your words. Watch your words; they become your actions. Watch your actions; they become your habits. Watch your habits; they become your character. Watch your character for it will become your destiny” - Frank Outlaw

Overview of the Advisory Curriculum

The Kindness Retreat Advisory Curriculum was created to increase the impact of a Youth Frontiers Kindness Retreat by helping teachers build on the spirit and lessons of the retreat.

Organization of the Guide

The guide has two levels that contain activities to keep students' learning about kindness.

- Level One focuses on understanding and awareness of kindness
- Level Two is a chance to apply and practice kindness

Level One - Knowledge/Understanding

Lesson Outcomes

- Students will be able to define kindness.
- Students will understand how kindness is fundamental to a positive sense of self, healthy relationships and a safe, comfortable environment for all students.
- Students will understand the merits of the value of kindness, and the importance of their role in creating a kind school environment.

Assessments and Indicators of Performance

- Students will be able to verbalize and write a personal definition of kindness.
- Students will be able to identify kind and unkind acts.
- Given a situation involving a dilemma, students will be able to propose possible kind responses.

Instructional Strategies

- Post-it Poems
- Horse
- Situations
- My Kindness Definition
- Stop the Bully
- Kind and Unkind Posters
- Kindness as a Choice
- Kindness Heroes

Level Two - Action/Integration

Lesson Outcome

- Apply the value of kindness to create positive change in the school and community.
- Integration of kindness awareness, understanding and application to events as they occur.

Assessments and Indicators of Performance

- Kind behavior between students will increase.
- Unkind behavior will decrease.
- In situations where someone is being treated unkindly, students will intervene with skill and confidence.

Instructional Strategies

- Kindness Spies
- Kindness Journal
- Kindness Class
- Debriefing Sessions

Extension Strategies

- Kindness Letters
- Kindness Brainstorm
- Kindness Crews
- Kindness Mentors
- Newspaper Stories Extension
- Double Back
- Publish
- Read Together

Level 1 -Knowledge/Understanding

Instructional Strategy 1

Post-it-Poems

Time: 30 minutes

Goal: For students to identify characteristics of kindness

Materials: 3 Large Post-it-notes per student, dark colored crayons or markers, tape, large area to display notes

Preparation: Have each child write a word or phrase that has something to do with kindness on his or her Post-it note. Emphasize that there is no specific answer, and each person may think about kindness a bit differently.

Description: Randomly stick student responses on a large area such as a window or blackboard. Read the responses together and notice the different and similar ways that people in the class think about kindness. Choose individual notes to begin a large group poem. You may choose students to pick what should come next. When the poem is complete read it as a class. Have a student copy it if you wish to display it in your classroom.

Alternative: Put students in pairs or groups and have each group write a poem.

Discussion Questions:

1. What did you learn about kindness that was new?
2. How will you use what you learned?

Instructional Strategy 2

Horse

Time: 30 minutes

Goal: To learn about kindness through a story and discussion.

Materials: One copy of Resource One

Preparation: Divide your class into groups of 3-5 students.

Description: Read the story "Horse" to the class. Give the students a few minutes to answer the discussion questions individually. Ask the students to get into their small groups and share their answers. Have a discussion about the story and facilitate questions as a large group.

Discussion Questions B:

1. How was kindness used?
2. What was the problem and solution?
3. What was the problem that the student faced?
4. How did his or her friends use kindness to help him or her solve the problem?
5. Think of a time when someone used kindness to help you solve a problem. What did they do? How did you feel?
6. Think of a time when you used kindness to help someone else solve a problem. What did you do? How did you feel?
7. Do you have to like someone to be kind to him/her?

Resource One

Horse

By Ruth Charney

Well, it happened that Horse was leading Fox, Dog, Rat, Sheep, Goat and other gentle beasts from the old forest to the new. It had been a long winter, but the day was grand and Horse pranced along, his mane flying in the wind, as if a flag-bearer. At times, the shorter-legged creatures would climb aboard his back and rest when weary as the procession continued. Suddenly they came to a rushing river. Across the river there fell a log. The log was just long enough, narrow enough and high enough to need careful feet to cross safely. Horse

was first and he stepped up. No sooner did he have all fours on the log than he was filled with dread. Suppose he slipped? Suppose he lost his balance and fell over? Suppose the log began to shake with his weight? Horse backed off the log. He turned to Goat and ordered, "You are lighter. You go first"

Goat was nimble, a climber of steep cliffs. He was over the log in no time. Even Donkey did not pause or ponder. He swayed a bit, his hind quarters seeming to go on their crooked way apart from his fore quarters, but soon he too was across. And then there was only Horse. He considered swimming the river. The current looked swift; the waters were icy. There was no telling where he would end up or if he would end up. Now the others were waiting. Horse could not go forward or backward. Could he stop here and make this his new settlement? He knew there were better places ahead. Could he go back to the old place? There wasn't much food left. He would not, could not go on. While he stood still in uncertainty and fear, the other animals were meeting.

"Horse has left us," cried Rabbit.

"Horse doesn't like us," said Sheep.

"Horse has found the best spot and wants to keep it for himself," said Turtle.

"Horse is scared stiff," said Beaver.

Horse scared??? The other animals couldn't imagine that! What is he scared of? It couldn't be that something they accomplished would trouble the fast and strong Horse.

"Perhaps," murmured Mouse, "a monster lurks in the depths of the river and only Horse knows. He let us almost die," thought Mouse bitterly.

So for the next long time all the animals stood still and watched Horse being scared. Finally after a forever long time, Fox cried out, "Horse? Are you thinking?"

And Horse said, "Yes"

"What - if I may ask - are you thinking about?" said Fox.

Horse answered, "The log"

Fox said, "The log? What about the log, Horse?"

Horse sighed, "Why must a log be round on all sides, Fox?"

Fox replied, "Round it is, Horse"

Horse: "I was thinking it would be better to make logs flat"

Then Rat piped up, "Horse, are you coming or staying?"

Horse said in a soft voice, not at all usual for him, "I would come - if I could come - but I can't come"

And Beaver repeated, "He's scared stiff"

So the animals stood silent for awhile more and watched Horse being scared on the far shore. Then a creature who had not yet spoken said, "Let's help Horse cross the log"

The other beasts opened their eyes as wide as possible and grinned a most incredulous grin. "We cannot pull Horse. We cannot push Horse" And the small but knowing creature said wisely, "We can keep him company"

So all the animals, big and small, sure and awkward of foot, returned across the log. They explained the plan to Horse. Then they all lined up. Donkey, seeing Horse tremble a bit, went over and said in a quiet tone so only Horse could hear, "Just pay attention, Horse, to what's most important"

"What's that, Donkey?" asked Horse.

"To keep going," said Donkey.

And so it happened that there was a trail across the log and Horse was in the middle, Fox holding his tail from behind and Horse holding Goat's stubby tail in front. Slow and slower and pause and slow they marched until each and every animal crossed the log. Safely.

And that is - from what I heard - how it came to be that the animals came to the new forests where they have been for some time now. Which goes to show that there is always some point, often along the most important journeys, where fear is great and the best care from others helps us make it. And, perhaps we must also remember to pay attention to what's most important.

Instructional Strategy 3

Situations

Time: 30 minutes for 2 consecutive days (total of 60 minutes)

Goal: To create kind responses to common dilemmas students might face at school.

Materials: One copy of Kindness Resource Two

Preparation: Divide the class into groups of 2-4, cut Resource Two into strips.

Description:

Day 1: Briefly review Instructional Strategy 2: "Horse." (If your class did not do Instructional Strategy 2 recently, have a discussion using questions 3 through 6 from Instructional Strategy 2.) Give each group of students three scenarios. Have each group select one of the three scenarios they want to work with. Give them 5-10 minutes to decide

how they will show, through a role-play or verbal response, a response to the situation. Have each group act out their role-play for the class or share their situation and the response. After each group presents, process using the discussion questions. Give each group of 2 or 3 a situation from Resource Two. Give them 5 minutes to decide how they will show, through a role-play or verbal response, a response to the situation. Have each group share their situation and response to the group.

Day 2: Allow the rest of the groups to present their role-play or response. After each group has gone, ask students to share what they learned from the groups and discussion and what they will do differently.

Discussion Questions B:

1. What was the problem that the student faced?
2. How did his or her friends use kindness to help him or her solve the problem?
3. Was it hard to think of a kind response to your situation?
4. When is it hard to be kind in real life?
5. If you were the person being treated kindly, how would you feel?
6. If you were the person being treated unkindly, how would you feel?

Resource Two

Situations

Divide your students into small groups and have them brainstorm ways to handle the following situations, based on what they learned at the Youth Frontiers Kindness retreat.

You are walking out of school when you see three older boys who have taken a smaller girl's lunch box. They are holding it above her head, just out of reach and she is trying to grab it.

A group of friends are talking at lunch. One begins to talk about another classmate who is overweight, using put-downs to describe him/her.

Your best friend announces that he/she lost your soccer ball.

A new student is introduced to the class. He/she speaks another language and dresses differently than most of the students at your school.

Your best friend is spending a lot of time with someone else and your feelings are hurt. You decide to talk to him/her about it.

Another student calls you a bad name.

Your teacher tells you that her spouse is in the hospital.

The kid who sits across from you in Science looks sad today.

You are assigned to work in a small group with someone you do not like.

The person who sits behind you keeps on poking you in the back with an eraser.

In gym, a kid is bragging about what a great athlete he/she is, and making fun of other kids who don't do as well. One of your friends breaks their wrist and is off the basketball team for the rest of the season.

One of your friends breaks their wrist and is off the basketball team for the rest of the season.

A clumsy student trips and knocks over your art project, breaking it.

You are in the cafeteria when the student in front of you drops his/her tray, spilling spaghetti and milk everywhere.

You hear a friend making racial comments about another student.

The lunch person yells at you for moving too slowly through the line.

The person at the locker next to you is in a hurry and elbows you out of the way.

You accidentally knock a classmate's books off his/her desk.

It is the first day of school, and you see a younger kid looking lost. He/she looks like he/she might cry.

Your teacher asks you to help another student with some work he/she needs to finish. You really don't like this kid.

Your teacher is having a very bad day. He/she snaps at you when you ask a question.

A classmate is teasing you about your glasses.

Instructional Strategy 4

My Kindness Definition

Time: 30 minutes

Goal: To create a personal definition of kindness

Materials: Student journals, pencils

Preparation: Post the questions you wish students to answer so everyone can see them.

Description: Have students write what kindness means to them in their journals. Students may also answer all or some of the discussion questions. Have students volunteer to share parts of their journal writings. The students could use some of the terms from Instructional Strategy 1 in their definitions. It might also be helpful if after each student wrote their own definition they could collaborate with a partner to create a joint definition. Display the definitions around the room.

Discussion Questions:

1. What does it mean to be kind?
2. What does it mean to be unkind?
3. Can one kind act make things better in your school? How?
4. Can one unkind act make things worse or harder in your school? How?

Instructional Strategy 5

Stop the Bully

Time: 20 minutes for 2 consecutive days (total of 40 minutes)

Goal: To teach the students some non-violent ways to respond to bullying.

Materials: Poster board and markers

Preparation: None

Description:

Day 1: Have a discussion about the different types of bullying using the discussion questions. Split the class into 6 or 9 groups. Have two or three groups focus on each type of bullying. Hand out one poster board and marker to each group. Ask the students to write the type of bullying on the top of their poster board and brainstorm all their ideas for what they can do in response to discourage the behavior. Collect the posters.

Day 2: Briefly review day one and hand out the posters. Ask groups to report to the class and discuss the pros and cons of each response. Display posters in the class.

Discussion Questions:

1. What are three types of bullying? Give examples of each.
2. Why do you think people bully?
3. What is your reaction when somebody bullies you?

4. What can you do to stop the bullies?

Types of bullying

1. Physical-inflicting physical harm or discomfort
2. Verbal-saying hurtful things to someone
3. Silent-being cruel through passive action, i.e. not including or ignoring

Instructional Strategy 6

Kind and Unkind Posters

Time: 45 minutes

Goal: To identify ways that students are kind and unkind in their classroom using a poster illustration.

Materials: Large white pieces of tag board or art paper, markers

Preparation: Divide the class into pairs.

Description: As a class, brainstorm two lists: “Ways We Are Kind” and “Ways We Are Unkind” These should be actual examples of behaviors that are seen in the classroom and should be described as specifically as possible. Assign each pair of students a kind and unkind behavior to illustrate on their poster. Have them draw a line down the middle of the paper and label the sides “Ways We Are Kind” and “Ways We Are Unkind” Have pairs share their poster with the class.

Discussion Questions:

1. How do you feel about the ways we are kind? Unkind?
2. Is there anything you would like to change in your behavior? How could you do that?
3. What gets in the way of your being kind?
4. What can you do about it?

Instructional Strategy 7

Kindness as a Choice

Time: 30 minutes

Goal: For students to realize that they have the ability to choose how they treat people: kindly or unkindly?

Materials: Large butcher block paper (1 per group), one marker per group

Preparation: Divide the class into groups of 6. Write one of the discussion questions on each sheet of paper.

Description: Share a story – either share one about a kindness mentor or read a story. Start a discussion with the students about the different ways we learn about kindness. Talk about how much we learn by watching other people – friends, celebrities, teachers, parents, etc. Ask the students to take some time and write about someone they admire because of their kindness and what they have learned from them. Collect all of the stories. At the beginning of each week, ask one of the students to come up and read/tell the story about their "kindness hero."

Instructional Strategy 8

Kindness Heroes

Time: 15 minutes and ongoing

Goal: To help students identify and learn from kind role models.

Materials: None

Preparation: Decide on a kindness mentor story to share.

Description: Give each group a piece of paper with a question to brainstorm. Remind the groups that brainstorming doesn't mean evaluating someone's answer. Instruct each group to assign a person to write down group responses. Give each group 3 minutes to come up with as many answers as possible. At the end of three minutes have the groups rotate the sheets. Rotate until each group has responded to each question. Have each group present the final question and list to the class.

Discussion Questions:

1. What are the advantages of being kind to others? What are the disadvantages?
2. What are the disadvantages of being kind to others?
3. What can you do if you see someone else behaving unkindly? Create a list of possibilities.

4. We often think of kindness as something we do. Are there any times when we can show kindness by choosing not to do something?
5. When is it unkind not to do something?
6. What are things that might stop you from doing something kind? What could you do about them?

Level 1 -Extension Strategies

Kindness Quotes

From Resource Three, slice the Kindness Quotes page into strips and randomly distribute one quote to each small group of students. Choose one or more of the following, or allow your students to choose:

- Have each student create a short story, or poem around the quote.
- Have each student or group create a poster around the quote.
- Have each student or group produce a video or commercial around the quote.
- Have each student create an art project around the quote.
- Have each student write a kindness Haiku.
- Have each student send a letter to someone with the theme based on the quote.

Kindness Word Hunt

For this, each pair of students needs a copy of today's newspaper. Read aloud a headline from an article in the paper. Students quickly find the article and scan it to find a kind word. When they find one, they raise their hand and a student recorder writes it on the board. (If your school doesn't use the newspaper, you could do a similar activity by choosing a page from a book the class is reading, or looking at a news source on the Internet.)

Kindness Stories

Write a story about a kind thing you did or witnessed. Be sure to include the feelings you or the other people in the story had. Share these stories with the class and display them on a Kindness Wall in your room.

Kindness Extravaganza

Take your personal definition of kindness as written in your journal, and find a creative way to express it to your class. Create a story, poem, skit, song, commercial, rap, dance, poster, etc. that expresses your individual view of kindness. Hold a Kindness Extravaganza, and invite parents or younger students in your school to come and see what you have developed.

Resource Three

Kindness Quotes

“You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give” -Khalil Gibran (Lebanese-American Author)

“Kindness is the connection that links us all together and strengthens the bonds within our communities, neighborhoods, and families” -First Lady Rosalynn Carter

“We should behave to our friends as we would wish our friends to behave to us” -Aristotle (Greek Philosopher)

“It is well to think well. It is divine to act well” -Horace Mann (Education Reformist of the 1800s)

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has” -Margaret Mead (American Cultural Anthropologist)

“If I can stop one heart from breaking, I shall not live in vain: If I can ease one life the aching, Or cool one pain, Or help one fainting robin unto his nest again, I shall not live in vain” -Emily Dickinson (Author)

“I expect to pass through life but once. If therefore, there be any kindness I can show, or any good thing I can do to any fellow being, let me do it now, and not defer or neglect it, as I shall not pass this way again” -William Penn (Founder of Pennsylvania)

“When I walk on the beach and enjoy the sunset, I do not call out: “A little more orange over to the right, please,” or: “Would you mind giving us a bit less purple in the back?” No, I enjoy the always different sunsets, as they are. We do well to do the same with the people we love” -Carl Rogers (American Psychologist)

“If you treat an individual as he is, he will remain as he is. If you treat an individual as he should or could be, he will become the person he should or could be” -Goethe (Painter, novelist, and philosopher of the early 1800s)

“Let us dedicate ourselves to what the Greeks wrote so many years ago: to tame the savageness of man and make gentle the life of this world” -Robert F. Kennedy (Attorney General 1965-1968)

“To laugh often and much: to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends, to appreciate beauty, to find the best in others; to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition; to know even one life has breathed easier because you lived. This is to have succeeded” -Ralph Waldo Emerson (American Author, poet, and philosopher)

Level 2 - Action/Integration

Instructional Strategy 1

Kindness Spies

Time: 20 minutes (Can be done as a weekly activity.)

Goal: To help students practice making kind statements and recognizing kind behavior.

Materials: Hat or bucket, slips of paper with each students name on it (big enough to write a note)

Preparation: Write each student's name on a slip of paper and place in the hat or bucket.

Description: As an ongoing activity, encourage students to commit to doing one kind act each day. Before dismissal each day, allow a few minutes for them to write about it in their journal.

Discussion Questions:

(You might want to have students answer one of these each day and add your own as time goes on.)

1. Are all kind acts grand and dramatic, or could something like a smile be a kind act?
2. It can be a challenge to be kind to an unfriendly, or unkind person. What are some of the ways you could try to be kind even in this situation?
3. How do you feel when you perform an act of kindness for someone?
4. Do people always respond positively to kindness? Why do you think they do this?

Instructional Strategy 2

Kindness Journal

Time: 5-15 minutes (Can be done as an ongoing activity)

Goal: To practice and recognize kind behavior.

Materials: Student journals, pencils

Preparation: None

Description: Review the "Ways We Are Kind" list from Kind/Unkind Posters or brainstorm a list of the things students can do to be kind. Post the list somewhere in the classroom. As an ongoing activity, encourage students to commit to doing one kind act each day. Before dismissal each day, or at the end of each week, allow a few minutes for them to write about it in their journal.

Alternative: Write each of the kind acts on a small slip of paper and put them into a jar – give the jar a fun name. At the beginning of each week/month have a student select a slip and read it – this will be the theme. Spend a few minutes talking about the theme and struggles people may have with doing the specific act. Create a display in the classroom to remind everyone what the theme is for that week/month – done by you or students. Encourage the students to make a special effort that week/month to do the kind act as much as they can. Students can also encourage their friends to participate. At the end of the week/month spend some time sharing stories about their efforts during the week/month. Celebrate all those who made the effort.

Discussion Questions:

(You might want to have students answer one of these each day and add your own as time goes on.)

1. Are all kind acts grand and dramatic, or could something like a smile be a kind act?
2. It can be a challenge to be kind to an unfriendly, or unkind person. What are some of the ways you could try to be kind even in this situation?
3. How do you feel when you perform an act of kindness for someone?
4. Do people always respond positively to kindness? Why do you think they do this?

Instructional Strategy 3

Kind Class

Time: 45 minutes (one time per month)

Goal: To practice kindness as a group by planning a kind activity together.

Materials: Dependant on the activity chosen.

Preparation: Make arrangements with any other students that will be involved in the activity.

Description: As a class, plan and carry out one act of kindness for another class in school each month. Examples include: Reading to younger kids, helping them practice spelling words, planning an art activity to do with another class or preparing a community service project to benefit your school.

Instructional Strategy 4

Debriefing Sessions

Time: 20 minutes (this is an ongoing activity utilizing "teachable moments.")

Goal: For students to demonstrate their understanding of kindness by applying their knowledge to actual events as they occur.

Materials: None

Preparation: Place the questions below in a handy place so that you are able to refer to them when a situation occurs.

Description: Regularly practice and debrief actual events related to unkind behaviors that happen at school. As students practice breaking down an event into a sequence of behaviors, they will increase their awareness of how problems between students develop and will be more able to use kindness at the early stages of a problem before problems escalate. This also increases awareness of how one person, using kindness, can change the course of an interaction.

Discussion Questions:

1. Identify what caused the situation to escalate.
2. What responses were used?
3. What alternative responses could have been used?
4. What did you do? Then what happened?
5. What might be done differently next time?
6. What do you think was learned?

Level 2 - Extension Strategies

Kindness Letters

Ask each student to brainstorm people whose kindness has inspired, encouraged, supported or motivated him or her. The lists could include family members, coaches, friends, professional athletes, teachers, celebrities and neighbors. From their lists ask each student to select one person and write a letter expressing gratitude and detailing how they have been touched by the kindness of that person. Share the letters and mail.

Kindness Brainstorm

Brainstorm a list of things students can do to make another person at school feel good. Make the list as long as possible. Emphasize that kindness can be conveyed in small ways. Post the list in a main hallway at school to inspire others, or have individual students illustrate one item from the list and post these pictures in the hallways.

Kindness Crews

Divide your students into groups of 4 or 5 and form kindness crews. Students could create a name for their crew, choose a special symbol, write a statement of purpose telling the goals of the crew, decide on any rules for crew members, plan kindnesses that could be implemented right away, and write a theme song or rap that tells what is important about kindness. This could be shared with your class or school.

Newspaper Stories Extension

If you are collecting newspaper stories about acts of kindness, get in touch with one of the people in the stories and invite him/her to come into the class and tell about the kindness he/she extended to others or received. Better yet, get both parties to come in (the firefighter who rescued the cat from a tree and the little girl who owns the cat). If these people cannot visit the school, perhaps your students could interview them in person, over the phone or via email.

Double Back

Loop back through Levels One and Two and remind students what they learned.

Publish

Find ways for public affirmation and acknowledgement of students' acts of kindness.

Some ideas:

Create a special section in your school newspaper for reporting acts of kindness.

Design a kindness bulletin board for your classroom. When a student witnesses an act of kindness, he or she writes it on a post-it or note card and tacks it up on the board.

Create an all-school kindness chain. Students from all classes can write an act of kindness they have seen on a strip of paper and link it to a chain in the hallway or cafeteria. See how far it will go!

Read Together

Together, read the book, *People Who Make a Difference* by Brent Ahsabrunner. This is a book about real people who help make the world a better place. How can students contribute to this effort?