

INTRODUCTION

Listed below are project ideas that build understanding of RAK's 12 Kindness Concepts. Each project is designed around a stated objective and RAK's Kindness Paradigm, which focuses on inspiring and empowering students with kindness skills that prompt them to act kindly toward others and share kindness.

Some suggestions for implementing the projects:

- These ideas are meant to inspire teachers to create their own project and do not describe the project in detail. Use the Project Planning sheet on p. 9 to develop a project that fits the needs of the class.
- Consider printing out and hanging the appropriate Kindness Concept poster in the room and discussing the concept before beginning the project.



ASSERTIVENESS

Let's Be Kind! Campaign (See Grade 2 It Takes One lesson for more information about this project.)

Objective: Students will be able to discuss ways to stand up for themselves and what they believe in without upsetting others.

Inspire: Ask what it means to be assertive (definition is standing up for yourself and what you believe in without upsetting others). Then, have students discuss situations when it is important to be assertive (when someone is being unkind to or bullying others, when a person can't speak up for themselves, etc.)

Empower: Brainstorm ways students can deal with bullying or unkindness at school. For example, they could:

- Make posters that promote being kind and being a friend rather than a bully, including a few ways to respond to a bully and also ways to show kindness.
- Create a song about being kind to others and how to handle bullying.
- Make a video about being kind and suggest ways to deal with a bully.

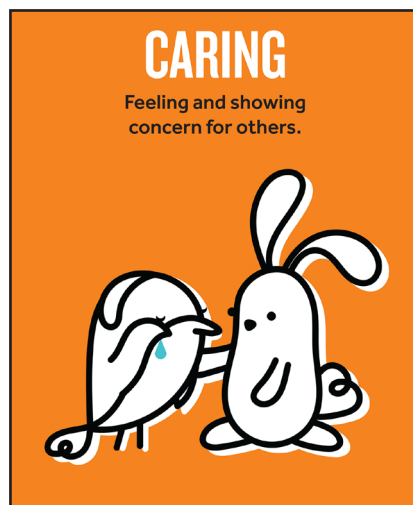
Act: Have students create the poster, song or video.

Share: Once they are done, have students share what they made with the school, and what it was like to create and share the project.



CARING

1. Baskets of Caring



Objective: Students will be able to show caring for people who need help (like the homeless or elderly in need) by creating baskets of food or goods to deliver.

Inspire: Ask what it means to be caring to others. Then, have students discuss practical ways they can show caring to people in the community who may not have money or food, asking them to identify groups of people who may be in need. (Possible ideas are creating baskets of food or supplies, such as toothpaste, toothbrush, gloves, hats, etc. for the homeless, baskets with letters that show caring.)

Empower: Have students discuss the different projects and then take a vote on what project they want to do. After the vote, determine the scope of the project.

Act: Have students gather the materials for the baskets, perhaps through donations from the school community or local merchants.

Share: Once they are done, have the students deliver the baskets to a homeless shelter, retirement home or other location where the baskets are to be shared.

2. School Beautification Project

Objective: Students will be able to discover what it means to care for their school by raising money for and planning a beautification project.

Inspire: Ask what it means to show caring toward their school. Then ask students for examples of how they can care for their school (i.e. planning a school garden, a school or playground clean up, painting a mural on a school wall, etc.) Write their responses on the board.

Empower: Have students develop those examples into possible projects that show caring for their school. Then have them brainstorm how they can raise money for those projects and how they can interest other people in doing this project. Perhaps they want to place penny jars around the school to raise money, create posters to encourage interest in the project, etc. Students will need to have their project approved by the principal. Consider having them contact the school board or the local media to generate community interest in the project. They may want to contact local businesses to solicit donations for the project. Consider working with other classes to raise money for and create the school beautification project during RAK Week in February.

Act: Spend time designing and creating the project. Make sure to emphasize that the pennies don't seem to have much value, but when combined, they do make a difference. In the same way, one kind act may seem insignificant, but many kind acts practiced daily have a great impact.

Share: Once the project is finished, have students reflect on what they learned from the project and how showing caring at school can improve the community and how people feel about the school.

3. Caring Songs

Objective: Students will be able to evaluate what caring means by finding (or writing) and singing caring songs.

Inspire: Ask students to think about what caring means to them. Write their ideas on the board.

Empower: Then, have students either find songs about caring on the Internet or in books or write their own, using the examples they mentioned or others. If they write their own lyrics, it might be useful for students to use a well-known tune (like Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star, Frere Jacques, or If You're Happy and You Know It). Or, if there is interest in the class, have students compose their own tune for the lyrics they have written.

Act: Once they have finished their songs, have them rehearse the songs and then perform them as a class for the school, at a community center or for children at a hospital.

Share: After students perform the songs, have them reflect on what they learned from the experience.

COMPASSION

1. Reading Books to Younger Students

Objective: Students will be able to discover what it means to show compassion by reading books to younger students.

Inspire: Ask students to think about what compassion means to them and why showing compassion is important.

Empower: Explain that they are going to show compassion by reading books to younger students.

Act: This project can be done in one of two ways. One way would be for students to choose some of their favorite picture books and record themselves reading those books. Then, those recordings can be shared with younger classes or even children's wards at a local hospital. Another idea would be to partner with a K-2 class as an ongoing reading buddies project, where the 3-5 students read books to a K-2 student weekly.

Share: After students have created recordings and delivered them to the class or hospital or become a reading buddy to another student, have them reflect on what they learned from the experience.



2. Tell Me; I'll Listen Read Aloud

Objective: Students will be able to evaluate what it means to show compassion to others through hearing the teacher read a book titled Angel Child, Dragon Child.

Inspire: Ask students to think about what it means to show compassion and understanding to someone who is from another country.

Empower: Read the students the book Angel Child, Dragon Child by Michele Maria Surat, a story about a Vietnamese girl who is teased because of her language and dress. After she fights back, the principal assigns the tormentor to listen to her story and the two children become friends. Discuss how this story illustrates the importance of showing compassion toward others and trying to understand them.

Act: Divide the students into pairs and have them tell each other a story about what their family likes to do together. Try to pair up students who don't know each other very well and encourage them to listen for three minutes to the person's story without interrupting. Then, they can ask questions of the other person. They should each have a turn. After they have listened to their partner's story, have the partner draw a picture or write a story about the other person's family.

Share: After everyone has finished, have the students share the story or picture about their partner with the class.



FAIRNESS

Fairness Skits

Objective: Students will be able to analyze what it means to be fair through performing skits for the class or the school.

Inspire: Ask students what it means to be fair. (If necessary, share the RAK definition, which is: Treating people in a way that does not favor some over others.) Then, ask students to give examples of how they can be fair to others at school or at home. Write the examples on the board.

Empower: Divide students into small groups and have them write a skit about being fair or not being fair, using the examples written on the board or examples they develop in their group.

Act: Have students perform the skits for each other or for other classes. After each skit, talk about ways that the students showed fairness or didn't show fairness, and what would have been a fair way to interact with the others.

Share: Have students discuss how they can be fair to others at school or at home and commit to those actions.

GRATITUDE

1. Janitor Appreciation Day (or secretaries, bus drivers, volunteers, etc.)

Objective: Students will be able to discover what it means to show gratitude toward the janitors (or other people who help) at their school through an appreciation day.

Inspire: Ask students who are the people who help make their school a special place. If students can't think of anyone, begin the discussion by mentioning janitors, bus drivers, volunteers, paras, secretaries, etc.

Empower: Discuss practical ways they can show gratitude to these people (such as making cards, planning a special meal or event, picking up the classroom for the janitors, etc.) Write these ideas on the board.

Act: Have students decide on a project that shows gratitude and who they want to show gratitude to. Then have them plan the project.

Share: As a debrief, have students discuss what it was like to show gratitude to these people and how they can continue to show gratitude in their lives.

2. Valentine's Day Hearts

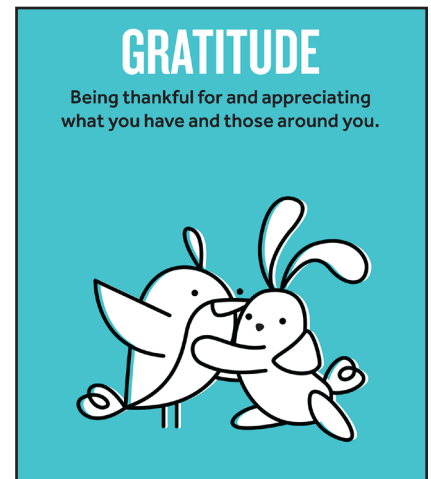
Objective: Students will be able to analyze what it means to show gratitude and kindness to fellow students in their class.

Inspire: Ask students what gratitude and being thankful means to them.

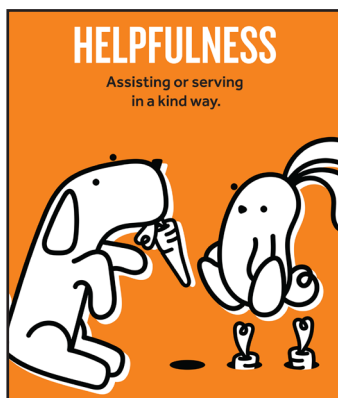
Empower: Explain that Valentine's Day is often a day when people show how much they care for or love each other, and that this year they will be thinking about ways they can show gratitude and kindness to each other as a preparation for Valentine's Day. Have students discuss very specific ways that can show gratitude and kindness to others in the class.

Act: Have students make paper hearts and write one very specific way they can show gratitude and kindness to others in the class on each heart. Put all the hearts in a box. On Valentine's Day, have students pull a heart out of the box and commit to completing the activity written on each heart before they leave school that day if possible.

Share: The next day, check in to find out whether the students showed gratitude to someone. Have students share their comments and thoughts as part of a class discussion or record them on a class poster or in journals. Activity could be expanded to include students in other classes, teachers, staff, administrators, etc.



HELPFULNESS



1. Reaching Out to Those in Need

Objective: Students will be able to evaluate what it means to be helpful to others by reaching out to those in need.

Inspire: Ask students to discuss what it means to be helpful and why it is important.

Empower: Then, ask students to create a list of situations where people might need help (a younger student is being bothered at recess, an older person needs help getting groceries out of their car, a classmate is struggling in math, etc.) Write the situations on the board.

Act: Have the students decide what are they going to do to be helpful and commit to doing that within a certain time frame (by tomorrow, next week, etc.)

Share: Check in with students to find out how they felt after being helpful. Students could share as part of a class discussion or record comments and thoughts about the activity on a poster in the class or in journals. Have them commit to being helpful to someone on a regular basis.

2. Smile File

Objective: Students will be able to examine what it means to be helpful to others by creating or finding pictures or quotes that cheer up their friends and classmates.

Inspire: Ask students to discuss a time when they felt sad or upset and how someone helped them feel better.

Empower: Then, ask students to give examples of what they could say to someone who they know is feeling sad.

Act: Explain that one practical way to do that is to create a "smile file", which would include words they write or pictures they draw, or quotes or pictures from books or online that might make someone feel better if they are sad or upset. Have the students collect these quotes or pictures from books or online or write or draw their own and put them in a classroom "smile file." This could be a folder, an envelope or something else that they create.

Share: Encourage students to share the images or quotes from the folder with a classmate or friend as needed.



3. Let Me Help You Game and Project

Objective: Students will be able to evaluate what it means to be helpful through a game and a service project that encourages helping each other.

Inspire: Ask students to talk about what it feels like to help someone or when someone has helped them.

Empower: Explain that they are going to play a game which will involve helping someone. Before class, create an obstacle course that isn't too difficult, or students could help design a course. Pair off into partners. One partner wears a blindfold; the other is the helper. Start by having the blindfolded players try to navigate the obstacle course without help. They may refuse, or they may try and laugh, trip or fall. Next, have the helpers guide the blindfolded players through the course. Switch places so all players have the chance to experience how good it feels to give and receive help. After the game, discuss with students what it was like to give and receive help.

Act: Then, have the students talk about how they can help people at school or in their community who are in need and commit to specific actions in the upcoming week. Ideas might include doing the dishes, helping a younger sibling with homework, cleaning their room without being asked, etc.

Share: Have students share how it felt to help someone and commit to helping others on regularly.

4. Mentoring younger students (good project for 5th graders)

Objective: Students will be able to determine what it means to be helpful through mentoring younger students.

Inspire: Ask students to think about what being helpful means to them.

Empower: Explain that they are going to be a mentor to K-2 students once a week. Ask them for examples for how they could help or mentor younger students (helping them learn to tie shoes, organize their cubbies, tutoring, being a buddy at recess, etc.)

Act: Work with K-2 teacher to partner a student from your class with a K-2 student and determine how often and how long they will mentor the younger student. This could be a month long project, a semester, or longer; students could meet once or twice a week or whatever works best for the teachers.

Share: Have students share their experiences. What were the challenges and the positive aspects of helping the students?

5. Secret Service Helpers

Objective: Students will be able to discover what it means to be helpful through a service project in their school or community as "Secret Service" Helpers.

Inspire: Ask students to think about ways they can help people at school or in the community without the other person knowing. Write their ideas on the board.

Empower: Then ask students what it would feel like to help someone without them knowing. Have them discuss with a partner or in the group whether it matters if no one knows they are helping. Then, explain that for the next week (or month or whatever time frame you choose) they will become "Secret Service" Helpers, which means they will help people without them knowing, doing some of the ideas written on the board.

Act: Have students act as "Secret Service" helpers. They may want to make badges that say "Secret Service" on them and wear sunglasses or simple disguises for fun while serving the school as a "Secret Service" team.

Share: Have students share their experiences. What did it feel like to help someone without that other person knowing? Did the person find out? Did that matter?

INTEGRITY

Integrity Murals

Objective: Students will be able to examine what it means to show integrity and create a mural that describes ways to show integrity to display at school, a senior center, nursing home or other public place.

Inspire: Ask students what integrity means (being honest and doing the right thing when no one is looking). Then, have them share ways they can show integrity at school, at home or in the community (doing their homework, telling the truth, picking up trash on the playground, caring for someone in need, helping an elderly person cross the street, etc.) Write their suggestions on the board.

Empower: Hand out markers, crayons or colored pencils, and other materials to decorate a poster. Roll out a long sheet of butcher paper. Have students work together or independently on a section of the mural to create a picture that shows integrity. Students may want to write or draw one scene or more than one scene. Once they are done creating the mural, have them decide where they want to hang the mural.

Act: Have the students display their mural at the school or take a field trip to a nursing home or senior center to display the mural. Have them explain their specific part of the mural and why it was important to them.

Share: Challenge students to show integrity to others in the ways they drew or wrote about in the mural.



PERSEVERANCE

Perseverance Banner

Objective: Students will be able to discover what it means to show perseverance and create a classroom banner to record how they kept trying.

Inspire: Ask students what perseverance means (keep trying when something is hard). Have students share when something was hard for them and they kept trying.

Empower: Post a large banner on the wall with Perseverance written in large letters across the top. Consider posting the RAK Perseverance poster on the wall next to the banner. At a designated time each week, have students write or draw on the poster a situation when they kept trying and share with the class what they did.

Act: Encourage students to try when something is hard and to draw or write what they did on the banner.

Share: After a certain amount of time (or as the situations are posted) review what the students have written or drawn, and ask people how it felt to keep trying in that situation.

RESPECT

1. Complimenting Others (see Grade 3 Complimenting Others lesson for more information)

Objective: Students will be able to discover what it means to compliment others, which is a way to show respect.

Inspire: Ask students what it means to compliment others.

Empower: Explain that when you give someone a real compliment you comment on their abilities or talents; telling a person that you like his shirt or her new backpack is nice, but an even nicer compliment is when you tell someone they are good at something.

Act: Have each student write on a piece of paper something they are good at and exchange that paper with a partner. Have them take turns standing up and complimenting the person on their talent.

Share: During the week, have students practice complimenting others. Ask them to share at the end of the week how they complimented others and how it felt to compliment them.



2. Compliment Cards (see *Grade 3 Complimenting Others* lesson for more info; this project can be done after the students practice their skills complimenting others, as described in the previous project.)

Objective: Students will be able to examine what it means to show respect to others by creating compliment cards.

Inspire: Ask students why complimenting others is a way to show respect.

Empower: Have students give examples of meaningful ways to compliment another person.

Act: Have students think about someone who they would like to compliment. Then have them write and design a compliment card with markers, stickers, etc.

Share: Have students give the card to their friend or a member of their family. Ask them what it felt like to give the card to that person.

3. Respect Ribbon Campaign

Objective: Students will be able to analyze what it means to show respect through a campaign where they create and hand out respect ribbons.

Inspire: Ask students what it means to show respect to others.

Empower: Have students share examples of when they have shown respect or others have shown them respect.

Act: On a classroom bulletin board, create a display that says something like "Our Respect Campaign." Have students write on ribbons or strips of paper specific ways that people can show their respect to others. Have the students hand these ribbons or strips of paper out to each other in class (or to others at school) and encourage the student to show respect in the way suggested on the ribbon or strip of paper.

Share: Once the student has done that action, have him or her explain to the class how they showed respect and pin the ribbon or the strip of paper to the bulletin board display. Watch as the respect ribbons grow.

4. Being Respectful

Objective: Students will be able to identify examples of respectful and disrespectful behavior.

Inspire: Ask students when they have seen people being respectful or disrespectful to others.

Empower: Create a list with situations and ask the students whether the people are being respectful or disrespectful and why. For example:

- *You are screaming as loud as you can for your team at a soccer game. Two elderly people sitting in front of you cover their ears every time you yell.*
- *Your sister is trying to read and can't focus because you are playing loud music. It's raining and she can't go outside, but you ignore her when she asks you to turn it off.*
- *You are playing baseball and the umpire calls you out when you know you are safe. You tell her that you know you beat the tag, but she disagrees. You want to say that she doesn't know anything, but you walk off the field.*
- *You see a friend at the grocery store. She is at the end of the aisle and you yell loudly to get her attention.*

For older students you could make the situations more open-ended and ask them to figure out what would be the respectful or disrespectful thing to do. For example:

- *Someone you don't get along with very well sees you on the playground and calls you a name.*
- *You're sitting through a lesson at school that you find boring.*



- *A new girl at school wears old, faded clothes and your friends tease her.*

- *A student curses loudly at lunch because everyone thinks it is funny.*

Act: After each situation, have two or three students act out these situations for the class.

Share: Challenge students to show respect through their behavior during the week. Check in periodically to ask students whether they feel they are acting in respectful ways toward others.



5. We are all different; We are all the same

Objective: Students will be able to distinguish what it means to show respect to others who are similar to or different from them.

Inspire: Ask students whether it is easier to show respect to people who are similar or different and why.

Empower: Divide students into groups of three or four and hand each group small pieces of paper and a paper bag. Tell them to take turns in their group discussing what they like to eat, do for fun, learn about, etc. Have them write things the whole group likes, one idea on each piece of paper; students

may have things they only like, and can write those on a piece of paper too. Have the students put the papers in their group's paper bag.

Act: Collect the paper bags and gather again as a whole class. Pull at least one idea from each bag, read one at a time and have students raise their hands if they like that activity. Have a student who likes the activity partner with a student who doesn't like that activity, food, etc. and discuss for one minute why they like or don't like what is written on the paper. Then read another idea from the bag, have students raise their hands if they like the activity, and this time do a quick pair share with someone who thinks the SAME. Read other ideas from the bags, and have students alternate between discussing the activity with someone who has the same opinion and a different opinion.

Share: After the activity, have students discuss whether it was easier to show respect toward someone who had a similar or a different idea about the activity and why. Encourage students to show respect during the week in all situations. Check in periodically to see how they are doing.

RESPONSIBILITY

1. Canned Food Drive

Objective: Students will be able to demonstrate responsibility to the community through a canned food drive.

Inspire: Ask students how they have shown responsibility at home or in their community.

Empower: Explain that one way to show responsibility is to collect food for those in need. Then ask for ideas for how to organize the food drive.

Act: Plan and hold a canned food drive at your school and deliver the food to your local food bank or shelters for the homeless. Have the students make kindness cards to include with the canned food delivery.

Share: Ask students to share what it felt like to show responsibility to those in their community who don't have enough food.

2. Responsible People in History

Objective: Students will be able to determine what responsibility means by studying responsible people from history.

Inspire: Ask students to talk about what it means to show responsibility as a citizen of a country.

Empower: Ask students to think about people from history who have show responsibility to others through their actions.

Act: Have students chose one person to research and how they made a difference through their actions. They could create a report, a poem, or some other project about that person.

Share: Once students have completed their project, have them share it with the rest of the class.



SELF-CARE

Taking care of yourself through
kind words, actions and thoughts.



SELF-CARE

1. Self-Care School Mural

Objective: Students will be able to examine what it means to care for themselves by creating a classroom mural to document their actions.

Inspire: Ask students what it means to care for themselves and to provide examples of ways they can show self-care.

Empower: Post large sheets of paper on the walls and ask students to write or draw examples on the large sheets.

Act: Rotate the mural through different classes and grades within the school so that each student has the opportunity to add to the mural. Challenge students to do the things they are writing about on the mural.

Share: Once different classes have an opportunity to write or draw on the mural, hold an all-school assembly to share the ideas.

2. Self-Care (Caring) Campaign

Objective: Students will be able to analyze what it means to care for themselves and others through a coloring or drawing contest.

Inspire: Ask students what it means to care for themselves and to provide examples of ways they can show self-care or caring for others.

Empower: Ask students to draw a picture of someone caring for themselves (in a different way then the Kindness Concept poster if displaying in class).

Act: Put the pictures upside down and select one at random. Before the next day, have students consciously try to care for themselves in the way shown in the picture. The next day, randomly choose another picture and challenge students to are for themselves and others in ways shown on the pictures.

Share: Debrief each day to find out what it felt like to care for themselves and what they learned about caring for themselves and others. Was it new? Helpful? Hard? Uncomfortable?

SELF-DISCIPLINE

1. Kindness Flower Bed

Objective: Students will be able to develop self-discipline by creating a kindness tree/flower bed.

Inspire: Ask students to explain what it means to show self-discipline.

Empower: Explain that they will be asked to show discipline by creating a Kindness Flower Bed.

Act: With the help of other classes and the school community, plan and create a flower bed on the school grounds. Assign tasks, providing age appropriate activities to different classes. Ask the school community or local merchants to donate flowers, dirt, wood to build the beds, shovels, work gloves, etc. Create and display a Kindness Plaque with kindness quotes collected by the class. Also plan how to maintain the project through weekly meetings.

Share: Ask what it felt like to create a Kindness Flower Bed for the school and what they learned about self-discipline. Have students continue to care for the flower bed.

SELF-DISCIPLINE

Controlling what you do or say
so you don't hurt yourself or others.



2. Self-Discipline in the News

Objective: Students will be able to demonstrate self-discipline by finding news stories about self-discipline.

Inspire: Ask students to explain what it means to show self-discipline.

Empower: Start each day for a few weeks with a story from the news where someone showed self-discipline and kindness.

Act: Encourage students to show the kind of self-discipline that they read about each day.

Share: Ask students what they learned from these stories about self-discipline. Was it hard or easy to show self-discipline? Why?

ALL KINDNESS CONCEPTS

1. Kindness Posters

Objective: Students will be able to examine what it means to be kind by creating and displaying posters.

Inspire: Ask students for examples of how they can show kindness in their home or community.

Empower: Divide students into groups of five. Hand out a poster board and markers to each group. Explain that as a group, they need to develop one idea to put on the poster that encourages others to be kind. Explain that simple is better. Some examples "Help an elderly person cross the street." or "Be responsible at school." or "Respect your teacher." or "Smile and show a friend you care."

Act: Allow time for students to create and decorate their poster. Decide as a class when they are going to hold up signs around school, such as during lunch, after school or during a passing period. Then have them display their posters.

Share: After they display their posters, ask them what it felt like to encourage others to be kind with their posters.

2. Kindness Quotes

Objective: Students will be able to discover what it means to be kind by finding and reading quotes or sayings about kindness and committing to showing kindness.

Inspire: Ask students what it means to be kind.

Empower: Have students find quotes, sayings or readings about kindness from books or the Internet.

Act: Have students read the quotes or sayings to the other students in class and commit to showing kindness that week. Or have the principal start each day with a reading about kindness from values.com or arrange to have students deliver an approved reading over the intercom.

Share: Ask students whether hearing readings and committing to kindness helped them be more kind to others.



3. Random Acts of Kindness Club

Objective: Students will be able to analyze what it means to be kind by creating a Random Acts of Kindness Club.

Inspire: Ask students to provide examples of ways they can show kindness to others. Write their examples on the board.

Empower: Have students discuss with a partner which ways of showing kindness are easy for them and which ways are difficult.

Act: Start a Random Acts of Kindness Club and commit to doing at least one Random Act of Kindness per week.

Share: Record the activities in a class journal or on a poster and prepare to read entries to your class. Ask students what it felt like to do random acts of kindness.



4. Random Acts of Kindness Week Activities (all school activity)

Objective: Students will be able to discover what it means to be kind through Random Acts of Kindness Week activities.

Inspire: Before RAK Week in February, have students talk about how they can show and share kindness at school and in their community. Figure out ways that K-2 students can work with students in grades 3-5 to develop the list of activities and determine each grade's role in those activities. Activities could include: trash pick-up, visit to a local senior home, homeless shelter, children's hospital to share Valentines or sing, raising money for an animal shelter, etc.

Empower: Have the school's student council or RAK Club sponsor an activity each day during RAK Week and announce the events each morning over the intercom.

Act: Do the activities that are suggested for the day or week.

Share: Reflect on what it was like to work together as a school to spread kindness.

5. Kindness Check Lists (for RAK Week)

Objective: Students will be able to examine what it means to be kind through showing kindness to others.

Inspire: Ask students for examples of how to be kind. Write those ideas on the board.

Empower: During RAK Week, have students create an individual checklist of at least five ways they will be kind during RAK Week. Activities could include: helping neighbors weed their lawns, picking up litter, smiling and saying thank you to the bus driver and doing anything else that is kind. For more ideas, check out [our database](#).

Act: Have students share kindness in the five ways they wrote down on their checklist.

Share: Ask students what it felt like to show kindness during RAK Week, and what they learned from the experience.

PROJECT PLANNING SHEET

PROJECT TITLE: _____

DATE TO FINISH PROJECT: _____

PROJECT GOAL: _____

MATERIALS NEEDED:

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

PROJECT STEPS:

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

6 _____