

Acts of Kindness

February 5, 2010



Valentine's Day, February 14th, is a fun day for both young and old! More than just a day for romantic couples, it can be a day to celebrate friendship and kindness, and to show our appreciation for all who are dear to our hearts.

Because young kids are concrete thinkers, it can be hard for them to understand an abstract concept like kindness that can't be represented by a physical object. However, by noticing when people around them give to others, offer their help, or take actions that make others feel comforted and loved, your kids can learn that "You are kind" means so much more than three words inscribed on a Valentine's candy heart.



When To Do It

Valentine's Day, or any quiet afternoon

What To Do

Here are four kindness activities you can try with your kids this Valentine's Day — or any other time during the year!

1. Card Kindness

- What would Valentine's Day be without pretty cards? Help your kids make cards of Kindness for those they appreciate in their lives.
- Help them identify ways in which their friends or family members have been kind. If they have trouble coming up with examples, give them some hints. (Hint for parents: take a little time in advance to recall some of these acts of kindness, so you're ready to jog your kids' memories!)
- Once they have some ideas, help them make cards thanking these special people for the various acts of kindness.
- Help them decorate with red paper, doilies, and stickers, or glue on candy hearts.
- You can suggest they also describe the kind act in writing — people love knowing that their kindness was noticed and remembered.

2. Special Gift Kindness

- As your own budget allows, give your kids a special gift budget to buy small Gifts of Kindness for a few of the kind people in their lives.
- Help your kids pick out items that mean something special to each of the people they have chosen. Suggest they remember gifts that they themselves have particularly enjoyed and treasured, and think about why they feel that way.
- If they have money left over, suggest they treat themselves to a Gift of Kindness — or save the money for something more special later!

3. I Spied Kindness Box

- Decorate an empty box with fun heartfelt images. Close it and cut a slot in the top.
- For a one-month period, ask you kids to be on the lookout for acts of kindness.
- Have them describe each kindness on a sheet of paper (the youngest kids may need your help with this), and drop it into the I Spied Kindness box.
- At the end of the month, open the box and spend time reading aloud all the acts of kindness.
- Give your kids a Gift of Kindness for all their hard work of noticing when people do kind things to others.

4. Kindness Jar

- Have your kids decorate a Kindness Jar to fill with spare change that your family will collect for a month. (Kids will love to watch the jar fill up day by day.)
- At the end of the month, help your kids sort the coins into coin roll wrappers and decide where they would like to donate the money.
- Take them to the chosen charity and let them hand over the contents of the Kindness Jar.

What You Will Need

- Colored paper, doilies, stickers
- Candy hearts
- Jar/Box (a shoe box or candy box is a good size)
- Scissors
- Tape, glue

Talk About It

Was it hard for your kids to find people who were kind? How many people do they know who are kind? Did they find it fun to do the activity you chose? Do they think they are kind? Are you? Are their siblings? Why or why not?