



THE SEL SCOOP – DECEMBER 2020

Supporting your Child Socially and Emotionally SPREADING KINDNESS AND FINDING JOY

We want our children to be happy but how do we help our children achieve contentment, find joy and grow into happy adults? The latest research on happiness gives us surprising answers. The largest determinant of our happiness is our own mental, emotional, and physical habits. So, SEL instruction is the gateway to helping our children find their happy.

KINDNESS IS CONTAGIOUS The positive effects of kindness are experienced in the brain of each person who witnesses the kind act. It can significantly increase a person's mood and make them more likely to do another kind act. This means one good deed in a crowded area can create a domino effect and improve the day for others.

KINDNESS = PLEASURE In addition to boosting dopamine (activating pleasure and reward centers), when you are kind to another person, your brain stimulates the production of serotonin, a neurotransmitter that helps regulate mood. This feel-good chemical heals your wounds, calms you down, and makes you happy contributing to the "helper's high" (Emory University).

KINDNESS INCREASES HAPPINESS A 2010 Harvard Business School survey of happiness in 136 countries found that people who are altruistic, are happiest overall. Research shows that the pride of contributing to the betterment of society makes us happier. Our job as parents is to find ways for our kids to make a positive difference in the world so they can enjoy and learn from this experience.

“ Kindness is
a gift everyone can
afford to give.”

- Unknown

Intentional Acts of Kindness Over the Holidays

1. Give up your spot in line
2. Pay for someone else's coffee
3. Send cards to the elderly
4. Donate food to the foodbank
5. Donate pet food to pet shelter
6. Smile at everyone you see today
7. Take on a chore that is not usually yours
8. Help neighbors shovel their driveways or clean snow off of their car
9. Create holiday decorations for others and put them on a tree in their yard
10. Leave a happy note for someone to find

Conversations with your Kids

- What does Kindness mean to you?
- What does kindness look like/sound like/feel like?
- Think of a time when someone was kind to you. How did you know that was kindness?
- In what way could it motivate you to be kind too?
- In our family, what are kind things that we already do for each other?
- What can we do to bring more kindness into our home? /your school? /our community?

Learn more by watching:

<https://www.parents.com/kids/development/social/social-and-emotional-skills-to-teach-kids-that-will-help-them-be-kind/>

Dr. Christine Carter on raising happy and kind kids: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LOGyFj5MTA>



Central Okanagan
Public Schools
Together We Learn

Central Okanagan Public Schools Social Emotional Learning Team