

## TEACHING KINDNESS

November 1, 2020

Kindness is one of those simple concepts that takes a lifetime to understand. Being kind to each other is one of the first things we learn as kids, yet adults still struggle with being kind in every circumstance. As parents, we need to think about how we can teach kindness to your children, while working on it in your own lives. Here are some ideas that you can use.



### Search the Bible for examples of kindness.

- Ruth and Boaz showed kindness to Naomi. ([Ruth 1](#) and [Ruth 4](#))
- King David showed kindness to the family of Jonathan, a friend of David who had died. ([2 Samuel 9](#))
- Four friends brought their paralyzed friend to see Jesus so he could be healed. ([Luke 5:17-26](#))
- Jesus told The Good Samaritan parable to help people understand the importance of showing love to everyone. ([Luke 10:25-37](#))

**Model kindness for your children.** Our kids learn by watching us. If you aren't kind to your neighbors or coworkers, your kids will pick up on that and pass it along to their friends at school. With this in mind, whenever you interact with someone else at home, church, work, or wherever you happen to be, ask yourself how you can be kind to that person. This practice will increase the kindness you show to others and your kids will see your kindness in action.

**Challenge your children!** Our kids respond when challenged in loving ways. When my family had extra produce from our garden, my daughter had the idea of giving some of it to our neighbors. But she became shy when it came to knocking on their doors. We know and love our neighbors, so we knew that they would be nice to her. We challenged her to step out of her shyness and knock on our neighbors doors, zucchini in hand. She accepted our challenge and had lovely conversations with appreciative neighbors. It was her idea to share our vegetables with the neighbors, but she needed a little push to get out of her comfort zone.

**Online Kindness.** During the pandemic, many kids are worried about friendships. How can kids comfort each other through virtual support networks? Be peer tutors with schoolwork and check in on how virtual classmates are feeling each day. Use visuals like memes, emojis, GIFs or videos to brighten friends' days.

**Be kind together as a family.** Maybe you could do an age-appropriate service project together for someone in need. Or you could write encouraging notes and hand deliver them to people who need a kind word in your community. Doing acts of kindness together as a family makes it a natural thing for your kids to do on their own.

**Big and small things.** Being kind doesn't always mean doing something big. Sometimes it is as simple as a smile or a small word to someone you walk past on the sidewalk. Don't make it so difficult to do kind things that it seems like a mountain to climb. Normalize kindness and make it an every day, all the time sort of thing.

You can teach your kids about kindness in every area of your and their lives. Like other spiritual disciplines, it takes some practice and time, but raising kind kids is important in a world that tends to tear people down all the time. Kindness in one area of life, like school or church, will hopefully find its way to all areas of life, like in your neighborhood, on a sports team, or even online. Practice and teach kindness with your kids today.

Want to dig deeper? Check out Family Fire's article [Creating Successful Children By Emphasizing Values](#)

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