



We all know that being kind is important, but did you know acting kind is **good for you, too**? According to studies, being kind can:

- Lower stress
- Improve friendships
- Help build self-esteem
- Raise feelings of happiness

This month, in recognition of **World Kindness Day on November 13**, we're focused on improving children's mental health through kindness.

How to teach and model kindness

You can educate the children in your life about kindness through modeling caring acts and statements day to day. By showing them this way of interacting and behaving, you build a sense of empathy for others, develop supportive relationships, and boost mental wellness in the family. Try these tips to introduce more kindness to kids:

Be the model. Children watch adults' behavior to learn how they should respond in social situations. If you and people in their environment are regularly showing compassion for others, it's likely your children will too.



Recognize their efforts. When you witness or learn that your child has acted with kindness, tell them directly that this behavior is important and how much it means to you/others. Also, encourage them to recognize their own sense of contentment, pride and accomplishment that comes with being kind.



Promote self-care. Talk about the importance of acting kind to ourselves. This could be through practicing wellness activities or making sure we're thinking kind thoughts about ourselves, especially when challenges arise.



Read up. Provide developmentally appropriate books that focus on kindness or altruism. Select stories children can easily relate to, where the main characters are performing acts of kindness. You may also learn about kindness by reading books together on famous altruists, asking your children which person they admire and why.



Curate their media exposure. Children are increasingly exposed to violence and aggression through various media platforms. As we know, they tend to imitate observed behavior, so it's helpful to offer more opportunities for TV shows, movies, games and social media that promote themes of caring, respect and kindness.



Get involved. Find local organizations that your children can volunteer with.

- **Volunteer Opportunities at Baptist Health**
- **Volunteer Opportunities in Jacksonville, FL**



How can we cultivate daily kindness?

Your family can commit to practicing kindness each day, whether that's by calling a loved one just to say hello, sending a kind note to a friend, or talking about what kindness means to you. To promote it within themselves, consider talking with children over dinner or during a drive about what they like about themselves.

A journal page titled "I am AWESOME!" with two yellow stars. It contains a paragraph about kindness, a section for "Do your best to come up with new ideas...", and a section for "List at least three ways that you are awesome every day for the next week...". There are lines for writing and a date field. At the bottom, it says "ON OUR SLEEVES" and "Wolfson Children's Hospital" with a logo and a star.

Another way to start a kindness habit is to keep a journal. [Click here](#) to download our journal page and use it daily to help practice. Looking back through it with your child may help remind them of the many ways they are caring and thoughtful.

Want to practice more kindness? Take the *On Our Sleeves* **5-day kindness challenge** in celebration

of World Kindness Day November 13.

Don't forget to share how you're using *On Our Sleeves* resources. Hit the **reply button** to tell us your *On Our Sleeves* story.

Sincerely,
Wolfson Children's Hospital

The mission of *On Our Sleeves* is to provide every community in America access to free, evidence-informed educational resources necessary for breaking stigmas about child mental health and educating families and advocates. **For more information, visit OnOurSleeves.org.**

To access educational resources and revisit the mission of *On Our Sleeves*®, visit wolfsonchildrens.com/onoursleeves.

Wolfson Children's *On Our Sleeves* is made possible by Robert and Margaret Hill.



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