

Random Acts of Kindness has brought more meaning into my life, and I am committed to help spread the word.

— Carol, State Parent Facilitator, HI

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These Lesson Plans are a culmination of school-wide activities and classroom activities, ranging from grades K-12.

Lesson Plan

Pizza with the Principal & Kindness Kash

Submitted by Dianne; Schiller Park, IL

Type of Activity: This program involves the entire school.

Grade Level: Grades 3, 4, and 5 regular education and special education students. Our school is a 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade center. This program could be effective at a primary center or middle school.

Goal: To recognize and improve student efficacy, empathy, and compassion in our students.

Objectives:

1. Students will recognize the effects of their words and actions on others.
2. Students will develop personal efficacy.
3. Incidents of aggression and other negative forms of conflict resolution will decrease.
4. Incidents of kindness and other positive outcomes of conflict resolution will increase.

Overview:

In the winter of 1999, we noticed that students were not getting along as well as we would expect. Instances of bullying, name calling, fighting, intimidation, and insubordination were increasing. The interventions we were using were for the most part ineffective.

We decided to “think out of the box.” Instead of noticing primarily the misbehaviors, we decided to focus on the good things students were doing. We designed our program and notified students and parents. Immediately, we saw a dramatic improvement. Students wanted those little yellow slips that indicated success. The *Pizza with the Principal* incentive was a huge hit. As time went on, we felt the need to recognize the whole school for success: clean lunch tables, no referral to the principal, good bus behavior, etc. Therefore, we added the *Principals Kindness Days* so that all students could be rewarded.

Teachers, staff, students and parents value our Random Acts of Kindness Program. The learning environment for everyone has improved. It is friendlier, more positive, and supports student achievement.

Materials:

1. Random Kindness Recognition Slips
2. A container for the slips in each homeroom
3. Rewards:

Monthly Pizza w/the Principal Party

Because many of our students are disadvantaged, we make this party special with tablecloths, party favors (usually some type of school supply), and treats to take home. The take home treats include chips, candy, cookies/crackers, etc. We want the students to be able to celebrate their success with their families. We tell them that their good behavior resulted in a celebration for the whole family. Students also take home a laminated certificate stating, This certifies that _____ performed an important act of kindness impacting the learning environment of our School.

*You were a role model.
You provided a good example.
You are important and valued.
You make a difference.*

- b. Students are recognized randomly by faculty or staff members for acts of kindness. They are given a yellow recognition slip titled: I WAS CAUGHT PERFORMING A RANDOM ACT OF KINDNESS. Students list their names, room numbers, and date on the papers. They then complete the following sentence: This is what I did. We feel that it is important that students do this part so that they have the opportunity to reflect on and internalize the effects of their kind actions on the school environment.
- c. Teachers have the opportunity to pull kindness slips to reward good behavior with stickers, pencils, etc. They also have the opportunity to give Kindness Kash coupons worth \$0.50 redeemable at the school store.
- d. We have "Principal's Random Acts" announced periodically. All students are recognized for good sportsmanship, good behavior on the playground, cooperative cafeteria behavior, etc. All students then receive a reward such as a pencil topper, ice cream treat, chips, key ring, etc.

Procedure:

1. All faculty and staff members have recognition slips. Aides take Random Kindness Recognition Slips to the cafeteria and playground along with their Discipline Referral Slips so that it is easy to recognize good behavior.
2. If a faculty or staff member notices an act of kindness, she/he may give the student a slip to fill out and deposit in her/his classroom. Acts of kindness are to be recognized randomly.
3. Homeroom teachers keep containers for slips collected monthly. On the last day of the month, each homeroom teacher randomly selects a slip and sends it to the office. Remaining slips are discarded after all students who received a slip that month are congratulated. Students are then encouraged to begin the process again.
4. Homeroom teachers are free to use Kennedy Kindness Kash up to twice a week to recognize students. The "Kash" can be used at the School Store.
5. Selected students are invited to join the principal during a time randomly selected for pizza and other treats. At this time, they receive a special certificate of recognition and treats to share with their families.

Expected Outcomes:

Since implementing this program three years ago, outcomes have included:

1. Improved school environment:

- 50% fewer referrals to the office for lunch/playground conflicts such as fighting, bullying, name calling.
- Dramatic decrease in referrals for insubordination
- Students are excited when they are recognized. Even the student recognition slips, although only small yellow slips of paper, are valued as a tangible sign of success.
- The teachers and staff members “notice” the good behavior of students in a concrete manner resulting in more positive attitudes.

2. Improved academics

- Students are more willing to help one another in class.
- Students are more supportive of one another, improving cooperative learning groups, pair/share and other best practice strategies.
- Students are more satisfied with school. They like coming to a place where adults catch them “being good,” Improved attitudes lead to increased effort, motivation, and achievement.

Evaluation:

- Goals are set and evaluated by teachers with whole groups and individuals.
- The principal tracks the number of discipline referrals over time.