

Kindness Counts: Exploring Random Acts of Kindness

A Curriculum For "The Book About Tony Chestnut"

Dear Educators,

My educational philosophy is based on integrated units that allow us to make certain our children are learning relevant knowledge that they can easily apply to real life situations. Theme teaching with correlating projects also allows us to cover a variety of material and effectively teach many concepts and skills. This approach builds on children's interests, as it allows them to learn at their own individual pace and connect this knowledge to their daily lives.

The educational benefits of incorporating interactive themes in the early learning classroom are unsurpassed. *Tell me and I'll forget; show me and I may remember, involve me and I'll understand.* This Chinese proverb is the means to all learning and teaching at its very finest. Children learn best through active, hands-on participation and the integration of as many senses as possible. A learning environment rich in meaningful opportunities for children to explore is a holistic and natural way for them to learn. It is a vehicle that demonstrates respect for the classroom's diverse learning styles and individual developmental needs.

I created **The Book About Tony Chestnut** based on this philosophy. Children are invited to actively participate, join-in and connect with the storybook's characters. This comprehensive and multi-sensory approach to early literacy will help develop a youngster's reading skills while simultaneously immersing them in a joyful, memorable and socially meaningful experience. By combining story time with a song that enhances the total experience, even the most reluctant reader's interest in books will be awakened. In addition, the story's compassionate message of kindness, friendship and sympathy speaks to children in a language they can understand.

Why teach kindness? There have been numerous studies which demonstrate the positive effects of kindness on health and well-being. The kindness giver, receiver and even those observing the kind act immediately experience an increase in happiness, a blissful sense of euphoria, increase in energy, more optimism and a general feeling of being healthy. Children who learn about compassion, respect, empathy and how to express acts of kindness in both words and actions, can have a positive impact on the world they live in. It is proven that young children raised to understand the value of kindness are less likely to bully or even become violent.

In this Kindness Counts: Exploring Random Acts of Kindness curriculum, The Book About Tony Chestnut

literally sets the stage for a month long kindness theme. Then each extended activity allows children to experience firsthand the wondrous feeling that results from even the smallest kind act. Present a curriculum rich in kindness and watch your class blossom into thoughtful children eager to continue on a path of being considerate, caring, sympathetic and kind towards others.

Thoughtfully,

Child Development Specialist
The Learning Station

Laurie Monapau



KINDNESS COUNTS: Curriculum Contents
Exploring Random Acts of Kindness
Preparing the Classroom
Setting up your Kindness Tree
Word Wall & Vocabulary Words
Flower & Leaf Templates
Begin the Lesson: Read, The Book About Tony Chestnut
Thought Provoking Questions 6
Introduce Your Kindness Tree
Expand Your Lesson
Daily Helper Station
Art, Language Arts & Math
Tony Chestnut, Lyrics & Movements
Signing Manners (ASL)
The Power of a Handshake
Group Activity & Family Night
Healthy Snack Recipes
Kindness Counts Family Newsletters
My Kindness Chart
Learning Station Songs, Dances & Circle Games

Kindness Counts: Exploring Random Acts of Kindness



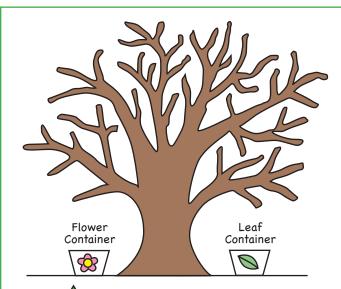
The primary focus of this theme is to help children recognize acts of kindness through reading and life experiences, and to encourage children to be helpful and kind towards others. Acts of kindness are not easily forgotten. When children are given the opportunity to share kindness with others they learn a valuable social, emotional and moral lesson that will last a lifetime.

AGE APPROPRIATE: 4-6 year olds **LENGTH OF ACTIVITY:** 1 month

OBJECTIVES:

- To understand the meaning and importance of empathy.
- To reinforce positive behaviors such as listening to others, caring, concern and kindness.
- To practice self-expression; articulate feelings, thoughts and ideas.
- To help children understand the values of being kind towards others with both words and actions.
- To encourage children to problem-solve and constructively resolve a conflict or situation.

Preparing The Classroom: Setting up your Kindness Tree



FLOWER & LEAF TEMPLATE (pages 4 and 5)

Make a child-size tree (trunk and branches) out of brown construction or butcher paper. Using tape attach the tree to the wall. Place the tree trunk as low to the floor as possible so children can reach and interact near the branches.

Cut out oval shaped construction paper leaves and brightly colored flowers. Place the leaves and flowers in two separate containers near the tree. You will also need a marker and tape to attach the leaves and flowers.

SUPPLIES NEEDED:











construction/ butcher paper

tape

scissors 2 containers

marker

Word Wall / To Promote Literacy

Print each vocabulary word on a sentence strip. As each word is introduced place it on the wall near your tree. Each time vocabulary words are mentioned in the lesson direct children to the written word. Encourage children to use these words when describing their act of kindness.

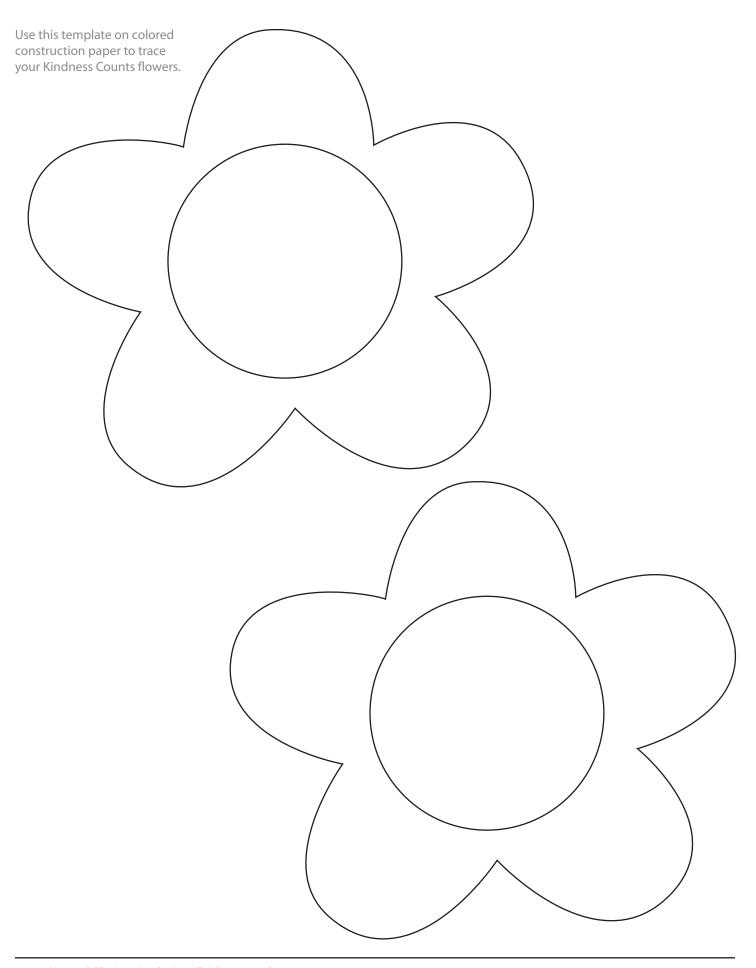


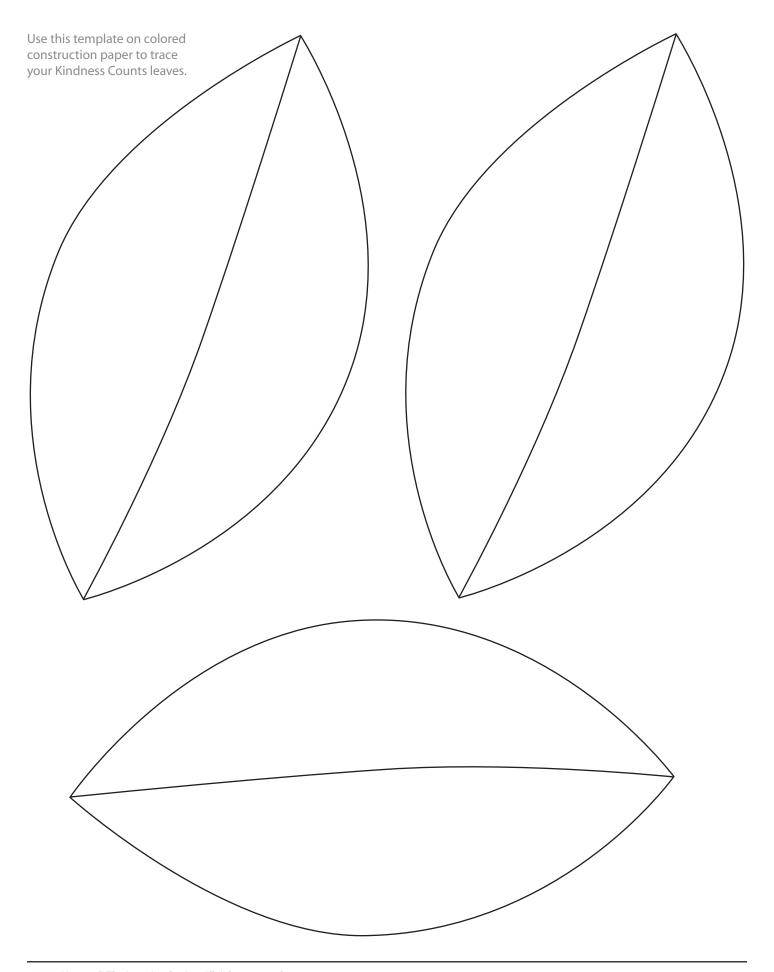
VOCABULARY LIST WORD STRIPS (page 3)

Kindness Sharing Concern Empathy Sympathy Courage

Caring Compassion

KINDNESS **EMPATHY** CARING SHARING SYMPATHY COMPASSION CONCERN COURAGE





Begin The Lesson: Read "The Book About Tony Chestnut"

SKILLS:

- Literacy Awareness
- Oral Language
- Critical-thinking
- Comprehension
- Self-expression

COMPREHEND KINDNESS:

Ask Thought Provoking Questions to Prompt Ideas









Turn to the pages in the book related to each question:

PAGE

How do you think Eileen felt on her first day at a new school?

Do you remember your first day of school? Tell me about how you felt on your very first day of school.

PAGE

Eileen really felt sad when she looked out at the playground and saw all the children were having fun. What do you think made her feel so sad? Have you ever felt sad like Eileen? Tell me about your sad experience. Did anyone try to cheer you up?

PAGE 12

How would you feel if you went outside to play and the other children didn't invite you to join them?

PAGES 15-17

Tony Chestnut felt sad when his little sister started to cry. He was concerned for her and he cared about her feelings. When we care about someone's feelings this is called having **empathy**, **sympathy** or **concern** for them. Can you tell me some of the things Tony Chestnut did to try and cheer up his sister Eileen? What would you say or do to make someone feel better if they were sad?

PAGES 19,20

Tony Chestnut is shy. It took a lot of **courage** for him to climb up on the yellow bench and sing his song to his sister Eileen. What do you think made Tony Chestnut feel so brave? Have you ever had to use **courage** like Tony Chestnut?

PAGES 22-47

PAGE

48

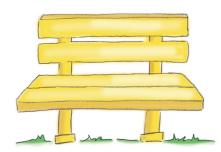
Tony Chestnut bravely sang his song to his sister Eileen and she smiled. Then one by one all the smiling children on the playground joined in. How do you think this made Tony Chestnut feel?

What special things can you do to show your friends you like them? What are some ways you can be nice to people. What can you do today to be kind to our friends in school? What can you do at home to be kind to your family?

Introduce Your Kindness Tree

SKILLS:

- Listening
- Following Directions
- Positive Behavior
- Values of Kindness



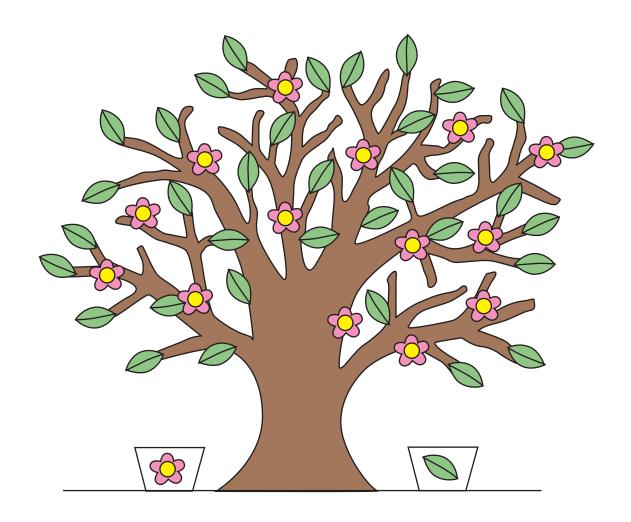
Count Kindness:

During your morning group meeting introduce the Kindness Tree and explain to your children how they can make it bloom.

Acts of kindness will earn children a leaf or flower on the Kindness Tree. Begin by asking your children to share ways that they have been kind or helpful to a friend or family member, or ways that a friend or family member has been kind to them.

Explain that throughout the day you will be observing for when a child performs an act of kindness (i.e. sharing, being helpful, or comforting another child). For their reward the first two weeks they will tape a colored leaf on the tree. In the third and fourth weeks their reward will be a colorful flower. Label each leaf and flower with their name and the act of kindness that they performed.

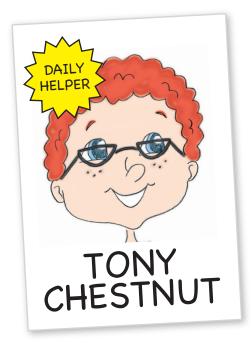
Note: The class will continue this phase of the activity each morning.



Daily Helper Station: Encouraging kindness in the classroom.

SKILLS:

- Reinforcing Positive Behavior
- Practice Kindness
- Goodwill & Helpfulness



Directions:

Take digital photos of each child in your class. Make helper badges using large self-stick labels. Each day assign a few children as the day's classroom helpers. Put their name on their badge and place their photo on the wall above the station.

The role of daily classroom helpers is to assist other children throughout the day. Children can call on a helper when needed or the teacher can assign them a helper task. Some tasks can include:

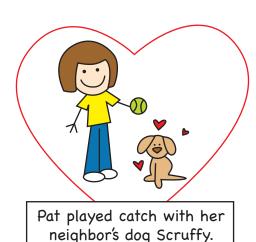
- Helping to set up an activity for the class (i.e. setting up paints in the art corner, filling up the water table or putting out the manipulative table activities)
- Assisting another child with clean-up
- Helping a child complete a puzzle
- Sharing a book with another child
- Holding a door open for the class
- Helping serve snacks to the class
- · Washing tables after an activity or meal
- Handing out paper towels during hand washing
- Feeding the classroom pet
- · Comforting a child who is sad or hurt



Art: Kind Heart Illustrations

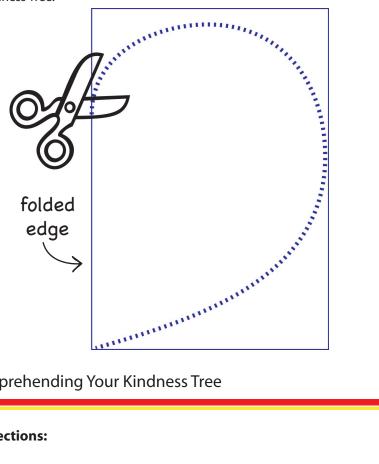
SKILLS:

- Broadening Acts of Kindness
- Creative Free-expression



Directions:

Make heart shaped paper for children to draw on by simply folding easel or construction paper in half and then do one outside cut. Encourage them to make drawings to illustrate their experiences. Display their drawings near your Kindness Tree.



Language Arts and Math: Comprehending Your Kindness Tree

SKILLS:

- Word Recognition
- Counting
- Oral Language
- Theme Comprehension

Directions:

When your tree has fully bloomed into a beautiful Kindness Tree help children read the leaves and flowers. Can they find their names? Can they find the names of their friends? Have each child share their special act of kindness with the group.

Celebrate by clapping as you count each leaf and flower on the tree.

Variations:

Count as you tap on a small bongo drum, shake a tambourine or hand shaker.



Music and Movement: Tony Chestnut Knows I Love You

SKILLS:

- Following Directions
- Listening
- Eye Hand Coordination
- Large Muscle Development



Directions:

1.) Print out the lyrics and movements for the song, **Tony Chestnut.**



LYRICS & MOVEMENTS (page 11)

Suggestion: Tony Chestnut lyrics can also be printed for each child to bring home and share with their family.

2.) Introduce the lyrics and movements from the Tony Chestnut printable sheet. Practice the movements with the children.



3.) Play and perform the song, Tony Chestnut (Track 5 on The Book About Tony Chestnut CD)

LYRICS	MOVEMENTS				
Tony Chestnut knows I love you.	Point to your toes, knees, chest, head, nose, eyes, heart & to a friend.				
Tony knows. (Tony knows.)	Point to your toes, knees & nose.				
Tony Chestnut knows I love you.	Point to your toes, knees, chest, head, nose, eyes, heart & to a friend.				
That's what Tony knows.	Point to your toes, knees & nose.				
Tony, Tony and his sister Eileen.	Point to your toes, knees, toes, knees then lean to the right.				
And Eileen loves Neil and Neil loves Pat.	Everyone lean to the right, kneel & pat your shoulders.				
But Pat still loves Bob.	Pat your shoulders and bounce your head back & forth.				
And there's Russell and Skip.	Stand-up, wiggle your legs then skip in place.				
This song is silly, but it's hip.	Make a silly face then stick out your right hip & point to it.				
How it ends, just one man knows.	Turn and point to your bottom.				
And guess what (what), it's Tony Chestnut.	Hold your arms up in the air. Point to your toes, knees, chest & head.				

- Talk that directs music to play faster.
- Cup your hands and pretend you are stirring the musical pot that is controlling the speed of the music.
- Stir faster and faster.
- Repeat all the lyrics and movements above.

Tony Chestnut

The Book About Tony Chestnut CD, Track 5 Copyright 2010 Monopoli/The Learning Station

Original recording from the CD, Tony Chestnut & Fun Time Action Songs Copyright 1997 Monopoli/The Learning Station

Suggested Movements to Tony Chestnut

Tony Chestnut knows I love you.



















Tony knows. (Tony knows).









Tony Chestnut knows I love you.





















That's what Tony knows.



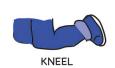






And Eileen loves Neil and Neil loves Pat,







but Pat still loves Bob.





AND WIGGLE YOUR HEAD UP AND DOWN

And there's Russell and Skip.







This song is silly, but it's hip.



MAKE SILLY **FACE**



STICK OUT YOUR RIGHT HIP AND POINT TO IT

How it ends, just one man knows.

TURN AND POINT TO YOUR BOTTOM.



And quess what, (what) it's Tony Chestnut.

HOLD YOUR ARMS UP IN THE AIR...













During the talk that directs the music to play faster. Cup your hands and pretend you are stirring the musical pot that is controlling the speed of the music. Stir faster and faster... repeat...

Sign Language (ASL): Signing Manners

SKILLS:

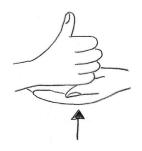
Learning sign language (ASL) is an optimum way to combine hand movements with words and contains a plethora of positive developmental benefits. First of all, when children learn words combined with signs they are processing language using both sides of their brains. The left side of their brain processes the verbal sounds and the signed images are processed on the right side of the brain. When both sides of the brain are enthused, the child has developed two language recall locations. Foremost, learning sign language exercises a child's essential skills necessary for language development; listening, receiving accurately and processing what they have heard.

Practice Note:

Teach each sign by verbally saying the word as you sign it.



HELLO - Just like you are saluting someone. Begin with your saluting hand touching your forehead and simply move it forward in a downward motion.



HELP – Make your right hand flat and put your palm up. Keep your palm up and bring your hand towards your tummy. Then make a fist with your left hand. Rest your fist on your flat hand with your thumb on top. Now simply lift your flat hand as if it is raising your fist.



PLEASE - Place your flat right hand over the center of your chest. Move your hand in a circular clockwise motion.



THANK YOU - Begin with the fingers of your dominant hand near your lips. Keep your hand flat. Smile as you move your hand forward and down in the direction of the person you are thanking. **VERY THANKFUL** - Use both hands with this sign.



I LOVE YOU - Hold your dominant hand out in front of you like you were saying, STOP. Bend down only your middle and ring finger toward your palm. Face your palm towards the person you are telling, "I Love You!"

To learn more and see a FREE ASL dictionary with video demonstrations visit: www.babies-and-sign-language.com/glossary-photos.html

The Power of a Handshake: Setting the Pace for a Positive Day

SKILLS:

- Making a Positive Social Connection
- Creative Thinking
- Listening
- Following Directions

It's believed that the handshake may date as far back as the 2nd century BC. Traditionally, people shake hands to communicate trust, friendship and equality. According to Child Development Specialist, Dr. Becky Bailey, "Our connection with others affects our biology, health and learning. Greet each other daily. It helps your immune and cardiovascular system, and wires your brain for impulse."

DIRECTIONS: Begin your day, every day, by greeting your children with a handshake. Then have the children share a handshake with their friends. Such as:



Butterfly Handshake: Lock thumbs with a friend. Flutter your fingers like a butterfly's wings and move your hands up and down.

Knuckle Knock: Close your hand with your knuckles facing a friend. Smile and gently tap knuckles with a friend.



Traditional Right-Handed Handshake: Stand up, find a friend, hold out your right hand. Firmly shake as you look into your friend's eyes and smile.

Hand Shake with a Greeting: As you shake a friend's hand share a greeting such as "Hello" or "Good Morning". Share this greeting in another language. Here is "Hello" in a variety of other languages:

Hallo – German Hola – Spanish Bonjour – French Namaste – Hindi Ciào – Italian Salut – Romanian Hoezit – South African (pronounced howzit) Aloha - Hawaiian
Jambo - Swahili
Mambo - Congo
Konnichiha - Japanese
(pronounced as konnichiwa)



Creative Handshake: Create your own fun greeting using a pattern of different hand jive movements. For example, two high fives, right hand high five, left hand high five. After you introduce the handshake have the children repeat it. Children can then take turns adding new hand movements to their hand jive.

Silly Handshake: Have children make their own silly hand shake and share it with their friends. Name the handshake after each child. For example: Don's Super Silly Monkey Handshake.





Greetings, from the CD, **Brain Boogie Boosters:**Share this song at morning meeting to unite children and set the pace for a joyful day!



Group Activity: Keeping Kindness Flowing

SKILLS:

- Cooperation
- Teamwork
- Self-esteem

Directions:

Bring smiles to the faces of other children by visiting another classroom and have your children perform the song, Tony Chestnut. Add to this kind act by sharing cut out hearts with the class you visit and by demonstrating some kind words in sign language.



Family Night: Kindness Celebration

SKILLS:

- Demonstrating Respect for Families
- Caring
- Sharing

Directions:

Commemorate kindness with a Family Night Kindness Celebration.

- 1) Share each child's kindness contribution to the beautifully bloomed **Kindness Tree.**
- **2)** Read, **The Book About Tony Chestnut** and have the children delight their families by performing the song, **Tony Chestnut**.
- **3)** Conclude the event with simple refreshments that were prepared by the children such as: Healthy Elvis Sandwiches, Ants On A Log, Wild Thing Munch n' Crunch or Sushi Dessert Treats.





SEE RECIPE CARDS (page 15)

IMPORTANT:

Make sure you are aware of children's food allergies before preparing any recipes.

Healthy Elvis Sandwiches

Ingredients:

- 2 slices whole grain bread
- peanut butter
- banana slices
- honey



Directions:

Spread the peanut butter on one side of one slice of bread. Top with sliced banana, then drizzle with honey. Cover with the other slice of bread and cut into 4 equal pieces.

Display the sandwiches on a platter.

Ants On A Log

Ingredients:

- peanut butter
- cream cheese
- celery sticks
- raisins



Directions:

Simply stuff peanut butter or cream cheese into celery sticks and garnish with raisins.

Simple Punch

Mix together a variety of fruit juices, chill with ice cubes made from one of the juices.

Wild Thing Munch n' Crunch

Ingredients:

- granola
- variety of dry cereals
- variety of nuts
- dried fruits



You will also need:

small lunch bags (1 for each child) or a large bowl (family style serving).

Directions:

Let children choose from the variety of dry ingredients and place them in either a small lunch bag (individual serving) or mix the ingredients in a large bowl to enjoy as a group.

Sushi Dessert Treats

Ingredients:

- 1- 2 boxes of dried fruit strips or fruit Roll-Ups (variety of flavors & colors)
- 4 cups of crisped rice cereal
- 1 large whipped cream cheese
- 1 tablespoon of honey
- dried apricots, pineapple, mango or raisins



Directions:

Gradually add whipped cream cheese to rice cereal until it's evenly coated. Stir in honey. Unroll a fruit strip and cut lengthwise in half. Spread a thin layer of the mixture on top, distributing it evenly. Add a row of fruit, 1 inch in, in a horizontal line. Gently roll the lower edge over the fruit and continue to the end. Cut each roll in half to create two sushi pieces and trim ends if needed. Makes approximately 4 dozen. **Dipping Sauce:** Mix strawberry jam with a splash of pineapple fruit juice.

Kindness Counts Family Newsletters:

Create Kindness Counts parent newsletters. These newsletters will inform as they invite families to actively participate at home. Post your newsletters online or print a copy and send it home with each child.

Sample Newsletter 1 – Introduction to Kindness Counts

Dear Parents,

Beginning next week our theme will be Kindness Counts. We are learning about kind gestures we can do towards others; both in school and at home. If you take a peek in the classroom you will see our Kindness Tree on the wall. Right now the tree doesn't have any leaves or flowers. The children will be able to make this tree beautifully bloom by performing acts of kindness. Each time they share a kind act, their name and act of kindness gets written on a colorful leaf or flower and is placed on the tree. Here are some kind acts I'll be looking for in the classroom:

- · Sharing toys with fellow classmates.
- Being helpful in class (i.e. cleaning their space, helping setup an activity, being a good listener).
- Demonstrating concern and comforting another child who is sad (i.e. holding their hand, trying to cheer them up or sharing a hug).
- · Sharing a smile with a classmate.
- · Using kind words like "please" and "thank you".
- If someone is being unkind or mean, telling them it is wrong and telling a grown-up.

- Sitting with a child who usually sits alone.
- Inviting a child who is alone to play with them.
- · Making a new friend.
- · Complimenting or sharing a kind word with another child.
- · Being polite to classmates.
- · Holding the door for the person behind them.
- Coming to the aid of another child (i.e. picking up something they dropped, helping them with an activity, assisting them to complete a task, such as putting on their coat).

As part of this activity, we will be reading the story:

The Book About Tony Chestnut, Written by Laurie Monopoli and Illustrated by Wendy Sefcik.

We will be singing the song:

Tony Chestnut by The Learning Station

For more information on, The Book About Tony Chestnut, and for song lyrics you can visit: www.LearningStationMusic.com or www.TonyChestnut.com.

In our art corner children will be drawing pictures that express their acts of kindness. Their pictures will be proudly displayed on hearts in the room near our Kindness Tree.

You are invited to come in and watch our beautiful Kindness Tree bloom! Please remind your children that they can make a difference each time they brighten someone's life through small efforts like a smile, kind word, saying thank you or showing they care.

Thoughtfully,

Your child's teacher

Kindness Counts Family Newsletters:

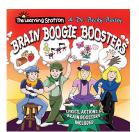
Sample Newsletter 2 – Kindness Counts Family Activity
Dear Parents,
Our classroom Kindness Tree has begun to beautifully bloom with kindness!
Here's a fun way that you can participate at home and share kindness with your child's class.
Place this "My Kindness Chart" on your refrigerator and each time you observe your child demonstrating an act of kindness write it down on that day. On please send the chart to school with your child. During our morning meeting we will share each child's home chart with the group and post it next to our Kindness Tree.
Your child can demonstrate kindness at home by:
 Being helpful, polite and a good listener, both at home and outside the home (i.e. while grocery shopping, driving in the car or visiting others).
• Helping around the house (i.e. putting their toys away, helping a sibling put their toys away or assisting a parent with a home chore like setting the table).
• Drawing a picture for a family member or friend to cheer them up. Posting the picture on the fridge or sending it in the mail to them.
• Using polite words and manners at home.
• Sharing their toys with siblings and friends.
• Allowing a sibling or friend to go first (i.e. choose the first crayon, take the first snack or pick the first toy to play with).
Comforting a family member or friend who is sad or hurt.
• Sharing a hug with a family member.
• Singing a song to your family and friends.
Family Kindness Activity As a family, you can perform an act of kindness and share that with your child's class. At the top of your child's Kindness Chart write your family act of kindness.
Suggestions: Giving away unused toys to a charity or toy drive. Making and sending a card to someone just to brighten their day. Set up a conference call with a family member to tell them how much you love them. Join together as a family to clean up the garage or yard. Prepare a family meal together, set the table and clean-up as a team.
Please remember when you catch your child performing an act of kindness, shower him or her with words of praise, a hug and celebration by posting their kind act on their chart.
Kindly,
Your child's teacher

My Kindness Chart

Name: Our Family Act of Kindness:					Kindness starts with ME!		
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	

Enhancing Kindness through Interactive Songs, Dances and Circle Games

All **Learning Station** songs support and encourage positive social interaction and cooperation. Here are just a few that focus directly on kindness, friendship, teamwork, respect and a positive connection with others.



CD Brain Boogie Boosters Songs:

- Greetings You Are Heart
- Itsy Ditsy Spider Peace Like A River
- Friends Connect Team of Two
- It's A Marvelous Day



CD Play To Rest Song:

Clean Up Is Fun



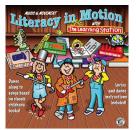
CD Kid's Country Song & Dance Songs:

- You Are My Sunshine
- · Happy Trails To You



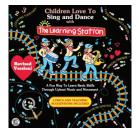
CD Tony Chestnut & Fun Time Action Songs Songs:

- Tony Chestnut
- I Like Friends



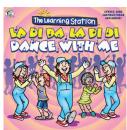
CD Literacy In Motion Song:

• The Giving Song



CD Children Love To Sing and Dance Song:

Special Friends



CD La Di Da, La Di Di Songs:

- Slap Happy
- Scratch My Back
- Friendship Dance



CD Seasonal Songs In Motion Songs:

- Mulberry Bush
- · London Bridges



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