

Little Things Make a Big Difference

Let's show our children the power they have to positively influence the world around them, and show them that little things do make a big difference.

Watch this!

Play *Little Lights*

- In this film, a boy feels alone and signals into the darkness with a little light. A girl sees the light and, with the help of friends, shows the boy that a lot of people care.



Talk about it!

	What did your students take away from this film? Ask them!	How can your students relate this film to their own lives? Ask them!
Emotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the beginning of the film, how did the boy with the light feel? Why do you think that the boy felt sad? He flashed his light but then he saw a light flash back. How do you think that made him feel? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you ever felt sad and lonely? What did you do when you felt sad and lonely to make yourself feel better? When you feel lonely, do you ever ask a friend to play? How has playing with a friend made you feel better?
Reasoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the girl saw the light, what did she do? What was she thinking? In the end, she got a lot of people to help her send the boy a signal. Why do you think that she did that? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the film, the girl saw the boy's light and thought he might be lonely, so she shined her light. Have you ever done something to help someone else who felt sad or lonely? Has anyone ever asked you to play and you said no? If so, how do you think that made them feel?
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The girl got a lot of people to help her. Why did she ask for their help? Why do you think that they wanted to help her? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you ever thought about doing something to help someone else? What could you do? Who would you ask for help?

Try this!

Show them how!

Help children see how enjoyable it is to be kind and receive kindness.

- Pull out a calendar and assign each student in your class a week to call their own.
- During this week, the class should focus on learning more about the student of the week as he/she shares things about themselves.
- While these may be things like their favorite toys or games, encourage the students to share things like what they wish they were better at doing, things that make them scared, and things that they used to find problematic, but they have overcome.
- Each day ask the students to draw a picture or share a nice comment that you can write down for them, all focusing on the student of the week.
- At the end of the week, present the items to the student of the week and have him/her express his/her gratitude and share how each of these things made them feel.

Act it out!

Being kind starts right now. Help children see how being kind can be something you plan for and do, but it is also something as simple as saying something kind to someone.

- Have your students sit in a circle.
- Ask for a volunteer. Tell the student to turn to the person to their right and say something kind to them.
- The person who received the kind words now turns to their right and says something kind.
- Continue the process until everyone has gone around the room and had a chance to participate.
- Afterwards, ask the students how it felt to receive the kind words.
- Now ask the students how it felt to give the kind words.
- Point out to students that giving kindness feels just as nice as receiving kindness and giving kindness is something that we are all in control of, and thus we are in charge of our own happiness.
- Be sure to include all teachers in the room in the circle. Not only are teachers role models for offering kind words, but students also need to realize that they have the power to make adults happy by saying kind things to them as well. Everyone deserves to be happy and appreciated!

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Talk about it!

	What did they take away from this film? Ask your students!	How can they relate this film to their own lives? Ask them!
Emotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the beginning of the film, how did the boy with the light feel? He flashed his light but then he saw a light flash back. How do you think that made him feel? How did his feelings change when he saw the big lights? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why do you think that the girl flashing her little light back was so meaningful to the boy? Has anyone done a little act like this to make you happy? How do you think it made them feel? Does kindness make both people feel happy?
Reasoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the girl saw the light, what did she do? Do you think that the boy and girl knew each other? If they did not know each other, then why did she want to help? In the end, the girl got a lot of people to help her send him a signal. Why do you think that she did that? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the film, the older sister did not seem to get along with the girl in the beginning, but later she came to help. Why do you think that she wanted to help? How did the sister helping change the relationship of the girl and the sister? Does working together to help someone bring them closer? If you think it does, why does that happen?
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The girl got a lot of people to help her. Why did she ask for their help? Why do you think that they wanted to help her? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you ever taken on a big project like the girl in the film? What kind of thing could you do to show people that they are not alone?

Try this!

Spread the Kindness!

Everyone benefits from kindness, not just children.

- Ask students to reflect on all the teachers that they have had who are still working in the school. Tell them to choose a teacher from their list who has helped them with something or who has shown them kindness in some way. If possible, have each student choose a different teacher.
- Have the children write letters to the teachers to thank them for their kind acts and to express how much they meant to them.
- Read the letters out loud to the rest of the class without stating who the letter is to or from. Can the students guess who the letter is for?
- Were they aware that this teacher was this kind to his/her students? Ensure that students realize that kindness is within everyone, even if they do not see it or notice it all of the time.

Kindness starts now!

Children have more power than they realize to create a kindness chain reaction.

- Now ask your students to deliver their letters to the teachers in the school! People rarely mind being interrupted from work/class if it is for kindness.
- Ask students to read the letters out loud in front of the teacher's class that they interrupted.
- When the students return, ask them how the teachers reacted to hearing the letters.
- What did the teachers say? What did the teachers do?
- How did their class react to hearing the students read the letters to the teachers?
- How many of your students think that the students in the special teacher's class may now see their teacher in a different light or may want to do something kind for that teacher?

Kindness Counts!

Kindness counts, and kindness is contagious!

- Ask students to estimate how many students were in the class that heard the letters being read.
- Total the estimated number of students who heard the letters read. Add in the number of students in your class, along with the number of teachers who received letters. Consider how many people witnessed an act of kindness today within a short period of time.
- How do your students think the school will be affected by the little things the students did? Do they think that their little things have the power to make a big difference? They do!

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Talk about it!

	What did your child take away from the story? Ask him/her!	How can your child relate this film to their own lives? Ask them!
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Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The girl got a lot of people to help her. Why did she ask for their help? Why do you think that they wanted to help her? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you ever thought about doing something to help someone else? What could you do? Who would you ask for help?

Try this!

Spread the Kindness!

Being kind starts right now. Help children see how easy it is to be kind.

- Get small index cards and have your child draw a picture on each of them, or write something nice, like:
 - You're an awesome friend.
 - You're a gift to those around you.
 - You are awesome!
 - I like your style.
 - You have the best laugh.
 - I appreciate you.
 - You are the most perfect you there is.
 - You are enough.
 - You're strong.
 - Your perspective is refreshing.
 - I'm grateful to know you.
 - You light up the room.
 - You deserve a hug right now.
 - You should be proud of yourself.
 - You're more helpful than you realize.
 - You have a great sense of humor.
 - You are really courageous.
 - On a scale from 1 to 10, you're an 11.
 - You are strong.
 - You're even more beautiful on the inside than you are on the outside.
 - I'm inspired by you.
 - You're like a ray of sunshine on a really dreary day.
 - You are making a difference.
 - You bring out the best in other people.
- While you run errands, encourage your child to give a card to someone.
- Keep a tally of how many times your child hears a “thank you,” gets a smile, gets a hug, gets a high five, or hears a kind word in response.
- At the end of the day, point out how many of these your child received in one day.
- Show them how giving kindness gets kindness back in return. The little effort they gave, made a big difference in how good they feel about themselves and in how others felt as well.