

Teaching Kindness

Chuck Wall teaches management and human relations at Bakersfield College. He walked into class one day and told his students that their homework was to perform one random act of kindness. His students did not understand the assignment, but the professor would not answer their questions. He encouraged his students to figure it out for themselves.

One week later, the students returned to the classroom excited to share their stories. One student told of distributing blankets to the homeless, another reported on helping a lost dog to find its owner, and another student had contacted a long lost friend. Students were so energized by the homework assignment that they wanted other people to be kind, too. With the support of local businesses, the students made stickers to put on cars that challenged people to do something kind for others. They sold the stickers and decided to donate the money to a center for the blind. This was not surprising, as Professor Wall is blind.

Since then, similar kindness campaigns have been started in schools around the world. Many schools organize a Random Acts of Kindness Week, usually around November 13, to celebrate World Kindness Day. Some schools use each day of Random Acts of Kindness Week to perform a different kind act, such as making a new friend, helping someone, doing community service, or raising money for a charity. Students learn to consider other people and think about how small actions can make the world a better place.