



Cultivating Kindness

The benefits of kindness are remarkable! Kindness has been linked to decreased stress, reduced symptoms of anxiety and depression, lowering blood pressure, and easing pain. It has been connected to increased happiness, improved overall wellbeing, and has the potential to prolong your life. Evidence has also shown that kindness can help children and teens to learn and do better in school.

It feels good when people are kind to us, but being kind to yourself and others, or even just watching an act of kindness happen can be good for you too. That's right... kindness is contagious! Kindness can be spread simply by seeing or experiencing it – when you're part of an act of kindness, you're likely to act in kind ways toward others.

Healthy Teens

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Kindness has no boundaries. Everyone has the ability to give and receive kindness. It can involve simple gestures like opening the door for someone, shoveling snow from a public sidewalk, or smiling at others. It can also involve planned activities like volunteering at a community event or serving a meal to someone in need (remember to follow public health guidance for COVID-19).

Here are some ways that you can instill kindness in your teen:

- **Walk the talk** – Model kindness with your teen in your interactions with them and others.
- **Make it a rule** – Include kindness as part of your family rules or talk about kindness as one of your family values.
- **Broaden their horizon** – Encourage your teen to be kind to someone outside of their small circle of friends or family, like a new student in their class or a senior citizen in the community. It is important to show them that being kind should go beyond their social network.
- **Practice makes perfect** – As the old saying goes, the more we do it, the easier it becomes. As a family, try doing random acts of kindness in your neighbourhood or volunteer with a community organization.

So now that you know a little more about kindness, why not give it a try?

Celebrate [World Kindness Day](#) on November 13th or take it a step further and challenge your family to an act of kindness a day for the entire month. Guaranteed you will feel the positive effects. Visit [Random Acts of Kindness](#) to get more kindness ideas for you and your family.

Many Albertans have been impacted physically, mentally, emotionally and financially as result of the COVID-19 pandemic. For information about supports available in Alberta visit: www.ahs.ca/helpintoughtimes