

# Parenting Together

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 12

December 2018

## What is Generosity? Why is it Important to Model this for Children?

*The simple definition of generosity is "the quality of being kind and generous." It is probably safe to say we all hope to nurture this quality in our children. But how can we teach a quality? There are some surprisingly simple tips and tricks that we will dive into shortly.*

When young, it is natural for children to focus on themselves. Their main focus is making sure their own needs are met by the people around them. But as children mature, it becomes necessary for them to look beyond their own needs and start being responsive to the needs of others.

**Parents play a big role in helping children through this stage, both through encouragement and by example.**

Researchers at Harvard's Making Caring Common project have some ideas and practical tips to support your children through this developmental stage and to help encourage them to grow into kind, generous adults.



### 1. Send a clear message: Kindness counts!

Children need to hear from us that how they treat others is as important to us as their own happiness.

### 2. Give children a chance to practice gratitude.

Research shows – people who have a habit of expressing gratitude are more likely to be helpful, generous, and compassionate.

### 3. Walk the talk: Let your child see you performing acts of kindness.

The best way for our kids to learn about what it means to be a “good person” is to see us modeling ethical behaviors and actions.

### 4. Expand your child's "circle of concern."

Helps children listen closely to those in their immediate circle, AND to consider the perspective of those on the outside.

### 5. Help children manage difficult feelings.

It's our job to teach kids that all feelings are ok, but there are ways to manage challenging feelings that are more helpful than others.

## The Book Nook

*The Berenstain Bears Think of  
Those in Need*  
By Stan Berenstain

*The Spiffiest Giant in Town*  
By Julia Donaldson

*The Empty Piñata / La Piñata Vacía*  
By Alma Flor Ada



For more tips on raising generous children, check out these articles: [parents-together.org/good-kids/](https://parents-together.org/good-kids/) and [childmind.org/article/tips-for-raising-generous-children/](https://childmind.org/article/tips-for-raising-generous-children/)



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# Experiencing and Learning Kindness

Phrases like "random acts of kindness" and "pay it forward" have become popular terms in our society and it seems there is a good reason why we can't get enough of those addictive, feel-good emotions. Scientific studies prove there are many physical, emotional, and mental health benefits associated with kindness.

As minds and bodies grow, it is clear that children require a healthy dose of those feel-good emotions to thrive as healthy, happy, well-rounded individuals.



## CRAFTING CORNER

### Holding Gratitude in Your Hand

- On a piece of paper, trace around your child's hand.
- Let them trace around your hand on another piece of paper.
- Together, think about makes you feel grateful.
- Help your child write words or draw a picture in the middle of their traced hand of what they are grateful for.
- Do the same with your traced hand.

## References

Child Mind Institute: Tips for Raising Generous Children  
<https://childmind.org/article/tips-for-raising-generous-children/>  
Parents Together: Raising "Good Kids"  
<https://parents-together.org/good-kids/>  
Edutopia: Why Teaching Kindness in Schools is Essential to Reduce Bullying  
<https://www.edutopia.org/blog/teaching-kindness-essential-reduce-bullying-lisa-currie>  
Ripple Kindness Project: The Benefits of Kindness  
<https://ripplekindness.org/school-curriculum/the-benefits-of-kindness/>

## 10 Benefits to Children from Learning and Practicing Kindness

1. Happier
2. Better concentration
3. Increased self esteem
4. Improved health
5. Get along better with others
6. Less bullying
7. Less stress
8. Greater school attendance
9. Better grades in school
10. Increased feelings of gratitude

### To illustrate #1:

There is a famous study by Dr. Sonja Lyubomirsky from the University of California in which students were asked to commit five random acts of kindness each week for six weeks...

**Students showed a 41.66% increase in happiness.**

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For more ideas, check out this article:  
<https://ripplekindness.org/school-curriculum/the-benefits-of-kindness/>

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**"Children and adolescents do not learn kindness by only thinking about it and talking about it. Kindness is best learned by feeling it so that they can reproduce it."**

*-Dr. Patty O'Grady*

*Expert in neuroscience, emotional learning, and positive psychology*

