

Strategy Overview

Explore Kindness is a social and emotional learning (SEL) program for PreK-1st grade students. Designed to help children practice kindness, respect and tolerance, it provides free resources to educators, families and the wider community.

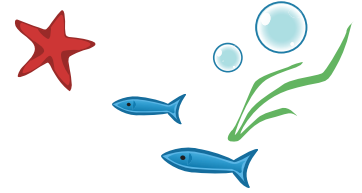
Malls and retailers implement the program, providing access in a familiar and comfortable setting. Marketing directors facilitate activities and establish relationships with educators in their area. They visit various elementary schools, where students are invited to meet Captain McFinn characters and enjoy storytime. All activities and supplementary materials are offered for free.

In addition, many online resources are available to the public at www.explorekindness.com. Viewers have access to a treasure chest of lesson plans, videos, crafts and much more. Lessons are followed by tips for reinforcing the concepts during daily activities, such as reading time, recess and bedtime.

Developed with guidance from nationally recognized experts in early social and emotional learning, Explore Kindness uses clear steps to address multiple learning styles: visual, auditory, kinesthetic and reflective. Strategies and tools help to foster positive childhood identities, good friendship behaviors and respectful choices. Family activities engage parents/caregivers in the program.



Best Practices



Each lesson of Explore Kindness emphasizes teamwork, respect and cooperation. The following strategies are encouraged for all facilitators:

- Emphasize that no single person leads an activity. Instead, students should work together toward a clearly defined goal. Encourage them to seek help from one another before turning to you.
- Praise students who demonstrate sharing, good communication and cooperation.
- Encourage equal participation and respect for different ideas.
- Advocate for students who are shy or at-risk of being discriminated against. Give these students opportunities to share their skills and talents with others.
- Make it clear that bullying will not be tolerated. Encourage students to look out for one another and support their fellow students by being good friends. Ask them to report any aggressive situations right away.
- Incorporate discussions about kindness and respect into other areas of study, such as reading, health and social sciences. Discuss book characters who face and deal with difficult situations and how they work to resolve them.
- As a facilitator, address your own strengths, weaknesses and biases. Harvard University's Project Implicit offers an online assessment tool to help you explore "thoughts and feelings outside of conscious awareness and control." You may find it at: www.implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html

