As a teacher, coach, parent or community leader, encouraging kindness and empathy is about what you say and do with children.

You are a role model, mentor, and guide who talks with children about how to be kind. You show them what being kind looks like, through your words and actions.

You may have encouraged kind, caring, empathic behavior among your children students in the past and it might feel familiar and comfortable to you.

If the conversation feels a spot new to you, here are some helpful places to start.

Wishing you moments of inspiration, connection, and caring,

Dr. Lynne
We can have "Cognitive Conversations" about almost anything, life experiences, cognitive and social-emotional skills or academic content we wish to teach our children.

"Cognitive Conversations" are the conversations you have with children to help them think about, reflect on and even problem-solve around a specific experience or issue.

Cognitive conversations are designed to enhance children's social-emotional, thinking, learning and behavior skill sets by bringing front of mind:

- The definition of a concept (such as kindness, empathy, dignity, respect, attention, self-regulation, impulse control, etc).
- The meaning of a concept (what it looks like or how it is applied in our thoughts, words, and actions) and
- The actions related to the concept, what we can do to enhance it (these are the how to’s, think this, say this, do this).
With Bloom Your Room, we are having cognitive conversations about kindness.

What follows are questions designed to help you speak with your children or students about kindness. Exploring what kindness looks like, sounds like, and feels like is a meaningful beginning for many children. Particularly those who wish to live with more kindness, yet are not quite sure how to.
What we CAN say

What does "being kind" mean to you?

Think of a time when someone was kind to you, describe what happened.

What did it make you think?

How did it make you feel?

What we CAN do

Let's take a moment to write or draw about a time when someone was nice to us.

What was the first thing that happened, what happened next, how did the story end?

Now, we will talk about what kindness is, how to know it, live it and pass it on.

Have the "Cognitive Conversation"
Let's Talk about Kindness
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Let's Talk about Kindness

What does "being kind" mean to you?

Think of a time when someone was kind to you, describe what happened.

What made you know this was kindness?

How did kindness feel to you in that moment?

In what ways were you motivated to be more kind to others?
What we CAN say

Being kind actually looks like something. We have all seen someone being kind, can you imagine in your mind what that looked like?
We can have kind faces, we can stand or hold our bodies in a kind way.
We can make kind gestures with our hands.
Let’s imagine for a moment what kindness “looks like” to you.

What we CAN do

Let’s all stand up for a second. We’re going to show what kindness looks like with our faces, hands, and bodies.

Show me with your face what being kind looks like to you.

Show me with your hands what you look like when you are being kind to another person.

Show me with your body what being kind looks like.

Have the "Cognitive Conversation"

What does Kindness "look like"?
Have the "Cognitive Conversation"
What does Kindness "look like"?

Did you know that "being kind" actually "looks like" something?
Describe what kindness looks like to you.

@drlynnekenney
What we CAN say

Being kind actually sounds like something. Let’s imagine for a moment what kindness "sounds like" to you. Is it loud or quiet? Is it harsh or gentle? Is it inviting or rejecting? When you hear kindness, does it make you feel interested and engaged? The cool thing about the sound of kindness is that you can be sure you know it when you hear it.

What we CAN do

Let’s imagine for a moment that we are in a large room, like our classroom, lunch room or auditorium. Everyone is talking, what are you hearing? What sounds do you hear that make you think, "Wow, that was kind"? What sounds do you hear that make you think, "That really wasn’t every kind at all"?

Let's open our ears to the sounds of kindness.

Have the "Cognitive Conversation"

What does Kindness "sound like"?
What we CAN say

What does "being kind" feel like to you?

When someone is kind to you, how does that make you feel?

When you are kind to someone else, how does that make you feel?

What we CAN do

Write down how you felt when someone was kind to you. Happy, excited, appreciated, welcomed.

Draw a rainbow with all the colors you think of when you think of kindness.

Write some Kind behaviors on your Kindness CAN Keeper poster.

Have the "Cognitive Conversation"
What does Kindness "feel like"?
We often hear from teachers, parents, and coaches that having "Cognitive Conversations," be they about thinking skills, social-emotional skills or academic skills, helps improve the student-teacher connection while also making the "HOW To's" of skill sets feel more transparent, less mysterious and easier for children to learn.

Try having a few Cognitive Conversations with your students and let us know how it goes, www.facebook.com/DrLynneKenney/

We appreciate your dedication to the well-being of children.

Sending you joy today,

Dr. Lynne