

How to Start a Kindness Club

Every school could use a little more kindness! A great way to spread the joy of kindness is to start your very own Random Acts of Kindness (RAK for short) Club.



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Feel free to contact us with questions or comments. We support the promotion of kindness at schools and will be happy to help however we can.

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Step 1: Form a RAK Club

First, find a school staff member that is willing to act as your staff advisor. Ask your new advisor to help you get permission from the school to start your RAK Club. After that, forming a RAK Club is as simple as answering a few basic Who, What, When, Where and Why questions:

WHO WILL BE PART OF THE CLUB?

Get Started: Begin with a few dedicated students and one or two staff members who are willing to act as the advisor. An advisor is essential to help keep you on the right track and to offer suggestions when you get stuck. A past RAK Club advisor suggests that the staff be people who are already fairly well-known in the school or know many of the students.

Make it Official: Meet with your school advisor to see if there are any documents or steps that need to be taken to officially start your RAK Club. There may be special school requirements or specific people whom you need to talk to before you can start a club.

Include Everyone: The founding students should look to all groups at school to recruit people. A RAK Club should be a representation of the whole school, not just a certain group.

Assign Roles: Give all members a role/responsibility. If you have a large group, form a team of leading officers to perform different tasks.



Just think of all the kind acts you can do as a team!

“Be kind whenever possible. It is always possible.”

—Dalai Lama

WHAT WILL YOUR GOALS BE?

Develop a set of goals and ideas that will help you in the first week of the club’s existence. Allow the goals and ideas to evolve over time as your club becomes more organized and your membership grows.

What influence do you want to have and where? In the entire school? In the larger community?

Set Yourself Up for Success: Make sure your goals are *realistic*. Under each goal, write down the steps you need to take to accomplish that goal and assign a timeline to those steps.

WHEN AND HOW OFTEN WILL YOU MEET?

Pick a time before, during or after school when the most people can attend.

Remind people the day before each meeting so they remember to be there.

WHERE WILL YOU MEET?

Pick a meeting location that is easy to find and is open at the time of day you need it. If a classroom is not available, consider meeting in the lunchroom, the gym or even on the steps.

WHY DO YOU WANT TO START A RAK CLUB?

WHAT WILL BE YOUR MISSION?

Besides the obvious goal of doing kind acts for others, consider creating a mission statement to go along with your set of goals so everyone knows what the purpose of the club will be. Some examples of mission statements are:

- To build self-esteem and raise school morale by showing every person at our school that he or she really can make a difference.
- To bring everyone at our school together in a cooperative, caring way.
- To remind students to look for the good they see in people!
- To change the world with kindness!

Once you have established all of the above steps, compile them into a document, charter, or a big poster and have every RAK Club Member sign it. Share this with other students, school administration or even the district.

So to review, here is a handy checklist of things you need to do:

- Find an adult supervisor who is willing to help launch your club.
- Check with your school about making your club official.
- Decide who will be part of the club (to start out).
- Decide when and how often you’ll meet.
- Decide on some goals and write a mission statement.

“My personal view is you can’t scare people into kindness and you can’t scare them away from bullying; you have to make them realize how good it feels to be kind.”

—Peggy Filer, RAK Club Advisor

Step 2: Spread the Word

Ask your staff advisor to help you publish information about the RAK Club within your school. It can be publicized over the morning announcements, in classroom newsletters, on fliers or posters, on a hallway bulletin board, or even in your school newspaper. Remember to personally invite people, too!

A fun idea to recruit new members is to make a small note and attach a candy. The note could say something like “Have a great day! From the RAK Club. Please come to our meeting today.” (be sure to include the meeting location and time as well).

Step 3: Before Your First Meeting

Let the fun begin by holding your first meeting as an official RAK Club! Before your first meeting, there are a few things you need to get ready:

- Create a meeting agenda (*see sample below*)
- Decide who will facilitate each meeting.
For your first few meetings, consider inviting your advisor.
- Make sure you have copies of your Code of Conduct for new members to read and sign. (*see sample below*)

Step 4: Hold Your First Meeting!

To start, have everyone introduce themselves. Announce what grade they are in as well as something personal like their favorite class, hobby, act of kindness, etc. To get to know each other even better, consider an ice-breaker activity:

If you have a large group, at every meeting have everyone meet three new people and find two things you have in common with them.

Give all RAK Club members a colorful 3x5” index card and ask them to write down a kind act they’ve seen, done or received. Keep the RAK’s anonymous like “Someone made me cookies” or “I shoveled my neighbor’s walk.” Later, you can post the cards somewhere visible or use as inspiration for future club activities.

Have each person think of one RAK activity to bring to the next meeting.

Use your first meeting to get some fun tasks done!

- Brainstorm different names for your club, then vote on the final choice.
- Think of fun ways to show kindness in your school and community. Make sure to write them down! (We’ve included some ideas for you below). There are a lot of fun ideas at the [randomactsofkindness.org website](http://randomactsofkindness.org/website).

Hopefully you’ll meet some new people during your first meeting! That’s exciting, but it’s not always easy. We’ve included some ice-breaker games to help everyone get acquainted.



Check with your group to see if anyone in your neighborhood could use some help with yardwork or raking leaves / shoveling snow.



A good way to show kindness is to pick up litter from public spaces like parks or beaches. It's a fun activity and is always needed.

“Every Act of Kindness has the possibility to be life-changing. Kindness inspires; be an inspiration!”

—Tamara Letter, RAKtivist

“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

—Maya Angelou

Helpful Tips from Other RAK Clubs

- At every meeting, have the secretary (or someone with this designated role), write down things to help you remember what you’ve done, as well as what worked and what didn’t work at a particular time.
- Take pictures of meetings, activities, members, etc. Keep a scrapbook, blog or Facebook page for your club if all club members are 13 or over. Be sure to ask permission from people shown in your photos before posting online. Also remember to check your school policy or your advisor before creating a Facebook page for your club as there may be school or district-wide rules about that.
- Try to establish a few activities that might become school traditions. For example, organize a drive to collect personal products for the homeless each year before Thanksgiving.
- Even if people can’t commit to coming to meetings, encourage the school to be kind by making kindness signs to post in the hallways.
- If you have a budget, consider making a club tee shirt for each member. Wearing the same tee shirts to club meetings & activities is a fun way to build lasting friendships.
- Remember that every meeting and every school year will be different. As members and roles change, so will the club. Just keep doing kindness to ensure success!

Creating Your Code of Conduct

When you are planning the goals for your club, it’s great to set up expectations for your leadership and members. Having everyone sign a Code of Conduct is a great way to help them feel committed to the kindness lifestyle! You can even decide on your Code of Conduct together so that everyone ‘buys in’ to the process.

Here are three sample “requirements” to place on your Code of Conduct:

1. In our Kindness Club, we only use language that lifts others up—never puts them down.
2. In our Kindness Club, we are UPSTANDERS not BYSTANDERS.
3. Our Kindness Club commits to creating a positive atmosphere at our school by attending meetings and participating in school-wide and community events for change.

At the end of your code of conduct, you can have a place for students (as well as parents / caregivers) to sign and date. Doing that makes the commitment to kindness real and makes your club important!

“Kindness is making someone smile—if even only for a moment.”

—RAKtivist



Check with your local food banks to see if there are opportunities for your kindness club to help in some way.



Animal shelters are a great way for your club members to show kindness toward animals.

“You cannot do a kindness too soon, for you never know how soon it will be too late.”

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Sample Meeting Agenda

You can keep the agenda for yourself or print it out for your leadership or members. It's a good idea to keep your agendas from each meeting so you can look back at them each year. At each meeting, consider including the following things:

- ❑ **Welcome**
Share a moment of inspiration by telling about a kind act you saw online or reading a kindness quote.
- ❑ **Ice-Breaker Activity**
Even if it's really short, it's always a good idea to take some time for the club members to get to know each other better.
- ❑ **Monthly Kindness Activities**
Review the progress of your kindness activities you've planned. Be sure to give specific things each club member is in charge of when planning an event.
- ❑ **Big Event Planning**
If your club is planning a big event, take time to discuss the project and any details that need to be covered.
- ❑ **Impromptu Kindness Activity**
Feeling like doing something right then and there? Take the last part of your time to do a kind act nearby. It can be as simple as leaving positive messages on lockers or cleaning up litter on the school grounds.

Other Helpful Resources

Depending on the activities you decide to do, The Random Acts of Kindness Foundation has created some fun resources you might find useful.

Kindness Ideas

We have a huge collection of kindness ideas to inspire you. To see them visit: <https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/kindness-ideas>

Kindness Printables

Download and print a variety of fun things from our printables page: <https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/printables>

- Kindness Posters to print and display at your school
- Kindness Calendars with a simple kind act you can do each day
- Kindness Coloring pages to have a little fun
- Kindness Bookmarks to write positive messages in and leave in books for others to find.
- Kindness Award Certificates to recognize those who go above and beyond
- Tag! You're It! Cards to print off and leave behind after doing a kind act.
- Kindness Bingo cards to play during a RAK Club meeting