

# BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF KINDNESS:

## A Community Organizer's Guide to the Kindness Campaign

"Creating a political community based on kindness may seem like an impossibility... without generosity, there can be no community... The atmosphere of compassion that transforms a mass of alienated individuals into a caring community is created by countless acts of kindness and charitable foresight. '

Sam Keen from Hymns to an Unknown God

## LEGACY OF DR. BARRY WEINHOLD

In honor of the legacy of Dr. Barry Weinhold (1937-2024) , this manual is offered by CICRCL.org and The Kindness Campaign free to anyone who wants to promote kindness in their community.

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## I. Introduction

Letters from the Co-founders of the Kindness Campaign

The purpose of the Guide

## A LETTER FROM THE FOUNDER

Dear Community Organizer:

I started The Kindness Campaign because I became concerned about the seeming breakdown of the sense of community and the widespread increases in youth and family violence in our community. I began to realize that all of the negative attention these topics were receiving in the media may also be part of the problem. I remembered that a basic law of behavior is that you get more of whatever you pay attention to. This led me to design a community-based, antiviolence program that did not focus so much on violence, but instead focused primarily on the opposite of violence: kindness.

This idea is very simple: if you want to eliminate acts of violence, you need to get people to focus on recognizing the positive acts of kindness that so often go unrecognized in any community. To organize an anti-violence campaign in this way means that you are making sure that you aren't inadvertently reinforcing acts of violence by giving them your attention. In addition, by recognizing the acts of kindness that occur naturally in your community, you are helping people restore the hope and trust needed to build a kind, caring community.

We discovered that by encouraging recognition of the countless daily acts of kindness that were occurring naturally, we were able to create an atmosphere of compassion in our community. This concern for our neighbors and compassion for the plight of others grew and helped us begin to transform a mass of separate individuals into a kind, caring community where violence had a harder time getting the recognition that it feeds off of.

Through the combined efforts of KKTV and a staff of trained volunteers at UCCS, we were able to make people more aware of the role kindness plays in the daily life of our community and began to help community leaders find better ways to recognize the everyday acts of kindness that previously were often ignored.

This Manual contains a record of our journey and should be a valuable guide to you as you contemplate starting a similar campaign in your city or town. Remember that there is tremendous power in the simple idea that people want to be recognized for their positive efforts to make their families, schools, neighborhoods, and communities better places for them to live and grow. When people are not recognized for their positive efforts, many of them become afraid, feel helpless or hopeless and become uncaring about themselves and others, thus making it easier for the forces of violence to take over their community.

With kind regards,

Barry K. Weinhold, Ph.D.,  
Director, The Kindness Campaign,

## A LETTER FROM THE CO-FOUNDER

Dear Community Organizer:

KKTV became a partner with the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs in the Kindness Campaign as a result of a survey that we do annually in Southern Colorado. When asked the question; what are your biggest concerns for the future in Southern Colorado - two years in a row, the top two answers were gangs and youth violence.

At the national level, the television industry has been criticized for sexual and violent content of prime time and daytime programming. We knew there was a role we could play in addressing these issues at the local level. I personally heard from many people who asked why CBS Evening News as well as our local news, was always oriented toward the negative things that happen in our world and community. With that awareness, there was a desire to bring attention to more positive things that go on in our community. The Kindness Campaign seemed like the perfect vehicle for us to fill the need to hear about kindness.

Our primary participation involves on-air promotion and more specifically, at the end of each newscast, we air a kindness segment that has been called into our Cityline system. This segment includes a person talking about someone or something that happened to them in the past few days that they want to thank someone for. We provide the end of our newscast as the venue for that recognition.

We found, I believe, a good partner in UCCS. Their interest was expanding the Kindness Campaign in a grass roots way through the school systems and the business community. Together we created a synergy that has successfully pushed the Campaign, into the awareness of our community, at a much more rapid rate than either of us initially believed possible.

It is my belief that for this Campaign to be successful, one of the partners needs to be a television station. This station needs to be one that is heavily involved in the community and has made a commitment to news and being the news leader in that community. Without the television partner, this Campaign can grow at a grass roots level but the amount of time it will take for that growth may not be the most efficient way to run the project. A partnership between a television station and a university, as in our case, is one that is rare indeed. Yet, for this project, we are the perfect partners. I would encourage you and your group to do everything that you can to involve a television station to insure the success of your project. The television station must be fully committed to the project and willing to run the Campaign for the long term, not just for a month or two. If the station actively participates, the benefit to them and how they are perceived in the market place will be equal to the cultivation and awareness of kindness in the communities that they serve.

This is clearly a win, win situation for everyone.

I wish you success in your attempt to implement it in your community.

Sincerely,

James D. Lucas, V.P./ General Manager

## PURPOSE OF THE GUIDE

The purpose of this manual is to provide grass-roots organizer's with a blueprint or template to follow in implementing the Kindness Campaign in your community. Most of the material in this manual was developed as a result of implementing the Kindness Campaign in Colorado Springs, Colorado in the past two and half years. There are many practical suggestions that we can now offer you as a result of our experience. We learned many lessons the hard way; by just trying them out and hoping for the best. This experience can make it unnecessary for you to "reinvent the wheel" and can possibly prevent some of the trial and error learning that we had to do.

Even with this guide to assist you, you will still have to develop this program to fit the unique needs of your community. Also, what we learned to do that was most success was to follow the energy of the process as it unfolded without trying to shape the process too much. Initially, this was all we could do because we had no model or template to follow. Eventually, we learned that this was an effective, conscious strategy to organizing this type of grass-roots program. One of our Native American friends repeatedly cautioned us to never "get ahead of the medicine." this meant to us, "follow, don't push." We hope that you too can apply this principle to organizing the Kindness Campaign in your community.

For example, initially we thought civic organizations, churches and small business might be where to start with the campaign. However, it actually started in a graduate classroom and then spread to a few schools as a few members of that class took the ideas to the schools where they worked. From that small beginning, school after school joined the campaign and by far outstripped the other sectors of the community. We never had to go to the schools and "sell" the campaign. After the first few schools adopted the campaign, other schools heard about it and came to us wanting it in their schools. It may be different in your community, but you can be sensitive to where the energy for the program is coming from and then follow it effectively.

Another important principle helped us immensely. That was to "keep it simple." Any community awareness program, to be effective, has to reach almost everyone with its message. If that message is imbedded in too many words, slogans, jargon, etc. you will lose some people. It should be simple enough to give people an almost instant picture or image of what your program is trying to do. The slogan, "Spread Kindness, It's Contagious" did that for us. It is positive, action-oriented and conveyed the message we want people to get. There were many suggestions made to make the campaign more elaborate and have different slogans for different aspects of the campaign, but we resisted that and probably reached even more people with our message than we thought possible.

In using this manual, remember to:

- 1) organize it around the unique needs of your community,
- 2) follow the flow of the project instead of pushing it and 3)
- keep it simple.

## II. What is the Kindness Campaign?

Description of the Kindness Campaign

History of the Kindness Campaign

Statement of Beliefs

Goal

A Project of the National Program for the Study and Prevention of Youth and Family Violence, Barry K. Weinhold, Director, UCCS

The motto of The Kindness Campaign is "Spread Kindness -- It's Contagious." The mission and goals of the Campaign are (1) to restore the sense of community and neighborliness that we seem to have forgotten by promoting acts of kindness and (2) to prevent the spread of violence that has taken hold in our schools and community by promoting the spread of kindness. Everyone can help stop the spread of violence, hatred and unkindness. We all must remember to do small daily acts of kindness for ourselves, our family, friends, neighbors, school mates, work mates, strangers, those who are sick or in need, and anyone else we meet.

This Campaign reconfirms the important understanding that we are all interconnected. We all have a duty to act kindly towards ourselves as well as others. It is difficult to be kind to others, if our heart is empty of kindness. True kindness comes from having a compassionate heart. It takes countless small daily acts of kindness to create an atmosphere of compassion necessary to transform a mass of separate individuals into a kind, caring community. That is the main goal of the Kindness Campaign.

The Kindness Campaign is designed to provide simple recognition for daily acts of kindness. Many small, daily acts of kindness go unrecognized, while acts of violence are quickly recognized and maybe even are over-recognized by the media. If you want to eliminate violence, the best way to do that is by placing your attention on its opposite: kindness. As a result of the Kindness Campaign, the Kindness Coalition International designated the city of Colorado Springs as "A Community of Kindness" in 1997. Only two other U.S. cities and towns were given the award.

The Campaign has spread to over 105 area schools, with a combined enrollment of over 70,000 students. A Program Guide for the schools, Spreading Kindness, is available for elementary and middle schools. Schools report an immediate 32% drop in discipline referrals after they started the Campaign. Year long results show a 26% drop. Student put-downs dropped by up to 94% in participating schools. Through its "Creating Kind and Safe Schools" project, area businesses have adopted schools in order to stop the violence before it starts in our schools. To date, American Medical Response, Woodford Manufacturing Company and TRW have adopted four area schools.

CU-The Springs and The Colorado Institute for Conflict Resolution and Creative Leadership cosponsored the Campaign. In the past six years over 370 presentations have been made to schools, churches and community groups. The booklet, Raising Kind Kids, is available to help foster kindness in families and the guide, Kind Beginnings, is available to pre-schools. The 6th Annual Community of Kindness Awards Ceremony was held May 7, 2000 to honor 10 area residents, 10 students and 4 schools with the 2000 Community of Kindness Award. In addition, several large businesses, small businesses and non-profits received the Community of Kindness Business Award. Area residents also received the M.L.Chase Humanitarian Award.

## THE KINDNESS CAMPAIGN

The following are some suggestions of how you might spread kindness:

Make a list of things that you can do to bring more kindness to your self, your family, neighborhood, school, workplace or community.

- Put your shopping cart back in its appointed space in the parking lot.

As you walk through your neighborhood, pick up any trash on the sidewalk or gutter.

- Send a letter to a teacher or minister letting them know what a difference their acts of kindness made in your life.

Organize your friends or work mates to gather used clothing for homeless shelters.

- Make an anonymous donation to a local charity that is actively helping young people or start a fund-raising drive in your office for such organizations.
- Ask your children to go through their toys and donate some of them to children who are less fortunate.

Offer to baby-sit for a neighbor's children so they can take a break from parenting.

When someone new moves into your neighborhood, bake some cookies and go over and welcome them to the neighborhood.

### How You Can Contribute to The Kindness Campaign

The Kindness Campaign are supported by contributions from organizations, businesses or individuals. You can contribute by going to the website <https://CICRCL.org> and click on the SUPPORT or DONATE button.

## About the Kindness Campaign

The motto of The Kindness Campaign is "Spread Kindness It's Contagious."™ The mission and goals of the Campaign are (1) to restore the sense of community and neighborliness that we seem to have forgotten by promoting acts of kindness and (2) to prevent the spread of violence that has taken hold in our schools and community by promoting the spread of kindness. Everyone can help stop the spread of violence, hatred and unkindness. We all must remember to do small daily acts of kindness for ourselves, our family, friends, neighbors, school mates, work mates, strangers, those who are sick or in need, and anyone else we meet.

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## THE KINDNESS CAMPAIGN

### THE HISTORY OF

The Kindness Campaign had its beginning in Eastern Europe in 1992. My wife and I were on an assignment for the United Nations during my sabbatical leave from the University of Colorado Springs. We were living in Bratislava, Czechoslovakia and working out of the United Nations Center in Vienna, Austria some 45 miles away. Our task was to create an International Centre for Family Studies in Bratislava and get the centre affiliated with the United Nations. This was part of the U.N. International Year of the Family in 1993, which was housed in the Center for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs in the U.N. offices in Vienna.

During the fall of 1992, while living in Bratislava, we saw news reports of the anti-gay rights legislation that was approved by the voters (Amendment Two) in Colorado. When people in Bratislava and in Vienna wanted to know where we were from in the United States and we answered, "Colorado," they would immediately say "Oh, that's the hate-state, isn't it? When they asked where we were from in Colorado and we answered "Colorado Springs", they would ask, "Isn't that where all this anti-gay hatred got started?" This happened many times while we lived in Europe.

Needless to say, this disturbed us very much. We had been long-time residents of Colorado Springs and felt defensive when people made these generalizations about our home state and our home city. We tried in vain, at first, to defend our home with statements about its beauty and how not everyone there felt prejudiced toward gays. Later we just learned to smile and say "Yes, we know and we don't like it either."

When we returned to Colorado Springs in the spring of 1993, we found that the community climate had changed. Considerable polarization had taken place between the various factions creating considerable ill will. The newspapers, radio, and television stations provided a running commentary of a "war of words" as people who didn't even know each other, hurled personal insults back and forth. In addition, there was an apparent up-swing of gang-related youth violence with several drive-by shootings in the community. In the schools, I began hearing more about bullying attacks and the almost constant barrage of put-downs.

I searched for some way to be involved in the solution to these problems. This had been my hometown for over 23 years and I didn't like what I saw it becoming. I also didn't like the negative image that had been created world-wide as a result of the anti-gay rights legislation. I knew that what was happening here among a minority of its citizens did not represent the prevailing attitudes of most of the people in this community. Most of the people I knew were very kind, respectful and tolerant of others, but they weren't getting any chance to show it in the news-media.

I tried to become involved in one community group that had formed to counter the antigay movement, but I found they too were caught up in proving they were right and those on the other side were wrong. I began to see that the more attention that was focused on the negative aspects of the community, the more these aspects seemed to increase. This was also true of trying to stop the

youth violence. What I saw was that there was a need to refocus people's attention on the good things that were happening in the community, but I still didn't know how to do that.

I had a number of conversations with my colleagues at the university about this idea, but nothing gelled at first. Finally, my dean said to me in the hall one day, "Why don't you create a center here at the university to study the problem and maybe try to get some grant money?" He added, "Give me a concept paper on what you would like to do and I'll try to find some money to support it."

I went home and wrote out a ten page concept paper on what I thought the National Program for the Study and Prevention of Youth and Family Violence could accomplish and gave it to him. He was excited about the idea and offered to find some university money to send me to some conferences to discover what was happening in this field.

In December 1993, I chose to attend the National Conference on Family Violence and the National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect in Pittsburgh. They were scheduled back to back, so it would be easy for me to attend both. At the Family Violence Conference, I saw a presentation of a group from Elmira, New York where they were asking people to sign pledge cards to agree to help out young parents who didn't have much extended family support. It was called "10,000 Pledges" and it impressed me as a positive attempt to mobilize the community to deal with an obvious problem.

Then I attended a program from Kansas City, Missouri where an anti-violence coalition had developed a program in the schools to reduce bullying and put-downs. They were being successful on giving students recognition and attention for small daily acts of kindness.

When I returned to Colorado Springs, I began thinking about how I could merge these two ideas into a community-based anti-violence program that focused on the opposite acts of violence ... acts of kindness. I tried out the idea in one of my graduate courses in counseling. I asked the 28 students whether they would be willing to keep track of the number of small daily acts of kindness that they perform each week. I told them about the concept of focusing on acts of kindness as a way of refocusing our attention away from negative things in our lives. I designed a log sheet where they could keep track on their daily acts of kindness. I told them it was voluntary and involved no extra credit, but I promised an autographed copy of one of my books to the person who recorded the most acts of kindness.

The first week, 25 students recorded over 225 acts of kindness, with one person recording 19 acts of kindness. I was also eager to see who were the recipients of their acts of kindness: themselves, family members, neighbors, workmates, schoolmates or strangers? Most of the acts of kindness were to family members and to themselves, with a scattering among the other categories. I asked the students to continue recording their acts of kindness for three more weeks, until I had a sizable data base. Also, I make up buttons that said, "Spread Kindness It s Contagious," on them. Each person was given a button if they recorded an act of kindness and I asked them to pass on the button, if someone was kind to them and also they were to ask that person to do the same.

Each week, they would come to class reporting on their acts of kindness and asking for another button. They said they gave theirs away. One man reported giving a button to a checkout clerk in the grocery store who was extra nice to a woman with two young children. A woman teacher reported giving her button to a student in her class who was kind to other students. Some students asked for four or five buttons because they began to see more and more opportunities to give theirs away.

Several students also began asking me to speak to their schools, churches or civic groups about this idea. I began to see that I needed a media co-sponsor in order to get the work out to the whole community. I hypothesized that I would need at least 10% of the population wearing a kindness button and looking for a chance to pass it on before there would be any changes in consciousness. That would mean, 40,000 people would have to get a button. I knew I couldn't reach that many people by myself.

I made an appointment to talk to the station manager and news director of the CBS affiliate in Colorado Springs about the Kindness Campaign. I asked him if he would be willing to consider ending their evening news show with a good news story. He did indicate interest in the proposal and mentioned that he would discuss the idea with the general manager and get back to me.

I wasn't sure if anything would happen as a result of our conversation, but I had some unexpected support from Oprah Winfrey. That same afternoon, Oprah did her whole show on random acts of kindness which was carried on this CBS affiliate. The next day I got a call from the general manager wanting to discuss the idea further. It turns out that this station was looking for a community service project to invest in and they considered the Kindness Campaign.

This was the beginning of four months of negotiations to bring KKTV on board as a full partner with the university in operating the Kindness Campaign. By July 1994, we held a news conference and publicly announced our partnership. During this four month period, KKTV produced an eight minute video tape, based on a script that I wrote, that could be used in presentations to schools, churches and civic organizations in the community. They also created a "kindness line" as a part of their Cityline call-in service. Viewers who had someone be kind to them could call in and leave a message. Then the station selected one of these kindness messages to play at the end of the evening news shows at 5:30 and 10:00pm. By April 1996, over 20,000 calls have been received to this number and it has been an outstanding success. Many viewers reported how important it was for them to end the evening news with the positive feelings generated by hearing the kindness call.

The station also taped various community leaders, such as the police chief giving short testimonies about the Kindness Campaign, which they played between programs throughout their broadcast day. The station has contributed about \$200,000 in in-kind services to the Kindness Campaign and is a big reason why it has been so successful. In any kind of community-based program such as the Kindness Campaign, you need the support of the media in order to get the word out.

There were several other anti-violence programs in the community developed by the media. For example, one radio station sponsored a campaign called "Stop the Violence." It did not have

the intended impact on the community for several reasons. First, it was focused on a negative outcome (Stop the Violence) and second, there was no grass-roots co-sponsor to keep it moving and growing. A television or radio station is an important piece of the puzzle, but there also needs to be a grass-roots group that will serve as a co-sponsor to keep the campaign going.

In our case, the grass-roots group was the university, its students and a group of dedicated volunteers. I gathered a group of about 25 volunteers to help start the Campaign. Some of them "shadowed" me when I have presentations and then became a part of a speaker's bureau that also made presentations. These dedicated people shared my vision of how the Kindness Campaign could make a difference in this community.

From July 1994 through December 1995, this team made over 130 presentations in the community. They helped reach people in schools, churches, and civic organizations with our simple message, a pledge card (where they could pledge to do an act of kindness) and a button to wear and pass on. Over 45,000 people signed pledge cards and got buttons to wear during that time. Wendy's of Southern Colorado joined the Campaign for two months in May and June 1995 and helped distribute almost 30,000 buttons in their restaurants. (See Appendix A for details of the agreement.)

By the end of 1995, 50 schools were involved in developing Kindness Campaign programs. Each had a volunteer school coordinator and a committee of students, teachers, counselors, social workers, administrators and parents that planned the program in their schools. All of these schools contacted us because they had heard about the Kindness Campaign, either from watching KKTV or through referrals from other schools.

After the first year in 1994-95, we had gotten feedback from those schools that were developing programs that they were out of ideas by the end of the year. At that time, we secured a \$10,000 grant from a local psychiatric hospital to produce a program guide for the schools. We developed this over the summer of 1995, with a team of teachers, and field tested it during fall 1995 in 23 elementary and middle schools. This guide provides schools with over 150 suggested activities to choose from and has solved the problem that schools initially had with running out of ideas.

Another important part of the Campaign in the schools was periodic meetings with all school coordinators, so they could share ideas with each other and get support from their colleagues in other schools.

Another community event that really helped put the Kindness Campaign on the map in Colorado Springs was the Community of Kindness Awards Luncheon. It operates as a fundraiser for the campaign and provides public recognition for 20 adults who are nominated by school children and receive the Community of Kindness Award each year. In May 1995, over 400 citizens gathered to honor these unsung heroes and heroines. Also, each school that Participating in the nomination process, honored their classroom and grade level winners before sending them on to the citywide competition. We estimated that over 200 adults were recognized for their acts of kindness at some point in the process. This year, over 500 people attended the luncheon, including

about 100 school children as our guests. We ask local corporations and business to sponsor tables for award winners and their guests as well as student nominators and their guests.

The positive publicity from this luncheon has helped many people join the Kindness Campaign and has provided important recognition to adults who would not have had their acts of kindness recognized publicly. Even though it takes lots of time and volunteer efforts to produce this luncheon, it is well worth the effort. Finally, in September 1995 we created an on-line magazine on the World Wide Web called, "Spreading Kindness." The first issue contains articles on the grass-roots kindness organizations in California, Florida and Kansas City. Future issues will feature interviews and reports of kindness activities in other U.S. cities as well as international activities. We plan to produce two to four issues per year.

This represents a brief history of the first two years of the Kindness Campaign in Colorado Springs. We still hope to reach our goal of enrolling 80,000 people in Southern Colorado. We have enrolled over 10% of those living in Colorado Springs, which was our goal. Because KKTV covers all of Southern Colorado with a population of over 600,000 people, we have begun to expand the Campaign to Pueblo, Canon City and other communities in this region.

A market survey of its viewers by KKTV in the fall of 1995 showed that 70% of those polled were aware of the Kindness Campaign and of that group, 75% said they believed it was having a positive impact on our community. These are outstanding results for this community and provide us with valuable information on the overall efforts of the Campaign. In schools, we also have outstanding results. In the schools where we have checked, there was about a 30% reduction in discipline referrals to the office and some schools reported up to a 94% reduction in put-downs. We will continue to gather data on the impact of the Kindness Campaign in schools and in the community.

#### Brief Update of the History of the Kindness Campaign (June 2000)

This will briefly update the last four years of the Kindness Campaign, since 1996, when the First Edition of "Building a Community of Kindness" was first published. Actually, the foundation for the Kindness Campaign was firmly established by 1996. There have been some small changes and additions, but the campaign still has the same goals and has continued to do what it proposed to do when it was created in 1994. The best way to update yourself is by reading the back issues of "Spreading Kindness." Our electronic magazine that started on the web in the fall, 1995. All the back issues are in the Appendices to this Guide.

## STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

It is our belief that the Kindness Campaign is an effective way to curb youth and peer violence and help restore a sense of neighborliness and community, if it follows a set of basic beliefs and principles. It has to:

- Be focused on positive behavioral alternatives to violence, aggression and alienation.
- Be carried out with high integrity and those involved need to be models of what they are trying to teach others.
- Be simple and direct, free from jargon and gimmicks.
- Be implemented at a grass-roots level, as well as involve key community leaders who are models of kindness and trust.
- Have media support and have daily exposure to the general public.
- Have dedicated volunteers who believe in the vision of the Kindness Campaign.
- Be developed in an organic way by following the unique ebbs and flows of energy around the project in each community.
- Be designed around the unique needs of each community.
- Be fun for everyone involved and help people find more meaning and enjoyment in their lives.
- Be planned as a long-range intervention that can be sustained over at least five years.

## GOALS OF THE KINDNESS CAMPAIGN

The main goals of the Kindness Campaign are to:

- reduce the amount of recognition people receive for negative acts of violence or aggression and increase the amount of recognition people receive for being kind and respectful toward others.
- provide opportunities for citizens to participate in a positive, constructive way to improving the quality of life in their communities.
- create a "community of kindness" where the social norm is to be kind and respectful toward others and those who do not behave this way are assisted in redirecting their behavior in more positive ways through rewarding them for positive behaviors instead of punishing them for their negative acts.
- restoring a real sense of neighborliness to neighborhoods where this has broken down.
- help school officials, business leaders, public officials, parents and others learn how to manage others through rewards and not through punishments.
- help school age children learn pro-social behaviors and learn to resolve their conflicts peacefully without malice.

### III. Why do we need the Kindness Campaign?

Statistics

Causes of Violence

## STATISTICS

The problem of school-based youth violence appears to be getting worse. A recent survey by the National League of Cities shows that serious school violence has increased by 41% in the last five years in cities with a population over 100,000. Schools are now the largest purchasers of metal detectors in this country and peer violence is an everyday occurrence in schools.

While much attention is focused on visible forms of violence and on keeping guns and knives out of the school, there is a more hidden form of violence that is having pervasive, destructive effects. That form is peer violence. Studies show that over 80% of all children enter school feeling good about themselves. By fifth grade, that percentage has dropped to 20% and by twelfth grade it is only 5%. It is the day to day peer violence in the form of "put-downs" and bullying behaviors in our schools and families that eventually erodes away the positive feelings of our young people.

Child-to-child abuse and peer violence has never been viewed as a cause for great concern among adults. But escalating youth violence in our society, coupled with other social realities of our time, require us to rethink the potential impact of peer violence.

Youth and family violence seem out of control. A recent survey of 750 viewers by KKTU showed that "gangs, crime and youth violence" was rated the number one problem in Colorado Springs by 40% of the respondents. Last year in a similar survey, the respondents rated "the economy and jobs" as the greatest problem. One year ago 7.5% rated "crime" as the number one concern and "gangs and youth violence" were not even mentioned. In a similar comparison, 1940 teachers rated gum chewing, cutting in line, littering and running in the hall as their biggest discipline problems. In 1990 teachers claimed biggest discipline problems were: suicide, rape, drug abuse, assault, guns and gang violence.

A recent report indicates that domestic violence is now the leading cause of injury to women between ages 15 and 44. Research shows that 50 percent of all married women will experience some form of violence from their partners during their marriage. In addition, each year almost 6.9 million children are gravely assaulted by their parents.

However, the most violent family members may be children and youth themselves. Over 29 million youth per year commit one or more acts of violence against a sibling in the family, with 19 million of these attacks being severe enough to be considered assaults, if they had occurred outside the home. Many of these same children and youth are responsible for acts of violence outside the family as well. Across the board, children from violent homes are three to four times more likely than children from non-violent homes to commit illegal acts of violence-vandalism, stealing, alcohol abuse, drug use etc. and they are the ones who get arrested. They also have multiple school problems failing grades, discipline problems and aggressive or violent encounters with peers. Over 50% of all school-yard bullies become criminals. The average child receives 213 put-downs a week or 30 per day. Many of those occur at home or in school. Three out of four students report being bullied during their school career. Over 90% of students surveyed felt that being bullied caused lasting social, emotional or academic problems.

About 10% of those who drop out of school, do so because of repeated bullying. Also, one out of five high school students report avoiding restrooms out of a fear for their safety.

In the next half-hour alone, 285 children will become victims of broken homes and 228 children will be beaten, molested or otherwise abused by their parents. These youngsters are self-destructive as well. In the next year 500,000 children will attempt suicide, 6000 of those will succeed, 1,000,000 kids will run away from home, 12,000,000 teens will take some form of narcotics, all regular drug users. .

## CAUSES OF VIOLENCE

- 1) Violence on TV may be one culprit. Research shows that 15 years after TV is introduced into a country, the homicide rate in the nation doubles. But it is not the only cause.
- 2) The U.S. does not have "child-friendly" and family-friendly laws and policies. Our government programs and society in general do not support families. For example: family leave policies in the U.S. offer 12 weeks un-paid family leave. By contrast, the small country of Slovakia has three years paid maternity leave. In addition, all other industrial countries, except the U.S. and South Africa, have free home visitor services for all new parents, some offering up to three to five years of care. In addition, we are suffering from the breakdown of the extended family, leaving new parents isolated with no support system and no relief. This has led to a huge increase in domestic violence and child abuse.
- 3) Family structures are breaking down. Almost 30% of all children born in this country last year were illegitimate and among African-Americans the rate was over 60%. About one in five children live in single-parent families with an unmarried mother. Many of these children are poorly bonded and attached to their parent. They have two main needs: to belong and feel wanted and to feel powerful - the answers are to 1) join a gang and/or to 2) victimize others. The causes do not stop there.
- 4) Social and economic conditions have gotten worse. We can look at the increase in poverty conditions, lack of affordable housing, lack of quality daycare, overcrowding and violence in the schools as just a few of the additional causes. The results are: youth that feel unhappy, alone, unattached, angry, frightened, hopeless, with no future, no goals and nothing to be proud of.

### Youth and Peer Violence

We know that 80% of a student's behavior is directed toward recognition and approval. That is how they build and maintain a positive self-image. When asked the question, "Is it easier in this school to get recognized for doing something positive or something negative?" , students almost unanimously say that it is easier to get recognized for doing something negative. Add to that the constant flow of "put-downs" and possible bullying behaviors and you have a formula that can easily lead to the development of aggressive and anti-social behavior patterns where young people will actually seek negative attention because there isn't enough positive attention to go around.

At its worst, this peer violence has led to murder and suicide. Take the case of a seventh grade boy in a Missouri community who had been called "Fatty" all of his elementary school years. This cruel treatment continued in middle school, and one day he brought a gun to school, killed a classmate and then himself in front of his classmates. There was a recent case in Colorado Springs where a middle school student shot his classmate and then killed himself. The school where they attended is now involved with the Kindness Campaign to make sure that this doesn't happen to any other students at that school.

The picture is grim but not hopeless. By using primary prevention and early intervention and some basic psychological principles, we can begin to change the attitudes, actions and futures of our young people and thus eliminate these destructive behaviors. These methods save lives and save tax-payers money now used to support expensive treatment programs and the building and maintaining of new prisons. We know that these primary prevention methods are effective at reducing criminal and aggressive behavior and cost less than 10% of the cost of treating and rehabilitating youth offenders.

## IV. Is the Kindness Campaign Effective?

Why Kindness is an Effective Weapon to Stop Violence

## WHY KINDNESS IS AN EFFECTIVE WEAPON TO STOP VIOLENCE

At first glance, most people might agree that an act of kindness is a puny weapon to use to stop violence, but the evidence is mounting that acts of kindness may be our "secret weapon" in a campaign to end violence and hatred across the nation. The Kindness Campaign is a community-based anti-violence program started in Colorado Springs, Colorado. The "secret weapon" in this campaign is the 46,000 citizens who have pledged to do acts of kindness for themselves, family members, neighbors, workmates, classmates, and even strangers they encounter while driving.

Because of the grass<sup>w</sup> roots support for this campaign, the purveyors of violence and crime are starting to run scared. Shortly after he appeared in a television commercial for the Kindness Campaign, Colorado Springs Chief of Police, Lorne Kramer, received an anonymous letter containing a Kindness Campaign button with a bullet hole through it. His response was, "This is positive evidence that the criminals in this city are afraid of the power of kindness."

A similar reaction to peer violence is emerging in area schools. Our research data indicates that put-downs and bullying behaviors are on the increase and are most prevalent in grades four through eight. Kids in this age bracket receive more than 30 put-downs per day, most of which occur at school or at home. Over three-fourths of all students report being bullied at school or in their neighborhood. We also know that bullying behavior is a precursor to later delinquent and criminal behavior. National statistics indicate that more than 50% of all schoolyard bullies become criminals.

When the Kindness Campaign is introduced into elementary and middle schools, referrals to the office for discipline typically drop by one-third. Children who are now recognized for acts of kindness no longer have to use negative, disruptive behaviors to get the recognition they seek. When I talk to elementary and secondary school students, I often ask them, "Is it easier in this school to be recognized for doing something positive or something negative?" Their answer is almost always, "something negative." In schools where the Kindness Campaign is operating, students tell me that even the bullies become attracted to kindness and start acting more friendly and kind. When bullies see their classmates getting recognized for positive behaviors, they want to be a part of the action.

### Why Kindness Works

One of the main reasons why acts of kindness are an effective weapon in reducing violence is rooted in psychological principles. Social recognition can be used to strengthen a positive behavior (kindness), while conversely you can weaken a negative behavior (aggression and anti-social behavior) by taking your attention away from it. Another way to eliminate a negative behavior is to find an effective social punishment that creates an undesirable social consequence for the person. Unfortunately, many times the consequences or punishments carry with them undesirable secondary gains, such as peer approval for being "cool" because you got punished. Because of the danger of secondary gain, the most effective way to eliminate a negative behavior is to ignore it and then provide enough ways that people can get their positive behaviors recognized.

Research shows that paying more attention to negative or anti-social behaviors only serves to strengthen them.

One of the best examples of these principles in action is the anti-smoking campaign that took place in this country over the last fifteen years. In the beginning, the campaign focused on the health risks related to smoking and the benefits of not smoking. This produced few results because most smokers were in denial about the health risks. Actually, it was the idea of secondhand smoke however, that produced a public outcry against smokers. Non-smokers became adamant about not putting themselves at risk because of someone else's smoking. This outcry, coupled with the positive recognition people got for quitting smoking, led to massive peer pressure for smokers to quit. When smoking in public places became restricted, it was ultimately the peer pressure from friends and family that had the greatest impact on smokers. Millions of people in the U.S. stopped smoking on their own, without the support of any stop smoking treatment programs, even though nicotine is the most physiologically addictive substance known to humans. Ultimately, the positive response that people got from family and friends for not smoking, coupled with the negative responses they got for smoking, helped them quit for good.

### How to Stop Violent Behavior

These same principles can be utilized to stop violent behavior. While violent behavior is not known to be physiologically addictive, it may be psychologically addictive (rage-alcoholism) and does produce serious health hazards to those who come in contact with it. The health costs of violence in this country are well into the billions of dollars each year. Like the stop-smoking campaign, a stop-violence campaign will require implementing a massive public awareness effort about the costs of violence to all of us, mobilizing peer pressure from friends and families against violence and using positive social rewards to support pro-social and non-violent behaviors.

Any stop-violence campaign must also recognize the pervasive support for violence in this country. We live in a country that glorifies violence. Television and films glorify the use of violence as a weapon for getting people what they want and show violence as the most effective way to resolve conflicts. Research indicates that within fifteen years of introducing television into a developing country, the homicide rate doubles. More than 90% of American parents use spanking as a way of disciplining their children, a method that according to some experts teaches children how to use physical violence to resolve conflicts. Child abuse and domestic violence in families have become an epidemic in this country.

To counter the social and family support for violence in this country, we must find ways to recognize daily acts of kindness and build as much support for kindness as we have done for violence. This will require all of us to consciously look for opportunities each day to do small acts of kindness for others and to recognize the people who are being kind every day. At least as much attention by the media must be given to acts of kindness as they give to acts of violence.

## How Acts of Kindness Are Being Recognized

The media is a big part of the problem and they have to be a big part of the solution. In order to support the recognition of daily acts of kindness, the CBS affiliate in Colorado Springs, KKTV, created a "Kindness Line." Viewers can call 630-1111 (K.I.N.D.) and report any act of kindness they have experienced or witnessed. One of these recorded reports of kindness is played each evening at the end of the newscasts. Since the inauguration of the Kindness Line in July of 1994, more than 22,000 calls have been received, an average of 1,100 per month. These daily reminders of acts of kindness on the news help everyone stay aware that acts of kindness are happening each day in this community, despite the fact that the news is usually about acts of violence in the community. In addition, people now have world-wide access to this line through the Internet. All you have to do is access KKTV's Web page, follow instructions and type in your report of an act of kindness. Their Internet Web Page address is <http://www.KKTV.com/>. Another local example of recognizing acts of kindness was the Kindness Awards luncheon in May 1995 in Colorado Springs where over 440 people witnessed 20 area adults, nominated by school children, receive the 1995 Community of Kindness Awards. We are expecting over 700 in 1996. The Kindness Campaign also has reached over 28,000 school children in 50 area schools this year with activities designed to promote acts of kindness. Churches, civic organizations and businesses have also joined the Campaign. Finally, Wendy's restaurants in Southern Colorado and the American Furniture store in Colorado Springs have become distribution centers for Kindness Campaign buttons. Patrons are encouraged to sign pledge cards and get a free button to wear and pass on. The Kindness Campaign, using all these outlets, has distributed over 46,000 Campaign buttons this year. The Kindness Campaign is also part of a nation-wide effort to collect and document at least 2 million acts of kindness to balance the 2 million documented acts of violence (people who are arrested for violent behavior in this country). Every time you sign a pledge card pledging to do an act of kindness, call KKTV's Kindness Line to report an act of kindness, leave a typed report of an act of kindness on KKTV's Web page or leave an E-mail message at our Internet address at [kindness@rmii.com](mailto:kindness@rmii.com). you are contributing to the total of 2 million acts of kindness in this country.

If we all do our part, we can make our neighborhood, community, state and nation a safer and kinder place to live and work. The threat of violence can be eliminated, if we work together. The solutions are available, if we have the collective will to implement them and the persistence it takes to continue them. It took over 15 years in the stop-smoking campaign before real progress was made.

Sam Keen in his latest book, *Hymns to An Unknown God*, writes the following: "Creating a political community based on kindness may seem like an impossibility." He adds that, "We are discovering lately in American society that we can't build a good society on the principles of self-interest and entitlement alone. Without generosity there can be no community. Without the kindness of strangers, a society is turned into an armed camp....The atmosphere of compassion that transforms a mass of alienated individuals into a caring community is created by countless acts of kindness and charitable foresight." The goal of this campaign are to help recognize the acts of kindness that are needed to transform our nation into countless caring, compassionate local neighborhoods and communities all committed to developing and preserving the value of kindness and compassion toward one and all regardless of race, creed, age or gender.

## V. How does the Kindness Campaign address the problem?

In Schools

In the Community

In Businesses

## IN SCHOOLS

The Kindness Campaign works on the basic principle that the best way to eliminate unwanted, anti-social or violent behaviors is to systematically reinforce and teach children to use the opposite behaviors, such as kind and courteous acts, pro-social and non-violent behaviors. When acts of kindness are emphasized in a school, there is a dramatic drop in the number of disruptive acts in the classroom, there are fewer put-downs and less peer violence in the form of bullying and threats of physical violence. Gang-related aggressive behaviors are also reduced.

A similar kindness program in over 300 schools in the Kansas City area in the last six years resulted in a sharp reduction in numbers of put-downs and bullying behavior. Locally, a short two-week pilot conducted in two area schools yielded similar results. In one elementary school, a teacher systematically recorded the number of "put-downs" she observed in one class during one day prior to the Campaign and counted 14. After the Campaign began, she tracked "put-downs" in the same way and found only one put-down in that same class on that day. Referrals to the office for discipline at this school also dropped from 19 during the week before the Campaign began to 13 the week after it ended, a reduction of 32%.

In another study, a local middle school had 147 discipline referrals to the office in the 15 days before the Kindness Campaign began at their school. In the 15 days after the beginning of the Campaign, the number dropped to 101, a 31% drop in referrals. Students and teachers also reported seeing more kind and courteous behavior, fewer put-downs and less bullying behavior. Longer term statistics show a sustained reduction of discipline referrals of 26 to 30%.

While each school is encouraged to design the Campaign activities to fit their particular school, we generally introduce the Campaign in the following way:

- The faculty and staff are shown a short video tape describing how the Campaign works. They are asked to sign pledge cards and receive Kindness Buttons to wear for doing so.
- Then each school selects a Coordinator and a school committee of students and faculty to plan Kindness activities using our "Program Guide."
- Students learn about the Campaign through an all-school assembly or classroom presentations. In elementary schools, this is usually done by the Campaign mascot, Leo, the Kind-hearted Lion. Leo is a robot who is remote controlled and who talks to the students about kindness or sings the Kindness theme song with them. We also utilize middle school students to talk to the elementary school children about being kind. At the middle school level, sometimes we utilize high school students to talk to the middle school students about the benefits of being kind and using "put-ups" instead of "put-downs"
- Students are then taught kindness concepts in the school or classroom to help them integrate the skills needed to change the classroom and school climate. So far, this has occurred informally in some of the schools where some activities were planned by the Coordinator with

the help of various student groups such as the Student Council. The Spreading Kindness Program Guide provides the school with over 150 activities that they could use to plan an effective school-wide program.

Teachers and students can enroll in the Campaign by filling out a simple pledge card promising to do some act of kindness in the next week. Each person who signs a pledge card gets a button to wear that says, "Spread Kindness It's Contagious." They wear the button and pass it on when they see someone else doing a kind act. In this way, they keep the buttons in circulation and kindness keeps spreading. In the primary grades, the teacher often just wears a button and then passes it on when he or she sees a child being kind. This provides a model for children on how to recognize kindness in others and shows them that giving a button to others is as important as getting a button.

The actual Program Guide utilizes a multi-media approach to helping young children learn pro-social skills. Leo, the Kind-hearted Lion is utilized to help introduce the Kindness Campaign to elementary school children at all-school assemblies. Following Leo's performance, a stuffed animal replica of Leo is given to the school and passed around to the Kindest Classroom of the Week. Also, for the younger children, hand-puppets of Leo are provided to help reinforce the ideas that Leo promotes in his assembly appearances. Also, an award-winning video, "Facing Up," is utilized to teach middle school children how to prevent bullying and other forms of peer violence.

However, the best use of the Program Guide is to assist a school committee of students, teachers and parents in designing an effective school-wide Kindness Campaign program. Working through their school committee, a volunteer School Coordinator plans Kindness Campaign activities for the whole school year. These activities include holding periodic Kindness Award assemblies or classroom ceremonies to reward kind acts and pro-social behaviors; designing a positive referral system; holding essay, song writing and poster contests; organizing an "adopt a hallway" program; and organizing service learning projects in the neighborhood and community.

As of April 1996, the Kindness Campaign is currently being used in over 50 schools with a combined population of over 28,000 students. The community-wide Kindness Campaign, cosponsored by KKTU, has spread to many other parts of the community. Several businesses and organizations, such as the Junior League of Colorado Springs have been given Organizational Kindness Awards for their support of the Campaign.

## IN THE COMMUNITY

The Kindness Campaign addresses the problems of youth violence, alienation and separation by creating positive opportunities for people to come together and to recognize each other's positive contributions to building a "Community of Kindness." Below is a list of suggested ways that people might help each other and begin creating a "Community of Kindness."

- ♥ Hold a "Kindness Party" with your friends and ask everyone to share kindness stories with each other.
- ♥ As you walk through your neighborhood, pick up any trash on the sidewalk or gutter.
- ♥ Visit a neighbor with a bouquet of flowers for no reason at all.
- ♥ Send a letter to a teacher or minister letting them know what a difference their acts of kindness make in your life.
- ♥ Order a mail-order gift, anonymously, for a friend or someone at work who needs to be cheered up.
- ♥ Offer to help a neighbor by running an errand or by giving them a ride to the store.
- ♥ Make an anonymous donation to a local charity that is actively helping young people or start a fund-raising drive in your office for such organizations.
- ♥ Organize your friends or work mates to gather used clothing and give it to homeless shelters. ♥ Ask your children to go through their toys and donate some of them to children who are less fortunate.
- ♥ Dedicate a song on your local radio station to all those people who smiled at a stranger or were kind to strangers today.
- ♥ If a neighbor leaves on a trip, offer to take in their newspaper and water their plants.
- ♥ When someone new moves into your neighborhood, bake some cookies and go over and welcome them to the neighborhood.
- ♥ Shovel your neighbor's sidewalk or mow your neighbor's lawn.
- ♥ Slow down to let a motorist trying to enter the freeway have a space in front of you.
- ♥ Give someone you know a great big hug.
- ♥ Make a list of things that you can do to bring more kindness to yourself, your family, neighborhood, school, workplace or community.
- ♥ Put your shopping cart back in its appointed space in the parking lot.
- ♥ Offer to baby-sit for a neighbor's children so they can take a break from parenting.

## IN BUSINESSES

One of the main ways we have reached out to business is by offering them a reward for joining the Kindness Campaign. When a company gets 50% or more of its employees to sign a pledge card, we give them a "Kindness Award." Our local co-sponsor, KKTU, then videos the presentation of the award plaque and broadcasts it on the evening news show.

We have found that most businesses need some incentive such as free advertising and public recognition to get them to join the campaign. Once we have gotten them to join the campaign, we try to get them to change the "work climate" of their business. This requires them to appoint a coordinator and a committee of employees to plan ways they can make the work setting more positive and more kindness oriented.

When I talk to employees, I usually ask them the same question I ask school children; "Is it easier for you to get recognized at work for doing something positive or something negative?" When I talk to church members I may ask, "If you asked your children is it easier for you to get recognized in this family for doing something positive or something negative, what do you think they would say." Most of the time they answer "negative." This gives me an opening to introduce them to the concepts of the Kindness Campaign.

The next hurdle in business is to show that a more positive work environment would produce bottom-line results: more productivity and more profits.

Actually, many of the best companies in this country have shown that employee satisfaction is the corner-stone of a corporate culture from which customer satisfaction and profits are created. Federal Express is a prime example of a company that placed its employees first. They found out what it takes to bring forth the "discretionary effort" locked inside every employee. This effort is the difference between the maximum effort and care that an individual can contribute to his or her work, and the minimum amount necessary to avoid being punished or fired. This discretionary effort is totally within each employee's control. They can contribute this effort or withhold it as they choose.

The challenge we give to businesses is that if they adopt the Kindness Campaign, we can help them create a business that encourages every employee to use this discretionary effort. When people are given the positive recognition that the Kindness Campaign provides, they are empowered to exert the extra effort that is required to produce extraordinary results.

Companies who just provide the extrinsic rewards of good pay, safe working conditions, excellent medical and other benefits do not empower employees to use their discretionary effort. They have to treat them with kindness and respect and give them positive recognition for a job well done. These intrinsic rewards do not cost much money but can bring big profits. Also, it can prevent big losses. A survey of 1000 companies showed that the main reason why employees leave their jobs today is the lack of praise and recognition. The Kindness Campaign can help a company shut off the out-flow of trained employees and increase the out-put of these trained and valued employees.

Below is a list of some of the activities that we recommend to a company that wants to adopt the Kindness Campaign:

1. Personal, verbal thank you's from managers and supervisors. A recent study of 65 potential intrinsic rewards showed that a personal thank you from the manager for doing a good job (using that discretionary effort) was ranked number one. In the same study, only 58% of the employees reported that they seldom, if ever, get a simple "thank you."
2. In this survey, second to verbal thank you's as effective incentives were written thank you's. About 76% of the employees surveyed said they never got a written thank you from their boss. However, this incentive should not be reserved for bosses. By getting and giving a Kindness button, an employee can say "thank you" to any other employee at any time. As the buttons circulate in the company, they become a vehicle for every one to remember to recognize each other's good work and say "thank you." This maximizes the positive effects of "thank you's."
3. Provide public praise by creating a Kindness wall or a Kindness day in the company, where the kind acts of employees can be recorded and/or a day of recognition to the Kindest employees. Incentives such as a reserved parking place or a free lunch can be used to reward kind acts. The Kindness wall can include polaroid pictures of the Kindest employees. This wall is placed where everyone can see it.
4. Create a special Kindness award named after the kindest employee. This award can be given to others who are striving to be like this employee. At Walt Disney World, they created the Spirit of Fred Award, to honor an employee named Fred. Later the "Fred" Award became an acronym for Friendly, Resourceful, Enthusiastic, and Dependable. Fred himself selects five others to receive the award each quarter - a certificate mounted on a plaque, which he varnishes himself. The Spirit of Kindness Award could be created the same way, by filling in the name of the first recipient who then chooses others to receive the award later on.
5. In addition, you can create a traveling Kindness trophy that has the name of each employee who won, engraved on it.
6. Create a Kindness award based on a single, spontaneous event. Be open to create special Kindness awards at any given time.

Management and training consultant Bob Nelson lists the following suggestions for recognizing and motivating employees:

1. Personal thank you's - verbal or written.
2. Taking time to meet with employees and listen to them.
3. Provide positive feedback about the employees performance, the performance of his or her department or about his or her contributions to the overall performance of the company.

4. Make sure the work environment is open, trusting and fun.
5. Give employees information about the companies profits and losses, upcoming products and how this employee fits into the overall plan.
6. Involve employees in decisions that affect them.
7. Provide employees with a sense of ownership in the company giving everyone a business card is a good way.
8. Create a partnership with each employee - show them how you can help them reach their goals within the context of the company's goals.
9. Celebrate any and all successes. No success should go uncelebrated.
10. Recognize, reward and promote people who do their job and are kind and respectful to others.

Companies, like schools, have to create daily ways to recognize the positive contributions of their employees or they will not get the discretionary effort out of them and they may lose them entirely. In either case, the Kindness Campaign can prevent that from happening with very little extra money being spent.

## VI. What are the steps to take to get started?

Develop a Planning Process

Establish Your Organization

Recruit People

Develop Activities

Raise Funds

Gather Materials

Evaluate

## **ACTION PLAN FOR STARTING A COMMUNITY KINDNESS CAMPAIGN**

1. Establish a Steering Committee and Executive Committee, agree on vision and mission statement.
2. Identify and hire a local coordinator  
(If funds do not permit, select a volunteer or two to serve as coordinators.)
3. Gather data on need for KC
  - \* Surveys on violence & abuse
  - \* Focus Groups
  - \* Town Meetings
4. Raise community awareness of KC
  - \* Fact sheet for general distributions
  - \* Newsletters
  - \* Presentations to Community Forum
  - \* Set up Speaker's Bureau
  - \* Arrange Media Presentations
5. Form task forces/sub-committees to develop vision & action plans for schools, churches, families, businesses, etc.
  - \* Hold special events/fund-raisers
  - \* Target programs to key areas in your community
6. Develop long-term vision and action plans
7. Train local facilitators for each key area

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## DEVELOP A PLANNING PROCESS

The suggested planning process for the Kindness Campaign is very similar to the Developmental Assets Planning Model and the Build a Generation Planning Model. Some of you may already be familiar with one or both of these planning models. The Kindness Campaign planning approach includes the following nine steps:

### 1. Establish a representative Steering Committee

- Create a "vision team" (up to 30 people) and an executive committee (fewer than 10 people) to build commitment, gather information, set priorities and plan.
- The executive committee could come from the "vision team" and consist of the co-chairs of various committees or task forces, plus the coordinator.
- You should strive to get representation from all the key areas of your community on your Steering Committee. These need to be people who share a vision and are willing to work hard to make it happen.
- Later you may want an Advisory Committee to oversee the program and help set policy. These should be the leaders in each of the key areas you plan to serve in your community.

### 2. Identify a local program coordinator

- The one who manages the process and coordinates multiple volunteer-led efforts.
- The Kindness Campaign USA recommends having a paid coordinator 10-20 hours per week. Later on you will need a second paid volunteer coordinator for 10-20 hours per week.

### 3. Gather data about the need for the Kindness Campaign

- Gather data from your community through surveys, focus groups or town meetings. ● A committee could be in charge of this part of the planning process.

### 4. Raise community awareness of the Kindness Campaign

- Using newsletters, fact sheets, newspaper articles, television & radio PSA's, etc.
  - When you reach this point of planning, it is a good idea to bring on a paid volunteer coordinator to organize a speaker's bureau, help with setting up presentations, write a newsletter, etc. A public relations committee could also direct these efforts.

## DEVELOP A PLANNING PROCESS, continued

### 5. Form task forces to develop action plans

- For the specific types of initiatives (e.g. community, neighborhoods, family, school, individual and peers, churches, businesses).
- A committee could be in charge of this effort.

### 6. Develop a long-term vision and activate action plans

- This involves pulling together all the pieces with the "vision team."

### 7. Train local facilitators

- To assist other organizations in each of the key areas in developing their vision and action plans.

### 8. Raise funds to underwrite the long-term vision

- A committee should have the task of writing grant proposals and developing special events for raising funds for the initiative.

### 9. Conduct an evaluation of the action plans in each key area

- This will require some forethought and the evaluation process should be built into the development of action plans in each key area.
- You will need at least four sub-committees to implement this initiative in addition to the Steering Committee and the Executive Committee: (1) Data gathering, (2) Public Relations, (3) Action Planning, (4) Fund-raising. Other committees will have to be formed to handle special events, but these can be ad-hoc committees that exist only for the purpose of planning a special event. According to the timetable, this planning process usually takes about nine months to complete. (See following timetable). It can be shortened some by utilizing outside consultation.

## ESTABLISH YOUR ORGANIZATION

### 1. Essential Elements of a Sponsoring Agency:

- An organization or agency that is a 501 (c)3 non-profit is useful. A 501(c)3 is required to apply for grants or solicit donations.
  - A college, university or a grass roots coalition are logical choices because they touch many elements of the community and can provide an infrastructure. Colleges and universities usually have a non-profit foundation connected with them to collect donations, gifts and grants and community grass-roots coalitions often have non-profit status as well.
  - A campaign coordinator. A leader is needed that has the vision to see the campaign a success, the conviction to see the campaign through high and low times, faith in the philosophy behind the campaign and the courage to believe in that philosophy when opposed or criticized. We recommend that this be a paid position. It can be part-time in the beginning (10-20 hours per week).

### 2. Select Media and Other Community Co-sponsors

- Since this is a primary prevention program, designed partially to increase community awareness, a media sponsor is needed. A television station is a logical first choice. The CBS affiliate is the first place to check because of our local CBS affiliate's contact with other affiliates. You will need ties with CBS affiliates or other stations in your community. We can provide information and contacts with KKTV who can talk to your local television station about the benefits of the Campaign. Media sponsor must be willing to provide in-kind production and design services such as videos, brochures, logos, buttons, and regular coverage of activities.
- Additional sponsors who can provide in-kind services or monetary support will be helpful. your media sponsor may be able to solicit participation from their advertisers. For example, a local hospital helped us with printing brochures, fundraising invitations and activity programs and a psychiatric hospital helped by giving us a grant to produce the school activity guides...

## RECRUIT PEOPLE

### 1. Select a Steering Committee

- Representation from key sectors of the community, including reps from the media and community sponsors. (For example: Leaders of sponsoring organizations, leaders in education, grant writers, civic group leaders, religious leaders, political leaders, other community project leaders and fund-raisers.) (See Appendix B for a listing of Steering Committee members and their interests.)
- It is important to have your community well represented in the Steering Committee and all of your committees. Attempt to include diverse representation in the areas of gender, race, religion, ethnicity, culture, physically challenged, economic class and age. This will help your committee to see many sides of the issues and plans you make.
- Develop a vision and main mission statement. The vision statement is usually one sentence that describes the overall purpose of the Kindness Campaign in your community. The mission statement is longer and specifies how you plan to bring the vision to reality. (See Appendix C for sample mission statements.)
- Form sub-committees and assign tasks to each committee. For example: One committee to develop a speaker's bureau, a school-based activities committee, a fund-raising committee, a media committee.
- Develop a schedule of meetings. At least once a month at first, then meet with subcommittees as tasks are developed. Semi-annual or quarterly meetings of the Steering Committee may be all that is necessary as sub-committees and executive committees begin working on their tasks. At this time the Steering Committee may want to develop into a formal policy-making board and create by-laws. Or you can create an additional Advisory Board to set policy.

### 2. Select an Executive Committee

- The membership should be drawn from the Steering Committee and can consist of the co. chairs of the sub-committees plus the coordinator and a representative from each taskforce. This group should meet once a month.

### 3. Recruit Volunteers

- Undergraduate college students can often get credit for developing and/or doing service learning projects around the goals of the Kindness Campaign.
- High school students also sometimes able to get credit for service-learning projects in the community.

## RECRUIT PEOPLE, continued

- Graduate Students usually can do independent study projects for credit. Many college or university departments may be helpful: Public Administration, Community Agency Counseling or Social Work, Education, etc.
- Ask Steering Committee to recruit volunteers.
- Advertise in the local newspaper for volunteers.
- Ask for volunteers at all public presentations.
- Advertise for volunteers at local universities and colleges.
- Eventually you will need a volunteer coordinator and can be funded by grants or fundraising projects.

### 4. Recruit members for Task-forces

- Task-forces should be created to plan activities in each key area of interest in the community. There could include schools, churches, businesses, neighborhoods, civic organizations, government, law enforcement, social service agencies and the media. ● Each Task-force should select co-chairs. Each Task-force will design and organize its own program and kindness activities uniquely suited to its area of interest.
- Each Task-force will develop a plan of action with ways to evaluate its effectiveness. ● Each action plan can be reviewed by the Executive Committee and the Steering Committee for ideas and suggestions.

## DEVELOP ACTIVITIES

### 1. Develop a Media Plan for the Campaign with media Co-sponsor

- Develop media plan with co-sponsor. (See sample Media Plan, Appendix D) ●  
Design basic activity like distribute pledge cards and buttons.
- Design and produce introductory video describing problem using local youth and family crime and violence statistics and survey information.(See Video Script, Appendix E) ● Develop a way to end news with a kind message or somehow integrate the campaign into stations regular newscasts. KKTV's "Cityline" was very instrumental in not only sharing kind acts on the news, but monitoring the number of calls helped us to gauge the impact of the Campaign on the community.
- Develop a regular way of communicating upcoming events to media sponsor in order to get appropriate media coverage.

### 2. Set up a process to schedule presentations

- Establish a speaker's bureau with your volunteers. Provide training to new recruits such as shadowing an experienced volunteer until they feel comfortable.
- Send out information letters or brochures to community and civic groups, schools, churches, youth groups, etc. asking them to schedule a short introductory presentation of 15-20 minutes. (See sample Kindness Campaign Description, Appendix F)
- Ask Steering Committee members to help arrange presentations with people and organizations they know. Ask for new leads at each presentation you give.
- Give presentations everywhere you can.
- Develop a sample script for volunteer presenters. (See sample Presentation Suggestions, Appendix G)

## RAISE FUNDS

### 1. Establish Special Events designed to raise community awareness

- National Random Acts of Kindness Week in February has a national media campaign that can help give the local organization local media exposure. (See sample proclamation, Appendix U)
- Encourage schools and community centers to do special activities for National Random Acts of Kindness week and have media coverage.
- Establish calendar of events and develop timelines for producing each event and assign sub-committees to work on them.
- Ask if the Kindness Campaign may participate by providing a speaker or a booth in related community events. (Festivals, celebrations, etc.)
- Present awards to businesses, churches and community organizations for their part in spreading kindness by enrolling at least 50% of their employees or members in the Kindness Campaign. Present it at their annual conferences, awards banquets, etc. (See Sample Business Award, Appendix H)

### 2. Establish Annual Community of Kindness Awards Activity

- Ask Steering Committee to elicit a local Business Organization to generate nominations, and recognize "Kind" businesses and organizations. For example: Economic Development Corp., Chamber of Commerce may assist you in soliciting nominations and/or presenting these awards. (See sample process, Appendix T)
- Schedule date with the Business Organization and local hotel/banquet hall.
- Assign sub-committee and co-chairs for luncheon. (See sub-committee list, Appendix I)
- Set up Time Line. (See sample Timeline, Appendix J)
- Establish a Luncheon Arrangements sub-committee to develop the printed Luncheon Program and schedule Speakers and local entertainment. For example, local school choirs and youth performances can be utilized. Select speakers who can deliver a positive, inspirational message.
- Develop letter and description to send to businesses. Use Chamber of Commerce lists or other business directories.
- Invite schools to participate in nomination process. You can have school children write essays and nominate adults who have been exceptionally kind. The schools give their own recognition awards and then send their winner's essay to the Community of Kindness competition where 20 local winners are recognized each year. (See sample process, Appendix K)
- Establish Nomination sub-committee.
- Establish corporate and individual sales sub-committees to sell organization tables, sponsored tables (for winners and nominees and guests), and individual tickets.

## RAISE FUNDS, continued

### 3. Solicit Donations

- Develop and print a pledge card to pledge an act of kindness, at the bottom include a space requesting donations.
- Solicit donations from businesses. Service-oriented businesses such as hospitals, insurance companies, banks, food stores, fast food restaurant are good places to start. ● Make sure each presenter for the Kindness Campaign mentions the fact that the Kindness Campaign is funded by donations and grants and receives no regular money from a university or community source. If possible, establish a non-profit, tax exempt 501 (c)(3) organization that can receive tax deductible gifts. You can also make arrangements with an existing tax exempt organization to serve as a pass-through or fiscal agency to collect funds.

### 4. Write Grants

- Research funding sources. For example, some high schools have money that they raise each year and donate it to a proposed program or activity in the community. Many local businesses have grant money available as well as sources through your media sponsor.
- The Kindness Campaign is eligible for grants in many areas. For example: education, domestic violence, youth crime and/or violence, crime, abuse prevention, community awareness, etc.
- Write grants. It is helpful if your coordinator or a steering committee member has experience in finding funding sources and grant writing.

## GATHER MATERIALS

### 1. Button Maker and Pledge Cards

- Ask media Co-sponsor to help with design and production. (See sample button and pledge card design, Appendix O)
- Get local fast food restaurant chain to buy and distribute buttons. Media co-sponsor may be able to help with this.

### 2. Printers for Brochures, Programs, Invitations and Guide Covers

- Ask media Co-sponsor to help with design.
- Find local businesses that would be willing to donate printing services or at cost. For example, a local hospital donates the printing of our Luncheon brochures and programs. (See sample Brochure and Luncheon Program, Appendices M and N)

### 3. School Activity Guide

- Order School Program Guides from the Kindness Campaign. (See Program Guide Order Form, Appendix P)

### 4. Community Organizer's Guide

- Order copies of this Community Organizer's Guide for each of the key people on your Steering Committee. (See Community Organizer's Guide Order form, Appendix Q)

### 5. Special Materials

- The Robot Factory in Colorado Springs created Leo, the Kind-Hearted Lion for us and stuffed animal replicas and hand puppets of Leo. (See "Leo" Order Information, Appendix R)

### 6. Franchising requirements for Kindness Campaign Logo and Slogan

- The Kindness Campaign name, Logo and slogan: "Spread Kindness, it's Contagious" are copyrighted and may not be reproduced without written consent of the Kindness Campaign.

## EVALUATE

### 1. Design Plan to Evaluate community awareness through media co-sponsor

- Number of calls to the "Kindness Line" operated by the television station.
- Do a marketing survey with a random sample of the viewers.
- Set up focus groups to determine the effects of the Kindness Campaign.

### 2. Design Plan for Campaign and Schools to evaluate success of Campaign in school.

- Design way to collect data on "put-downs" and "bullying behaviors".
- Design way to collect data on "referrals to office". Schools usually monitor this number anyway, just ask them to share their results. These are often broken down into categories like truancy, peer aggression, etc. so you can determine if the targeted behaviors are changing.

### 3. Design Plan for evaluating donations and buttons given out at presentations.

- Design form for speakers to fill out and turn in after each presentation. (See sample Report Form, Appendix S)
  - Count number of buttons distributed and pledge cards filled out.

**BELOW ARE EXAMPLES OF FORMS, AWARDS  
AND LETTERS THAT HAVE BEEN USED FOR  
THE KINDNESS CAMPAIGN**

**FEEL FREE TO USE THEM AS YOU WILL**

## The Kindness Campaign

### A Public Service of KKTV-II and UCCS

#### Proposal:

In order to continue our success, the Kindness Campaign is seeking even more widespread distribution of the Kindness button. A fast food restaurant chain with plenty of traffic throughout the day could be the ideal distribution point. The campaign is seeking active involvement on the part of the chain and has very much to offer in return.

#### Offer includes:

- Kickoff advertising campaign on KKTV to include two commercials a day for 60 days.
- Maintenance campaign for five months to include five commercials per week.
- Extensive news coverage
- Point of Purchase materials
- School involvement
- Community involvement
- 30,000 buttons to give away

#### Benefits:

- Tremendous goodwill in the community
- Positive news coverage ● Increased store traffic

#### Investment:

- Counter Space
- Tray liners to be used as pledge cards ● \$ 6,000 to \$10,000

#### Results:

Wendy's of Southern Colorado became distribution centers for the Kindness Campaign buttons and pledge cards. Almost 30,000 buttons were distributed through their participating restaurants during May and June 1995.

### Additional Proposal:

As an additional method of furthering messages of kindness on the air, KKTV could make available to our distribution sponsor 30-second promotional announcements that feature a message of kindness.

The announcement will have an open that discusses the campaign itself, then go into the prerecorded "kindness message" then close with the tagline: "This little bit of kindness brought to you by our friends at Wendy's, the Kindness Campaign, a public service of UCCS and KKTV-

### Result:

This proposal was not adopted. Mostly because of logistics and the amount of production time required by the station to produce these spots. It also proved too difficult to video kindness messages from average citizens to be played on the air later. Most people were too "camerashy" when approached at a local mall with an opportunity to record a kindness message. The somewhat anonymous call-in to the "Kindness Line" proved to be a much better way of getting kindness messages on the air.

B

## Appendix

### Steering Committee

public relations, special events coordination  
community organizing  
child abuse prevention, parent education programs  
youth violence, gangs, prevention programs  
child abuse prevention, fund-raising, marketing  
church programs for youth, prevention programs  
police programs to prevent youth violence  
prevention of youth and family violence, fund raising  
fund-raising, prevention, school-based programs  
business, fund raising  
violence prevention, school-based programs, fund raising  
school-based programs  
business, civic groups, fund raising  
volunteer coordinator, school-based programs, youth violence prevention  
business, civic groups  
business, hospitals, fund raising  
community organizing, business  
public relations  
promotions, special events coordination  
secretarial support, violence prevention

Sample Mission Statement

The Kindness Foundation, Dallas, Texas  
Mission Statement

The mission of The Kindness Foundation is to improve the quality of life in Dallas through encouraging intentional acts of kindness among all its citizens and discouraging acts of violence.

Goals

In order to carry out its mission, The Kindness Foundation will pursue the following goals:

- The Kindness Foundation will help Dallas in whatever ways possible to become known as the City of Kindness.
- The Kindness Foundation will help people of all ages experience the joy that comes through recognizing and claiming their value as persons, and in doing so, encourage them to be in service to others.
- The Kindness Foundation will develop a network of programs and agencies committed to kindness toward persons in need, and through sharing of ideas between members of the network, encourage the development of a worldwide kindness movement. It will include in its activities all who share its mission to work together for a more kind, peaceful and loving world. It will help build bridges of understanding and cooperation between the diverse populations of the Dallas Metroplex, and will participate, whenever and wherever possible, in peace-making efforts where conflicts currently exist or may arise.
- The Kindness Foundation will lay the foundation upon which on-going and expanding efforts and programs may be built to spread the idea that random and intentional acts of kindness are expressions of our human relationship with God, and of an enlightened humanity. It will be local in developing loyalties, but global in its scope and vision.

## **KKTV Kindness Campaign Promotional Plan**

### Elements of the Plan:

#### 1. Scheduled Spots on various news shows.

This would include interview spots talking about how the Kindness Campaign got started, how it works and a review of what has taken place so far, including the results of the two pilot programs in the schools.

#### 2. A press conference

This would probably be held at UCCS. We would have the Chancellor, the Dean and other University people involved in the National Program present as well as community leaders who are supporting the Campaign and several sports celebrities and other dignitaries. This would officially launch the Campaign.

#### 3. Production of a promotional video

This 15-20 minute video could include about 8 minutes from the Oprah show on Acts of Kindness that she did in February, 1994. It would also include the context for the Kindness Campaign as an anti-violence project of the National Program at UCCS and a description of how the Campaign works. We could show the Campaign in action in schools, in families, and in the community. We may film a policeman pulling over a motorist and giving him or her a bumper sticker to recognize an act of kindness. This video would be shown to civic groups, schools, and churches to enroll people in the campaign.

#### 4. Celebrity spots

We will video tape celebrities talking about kindness and the need to recognize acts of kindness. We hope to get about 50 celebrities to do a 3 to 10 second spot related to the Kindness Campaign. We already have a positive response from the Colorado Rockies and the Chief of Police.

#### 5. City Line call in

Viewers of KKTV will be given a telephone number to call and report acts of kindness that they witness. They will leave a name and number and then KKTV will follow up on the most interesting ones and do a news feature about the particular act of kindness mentioned by the caller. They also will play the recorded reports of acts of kindness at the end of the news.

#### 6. The Kindness Luncheon

This would be an annual recognition luncheon to give out community-wide Kindness Awards to deserving citizens. These people would be nominated by school children (K-12) and citizens in the community. We would also ask celebrities to give keynote talks on how some act or acts of kindness significantly affected their lives. This will also be a fund-raiser for the campaign.

#### 7. Bumper Stickers for the Police Department

In conversations with the Colorado Springs Police Department, they have agreed in principle to the proposal to have officers identify acts of kindness of motorists and to recognize these acts by stopping a motorist and giving him or her a bumper sticker with the Campaign motto,

"Spread Kindness--It's Contagious" and the KKTV logo on it. This will start as soon as we get them a supply of bumper stickers and some more written information on the campaign. They already cite motorists who demonstrate safe driving behavior and they would just add this to the existing program.

#### 8. Billboards with the Campaign Motto on them

We are looking for a donation of billboard space to display the Campaign motto and the KKTV logo, perhaps with the phone number where they can report an act of kindness they have witnessed.

#### 9. A Speakers Bureau

We will train a group of volunteers to speak at schools, civic and professional organizations and churches and enroll people in the Campaign. They will be given a carbonized pledge card and when they fill it out, pledging to do an act of kindness and hand in the tear-off card, we will give them a button to wear and pass on. This button will have the campaign motto and the KKTV logo on it. We will use the KKTV video when we speak to groups.

#### Sample PSA's developed for the Kindness Campaign

1) Acts of Violence are far too prominent on the landscape of our nation, our state and even here in our own home town. Join KKTV's Kindness Campaign and let's see if we can start an epidemic. Together we can clean up the landscape and build a foundation of Kindness.

2) Acts of Violence often get over recognized while acts of kindness usually go unrecognized. Join KKTV's Kindness Campaign, so we can all recognize and celebrate the acts of kindness we see everyday.

3) There is only one cure for violence and anger...Kindness.. That one simple word can change the way you think and feel. If enough of us focus on Kindness...we create an epidemic that will transcend our own home town and change the world. Join KKTV's Kindness Campaign.

E

## **Script for the Kindness Campaign Video Presentation**

Youth and family violence seem out of control. A recent survey of 750 viewers by KKTU, showed that "gangs, crime and youth violence" was rated the number one problem in Colorado Springs by 40% of the respondents. Last year in a similar survey, the respondents rated "the economy and jobs" as the greatest problem. One year ago, 7,5% rated "crime" as the number one concern and "gangs and youth violence" were not even mentioned.

A recent report indicates that domestic violence is now the leading cause of injury to women between ages 15 and 44. Research shows that 50% of all married women will experience some form of violence from their partners during their marriage. In addition, each year almost 6.9 million children are gravely assaulted by their parents.

However, the most violent family members may be children and youth themselves. Over 29 million youth per year commit one or more acts of violence against a sibling in the family, with 19 million of these attacks being severe enough to be considered assaults, if they had occurred outside the home. Many of these same children and youth are responsible for acts of violence outside the family as well.

Across the board, children from violent homes are three to four times more likely than children from non-violent homes to commit illegal acts of violence--vandalism, stealing, alcohol abuse, drug abuse etc.-- and they are the ones who get arrested. They also have multiple school problems failing grades, discipline problems and aggressive or violent encounters with peers. Over 50% of all school-yard bullies become criminals. Also, the average child receives 213 putdowns per week or 30 per day. Many of those occur at home or in school.

What can you and I do to stop this destructive behavior? There is a simple, easy way to begin to turn this tide of violence around. It involves spreading acts of kindness to counter the acts of violence that occur in our families, schools, neighborhoods and community.

The Kindness Campaign, using the motto "Spread Kindness It's Contagious," was started by Barry K. Weinhold, a Professor of Education at the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs. The project operates under The National Program for the Study and Prevention of Youth and Family Violence at UCCS. The main goal of the Kindness Campaign is to help prevent youth and family violence by restoring the sense of community and neighborliness that we seem to have forgotten.

Everyone must do his or her part if we are going to stem the tide of youth and family violence that has taken hold in many schools and families as well as many other parts of our communities, states and nation. Spreading kindness is up to each of us and it can be fun and rewarding. All you have to do to be part of the Campaign is pledge to do some daily acts of kindness for yourself, your family, your friends, your neighbors, workmates, school mates, strangers, those who are sick or in need and anyone else you meet.

"You can enroll in the Kindness Campaign right now by filling out the Kindness Campaign Pledge Card. Fill out the pledge card and tear off the carbon copy and turn it in. Someone will give you a button to wear and pass on to someone you see doing an act of kindness.

The Kindness Campaign offers you a chance to participate in an effort to reduce violence anywhere it occurs. It is easy, it works and it doesn't cost you any money. The idea behind the Campaign is that if you want to eliminate violence, one of the best ways to do that is to place your attention on its opposite, kindness. Currently, acts of violence are over-recognized by the media while most acts of kindness go unrecognized.

You can recognize and spread kindness in the following way: When you join the campaign (by pledging to do at least one act of kindness) you will receive a button that says "Spread Kindness--It's Contagious." Then when you see an act of kindness, you give your button to that person to recognize their act of kindness and ask them to do the same when they see an act of kindness by another person. In this way, you can spread kindness and bring more recognition to small daily acts of kindness or be caught in the act of doing an act of kindness by someone who has a button.

In case you still aren't sure what is considered an act of kindness, here are some examples: Make a list of things that you can do to bring more kindness to yourself, your family, neighborhood, school, workplace or community.

- Give a weekly "Kindness Award" to someone in your family, school, church or work place. Set up a process to select the winner or winners.
- Put your shopping cart back in its appointed space in the parking lot.
- Make a list of things you can do to bring more kindness into your family, neighborhood, school, work place and community.
- Hold a "Kindness Party" with your friends and ask everyone to share kindness stories with each other.
- As you walk through your neighborhood, pick up any trash on the sidewalk or gutter.
- Visit a neighbor with a bouquet of flowers for no reason at all.
- Send a letter to a teacher or minister letting them know what a difference their acts of kindness make in your life.
- Order a mail-order gift, anonymously, for a friend or someone at work who needs to be cheered up.
- Offer to help a neighbor by running an errand or by giving them a ride to the store.
- Make an anonymous donation to a local charity that is actively helping young people or start a fundraising drive in your office for such organizations.
- Organize your friends or work mates to gather used clothing and give it to homeless shelters.
- Ask your children to go through their toys and donate some of them to children who are less fortunate.
- Dedicate a song on your local radio station to all those people who smiled at a stranger or were kind to strangers today.
- Offer to baby-sit for a neighbor's children so they can take a break from parenting.
- If a neighbor leaves on a trip, offer to take in their newspaper and water their plants.
- When someone new moves into your neighborhood, bake some cookies and go over and welcome them to the neighborhood.
- Shovel your neighbor's sidewalk or mow your neighbor's lawn.
- Slow down to let a motorist trying to enter the freeway have a space in front of you. ●Give someone you know a great big hug.

## THE KINDNESS CAMPAIGN

A Project of the National Program for the Study and Prevention of Youth and Family Violence, Barry K. Weinhold, Project Director, UCCS

The motto of the Kindness Campaign is "Spread Kindness It's Contagious." The goals of the Kindness Campaign are to restore a sense of community and neighborliness that we seem to have forgotten and prevent the spread of violence that has taken hold in many parts of our community, state and nation. Spreading kindness is up to everyone and it can be fun and rewarding. Everyone can participate in this Campaign to stop the spread of violence, hatred and unkindness. We just have to remember to do some small daily acts of kindness for ourselves, our family, friends, neighbors, school mates, work mates, strangers, those who are sick or in need, and anyone else we meet.

This Campaign reconfirms the important understanding that we are all interconnected. We all have a duty to act kindly towards ourselves as well as others. The attitude of kindness has to start with being kind to ourselves. It is difficult to be kind to others, if our heart is empty of kindness. True kindness comes from having a compassionate heart. It takes countless small daily acts of kindness to create an atmosphere of compassion necessary to transform a mass of separate individuals into a kind, caring community.

The Kindness Campaign is designed to provide simple recognition for daily acts of kindness. Many acts of kindness go unrecognized, while acts of violence are quickly recognized and maybe even are over-recognized by the media. If you want to eliminate violence, you have to place your attention on its opposite: kindness. By signing a pledge card you get a button that says, "Spread Kindness -- It's Contagious," and when you witness an act of kindness, give that person your button to recognize what they did and ask them to pass on the button when they witness another act of kindness. In this way, you can spread kindness and help build a kind, caring community.

The Campaign is already spreading to many parts of this community. Over 50 area schools, with a combined enrollment of over 28,000 students, have developed campaign activities. Some of these schools experienced an immediate 32% drop in discipline referrals after they started the campaign. Long term results show a 26 - 30% drop over a semester.

The CBS Affiliate in Colorado Springs, KKTV, is a co-sponsor of the Campaign and has gotten an average of 1,100 calls per month to its Kindness Line (630-1111-K.I.N.D.) since its inception in July 1994. They end the news each evening by playing one of these recorded calls. Also, a speaker's bureau has been organized to introduce the Campaign to organizations, schools, churches and community groups. Special "Kindness Awards" are given to any company, church or organization that enrolls 50% or more of its employees or members. Each Spring, school children are asked to nominate adults for the Community of Kindness Awards.

The goal of the campaign is to enroll 80,000 people in Southern Colorado. Since July 1994, approximately 46,000 people have enrolled in the campaign.

## Appendix

The following are some suggestions of who you might spread kindness:

- Make a list of things that you can do to bring more kindness to yourself, your family, neighborhood, school, workplace or community.
- Put your shopping cart back in its appointed space in the parking lot.
- As you walk through your neighborhood, pick up any trash on the sidewalk or gutter.
- Send a letter to a teacher or minister letting them know what a difference their acts of kindness make in your life.
- Make an anonymous donation to a local charity that is actively helping young people or start a fundraising drive in your office for such organizations.
- Organize your friends or work mates to gather used clothing and give it to homeless shelters.
- Ask your children to go through their toys and donate some of them to children who are less fortunate.
- Offer to baby-sit for a neighbor's children so they can take a break from parenting.
- When someone new moves into your neighborhood, bake some cookies and go over and welcome them to the neighborhood.

### Information About The National Program

The National Program for the Study and Prevention of Youth and Family Violence is located at the University of Colorado - Colorado Springs. It serves as a permanent research and training facility devoted to the study of the causes of youth and family violence.

The activities of the National Program include sponsoring training seminars, designing basic and applied research projects, developing a database, issuing publications, hosting a national conference and collaborating with community agencies to create youth-centered, family-focused and neighborhood-based projects. Primary prevention projects designed to address the causes of violence, such as The Kindness Campaign, are the top priority of the National Program.

## G

## Suggestions for Kindness Campaign Presentations

The following suggestions are the result of my experiences in making presentations over the past two to three months. They are offered as guidelines to help you when you begin making presentations:

- Whenever possible, have two people available to do the presentation. This makes it easier to handle logistics, such as passing out and collecting pledge cards. It is also less likely that you will get challenging or hostile questions. Believe it or not, this presentation can sometimes touch people's guilt about not being very kind, which may prompt an attack on you or the Campaign.
- Pass out the pledge cards and information sheets before showing the video tape. This speeds up the process and gives people time to read over the material and think of an act of kindness to pledge. Also, this leaves you a little more time to field questions after showing the video.
- Introduce yourself and say something like, "I am a volunteer presenter with the Kindness Campaign which is co-sponsored by KKTV and UCCS." Also indicate what else you do, such as, "I am a business consultant" or "I am a graduate student in Counseling and Human Services at UCCS."
- Introduce the Kindness Campaign: "The Kindness Campaign is a community-based project of the National Program for the Study and Prevention of Youth and Family Violence at UCCS. It is totally supported by donations and receives no money from the university. All donations to the Kindness Campaign are handled by the CU Foundation and are taxdeductible.'
- Introduce the video tape: "This video tape was produced by KKTV and will describe the problems of youth and family violence as well as show how the Kindness Campaign can help deal with these problems."
- Following the video, be prepared to answer questions. Below are some typical questions and suggested answers:

Q: "Where does the money go?"

A: "It goes to our 'button bank' and is used to produce more buttons, pledge cards and promotional materials."

Q: "How do you know this works?"

A: "We have obtained positive results from the 50 participating schools, most schools experience a 30% drop in referrals to the office within one semester and similar results in the reduction of put-downs and bullying behavior."

## Appendix

Q: "How can I arrange for someone to give a presentation like this to my church, school, company, club, etc."

A: "You can schedule speakers to come out and present a program like this one by calling the Kindness Campaign office at the university at 593-3446.

Q: "Is there any other way to get buttons?"

A: "No. At the present time, the only way to receive a button is to fill out a pledge card or get caught doing an act of kindness by someone who has a button on."

- As you collect any cash or checks, give them each a button to wear. If anyone is interested in having a presentation at their organization, get their name, address and phone number and tell them someone will be calling to schedule a presentation.

Kindness Campaign Button Design



Kindness

it <sup>I</sup> s contagious

The UCCS  
Kindness  
Campaign

## Kindness Campaign Pledge Card Design

# KINDNESS CAMPAIGN PLEDGE CARD

I, \_\_\_\_\_ pledge to do the following  
act(s) of kindness for one of the following person(s) (check those  
that apply) myself, C] a family member, a friend, a neighbor, C] a  
teacher, C] a workmate, a classmate, or other \_\_\_\_\_  
~~\_\_\_\_\_ a teacher, \_\_\_\_\_ a workmate, \_\_\_\_\_ a classmate, or \_\_\_\_\_ other \_\_\_\_\_~~

(Describe what you will do) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I am a (check those that apply)  student,  parent,  teacher, I am a (check  
those that apply)  
staff member, administrator, O other \_\_\_\_\_ a I

YOUR DONATION IS DEDUCTIBLE



Kindness  
it ' s contagious  
The UCCS  
Kindness  
Campaign  
SPREAD

BUILDING A  
COMMUNITY  
OF KINDNESS:  
A Community Organizer's Guide  
Barry K. Weinhold, Ph.D.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES FOR EVALUATING  
THE NOMINATIONS FOR THE COMMUNITY OF  
KINDNESS BUSINESS AWARDS

1. Each judge will read and rank order the nominations in each of the three categories: large business ( 100 or more employees); small business (less than 100 employees) and non-profit organizations.
2. The ranking should be made based on, in your opinion, how well the nomination met the spirit and letter of the main criterion.
3. The main criterion is how these businesses and organizations "...have contributed significantly to the creation of a community of kindness in this city in the last year."
4. The type of contribution we are looking for is one that is above and beyond their usual contribution to the community. The contribution should be focused on improving the community in some important way that helps people act in more kind, respectful and compassionate ways toward each other.
5. Following the independent rankings of the six judges, we will pool the results and collectively determine the final rankings in each category. We need to select the top four nominations in each category, and select one of the four as the winner of the 1996 Community of Kindness Business Award.
6. We will list all four nominees in each category alphabetically in the printed luncheon program.
7. The winner in each category will not be announced until May 8, 1996, the day of the luncheon. Therefore, you should not communicate these results to the businesses and organizations that were nominated. We want to keep the suspense alive and be able to surprise the winners.

# THE 1996 COMMUNITY OF KINDNESS BUSINESS AWARDS

## Nomination Guidelines

The Economic Development Corporation and Chamber of Commerce of Colorado Springs are seeking the nomination of businesses and non-profit organizations in Colorado Springs who have contributed significantly to the creation of a community of kindness in this city in the last year. The type of contribution we are looking for is one that is above and beyond their usual contribution to the community. The contribution should be focused on improving the community in some important way that helps people act in more kind, respectful and compassionate ways toward each other. There will be three award categories: large businesses (100 or more employees), small businesses (less than 100 employees) and non-profit organizations of any size.

If you would like to nominate a business or non-profit organization for the 1996 Community of Kindness Business Award, please use the official nomination form on the reverse side of these guidelines. You need to state why you believe this business or organization deserves to be recognized for their contribution to this community. Include your name, address, phone number, and your relationship with the business or organization you are nominating (employee, officer, member, consumer or interested citizen). Mail or fax your entry to Community of Kindness Business Awards c/o The CU Foundation, P. O. Box 7150, University of Colorado-Cororado Springs, CO 80933-7150, by April 1, 1996. The fax # is (719) 593-3649.

These awards will be presented at the Community of Kindness Awards Luncheon, Wednesday, May 8, 1996, 11 a. m. to 1 p. m., at the AntlersDoubletree Hotel. If the business or organization that you nominate is chosen as one of the semi-finalists, based on your nomination, you will receive two free tickets (worth \$30 each) to attend the luncheon. You will be notified by May 1, 1996 if your entry is among those chosen as a semi-finalist. The award winner in each category will be announced at the luncheon on May 8.

In addition to these business awards, we will be giving the 1996 Community of Kindness Awards to 20 individuals who were nominated by school children in Southern Colorado whose school is participating in the Kindness Campaign. Entertainment will be provided by several musical groups from area schools. The keynote speaker at the luncheon will be Dr. Gene Cosby, Superintendent of Widefield School District. Dr. Cosby is an inspiring speaker who tells his own story of how the kindness of others shaped his life and his career.

Help spread kindness with your nomination.

OFFICIAL NOMINATION FORM  
FOR THE 1996 COMMUNITY OF KINDNESS  
BUSINESS AWARD

Business or Organization Being Nominated:

\_\_\_\_\_

Category of Entry: \_\_\_\_\_ Small Business \_\_ Large Business \_ Non-profit (Check one)

Address of Business of Organization:

\_\_\_\_\_

Name and Title of Business CEO or Head of Organization:

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone #

Name of Nominator:

Phone #

Address :

Relationship

\_\_\_\_\_

Nomination Essay: (Describe why you believe this business or organization deserves to be recognized for its contributions to helping make Colorado Springs a community of kindness. Be specific about what contributions you think the business or organization has made to the community during the past year. Please type or print your entry in the space below. Mail or fax your entry to the address below by April 1, 1996.)

Mail or fax to: The Community of Kindness Business Awards, c/o CU. Foundation, P.O. Box 7150, University of Colorado-Colorado Springs, CO 80933-7150, (719) 593-3649 (fax)

Appendix U

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PROCLAMATION

PROCLAIMING FEBRUARY 12-18, 1996

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KINDNESS WEEK IN COLORADO SPRINGS

WHEREAS, our daily news is dominated by tragic stories of crime, youth violence and disaster, too often leaving average citizens with feelings of fear, despair and helplessness; and

WHEREAS, the daily acts of kindness of most of the citizens of Colorado Springs often go unrecognized and unattended; and

WHEREAS, by recognizing these daily acts of kindness during this week, all citizens of Colorado Springs can become more aware of the importance of being kind and respectful to others throughout the year; and

WHEREAS, by recognizing these small daily acts of kindness during this week, everyone can participate in making this city a kinder, safer and better place to live; and

WHEREAS, this week is being observed in over 150 other cities and towns across this nation.

THEREFORE, I, ROBERT ISSAC, Mayor of Colorado Springs, Colorado, do hereby proclaim the week of February 12-18, 1996 as

"KINDNESS WEEK"

in Colorado Springs and encourage everyone to participate in spreading kindness and practicing respect, generosity, patience, and consideration of others at all times in order to create a better, kinder, safer, and more caring city. \_\_\_\_\_Mayor

Contact: Nanette Anderson, Acting Director

For Immediate Release

MAYOR PROCLAIMS FEBRUARY 12 - 18 AS "KINDNESS WEEK"  
IN COLORADO SPRINGS

Mayor Robert Issac is helping local organizers spread kindness by proclaiming the week of February 12-18, 1996 as "Kindness Week" in Colorado Springs. The Mayor will sign the proclamation at a press conference and signing ceremony in his office at 30 S. Nevada, Friday, February 9, at 9:45 a.m. The local Kindness Campaign, co-sponsored by UCCS and KKTV, is planning many special activities in area schools during this week. This week coincides with National Random Acts of Kindness Week that is being celebrated in over 150 cities. Contact Ms. Shelly Veatch, Volunteer Coordinator of the local Kindness Campaign, at 587-8958 for details of the location of specific activities during Kindness Week.

According to Dr. Barry Weinhold, Professor of Education at UCCS and Director of the local Campaign, "We are part of a national grass-roots effort to help recognize all the kind acts that are often ignored by the media. It is true democracy in action." The purposes of the local Kindness Campaign, that began July 14, 1994, are (1) to help restore the sense of community and neighborliness that we seem to have lost and (2) to serve as an antidote to the spread of youth and family violence that seems to be on the increase everywhere we go. KKTV's

CityLine 630-1111, extension K.I.N.D. has logged in an average of over 1,100 calls a month since July of 1994 from area residents. They end the evening news each day with a selected recording of one of these calls.

A volunteer speakers bureau has helped to enroll over 45,000 area residents since it began. People can enroll through presentations at their school, church, business or civic organization by signing a pledge card agreeing to do

a kind act for someone. When they sign up they receive a button to wear with the inscription, Spread Kindness ---It's Contagious, and are asked to pass it on to another person when they witness them being kind. The goal of the Campaign is to sign up 80,000 residents in Colorado Springs and Southern Colorado.

The local program currently operates in 50 area schools with a combined population of over 28,000 students. It focuses on promoting pro-social behaviors in students to counter the anti-social, aggressive and violent behaviors that are so prevalent in the schools, such as put-downs, bullying and gang-related behaviors. Each school develops a planned program that involves students, teachers and parents in activities that promote kindness.

One Campaign activity that involves area school children is the search for the unsung heroes and heroines in our community. Students are being asked to nominate adults who they look up to as kind, helpful role models. Each participating school will select its winners, who will then go on to a city-wide competition. The Community of Kindness Awards Luncheon will be held, May 8, 1996 at the Antlers Doubletree Hotel to honor the twenty finalists. Three of the finalists will be given special recognition at the luncheon.

For more information regarding the local and national Campaign activities scheduled during the week of February 12 18 and the Community of Kindness Awards luncheon, call Barry Weinhold at 593-3446. The Campaign operates under the National Program For the Study and Prevention of Youth and Family Violence at UCCS and is supported solely by donations and grants.



The Kindness Campaign Button