

## Kindness in the Classroom

BY SOCIAL TEAM ON SEPTEMBER 22, 2015

EVENTS, IN THE CLASSROOM, INSPIRE LEARNING

Kindness. It's a word we hear often, yet don't give much thought about in terms of school or the classroom. What if you could incorporate kindness into your school and see an improvement in student behavior, staff morale, and student climate? Would you consider it? Of course! Many educators want to include kindness in their school, but are unsure about the process, or if they will have the resources needed.

Creating a safe school environment that incorporates kindness is essential to a positive school climate, as well as fostering a positive atmosphere for everyone in a school community. Before we focus on creating kindness in the classroom, it's important to look at school climate and its importance.



School climate is created on a variety of several factors. First, let's examine the definition of school climate so we can better understand what it means. **School climate refers to the quality and character of school life related to norms, values, social interactions, and organizational structures.** School climate is experienced by the entire school community, which includes students, staff, and parents. According to the [National School Climate Center](#), there is a strong correlation between school climate and academics, and an even higher correlation between school climate and graduation rates. **Extensive research shows** that school climate has a profound effect on students' emotional and physical health, as well as decreased school absenteeism in middle and high school.

The next step in better understanding school climate is examining ways that educators can measure school climate in their own schools. The National School Climate Center offers a [Comprehensive School Climate Inventory \(CSCI\)](#) that provides an in-depth profile of your school community's strengths and needs. With this tool, you can assess student, parent, and educators' perceptions in order to gather details and make informed decisions for improvement.

Now that we better understand school climate, its importance, and how it can be measured, we can concentrate on how to go about creating a positive, safe, and engaging school environment. Establishing an agreed-on and shared definition of school climate is a great way to start creating a safe school environment as well as mobilizing a school-wide effort in creating a positive school climate.

In terms of a school-wide initiative, the Great Kindness Challenge is a great way to foster a positive school climate. This challenge consists of one school week each year devoted to performing as many acts of kindness as possible. In a survey of the 2015 Great Kindness Challenge, 97% surveyed saw an improvement in school climate and an 89% increase in staff morale. The GKC also minimizes behavioral referrals, unites community, and makes kindness a habit. Last year, over 2 million students and 4,000 schools participated in the GKC, with millions of acts of kindness being performed.

Activities for the GKC can include something as simple as saying thank you to your teacher and giving kind notes to friends, or bigger activities such as spirit

## 2015 Goals Exceeded!



**2012** 1,614 students  
3 schools

**2013** 113,954 students  
263 schools

**2014** 554,486 students  
1,099 schools

**2016 Goals:**  
8 million students  
16,000 schools  
400 million  
acts of kindness

days, school-wide service projects, or community-wide initiatives. Next year's GKC is from January 25- 29. If you're wondering about how to incorporate The Great Kindness Challenge in your school, there are **three easy steps**:

1. Register your school and receive the free GKC checklist and toolkit.
2. Print checklists for all students & plan complimentary activities.
3. On January 25-29, get happy and create a culture of kindness in your school.

If you're really excited about spreading kindness in schools, you can become a part of the **Great Kindness Challenge Ambassador Program**. Ambassadors actively promote and encourage schools to register for the GKC, and are given support in the form of a toolkit with ready-to-use materials. You might be wondering on how to incorporate kindness in your school or classroom year-round outside of the GKC in January. The **Random Acts of Kindness Foundation** has lessons, activities, and free resources for educators to incorporate in their classroom year-round. For even more ideas, visit our Pinterest board, **Kindness in the Classroom**.

The Great Kindness Challenge is a school-wide event, but it's also a transformative tool that teaches children that everyone deserves to be cared about. Creating a culture of kindness and positivity in schools ensures that children grow up to be caring and positive individuals. Kindness unites us all with a common theme: No matter our differences, we are all human and worthy of respect.

### ABOUT AUTHOR



SOCIAL TEAM

Posts from the McGraw-Hill Education Social Media & Content team.

### LEAVE A REPLY

Your Comment

Your Name

Your Email

Your Website

POST COMMENT

#### RECENT POSTS

Effective Professional Development Leads to Success for All

All in now: 8 imperatives for energizing inclusive classrooms and driving higher outcomes for English Learners

Celebrating Teacher Appreciation Week

A new horizon under ESSA: 11 Opportunities and actions facing educators and schools

Overcoming the Hurdles to Achieve Success in Direct Instruction: A Superintendent's Story

#### TRENDING POSTS

The Future of Blended Learning in ELA

Cross-Curricular Teaching of Data and Probability

Monday Mornings with Marisa

Making Small Groups Work for Differentiated Instruction

All About Dirt: Healthy Soil, Healthy Planet

#### TWEETS FROM @MCGRAWHILLK12

Tweets by @McGrawHillK12

MCGRAW-HILL EDUCATION, SCHOOL

Copyright © 2014 McGraw-Hill Education Global Holdings, LLC. All Rights Reserved.

LINKS

[About Us](#)  
[Customer Support](#)  
[News](#)  
[Privacy and Cookie Notice](#)  
[Report Piracy](#)  
[Site Map](#)  
[Social Media Directory](#)  
[Terms of Use](#)

## RESOURCES

---

[Align, Assess, Achieve](#)  
[Apps & iBooks](#)  
[College & Career Readiness](#)  
[Common Core State Standards](#)  
[ConnectED](#)  
[Free Webinars](#)  
[Next Generation Science Standards \(NGSS\)](#)  
[Online Learning Center](#)