



**Lesson Objectives:**

Club members and parents will build an understanding of empathy and kindness in action.

**Time:**

20—30 minutes

**Equipment and supplies:**

Bucket w/ water, marble, paperclip, bead, sprinkle, handout

**Preparations:**

- Review Lesson
- Gather equipment and supplies

# 4-H Club GO TO Resources



May 2021

## Random Acts of Kindness

### What is a “Random Act of Kindness”

A Random Act of Kindness is any action that a person takes to help another person or to make them feel good. It could be as small as a smile while passing in the hall or as big as a gift you spent time creating.

### Can I Really Make a Difference?

I know you’re thinking, “I’m just a kid, How can I actually make a difference in this big world?” They say that even the smallest act of kindness has a ripple effect. Let’s Test that theory!

### Ripple Effect Experiment

Gather a bucket of water and the items listed. Have the members make predictions about each of the items and if it will leave a ripple. Explain the ripple effect to the members and challenge them to complete one random act of kindness before the next meeting.

### The Ripple Effect

The world can seem like a really cruel place sometimes. And as individuals we often want to make a positive difference in anyway we can.

But we also get discouraged easily.

We see war, violence, poverty, starvation, abuse, and disease at every turn, and we feel like there’s little we can do to try and change these negative aspects of our world.

However, as it turns out, our acts of kindness and good deeds may have a larger impact on the world than we initially thought.

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According to a recent study published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, researchers have shown that generosity can be highly contagious.

**When we act kindly toward one person, that person is much more likely to be kinder toward others in the future.**

In this way, kindness can be “caught” by others like catching a cold, similar to other types of emotional contagion.

When researchers had participants play a game that rewarded greed, they found that a single act of kindness could produce dozens more.

For example, if you’re nice to John in Round 1, he’d be more likely to be nice to Kristen in Round 2, and they both would be more likely to be nice in Round 3, and so on.

**One act of kindness creates a “ripple effect” of kindness. It starts as a single act, but then spreads outward affecting many more.**

It’s good to know that our acts of kindness don’t only affect the people we do nice things for, but many other people who we may never even come into contact with.

This shows that our actions can have a real and long-lasting affect on the world, even if they start off very small.

The bigger truth is that if we are going to build a more positive world then it has to start somewhere. So why can’t you be part of the catalyst?

Of course some people are just more naturally kind than others, but we all have the capacity to rewire our brains to be more kind. We all have a chance to make a positive difference.

Begin practicing kindness more on a daily basis, and you can make incalculable changes over the course of your life.

And best of all, kindness doesn’t only benefit the recipients, it also benefits the givers. Doing acts of kindness on a regular basis has shown to be linked to increased mental health and happiness. That’s just one more good reason to be a nicer person.

# Ripple Effect Experiment

What items made a ripple when dropped into the bucket of water?

- |               |     |    |
|---------------|-----|----|
| 1. Marble     | YES | NO |
| 2. Paper Clip | YES | NO |
| 3. Bead       | YES | NO |
| 4. Sprinkle   | YES | NO |

Was anything too small to make a ripple?

What did you learn?

## University of Illinois Extension — Unit 2 — Boone, DeKalb, Ogle Counties

### Boone County Extension Office

205 Cadillac Court, Suite 3

Belvidere, IL 61008-1733

Phone: 815-544-3710

Program Coordinator: Melissa Irwin

Email: [mmirwin@illinois.edu](mailto:mmirwin@illinois.edu)

### Ogle County Extension Office

421 W Pines Rd, Ste 10

Oregon, IL 61061

Phone: 815-732-2191

Program Coordinator: Jodi Baumgartner

Email: [jbmgtrnr@illinois.edu](mailto:jbmgtrnr@illinois.edu)

### DeKalb County Extension Office

1350 West Prairie Drive

Sycamore, IL 60178-3166

Phone: 815-758-8194

Program Coordinator: Nicole Groezinger

Email: [groezing@illinois.edu](mailto:groezing@illinois.edu)

### Unit 2 Educator: Johnna Jennings

Email: [jbjennin@illinois.edu](mailto:jbjennin@illinois.edu)

## Sources & Additional Lesson info:

4-H Club GO TO Resources is being offered to 4-H clubs in Boone, DeKalb and Ogle Counties as a way to enrich and enhance 4-H experiences and programming at the club level. It is the goal of the Extension staff to assist 4-H leaders and officers in providing simple hands-on activities on a monthly basis that can broaden the 4-H club experience and as a result heighten positive youth development.

**Resources::** Teacherspayteachers.com / Kind Kids Club—Kindness Activities & Empathy Lesson

<https://www.themotionmachine.com/the-ripple-effect-of-kindness/>

**Prepared by:** Jodi Baumgartner, 4-H Youth Development Program Coordinator

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