

ADULTS AS MODELS OF KINDNESS AT SCHOOL

APPENDIX

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Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport

For additional information, contact:

Renseignements généraux

Direction des communications

Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur

1035, rue De La Chevrotière, 28^e étage

Québec (Québec) G1R 5A5

Telephone: 418-643-7095

Toll-free: 1-866-747-6626

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Table of contents

Suggested greeting from the director general or school principal.....	5
Consideration improves students' daily lives	6
“Every kid needs a champion”	8
Personalized messages	10
How classroom climate affects learning	12
The colour of MY kindness	13
Healthy email communication.....	14
Class portrait.....	16
Personalized logo	18
Kindness placemats.....	20
A collective work	22
Sample letter to parents	24
Template for personalized cards – The colour of my kindness	25
Template for certificate of kindness.....	26
Sample letter to bus drivers.....	27
Sample letter to crossing guards	28

TOOLS AND ACTIVITIES FOR ADMINISTRATORS AND SCHOOL STAFF

Suggested greeting from the director general or school principal

This year, the campaign to counter bullying and violence in schools and to promote a positive school climate will take place under the theme of *Adults as models of kindness at school*.

Because the school climate has a direct effect¹ on students' well-being, learning and success, this year we invite you to pay particular attention to kindness. Through our daily actions, behaviours and attitudes, not only with students but also among ourselves, we have a significant influence on our students' education. By acting in a positive way, we can help them grow in a welcoming and inspiring school environment, a place where they feel safe, included and respected.

This year, our objectives are as follows:

- To promote kind behaviour and harmonious interpersonal relationships, modelled by the adults at school
- To enable students to recognize the kind actions of adults in their school
- To rally the entire school community around kind actions

We thank you for your collaboration and are delighted to be working together as a team.

We wish you a wonderful school year!

Note:

The *Context* document, which is included in the 2018 Pedagogical Materials, can be given to principals to support them in introducing this year's theme to their team.

¹ Research shows that the school climate plays a key role in preventing violence. Researchers also make a strong connection between a harmonious climate and the quality of learning, school success and level of victimization at school. See Éric Debarbieux et al., 2012, *Le "climat scolaire": Définition, effets et conditions d'amélioration, rapport au Comité scientifique de la Direction de l'enseignement scolaire*, Paris: Ministère de l'Éducation nationale, MEN-DGESCO/Observatoire international de la violence à l'école, 2012. Also available online (in French):

<http://www.cafepedagogique.net/lexpresso/Documents/docsjoint/climat-scolaire2012.pdf>

Consideration improves students' daily lives

Suggested activity

Objective

- To influence school staff so that they act with kindness, by reminding them how thoughtful attention to students can greatly enhance their daily lives

Materials

Video projector

Link to the video: "[Every Opportunity](#)" (Atlanta Speech School, 3 min 50 s)

Procedure

Introduce the video with the following short description:

Thoughtful attention to students can go a long way to improving their daily lives. This video shows how interactions between children and adults can affect young people's education. It presents a school day from a young student's point of view. While the child begins the day with enthusiasm, the responses and behaviours of his teachers and other adults leave him discouraged. The video then shows how small changes in adults' behaviour, both inside and outside the classroom, can dramatically transform the situation.

After the video presentation, hand out the following avenues for reflection to guide the group discussion.

Avenues for reflection to guide the group discussion

1. In the first part of the video . . .

- 1.1 How does the student feel?
- 1.2 What is my interpretation of the adults' verbal and non-verbal language?
- 1.3 What is my interpretation of the students' verbal and non-verbal language?
- 1.4 In my opinion, how do the adults perceive their work?
- 1.5 In my opinion, what is the school climate like?

2. In the second part of the video . . .

- 2.1 How does the student feel?
- 2.2 What is my interpretation of the adults' verbal and non-verbal language?
- 2.3 What is my interpretation of the students' verbal and non-verbal language?
- 2.4 In my opinion, how do the adults perceive their work?
- 2.5 In my opinion, what is the school climate like?

3. How can we draw inspiration from this video to make sure that ALL our students feel comfortable in our school?

“Every kid needs a champion”

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY TO WELCOME STAFF

Video of Rita Pierson: YouTube, 7 min 48 s, EN/FR, TED Talk, May 3, 2013

Objective

- To inspire staff to act with kindness by demonstrating how showing consideration for others can improve students' daily lives
- **Although the video is intended for teachers, all school staff will find it inspirational.*

Materials

Video projector

Link to the video: [“Every kid needs a champion” \(7 min 48 s\)](#)

Procedure

1. Introduce the video with the following short description:

Rita Pierson, who has been teaching for 40 years, calls on teachers to have faith in their students and to develop meaningful personal relationships with them. With passion and humour, she demonstrates the importance and power of a positive teacher-student relationship.

2. Hand out the questionnaire to encourage participants to begin thinking about the topic.
3. Show the video.
4. Lead a group discussion using the suggested questions.

Personal reflection

1. I remember that I wanted to work in a school because . . .
2. I chose to work in a school because . . .

Group discussion

3. What is kindness?
4. What does the concept of kindness look like in our day-to-day lives?
5. Are our school guidelines always centred around the student?
6. How can I teach kindness concretely?
7. How can we do things differently in our school?

Personalized messages

Objective

- To highlight a strength, behaviour, attitude or quality in an adult that has a positive effect on the school climate

Materials

Personal notes or little cards

Adults as models of kindness at school I've noticed that . . .

Procedure

Place a note in someone's mailbox or on their desk at a specific time. Not giving out all the notes at the same time allows you to make precise observations and to repeatedly offer credible feedback. It's important to make sure that every staff member receives a personal message at some point during the school year.

A few suggestions

- I've noticed that you always take the time to greet each of your students before starting the day (or your class). This kind of personal attention is a beautiful way to show that each and every student is important. It has a positive effect on your classroom climate.
- I've noticed that you are always available to take some time to answer your students' questions. It is a great way to show that you respect them and that you care about their success.
- I've noticed that you always greet parents with a smile. This is a nice way to show them that our school is a great place to be.

- I've noticed that you are often available to provide support to new colleagues and to share your knowledge with them. This is a great way to help them integrate into our school.
- I've noticed that you inspire respect and consideration in your students. Your considerate manner toward your students leads them to follow your example in their relationships with others.
- I've noticed that one of your students is currently going through a difficult time and that you are providing support to help him or her. No doubt this student will benefit from your encouragement. It's important to look for the good in everyone.
- I've noticed that you really make an effort to include the more withdrawn students in your activities. This extra attention will no doubt boost their self-esteem and self-confidence.

How classroom climate affects learning

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY

Objective

- To raise staff awareness about the effects of a positive classroom environment on students' well-being, learning and success

Materials

Video projector

Link to the video: ["Construire un climat de classe positif et favorable aux apprentissages"](#) (2 min 40 s)

Procedure

1. Introduce the video with the following short description:

The classroom climate has an effect on brain chemistry and therefore on learning. A positive climate requires a careful structure and group cohesiveness.

2. Show the video.

3. When the video is over, use the following questions to guide the group discussion:

3.1 What are the effects of a positive work environment?

This question will help participants make connections between a harmonious climate in the classroom and the climate in the school. Both affect the students and the adults alike.

3.2 According to the video, what elements are essential to foster a positive classroom climate?

3.3 What are the advantages of a harmonious classroom climate?

3.4 How can we create a harmonious climate in the classroom?

Participants are invited to share their ideas on this topic. Sharing experiences increases a person's self-confidence and has an influence on the school climate as a whole.

3.5 How can we apply what we saw in this video to our daily practice?

The colour of MY kindness

GROUP MOVEMENT SUGGESTED FOR ALL STAFF

Objective

- To rally the entire school community around actions of kindness

Materials

Personalized cards – The colour of my kindness for each staff member

Sticky tack

Procedure

At the beginning of the year, each staff member is invited to choose an attitude or behaviour associated with kindness that he or she undertakes to promote and practise throughout the year.

We suggest that staff members each display their OWN colour on their classroom or office door so that all students and visitors can see it and be inspired by it.

Attitudes and behaviours associated with kindness		
Kind-hearted Cheerful Helpful Open Understanding Welcoming Generous Gentle Respectful	Thoughtful Sensitive Friendly Affable Accommodating Lenient Magnanimous Empathy Sympathy	Commitment Compassion Comforting presence Reassuring presence Co-operation Charity Clemency Conciliatory Etc.

Healthy email communication

Best practices

- One topic per email message
- Information presented in order of importance, with the most important at the top
- Empathetic writing—put yourself in the recipient's shoes
- Maximum one page of text
- Neutral tone to avoid misinterpretation

Avoid

- Spelling mistakes
- CAPITAL LETTERS, **bold type**, underlining and **colour**, which can all lead to misinterpretation
- Excessive punctuation (!!!, ???)

A few tips

- Reread the email to make sure it's logical and clear
- Check that the email title in the subject line refers to the topic
- Step back to take some time before writing an email (the more emotional a subject, the more time you should wait before replying)
- Keep in mind that an email leaves a written record and that it could be forwarded to another recipient at any time

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Class portrait

TARGET AUDIENCE: ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

Reflection, discussion and creative activity to help students become aware of the importance of feeling welcome

Objectives

- To help students become aware of the importance of feeling welcome and comfortable in a group
- To explore the elements to put in place in their environment to foster a warm welcome

Materials

Images that depict a good welcome

Camera or cellphone

Photo album (paper or virtual)

Procedure

1. Lead a discussion with the students on the meaning of the word *welcome*.
 - a. Show students various images that depict a good welcome and others that are not as welcoming.
 - b. Invite the students to name actions or attitudes associated with a kind welcome.
 - c. Invite students to say how they feel when they see these images and to define the elements they consider important for providing a good welcome.
 - d. Guide the students in a brainstorming session to find words, actions and attitudes that illustrate a warm welcome.
 - e. Choose the elements (words, actions and attitudes) that are the most important for the group as a whole.
2. Group the students in teams of two or three.
 - a. Ask them to come up with an original way to express the elements selected, using photography.
 - b. When they're ready, they can take photos to illustrate the different ways of providing a warm and kind welcome.
 - c. Each photo should be accompanied by an explanatory sentence or title.

2. Put all the images together in an album or create a montage.
3. Launch the album at the meeting with parents at the beginning of the year and organize an exhibition in the classroom.
4. Encourage the students to practise their new skills.

Taking it further . . .

- Create posters to be displayed around the classroom or in the school.
- Invite students to practise behaviours that express a warm welcome when they visit or host another group of students (e.g. on a field trip, at an extracurricular sports event).
- Share the initiative on the school's website or Facebook page, within the school board network, in the newsletter to parents, with the governing board, etc.

Personalized logo

TARGET AUDIENCE:

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY CYCLE ONE STUDENTS

Project can be multidisciplinary (Ethics and Religious Culture, and Visual Arts) and carried out as a class, as a level or as a school

Objectives:

- To create an opportunity for discussion with students on the values associated with kindness
- To have students create a logo on a theme that represents their class or their year

Materials:

Paper

Pencil or other medium of the teacher's choice

A computer with Internet access can be used to generate ideas or to create a logo online (several freeware programs are available online)

Procedure:

Students are already familiar with a number of logos associated with different events or organizations (e.g. Hooked on School Days, Apple, McDonald's). These logos, often linked to a slogan or a set of values, convey a variety of messages.

As a class:

1. Ask the students to name:
 - logos they recognize, and have them discuss the values or messages these logos convey
 - values associated with kindness

Attitudes and behaviours associated with kindness		
Thoughtful	Understanding	Accepting of others
Generous	Commitment	Respect
Friendly	Reassuring presence	Co-operation
Lenient	Sympathy	Conciliation
Gentle	Empathy	Security
Open	Compassion	Etc.
Helpful	Humanity	
Cheerful	Charity	

Individually:

2. Ask the students to:
 - Identify the elements they would like to communicate through their logo (research can be done to examine these elements in more depth and generate ideas).
 - Draft a sketch.

In teams:

3. Group the students into pairs:
 - Identify the ideas they agree on.
 - Decide on the values associated with kindness to be conveyed through their logo.
 - Come up with a slogan that embodies the logo.
 - Draw the logo.

Taking it further . . .

- Organize a contest within the class, and then within the school, to determine which logo best represents the way kindness is expressed in your class and at your school.
- Promote the logo by displaying it in a visible location in the school.
- Share the initiative on the school's Facebook page, in the school board network, in the newsletter to parents, with the governing board, etc.

Kindness placemats

TARGET AUDIENCE:

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY CYCLE ONE STUDENTS

Subjects: Ethics and Religious Culture (ERC) and Visual Arts

Objectives

- To highlight the objectives of the Ethics and Religious Culture program that help promote living in harmony with others
- To create placemats that will be used on the official first day of the campaign

Materials

11" x 17" sheets of paper

Coloured pencils or other medium chosen by the teacher

Procedure

As a class:

1. Introduce the activity with a story about values, such as the Value Tales book series or another resource or model that will inspire students. Have the students each name a person who has inspired them and explain their choice. As a group, note the values that emerge from each person's testimony.
2. Begin the activity with a discussion of the definition and purpose of values.
3. Create a table with two columns: "Values" and "Behaviours, actions or attitudes". Name values that the students already know and ask them to come up with associated behaviours, actions or attitudes. Example:

Values	Behaviours, actions or attitudes
Family	I spend time with my family. I celebrate the birthdays of my family members. (. . .)
Fun	I like to laugh. I like to be with people. I like to try new things. (. . .)

From the list of values named, select those associated with kindness.

Values, behaviours and attitudes related to kindness		
Friendly Kind-hearted Open Cheerful Comforting presence Conciliation Understanding	Helpful Gentle Accepting of others Reassuring presence Generosity Leniency Co-operation	Charity Empathy Sympathy Commitment Respect Etc.

Individually:

4. Have students identify those values associated with kindness that are important to them. Ask them to name behaviours or actions that demonstrate these values in their daily lives.
5. Give each student a sheet of paper (11" x 17") in the colour of their choice and ask them to illustrate the kind behaviour, action or attitude they identify with most. This project can be done in visual arts class.
6. Ask the students to present their placemat to the class.
7. Give the placemats, which may be signed or not, to the people in charge of the cafeteria. On the first day of the campaign, the placemats can be used on the students' trays.

NB: The number of copies to be made will depend on the number of placemats created by the students.

Taking it further . . .

8. Organize a contest, first within the class and then within the whole school, to choose the winning placemat(s). The placemats can be framed or plasticized.
9. Share the initiative on the school website, in the school board network, in a newsletter to parents, with the governing board, etc.

A collective work

TARGET AUDIENCE: STUDENTS AND STAFF IN ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Objective

- To promote kindness among all school stakeholders (students, staff, parents)

Materials

Cards marked with a kind behaviour, attitude or action. Cards in certain shapes (see below) can be used to more easily create a collective montage and give the work a larger meaning.

Sticky tack for the montage

Procedure

1. The day before the theme is officially launched, invite all school staff and students to choose one card at random. Each card shows a kind attitude, action or behaviour that the student or staff member will have to promote during the launch.
2. Ask students and staff to sign the card they received and to display it as part of a collective work. Place the work where everyone can see it. When parents come in for a meeting, for example, they can be invited to contribute to the collective work by suggesting a kind behaviour or attitude that they too would like to model.
3. For aesthetic purposes, the cards can be in the shape of a hand, flower or leaf, and can be displayed according to a proposed template. Here are two examples:



TEMPLATES AND LETTERS

Sample letter to parents

(School logo)

LETTER TO PARENTS

September 2018

The theme of this year's campaign to counter bullying and violence and to foster a positive school climate is: *Adults as models of kindness at school*.

We firmly believe that adults who model kindness can have a positive influence on your child's social learning.

Kindness is conveyed through empathetic attitudes and actions that show consideration for others and an openness toward them. It also means being mindful of the needs of others and wanting what is best for them.

We invite you to pay special attention to this theme. At various times during the year, we will ask for your participation so that, together, we can help your children grow in a school environment where they feel safe, included and respected.

As adults, we have a significant influence on children's education. We can inspire them through our daily attitudes, actions and kind behaviours. Thank you for your cooperation and for being part of our team!

* * *

Template for personalized cards – The colour of my kindness

(School logo)

**The colour of MY
kindness is**

Template for certificate of kindness

2018 CERTIFICATE OF KINDNESS

This certificate of kindness is awarded to:

NAME OF AWARD WINNER

We are proud to recognize you as a kind person who promotes and embodies values that have a positive impact on the people around you.

School: _____

Signature

Date

(School logo)

Sample letter to bus drivers

(School logo)

Subject: Thank you for being a model of kindness

(date)

Dear Bus Driver:

In keeping with the school transportation safety campaign that will take place from February 4 to 15, 2019, we'd like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation of the work you do every day with our students.

The tasks of a bus driver go well beyond simply driving a vehicle and require multiple competencies. In addition to getting the students to their destination safely and making sure they respect the rules, you are often called on to intervene in ways that demand tact, patience and diplomacy. Every morning you greet the students and every evening you bring them home, sometimes under difficult conditions.

On behalf of all the staff and students of _____ School, we thank you for your precious collaboration and your devotion to our students.

Sincerely,

(principal's signature)

Sample letter to crossing guards

(School logo)

Subject: Thank you for being a model of kindness

(date)

Dear Crossing Guard:

In keeping with the school transportation safety campaign that will take place from February 4 to 15, 2019, we'd like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation of the work you do every day with the students.

As an adult who sees the students every day, you play an important role. The tasks of a school crossing guard require multiple competencies. In addition to being responsible for students' safety at dangerous locations, you represent a model for these young pedestrians as they learn the rules that will enable them to travel safely.

On behalf of the staff and students of (*name of school*), we thank you for your precious collaboration and your devotion to our students.

Sincerely,

(principal's signature)

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