

# Counseling News

December, 2016

## Kindness Reduces Bullying



**"I found it is the small every day deeds of ordinary folk that keep the darkness at bay...small acts of kindness and love". – Gandalf, The Hobbit.**

Scientific studies have shown that there are many emotional, physical, and mental health benefits linked to kindness. [Patty O'Grady, PhD](#) is an expert in neuroscience, emotional learning, and positive psychology, specializing in education. She reports, "kindness changes the brain by the experience of kindness. Children and adolescents do not learn kindness by only thinking about it and talking about it. Kindness is best learned by feeling it so that they can reproduce it".

## Teaching Kindness Reduces Bullying:

Instead of teaching children what NOT to do, teaching what they CAN do is important to create change. Teaching and encouraging kindness is related to many of the following positive outcomes:

- **Happy People!** There is a natural good feeling that results when we do an act of kindness, even if it's small. Happy and compassionate students do not have a need to bully others.
- **Higher self-esteem.** The "helper's high" that comes from endorphins in our brains when we do something kind increases our sense of belonging.
- **More friends.** Feeling like they are accepted and liked by peers is usually important to students of all ages. Kindness increases our connections with other people on a deeper level.
- **Improved academic success.** The feel good effects of being kind help increase concentration and memory which greatly impacts learning.
- **Better mental health.** Acts of kindness increase serotonin levels, the natural brain chemical that improves mood. Have a consistently unhappy student? Encourage them to look outside themselves and be kind to someone else.

For more information about why kindness is important, check out this article: <http://www.edutopia.org/blog/teaching-kindness-essential-reduce-bullying-lisa-currie>

## WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS MONTH

- 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will participate in Career Cruising activities in their science classes.
- Karen Davis will facilitate "WhyTry?" group to support students in increasing their motivation to learn and participate in class.
- Jennifer Waller will facilitate "Pawsitive Steps", helping students reflect on behavior and empathy.
- Stephanie Amato will facilitate a "Girl's Coping Skills" group focused on mindfulness and strategies for coping with difficult emotions.
- Holiday Resources are available (please see list of resources on next page)

**Questions? Contact us!**

**Karen Davis (A-G)**

**Stephanie Amato (H-O)**

**Jennifer Waller (P-Z)**

# Holiday Resources

December, 2016

## Christmas

- 1. Live, Love, Christmas:** will serve 3000 children at City Bible Church. Parents will be given an appointment time to “shop”, appointment time must be kept. Toys are replenished every hour to allow for a variety of choices for all families. Referral is made through school counselors.
- 3. Share:** Families served in any Share program will have the opportunity to sign up to “shop” for gifts for their family. The sign up begins at 8:00 am December 21, 2016 at Fromhold Service Center 2306 NE Andresen Road, Vancouver, WA 98661. While parents shop children will be entertained with games, cookies and crafts. They will also be holding an adult only party for single and elderly adults. This takes place Dec 19, 2016 from 11-2. They will be serving lunch, have gifts and Santa. Dinner is also served at Share Christmas Day 1115 W 13<sup>th</sup> Street. Time TBA.
- 4. Salvation Army:** They will serve 1000 families for Christmas through Adopt A Family and the Toy and Joy Shop. 700-750 families will be served through the Toy and Joy Shop; parents will be able to shop for a gift for their child and will also receive food assistance. In order to receive assistance through the Salvation Army; families must pick up an appointment time slip beginning Nov 14<sup>th</sup>-Nov 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016 (**until spots are full**) at 1500 NE 112<sup>th</sup> Ave or Center for Social Services 7509 NE 47<sup>th</sup> Ave from 10:00 am-12:00 pm and 1:00pm-4:00pm.
- 5. St Vincent's De Paul:** They will provide a Christmas Food Box and gifts for children 16 and under. Call in November 28, 2016 from 9:00 am-1:00pm. Distribution will be December 17, 2016 at 2456 Stapleton Road.

Questions? Contact us!

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