

24. Infectious kindness

INTRODUCTION

Begin today's session by asking the children to all shake hands with one another. Then show this video and ask what they think it is showing:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=nwAYpLVyeFU

Explain that the video shows infectious kindness. Pick someone from the group to explain what this means.

Ask the children for their responses to such questions as:

- Who is responsible for the kindness shown in this video?
- What does kindness look like?
- Why are people kind to one another?
- Why does kindness spread?

ACTIVITY

Tell the pupils that you are going to put them in charge of creating celebrations for a new day you have created: National Kindness Day.

Ask:

- What would you like people to do on National Kindness Day? Why?
- Who would people spend time with?
- Where would the celebrations happen?
- What would people eat or drink?
- Would there be anything that you would ban on National Kindness Day?
- Would it be ok for people to choose not to take part?

Pupils could design their days independently or in small groups. After they have had some time, pick people to share their plans with the whole group.

Ask:

- What did you like most in each plan? Why?
- Which would create the best opportunity to celebrate kindness? Why?

CONCLUSION

Kindness is important in many religions.

Doing good and having the right belief go hand in hand in Islam. The Holy Qur'an speaks of true Muslims very often as "those who believe and do good deeds". Both the Quran and the Holy Prophet have told Muslims that the best among them is that person who shows the best behaviour towards other people. Kindness to the Neighbour is important to people of all religions and none.

Hesed appears in the Torah to communicate God's kindness and love toward humanity as well as human kindness and love toward each other. This Hebrew word is used in the Jewish religion as there is no English word big or strong enough to describe the kind of loving kindness they are referring to. Jewish people have another word for an act of loving kindness; it is called doing a 'Mitzvah'.

Encourage children to play 'Mitzvah Hunt' by downloading the app to the school network from <http://jewishinteractive.org/interact-with-judaism-reonline/> There's an excellent brief educator guide to go with the app which has been produced with RE:ONLINE.

Christians believe that kindness is about behaving towards others as God has behaved towards them; i.e., doing thoughtful deeds to others. Philippians 2:3-4: "Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others."

During the Christian season of Lent, a charity called 40Acts created a series of activities for people to take part in to do good, give back and live generously. Many of the acts involved being kind to neighbours.

You can see some examples of what people did each day here:

<http://www.40acts.org.uk/the-challenge/>

Ask pupils to explore them. This could be on the website if you have access, or you can print some off in advance.

Ask: Which acts do you think support the different religions' views of kindness explained above?