

# 5 TIPS TO RAISE A KIND CHILD

HOW TO STEER YOUNG MINDS TOWARDS KINDNESS IN WORDS AND IN DEEDS.

**F**rom around two years old, children are capable of empathy – understanding how others feel even if they do not feel the same way. Here are five ways to develop empathy, compassion and kindness in your child.



## 1 IDENTIFY AND ACKNOWLEDGE KIND ACTS

Ask children to describe kind behaviours they have encountered. Use puppets to role-play real-life situations. Pose a scenario (e.g. "How can we help a friend who is sad?"), and encourage them to offer suggestions on how to respond.

## 2 USE STORYTELLING

Children relate to the world through stories. Stories that weave moral values into the narrative are more compelling and memorable than lecturing them on dos and don'ts. *Have You Filled a Bucket Today?* teaches children about kindness using the metaphor of bucket-filling. Visit your neighbourhood library for more book recommendations.

## 3 MODEL KINDNESS

Children are always observing and mimicking what their parents do. Let them see you being kind, like offering to shop for groceries for an elderly neighbour or holding the lift door open for someone. As the saying goes, empathy is caught, not taught.



## 4 BE PATIENT AND NON-JUDGEMENTAL

When children say or do something hurtful to others, refrain from admonishing them. Instead, ask "Why did you say/do that?", explain the situation, and point out that the person at the receiving end of the name-calling or unkind deed may feel sad or angry. Teach children to treat others how they want to be treated.



## 5 CREATE OPPORTUNITIES TO BE NICE TO OTHERS

Ask children to think about how they can be kind to people around them. It could be for the school bus driver who brings them safely home, or their grandparents who spend time with them. They can do simple things like making thank-you cards to express their appreciation.

## GIVING OTHERS JOY

Encouraging children to think about what makes someone happy or to do something nice helps them think beyond themselves. Here are some ideas N1 and N2 children from TwinkleKidz @ Bendemeer planned for their teachers when they took part in an exhibition organised by social enterprise The Learning Connections last November.

