

Teaching Kids Kindness in a Cold, Cruel World

I was recently in a waiting room with three of my four children, and after I requested a “Yes ma’am” from them, another parent in the room thanked me. He thanked me for requesting respect and kindness from my children. I was taken aback as it was a blatant reminder that these things are no longer commonplace, and as parents, we are tasked with the daily struggle of teaching kindness in an unkind world.

This realization hit me full force when I first sent my innocent, precious babies off to school on the public school bus. At the end of the first week, my kindergartner was speaking to me with her middle finger in my face, asking “Mommy, what does this mean?”

As parents, we are the first line of defense in promoting kindness, but how do we combat the constant attack against our impressionable ones?

We practice what we preach.

It’s a constant struggle, and I’m no saint, but our children surely won’t learn it if we don’t make it a priority. It’s the little things that leave big impressions, resetting attitudes and changing hearts from coldness to kindness.

Below, find 10 easy ways to emphasize kindness in your daily lives:

1. Use your manners—please, thank you, yes ma’am, no ma’am, excuse me.
2. Hold the door for the person behind you.
3. Give a compliment.

4. When you're angry, take a deep breath and speak calmly.
5. Make random acts of kindness a common occurrence.
6. Be on time.
7. Apologize when you're wrong.
8. Curb your road rage.
9. Give encouragement to someone struggling.
10. Smile.

It's often not the big fanfare that sticks with children but rather the subtle act or quiet word of encouragement. Kindness may be a lost art in our world, but it doesn't have to be so in our homes. Begin early by being deliberate with your kindness, and your children will learn to be deliberate with theirs as well.

Angela Jamison is the mother of four young children and struggles daily to teach them the importance of kindness. From buying a stranger's lunch to promoting manners, Angela is on a mission to reinstate kindness in the smallest members of our society. When she is not with her own children, Angela is the director of a Christian preschool and enjoys reading, writing and exploring the path laid before her by the most perfect Father. You can learn more about Angela at her blog,

This article originally appeared at .