

OBJECTIVE

Students choose acts of kindness to perform in order to connect with their community.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Video and Lesson Guide
Circles of Connection Sheet, in student portfolio
Connection Notes: Month 8, 1 for each student
Connection Challenge: Acts of Kindness, 1 per student

RESOURCES

Slide Deck
Optional Teacher Connection Challenges
Communication Templates
Additional Connection Challenges for students

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

Kindness challenges exist in many forms. And all are based on the same idea—when you do good for someone else you are thinking less about yourself. When you are personally feeling down, that change in perspective is often what is needed to pull you out of the negativity. As you know, extreme loneliness creates a space where people are less likely to ask for what they need. By applying purposeful and specific activities, you can change those thoughts and reactions.

Acts of Kindness, when random or planned, have a great impact on your own happiness and social well-being. When done with people you know and have a relationship, the positive impact is greater because not only are you having the impact of the kindness, but you are also specifically working on the relationship as well.

LESSON GUIDE

Hand out the Connection Notes Sheet and have students get out the Circles & Notes pages from last month.

Begin with taking out the Connection Notes from last lesson and meet with their Connection Team to review the Connection Challenge from the previous lesson. Have them meet in the small groups of 2-4 from last lesson and talk about their reactions to the gratitude notecard experience. Were they successful? Were they surprised or confused by the reactions? Was there a pattern or theme to how people responded? After a small group discussion, share out as a class and then allow time to reflect by completing the first box, Check In, on the Connection Notes worksheet.

Take the pre-assessment.

This next lesson focuses on acts of kindness and how engaging with our community in purposeful ways ensures that we are growing our circles of connection. Introduce Izzy Boring as this month's storytellers. Izzy is a recent high school graduate and a basketball player. A hard piece of her story has been losing her boyfriend to suicide during her senior year, but through that she learned to connect with people in her life. She has learned it is okay to not be okay and it is okay to be vulnerable!

LESSON GUIDE

Show the Video and Discuss

Have students take brief notes in the second box, Video Notes, on the Connection Notes Sheet from Month Eight. Watch the entire video all the way through and have a conversation using these questions or ones that make sense for your students. You can pause before discussion and have students complete the questions on the notes page to give them time to process what they have heard.

- Then, start by asking, “Is there anyone in your life that this video makes you think about? Can you reach out and connect with them right now?”
- Allow time for students to text or call someone they are thinking about in the moment.
- Use the questions below to engage in a rich conversation with your students focusing on student engagement. Lead the conversation with the whole group or have small groups answer each question and then share their answers.
- It is vital that all students feel seen in this process so pay close attention to anyone responding in a way to the videos that is unexpected. Follow up with them after the discussion to ensure the video or conversation was not upsetting to them.

Play again, pausing for conversation with the Connection Teams. After the teams discuss, consider debriefing as a class. As you rewatch, pause at 1:38 and engage with students about Izzy’s story. She shares a rich story that has gotten to her where she is today.

- Ask students about their family history and what elements do they see as strengths that help them and what kinds of things are they still dealing with that might not be strengths yet?

Continue to watch and pause again at 4:10.

- When Izzy shares about losing Cade to suicide it is pretty touching to hear how he took on her interests and really difficult to hear his note to her before he died. Izzy talks about grief and how there is no right or wrong way to do it. As you think about the last few years, we have all experienced big losses with COVID, what are some ways that you have learned to cope and have purpose?

Continue to watch and pause again at the end. Izzy’s faith is strong and she speaks directly to each of us.

- Which part of her message makes sense to you?
- What parts are harder for you to understand?
- How do you show up each day in a brave way even when things are a struggle?

Allow time to Connect to Self

Allow time for your students to now connect with themselves and reflect on the conversation and video. Have them spend time thinking about and writing in box three, Connect to Self, on the Connection Notes Sheet for Month Eight.

Introduce this month’s Connection Challenge

1. Hand out Acts of Kindness Challenge sheet to each student.
2. Review the list and brainstorm additional ways they can exercise kindness their community specifically focusing on the people in their circles of connections
3. As students meet in their connection teams have them choose at least two acts of kindness they will perform for their community this week.

Allow time to Connect to Circle

Have the students complete the last box, Connect to Circle, on the Connection Notes Sheet for Month Eight.

TO ACCESS THE VIDEO, SLIDES, LESSON
MATERIALS, AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

WWW.SCHOOLS.ONLY7SECONDS.COM

