



SUMMER LEARNING EXPERIENCE - 2018

This year's Summer Learning Experience focuses on the theme of #LoveThyNeighbor. This theme is at the heart of our school's core value of Community. In chapter 12 of the Gospel of Mark we read:

One of the scribes, when he came forward and heard them disputing and saw how well he had answered them, asked him, "Which is the first of all the commandments?" Jesus replied, "The first is this: 'Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is Lord alone! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." (MK 12:28-31)

Assignment:

- On **Friday, September 21**, students will participate in a group discussion in their homeroom. The discussion will center on the theme of #LoveThyNeighbor and the student's thoughts, reflections and reactions to the movie and articles they watched and read over the summer as well as their answers to the reflection questions below.

Movie to Watch:

Kindness is Contagious (Available to rent on iTunes)

Articles to Read:

How About a Little Kindness, editorial, *Wethersfield Life*, June 2018

What Acts of Kindness Have You Witnessed or Participated In, Shannon Doyne, New York Times, 11/14/16

Reflection Questions to Consider:

1. What is your overall impression of the documentary, *Kindness is Contagious*?
2. What segment of the documentary was inspiring? Why?
3. Describe an occasion when you have experienced “kindness being contagious.”
4. What is the overall tone of the editorial, “How About a Little Kindness”? Explain your answer.
5. What point is the author of the editorial trying to make? What commentary is he making regarding American people today?
6. What is the author’s advice to his reader?
7. Do you agree with the editorial? With the author’s advice? Why or why not?
8. Have you ever experienced or witnessed events like those described in the article, “What Acts of Kindness Have You Witnessed or Participated In”?
9. Why do you think people in and around Ms. Le Pape’s neighborhood were so willing to help find Bailey?
10. What do their actions tell you about them? Why do you think that?
11. Do you have any stories from your own life of helping or being helped by people who you did not know?

Editorial

How about a little kindness?

The mood in America these days seems sharper than ever, at least, sharper than has been witnessed in many a year. Everyone has an opinion and they are not reluctant to shout it from the rooftops and drown out the voice of anyone who disagrees.

The topic doesn't really matter. It can be the tried and true controversial ones, like politics and religion, or it can be matters of the economy, race, celebrities, sports, almost anything one can think of.

When did we become so indignant, so intolerant, so angry with the world? Why do an increasing number of Americans seem unable to listen to any thought process other than their own?

An increasing number of motorists drive aggressively, as if the rest of us on the road are an imposition. Enough already with the tailgating and flashing high beams.

Social media has spawned a new world in which everyone has a public voice. But a lot of people don't have a clue how to effectively use that voice for the common good.

Facebook was a lot more interesting and enjoyable before every third post turned into some kind of political rant. Some folks use social media as a way to spread misinformation or to destroy the character of

other people.

Eventually the laws will catch up, but right now it's a free-for all on social media. If the same things were said in the news media, or even in general public conversation, those saying them would be subject to consequences under libel and slander and defamation of character laws.

Whatever happened to treating others the way you want to be treated? The Golden Rule is still around, albeit it rather tarnished. Let's polish it up.

We're not asking anyone to make a major effort here. Simple acts of kindness can go a long way.

Say hello as you pass another person on the street. Hold the door open rather than letting it slam in their face because you're just too busy to be concerned with the welfare of anyone else.

Offer to carry a bag of groceries for a senior citizen. Volunteer a few hours for a charity. Pet a dog. Help a neighbor shovel the snow from his or her driveway.

Listen to an opposing viewpoint and disagree, if you so choose, in a respectful manner. How hard is that? Perform one small act of random kindness day. Maybe others will follow your example. Wouldn't that be wonderful?

== NO ACT ==
of kindness
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NO MATTER HOW SMALL
.....
IS EVER
wasted

What Acts of Kindness Have You Witnessed or Participated In?



Orna Le Pape and her dog, Bailey, outside their apartment in Carroll Gardens, Brooklyn. Ms. Le Pape lost Bailey last month near her home, but help from neighbors and strangers led to the dog's recovery. Credit Demetrius Freeman for The New York Times
By Shannon Doyne

Nov. 14, 2016

We've all heard of the heroic actions of bystanders and random acts of kindness.

In the [Pet City](#) column "[World \(or at Least Brooklyn\) Stops for Lost Dog](#)," Andy Newman writes about Orna Le Pape and the people she did not previously know who helped her find her missing dog Bailey:

Everywhere Ms. Le Pape went, people seemed compelled to help. They asked for an extra flier so they could post it on Facebook, or make copies and tape them up elsewhere. They offered suggestions — call vets, call shelters, call animal rescue places, go to the police.

“I went to the sanitation garage, down by the water, and the guy said, ‘I’m announcing this on roll call until they find her,’” Ms. Le Pape said. “I ran into absolute strangers who said they were going to church to pray for my dog.”

... More acts of kindness. Near the Fairway supermarket in Red Hook a man flagged her down. “He said, ‘I see you’re offering a reward on your sign. I have the winery that’s down here — tell people the reward is they can come for a tasting and a tour.’”

... At 10 p.m. on Wednesday evening, more than 60 hours after Bailey dashed off, Ms. Le Pape was riding a bike two neighborhoods from home, calling Bailey’s name, and her phone rang.

“This woman is panting and puffing,” she recounted. “She says, ‘I’m following your dog, trying to stay with her.’” Bailey was on Sackett Street, just a few blocks from home. Ms. Le Pape flew down Columbia Street. She ran into the woman: “She said, ‘I was trying to call you again — we lost her.’”

The phone rang again. Someone had just seen Bailey in Red Hook, on Van Brunt Street.

And again: “I see your dog,” a man told her. Bailey was on Degraw Street, heading in the direction of home.

Ms. Le Pape called her mother. “I just sort of screamed something to the effect of, ‘Everyone get downstairs!’”

Ms. Le Pape’s older son opened the door. There was Bailey, at the top of the stoop.