



Kindness Connections Pacing Guides

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Welcome to **Kindness Connections**! Our play-based enrichment kit weaves topics like emotions, compassion, gratitude, responsibility, and much more into 30 thematic learning activities that children love.

Designed to fit seamlessly into your existing routines, themes, and units, the Kindness Connections kit makes it easy to add a layer of kindness lessons to any curriculum. And there's no need to wait—you can begin using it any time of year!

While Kindness Connections offers flexibility and allows teachers to tailor the lessons to their schedules and classes, we recognize that “clear is kind.” A starting point or road map can be helpful as you begin to incorporate the kindness lessons from Kindness Connections into your existing curriculum.

This pacing guide provides four “quick start” options to lesson planning with Kindness Connections themes and incorporating kindness into your classroom week after week, month after month.

In all four options, we've spaced and varied the Kindness Connections themes into options that will fit a variety of classroom needs and schedules. We also offer brief explanations as to why each option will help you teach kindness to preschoolers in a relatable way that allows them to build on the skills they learn. Rich, varied, repeated exposures to the Kindness Connections themes and its concepts are the key to making kindness a habit.

Thank you for doing this important work for the world's most important people!

With gratitude—

The Highlights Early Learning Team

Option 1: Monthly (10 Months)

Objective: Teach one theme of Kindness Connections per month, according to corresponding monthly holiday/traditions on the yearly calendar.

With this option, you will select the Kindness Connections themes to loosely correspond to the events and traditions that regularly fall on the yearly calendar. We've added suggestions for monthly content themes to help you plan kindness lessons around moments throughout the year that are most meaningful to your preschoolers.

Month	Theme	Week	Lessons	Related Activity	Related Monthly Theme
September	Building Friendships	1	Making Friends	Initiating Interactions	Back to School, Making New Friends
		2	Collaborative Play	Indoor Croquet Team Challenge	
		3	Conflict Resolution	The Cookie Mistake	
		4	Review of Building Friendships theme/ lessons	Consider incorporating additional Learning Lab links, integrating additional Expand & Explore activities, or reading additional recommended books from this unit.	
October	Responsibility & Accountability	1	Personal Responsibility	Responsible Routine Role-Play	Safety Awareness Month
		2	Being Accountable for Our Actions	Being Accountable with Kitty Helpers	
		3	Helping Others	Helping on the Farm	
		4	Review of Responsibility & Accountability theme/ lessons	Consider incorporating additional Learning Lab links, integrating additional Expand & Explore activities, or reading additional recommended books from this unit.	

November	Gratitude & Appreciation	1	Thankfulness for Others	Thank-You Letter	Thanksgiving, Gratitude
		2	Gratitude for Nature	Nature Exploration	
		3	Appreciation for Everyday Things	Everyday Gratitude	
		4	Review of Gratitude & Appreciation theme/ lessons	Consider incorporating additional Learning Lab links, integrating additional Expand & Explore activities, or reading additional recommended books from this unit.	
December	Communication & Listening	1	Active Listening	Silly Statues	Holiday Traditions, Communicating with Family
		2	Expressing Feelings and Needs	My Feelings, My Words	
		3	Taking Turns in Conversation	Conversation Ball	
		4	Review of Communication & Listening theme/lessons	Consider incorporating additional Learning Lab links, integrating additional Expand & Explore activities, or reading additional recommended books from this unit.	
January	Mindful Bodies & Movement	1	Understanding Body Awareness	Move Our Bodies with The Music	Boredom Busters
		2	Mindful Movement	Big Stretch	
		3	Manage Emotions and Stress	Calming Breath	
		4	Review of Mindful Bodies and Movement theme/lessons	Consider incorporating additional Learning Lab links, integrating additional Expand & Explore activities, or reading additional recommended books from this unit.	

February	Empathy & Compassion	1	Recognizing Others' Feelings	Feelings and Friends	Valentine's Day, Friendship
		2	Respond With Empathy	Compassionate Connections	
		3	Compassion for Animals	Animal Helpers	
		4	Review of Empathy and Compassion theme/ lessons	Consider incorporating additional Learning Lab links, Expand & Explore activities, or reading additional recommended books from this unit.	
March	Caring for Animals & Pets	1	Understanding Animal Needs	A Home for a Pet	Spring, Outside Play
		2	Showing Kindness to Animals	Kindness Role-Playing	
		3	Learning About Wildlife	Camouflage in the Wild	
		4	Review of Caring for Animals & Pets theme/ lessons	Consider incorporating additional Learning Lab links, integrating additional Expand & Explore activities, or reading additional recommended books from this unit.	
April	Environmental Awareness	1	Caring for Our Planet	Growing Plants from Seeds	Earth Day
		2	Exploring Nature	Discovering Patterns in Nature	
		3	Protecting Wildlife and Habitats	Building an Animal Habitat	
		4	Review of Environmental Awareness theme/ lessons	Consider incorporating additional Learning Lab links, integrating additional Expand & Explore activities, or reading additional recommended books from this unit.	

May	Understanding Emotions	1	Identifying Emotions	Daily Emotion Check-In	End-of-the-School Year Activities
		2	Labeling Emotions	Mood Cube	
		3	Expressing Emotions Appropriately	How Do You Feel?	
		4	Review of Understanding Emotions theme/lessons	Consider incorporating additional Learning Lab links, integrating additional Expand & Explore activities, or reading additional recommended books from this unit.	
June	Problem-Solving Skills	1	Understanding Problems	Story Problems	Summer
		2	Generating Solutions	Solution Sorting	
		3	Choosing and Implementing Solutions	Drawing a Solution	
		4	Review of Problem-Solving Skills theme/lessons	Consider incorporating additional Learning Lab links, integrating additional Expand & Explore activities, or reading additional recommended books from this unit.	

Option 2: Weekly (Week-by-Week)

Objective: Teach all 30 lessons, week-by-week, in order by theme.

This is the easiest and fastest way to start using Kindness Connections. Just grab and go! Starting with the first theme in the front of the Kindness Connections box, choose the first lesson in the Teacher Guide and incorporate the themed lesson, activity, and related content into your week. Continue in order, week by week, until you reach the end of the box. And, if your preschoolers are particularly engaged in a specific theme, you can expand your curriculum plans to include activities from the Expand & Explore section to further build on the kindness skills your preschoolers are learning week after week.

Week	Theme	Lessons	Activity
1	Mindful Bodies & Movement	Understanding Body Awareness	Move Our Bodies with The Music
2		Mindful Movement	Big Stretch
3		Manage Emotions and Stress	Calming Breath
4	Understanding Emotions	Identifying Emotions	Daily Emotion Check-In
5		Labeling Emotions	Mood Cube
6		Expressing Emotions Appropriately	How Do You Feel?
7	Building Friendships	Making Friends	Initiating Interactions
8		Collaborative Play	Indoor Croquet Team Challenge
9		Conflict Resolution	The Cookie Mistake
10	Empathy & Compassion	Recognizing Others' Feelings	Feelings and Friends
11		Respond With Empathy	Compassionate Connections
12		Compassion for Animals	Animal Helpers

13	Problem-Solving Skills	Understanding Problems	Story Problems
14		Generating Solutions	Solution Sorting
15		Choosing and Implementing Solutions	Drawing a Solution
16	Gratitude & Appreciation	Thankfulness for Others	Thank-You Letter
17		Gratitude for Nature	Nature Exploration
18		Appreciation for Everyday Things	Everyday Gratitude
19	Communication & Listening	Active Listening	Silly Statues
20		Expressing Feelings and Needs	My Feelings, My Words
21		Taking Turns in Conversation	Conversation Ball
22	Caring for Animals & Pets	Understanding Animal Needs	A Home for a Pet
23		Showing Kindness to Animals	Kindness Role-Playing
24		Learning About Wildlife	Camouflage in the Wild
25	Responsibility & Accountability	Personal Responsibility	Responsible Routine Role-Play
26		Being Accountable for Our Actions	Being Accountable with Kitty Helpers
27		Helping Others	Helping on the Farm
28	Environmental Awareness	Caring for Our Planet	Growing Plants from Seeds
29		Exploring Nature	Discovering Patterns in Nature
30		Protecting Wildlife and Habitats	Building an Animal Habitat

Option 3: Mix & Match (“Dip in/Dip Out” Option)

Objective: Mix and match activities from Kindness Connections, one lesson per week, over 30 weeks

With this option, you will mix and match kindness lessons from across the kit, week after week. Starting with the first lesson in each Teacher Guide, you will incorporate a different themed lesson and activity into your curriculum each week. Every 10 weeks, you will have the opportunity to revisit themes and build on the kindness lessons learned earlier in the school year. Choosing this option helps children cement their long-term understanding of concepts like gratitude, empathy, and compassion.

Week	Theme	Lessons	Activity
1	Mindful Bodies & Movement	Understanding Body Awareness	Move Our Bodies with The Music
2	Understanding Emotions	Identifying Emotions	Daily Emotion Check-In
3	Building Friendships	Making Friends	Initiating Interactions
4	Empathy & Compassion	Recognizing Others’ Feelings	Feelings and Friends
5	Problem-Solving Skills	Understanding Problems	Story Problems
6	Gratitude & Appreciation	Thankfulness for Others	Thank-You Letter
7	Communication & Listening	Active Listening	Silly Statues
8	Caring for Animals & Pets	Understanding Animal Needs	A Home for a Pet
9	Responsibility & Accountability	Personal Responsibility	Responsible Routine Role-Play
10	Environmental Awareness	Caring for Our Planet	Growing Plants from Seeds
11	Mindful Bodies & Movement	Mindful Movement	Big Stretch
12	Understanding Emotions	Labeling Emotions	Mood Cube

13	Building Friendships	Collaborative Play	Indoor Croquet Team Challenge
14	Empathy & Compassion	Respond With Empathy	Compassionate Connections
15	Problem-Solving Skills	Generating Solutions	Solution Sorting
16	Gratitude & Appreciation	Gratitude for Nature	Nature Exploration
17	Communication & Listening	Expressing Feelings and Needs	My Feelings, My Words
18	Caring for Animals & Pets	Showing Kindness to Animals	Kindness Role-Playing
19	Responsibility & Accountability	Being Accountable for Our Actions	Being Accountable with Kitty Helpers
20	Environmental Awareness	Exploring Nature	Discovering Patterns in Nature
21	Mindful Bodies & Movement	Manage Emotions and Stress	Calming Breath
22	Understanding Emotions	Expressing Emotions Appropriately	How Do You Feel?
23	Building Friendships	Conflict Resolution	The Cookie Mistake
24	Empathy & Compassion	Compassion for Animals	Animal Helpers
25	Problem-Solving Skills	Choosing and Implementing Solutions	Drawing a Solution
26	Gratitude & Appreciation	Appreciation for Everyday Things	Everyday Gratitude
27	Communication & Listening	Taking Turns in Conversation	Conversation Ball
28	Caring for Animals & Pets	Learning About Wildlife	Camouflage in the Wild
29	Responsibility & Accountability	Helping Others	Helping on the Farm
30	Environmental Awareness	Protecting Wildlife and Habitats	Building an Animal Habitat

Option 4: Themed Weeks (10 total)

Objective: Teach one full theme per week, across 10 different weeks during the school year.

Everyone loves a theme, and this option allows you to celebrate kindness themes over the course of a week. With this option, you will choose a Kindness Connections theme and cover all of the content over the course of your week. With three Circle Time activities, six Learning Lab Links, and nine Explore & Expand options per theme, the opportunities to tailor a week's worth of Kindness Connections content is a snap. Plus, with three recommended book selections that match the Kindness Connections theme, you can build a week full of kindness lessons that your preschoolers will love.

Theme	Lesson	Activity	Week	Suggested Time of Year for Weekly Theme Instruction
Mindful Bodies & Movement	Understanding Body Awareness	Move Our Bodies with The Music	1	January – Boredom Busters
	Mindful Movement	Big Stretch		
	Manage Emotions and Stress	Calming Breath		
Understanding Emotions	Identifying Emotions	Daily Emotion Check-In	2	May – End of the school year, saying goodbye
	Labeling Emotions	Mood Cube		
	Expressing Emotions Appropriately	How Do You Feel?		
Building Friendships	Making Friends	Initiating Interactions	3	September – Back-to-School
	Collaborative Play	Indoor Croquet Team Challenge		
	Conflict Resolution	The Cookie Mistake		
Empathy & Compassion	Recognizing Others' Feelings	Feelings and Friends	4	February – Friendship/Valentine's Day
	Respond With Empathy	Compassionate Connections		
	Compassion for Animals	Animal Helpers		

Problem-Solving Skills	Understanding Problems	Story Problems	5	Summer
	Generating Solutions	Solution Sorting		
	Choosing and Implementing Solutions	Drawing a Solution		
Gratitude & Appreciation	Thankfulness for Others	Thank-You Letter	6	November – Thanksgiving/ gratitude month
	Gratitude for Nature	Nature Exploration		
	Appreciation for Everyday Things	Everyday Gratitude		
Communication & Listening	Active Listening	Silly Stanzas	7	December – communicating with family/holiday traditions
	Expressing Feelings and Needs	My Feelings, My Words		
	Taking Turns in Conversation	Conversation Ball		
Caring for Animals & Pets	Understanding Animal Needs	A Home for a Pet	8	March – spring time
	Showing Kindness to Animals	Kindness Role-Playing		
	Learning About Wildlife	Camouflage in the Wild		
Responsibility & Accountability	Personal Responsibility	Responsible Routine Role-Play	9	October – safety awareness month
	Being Accountable for Our Actions	Being Accountable with Kitty Helpers		
	Helping Others	Helping on the Farm		
Environmental Awareness	Caring for Our Planet	Growing Plants from Seeds	10	April – Earth Day
	Exploring Nature	Discovering Patterns in Nature		
	Protecting Wildlife and Habitats	Building an Animal Habitat		