



PBIS SCHOOLWIDE KINDNESS COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM FOR K-8 SCHOOLS

A. INTRODUCTION

The Choose Kindness Foundation Goal is to support the development of a culture of caring and kindness through systematic instruction and recognition of kind behaviors in all areas of the school community.

Purpose of Grant: The PBIS Schoolwide Kindness grant project is designed to support schools that will emphasize kindness by adding CKF's 4 kindness skills to their existing PBIS Framework and procedures. These skills include being friendly, offering help, showing appreciation, and reaching out to those in need. Through systematic teaching of kindness, schools can increase students' experiences and expressions of kindness and create a more equitable environment.

The Need for Incorporating Kindness into Teaching Frameworks

Information from a variety of sources indicates that there has been a significant decline in the mental health status of children and adolescents over the course of the past twenty-five years:

- Increases in rates of both depression and anxiety.
- Concerns over bullying and drug and alcohol use.
- Increased feelings of social isolation and loneliness.
- Declines in kind and charitable behavior.

Each of these changes has been exacerbated by the impact of the pandemic which has resulted in increased social isolation, significant family stress and increased uncertainty regarding the future. Fortunately, there is also a large body of evidence that suggests that increasing kindness is one very important way in which these problematic changes can be addressed. Research shows that practicing kindness:

- Plays a critical role in the development of positive social relationships.
- Boosts peer acceptance and well-being.
- Improves academic performance.
- Increases levels of happiness.
- Protects from life's discontents.

“Being kind is not only the right thing to do—it’s also good for our physical and mental health. Psychologists have found that performing acts of generosity boosts happiness and well-being and is even linked to physical health benefits.” Engaging all students in a consistent effort to implement kindness-related activities and kind behaviors (showing appreciation, offering to help, being friendly and reaching out to those in need) across a variety of school settings offers schools a relatively simple way to create a culture of kindness and caring. Notably, research indicates that practicing kindness boosts peer acceptance and well-being, fosters inclusiveness, reduces feelings of social isolation, while increasing levels of happiness. As noted by the American Psychological Assoc. Prosocial behavior toward friends, strangers, and oneself—and even observing or recalling kind acts—have all been shown to increase well-being (APA, 2023).

What do we mean by kindness? According to Dr. Douglas Carnine, kindness is the quality of being friendly, giving and considerate. We act with kindness when we connect with others by offering help, being friendly, showing appreciation, and reaching out to those in serious need (Carnine, 2022).

Inclusive schools where everybody belongs, and all are valued are most likely to be successful cultivating kindness and increasing feelings of social connections and well-being. Therefore, the Choose Kindness Foundation Grants are targeted toward integrating kindness practices that ensure individuals from marginalized groups are included in leadership roles and participate in significant numbers in the kindness activities.

“It may seem daunting to mobilize schools to address a societal challenge like equity. However, schools are the best place to provide environments where each student feels welcome, safe, and encouraged. At the same time, they are the best places to teach each student how to be a caring and productive citizen in a diverse, multicultural society.” (PBIS.org, downloaded 02-22-21)

1. Eligibility & Requirements:

To be eligible to receive funds, schools must:

- Have implemented PBIS for the past three or more years.
- Have an established Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) Tier 1 score of 70% or greater or a Benchmark of Quality (BoQ) score of 70% or greater. (This requirement is to ensure that the school’s PBIS Tier 1 foundation is sufficiently strong enough to add something new.)
- Have a Free/Reduced Lunch eligibility rate of 60% or greater.
- Have not previously received a Choose Kindness Foundation grant.
- Monitor student outcomes using schoolwide discipline data.
- Agree to send schoolwide discipline data from the 2022-23 school year and 2023-24 school year to the CKF.
- As part of the application, interested schools will include the following:
 - The current schoolwide expectations/behavior matrix.
 - Create a kindness lesson for teaching Appreciation. Refer to the Choose Kindness Foundation’s toolkit for examples.
 - Description of the school’s current rewards and recognition plan.

2. Systematically integrating kindness into a school’s PBIS framework

Schools will add kindness skills to their current PBIS behavior expectations matrix and all Tier 1 activities including teaching expectations for kindness, rewarding kind behaviors, and celebrating kindness. Examples of behavior matrices, kindness teaching plans, and kindness reward systems are available in appendices that can be accessed by downloading the CKF PBIS Schoolwide Kindness Toolkit from <http://www.whykindness.org/toolkit>.

The core components of the grant requirements that must be addressed related to the integration of kindness include:

- Incorporating the 4 kindness skills into the school’s PBIS matrix.
- Developing and implementing classroom and schoolwide lessons and activities to teach kindness.
- Creating a system for schoolwide rewards and recognition.

3. Funding

The Foundation is offering \$2000 per school for the 2023-24 school year. Foundation resources are intended to contribute to a school's capacity to teach, strengthen, and celebrate kindness expectations throughout the school and the school year. For example, funds may be used for updating PBIS signage and posters, kindness-related incentives for students, kindness kickoff events, develop kindness rewards and recognition, develop calendar of kindness events and activities, etc.

4. Application Timeline

- i. Completed applications can be submitted immediately using the link on the Choose Kindness Foundation's website at www.whykindness.org/grants. Applications will continue to be accepted until available funds are exhausted, at which time the website will state that no more funds are available.
- ii. Foundation personnel will review new applications within 30 days and will notify applicants of the outcome.

Note: This is a competitive grant, and the Foundation reserves the right to evaluate applications based on completeness, clarity, and alignment with Foundation objectives.

Upon notification of being awarded the Kindness grant, the recipient agrees to begin planning and implementation of Kindness activities within 6 weeks.

5. Choose Kindness Foundation PBIS Schoolwide Kindness Toolkit

The Choose Kindness PBIS Schoolwide Kindness Toolkit is available on the Choose Kindness Foundation's website at <http://www.whykindness.org/toolkit> for schools to use as examples of each core component of the grant requirements. The toolkit consists of an overview of the core components and then appendices that include examples of the core components from CKF partner schools.

B. APPLICATION CONTENT AND REQUIREMENTS

PBIS teams will integrate the four Kindness skills (reach out to someone with serious needs, show appreciation, offer to help, be friendly) into their existing schoolwide behavioral system. Schools can draw on examples developed by previously funded schools, which appear in the Choose Kindness Foundation toolkit. Schools are encouraged to adapt materials to their context and individual PBIS frameworks.

- **Give Rationale:** Provide a description of student outcomes your school hopes to achieve by adding kindness to the schoolwide PBIS framework/program. Describe challenges or special circumstances that teaching and celebrating kindness will address.
- **Add Kindness Skills to PBIS Matrix:** Kindness will be defined on the PBIS School Matrix by using the four kindness skills (i.e., show appreciation, offer help, be friendly, reach out to those with serious needs) to describe examples of kind behavior in various school settings. Examples of a schoolwide kindness matrices are available in the Toolkit.
- **Include Students of Color:** PBIS Team will develop strategies to include students of color or marginalized students in the planning and implementation of PBIS kindness activities, e.g., leadership teams, planning committees, communications committees, Kindness Crews, etc.

- **Teach Kindness:** The Foundation realizes that kindness can be a rather abstract or vague concept for many children. The four kindness skills are intended to be taught explicitly so that schools can work from productive definitions, shared language, and extensive examples of kindness. Kindness lessons should be taught in all areas of the school. Teams can refer to sample lesson plans in the CKF Toolkit for examples of how to create lessons.
- **Develop Calendar of Events:** Develop teaching plans/activities calendars or schedules to teach kindness throughout the school year. The calendar (or schedule) will include the frequency and approximate timing of both schoolwide and classroom kindness events and activities.

1. Classroom Commitments:

- i. At least one classroom-based kindness activity or lesson will be presented each week. Example lessons are provided in the PBIS Schoolwide Kindness Toolkit at <http://www.whykindness.org/toolkit>

2. Schoolwide Commitments:

- i. A schoolwide-kindness event will be held at least 2 times a year.
 - ii. Kindness instruction will be presented for common areas, e.g., lunchroom, hallways, playground, cafeteria.
 - iii. Kindness events and schoolwide kindness campaigns should include opportunities for students to practice kindness around their school and community. E.g., World Kindness Day, First Responder Day, canned food drive, Teacher Appreciation Day, etc.
- **Rewards and Recognition:** Develop formal, systematic strategies to acknowledge and reward students when they demonstrate the skills of being kind. Rewards and recognition plans should include a range of rewards such as individual rewards and certificates, group or classroom rewards, frequent recognition (e.g., kind student of the week), and longer-term rewards (e.g., end-of-the semester celebrations). Examples of reward systems created by partner schools can be found in the Toolkit.
 - **Share School-Developed Resources:** Any activities, sample documents, grant-related resources that schools develop with these funds will be in the public domain and may be shared by the Choose Kindness Foundation with other schools and districts, at no cost and with attribution to the developer (s). It is the school's responsibility to assure that student privacy policies are adhered to before sharing resources with the Foundation.

Funded schools will also have the option to participate in quarterly meetings with Foundation personnel as an opportunity to share what's working and gather helpful-ideas about teaching kindness throughout the school year.

- **Submit Schoolwide Discipline Data:** Grant recipients agree to share schoolwide discipline data (ODR) with the Foundation for the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years by filling out and submitting the Discipline Data Reporting Form along with the application and at the end of 2023-24 school year (Appendix A). The form is intended to assist in determining the effects of integrating kindness.

- **Submit Mid-Year and End-of-Year Implementer’s Surveys:** Grant recipients agree to complete short surveys regarding their implementation of the CKF Kindness Grant.
- **Proposed Kindness Budget:** Each school will develop a PBIS Schoolwide Kindness budget detailing how Foundation funds will be utilized and distributed to support kindness activities. Foundation funds may be used to organize school-wide kindness campaigns, for example, a kickoff event and other school-wide events that feature kindness accomplishments and updating PBIS signage and posters. Funds may also be used to organize events such as classroom or grade-level kindness competitions, kindness incentives, and rewards and recognition. Foundation funds should not be used to supplant district funds. The budget proposal form is provided in Appendix B at the end of this document.

For additional information contact: schoolreports@whykindness.org

APPENDIX A



Schoolwide Discipline Data Survey and Analysis

School: _____ Date of Report: _____
Number of Years Implementing PBIS Kindness: _____ School District: _____
Person(s) submitting report: _____ Email: _____
Current school enrollment: _____ Enrollment 23-24 School Year: _____

Directions to PBIS Leadership Team:

Using your schoolwide discipline data (SWIS) from 2022-23 and 2023-24, respond to the following items regarding incidences of unkind behaviors. "Unkind" behaviors are those problem behaviors displayed by students which involve the student and other people. Unkind behaviors should be defined by the PBIS Kindness team and may include; behaviors such as bullying, physical aggression, disrespect, defiance, others as agreed to by the PBIS team. If you use SWIS for reporting data, your school can just submit copies of the following reports. If your school does not use SWIS for data reporting, please insert the requested information in the three tables that appear below.

Before beginning your analysis, download the following **multi-year** SWIS data reports:

- Referrals by Problem Behavior: Multi-Year
- Referrals by Location: Multi-Year
- Suspension/Expulsion Report

****NOTE:** The PBIS Team may include other data reports such as Average Referrals Per Day or by Grade or other reports in the analysis of outcomes for students.

1. Refer to the **Referrals by Problem Behavior: Multi-Year report**, please complete the table below.

	SY 22-23	SY 23-24	Difference
Defiance			
Disruption			
Harassment/Bullying			
Disrespect			
Physical Aggression			
Other Unkind Behaviors (Please list)			
Minor unkind infractions (Please list)			

Based on the **Referrals by Problem Behavior – Multi-Year** report, were there reductions in unkind behaviors attributable to grant-related kindness activities, particularly teaching and rewarding kind behaviors? Please explain.

2. Refer to the **Referrals by Location – Multi Year report**, please complete the table.

	SY 22-23	SY 23-24	Difference
Classroom			
Hallway/Breezeway			
Playground/Outdoor Area			
Cafeteria			
Bathroom/Restrooms			
Commons/Common Area			
Other (Please list)			

Based on the **Referrals by Location – Multi Year report**, were there reductions in problem behaviors in specific locations attributable to grant-related kindness activities, particularly teaching and rewarding kindness in those settings? Please explain.

3. Refer to the **Suspension/Expulsion Report** for 22-23 and 23-24, please complete the table below.

	SY 22-23	SY 23-24	Difference
In-School Suspensions			
Out-of-school Suspensions			
Expulsions			

Based on the **Suspension/Expulsion Report**, were there changes in rates of suspension or expulsion? Were the changes attributable to grant-related kindness activities, particularly teaching and rewarding kind behaviors. Please explain.

4. Please add comments, observations, results that are not included in your responses to questions 1, 2, and 3 above but are relevant to the PBIS Kindness grant outcomes for students.

Please submit this form and copies of the reports (listed above) you downloaded/used to complete this form to: schoolreports@whykindness.org.

Thank you!

Appendix B

Proposed 2023-24 Kindness Budget

Directions for Budget: The budget should include amounts for the kindness activities that will be supported by this grant. Frequency of the activities should be based on plans described in the PBIS School Kindness Application. Budget amounts are the best estimates at the time you submit the proposal and may be modified during the grant year depending on needs. Any major modifications must be requested in advance via email to schoolreports@whykindness.org.

	Description	Frequency*	Amount Requested
Classroom Activities			
Schoolwide Activities			
Schoolwide Rewards and Recognition			
TOTAL			\$2,000