



# Creating a “be kind” Code



## Discussion Guide

Clear expectations support an environment where kindness can thrive. Spending time establishing your classroom culture, and orienting to each other, is a great way to set the stage for your kindness practice with a set of shared values. It invites participants to open up to risk-taking, vulnerability, and learning in your kindness journey together. Dedicate time to explore ideas as a class or group so that the resulting code will be meaningful and motivational for everyone involved.<sup>1</sup>

## Methodology

This process can be used to develop your “be kind” Code. Lead a discussion with students where ideas are encouraged and shared, using the prompts to generate thinking about different types of behaviors. The point is to dedicate time to exploring these ideas as a class or group so that the resulting “be kind” Code can be displayed in a highly visible space as a reminder of your shared practice.

## Ground Rules

- Everyone participates
- All ideas are valid
- Everything is written on a sticky note (one idea per note) or board
- Listen, ask, and be curious

## Discussion Guide Situations

### Imagining a Kind Place

1. Ask students the following question (have it written on the board as well) and write their responses on sticky notes — one response per note — and stick them on the board:  
*“Let’s pretend that you visited another class for a day and you were trying to decide if that class was a kind place or not. What things might you see, hear, or notice that would help you know whether or not the class is a kind place?”*
2. Continue brainstorming for as long as students are engaged and contributing.
3. Use the prompts below to support the discussion and help generate ideas.

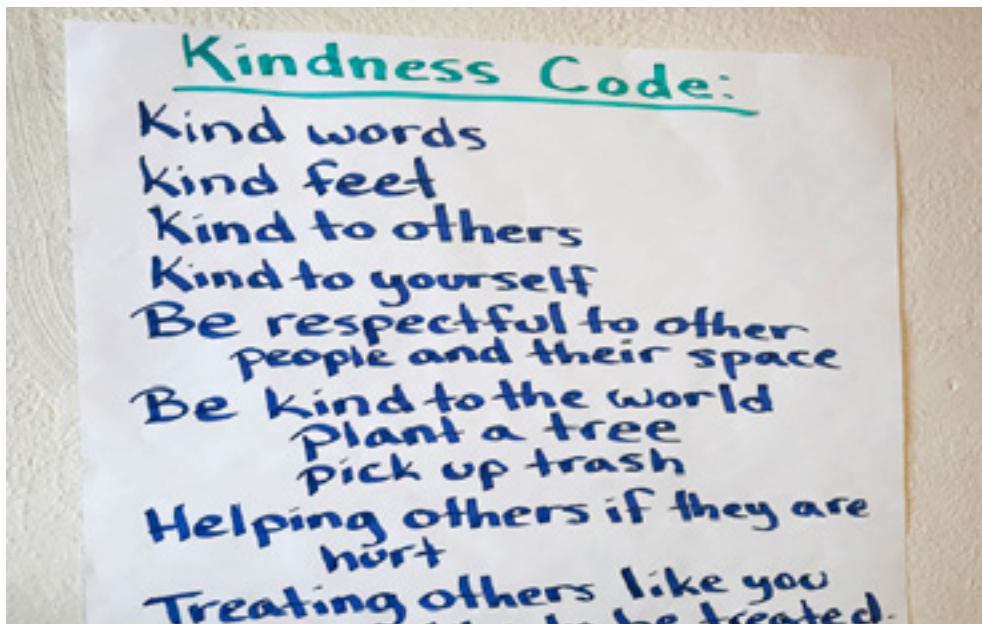
4. Ask students if they see any ideas that could be grouped together (common themes, etc.). Move the sticky notes so that ideas that students see as having something in common are gathered in groups.
5. Ask students to come up with a name or title for each of the groups.

### Prompts

What can each of us do to make our classroom a kind place?  
What does self-kindness look like?  
How do we treat new students?  
How do we learn from our experiences or repair mistakes?  
What support do we need when kindness is challenging?  
How do we celebrate each other?  
How do we make visitors feel welcome?

### Creating the “be kind” Code

1. Ask students to look over all of the names or titles of the groupings from the previous exercises. Ask if there is anything else they would like to include in their “be kind” Code.
2. Use the ideas that were generated to write down the “be kind” Code for your class.
3. Post your “be kind” Code for all to see and revisit it often.



**References:** 1. Wentzel, K.R. (2004). “Understanding Classroom Competence: The Role of Social-Motivational and Self-Processes.” *Advances in Child Development and Behavior* Volume 32, 2004, Pages 213-241 [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2407\(04\)80008-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2407(04)80008-9).