



Growing Social-Emotional Literacy Through Art
for Schools, Educators and Clinicians

BLOOM
YOUR ROOM™

Big Buds™

A youth service project based on the beloved
book and program, **BLOOM YOUR ROOM™**

Mentors in older grades help our garden grow by teaching younger peers what kindness is all about! With the help of this cheery kit, Big Buds™ will help new Buds discover what kindness feels like, looks like and sounds like, and introduce them to the importance of kindness in their classroom.

This printable art and activity kit includes:

- Teacher Planning Guide
- Big Buds™ Guide
- Big Buds™ Name Tags
- Bud Badges™
- Thinkerbee™ Greeting Poem
- Mini Poster & Short Story
- The Kindness Activity



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Why Teach Kindness in School?

We can make kindness an easy, natural habit by teaching it to children early. As we well know, it's harder to develop good habits as adults. Teaching young children social-emotional skills allows them to give and receive kindness down the road, helping them manoeuver through school and their careers with greater success. And, as future *adult* members of society, when each of us is in the habit of caring for one another, showing respect and compassion, we all benefit.

The Psychology of Teaching Kindness to Children

Throughout our books and programs, *Bloom: 50 Things to Say, Think and Do With Anxious, Angry and Over-the-Top Kids*, *Bloom Your Room™*, *Musical Thinking™* and *70 Play Activities™*, we encourage educators to have what we call, "Cognitive Conversations," to build thinking, self-regulation and social-emotional skill sets. In teaching a concept like "kindness," it's no different.

Cognitive Conversations are powerful. They are the conversations you have with children that help them think about, reflect on and even problem solve around a specific experience or issue. They are designed to enhance your students' social-emotional, thinking, learning and behavior skill sets.

We have found that having these conversations with children improves their self-awareness and knowledge of the existence of and application of skills that might have previously gone unknown, unseen or out of awareness. *Awareness is power. When we know more, we can do better.*

Why Peer-To-Peer Youth Mentors are Important

In *Bloom Your Room™*, our mentors are ambassadors we call Big Buds™; older students who come to your classroom to talk about what kindness is and how to share it. The mentored students receive personalized attention, leading to better confidence, self-esteem and growing skill sets.

The benefit of this program is that the mentors learn as much as the students do. Compassionately mentoring others develops leadership skills, empathy and social engagement. Mentors develop better communication skills, an appreciation for the differences among us and an understanding of how we look at the world from varying viewpoints.

Your Role when Big Buds™ are in your Classroom

You can assist Big Buds™ by showing them where things are located in your class and having the activity prepared. A warm introduction from your students with plenty of fanfare will go a long way to building the lighthearted feel of the activity.

You may choose to print the two activity sheets at the end of this set for each child, or set them up with a few blank sheets of paper or a notebook. In either scenario, the Big Buds™ will read the activity sheets out loud and show the artwork. You may also choose to print the mini poster and story for each student, or laminate single copies of each and let the students pass them around. Print as many of the Bud Badges™ as you need for each student, and have them ready for your Big Buds™ to distribute. If you can laminate them, they can be prepared ahead of time and students can use permanent marker to write their names on them.

Modeling kind behavior, the mentors will show your class how to become new "Buds" and eventually, Big Buds™ themselves. In *Bloom Your Room™*, we call children Buds because they are buddies and in the growing, *budding* and blooming process. Buds learn what kindness "looks like" and "sounds like" so they can spread it throughout their classroom and eventually, their community and beyond.



BLOOM
YOUR ROOM™

Thank you, Big Buds, from Thinkerbee!
This is important work, you'll see!
When new Buds are learnin' and laughin',
you make the change start to happen!

Why Teaching Kindness to Young Children is Important

You're taking an important role in helping the future of the world. Really! They're little kids now, but when YOU are old, THEY will be running the country and taking care of YOU!

We are building a culture of kindness in classroom communities of young children so that caring for and respecting others is a habit for them as they grow up. They won't have to work at it like some grown ups do, or even kids your age do!

It will be natural for them to pay attention to others and notice when they need help. Like, when they don't have anyone to sit with at lunch or having a hard time with an assignment. It will be natural for them to see someone who is sad and offer to tell them a joke or just listen. It will be natural for them to show someone who is angry how to breath deeply to calm down. It would be nice to be around people like that, right?

Being kind people will help us all go far in school, in relationships and in our careers. It helps others around you feel safe, understood and appreciated. So, let's do this!

How to Guide the Activity

The classroom teacher will make you feel at ease and help you; you won't be alone. Ask questions, and remember, younger kids love older kids and they will love YOU!

You can start by greeting the class, telling them your name, and reading the included poem. In it, Thinkerbee™ guides you into an introduction. Afterwards, you might like to share your age, grade, and maybe a hobby or a favorite food. You may tell the students you are there to teach kindness so their time in class is safe and happy.

The colorful mini poster and short story can be shared next. These materials introduce the characters and explain why kindness is important to growth in a garden – or a class. They also illustrate Big Buds™ and new Buds – what we call younger students. All Buds are smiling and friendly with each other, beginning to learn and grow!

On the two activity pages you will see questions for the children. As you read each section aloud, feel free to share your own answers to guide them. Your personal touch will help them understand the lesson and stay interested in it.

At the end, children may cut out their Bud Badges™. Talk to the teacher about this; she or he may have precut and laminated them. We have provided instructions with options to make the project quick and simple or more involved. Have fun with all of it!

The Big Buds™ Name Tag

Dress in bright, Bloom Your Room™ colors if you can! Wear the name tag below during visits so students learn your name as you catch their attention and inspire imagination.

QUICK INSTRUCTIONS: Cut the circle out and write your name in the blank box. Stick the ID to the front of your shirt with double-stick tape. Laminate for durability, if possible.

OPTION 1: If you can laminate the badge, then do so and punch a hole at the top of it, where you see the large, light green dot. Run a piece of yarn or string through it to hang around your neck.

OPTION 2: If lamination is NOT possible, cut out the badge and glue it to a paper plate or a cutout cardboard circle, punch the hole and wear it.



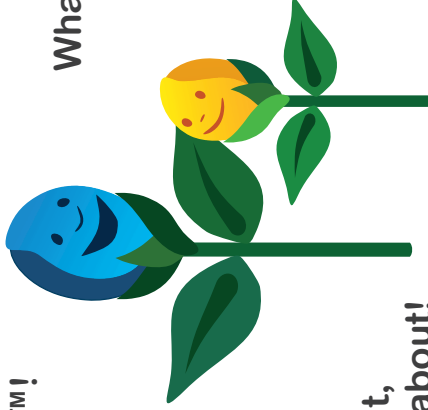
LET'S BEEBELIEVE IN KINDNESS!

Hi **Little Buds™**, it's Thinkerbee™!
BEE a thinker, just like me!

I love to think about **BEE**ing kind
it's who I am and on my mind!

With my red glasses I can view
so much kindness inside of you.

When you want to bring some out,
showing you care is what it's all about!

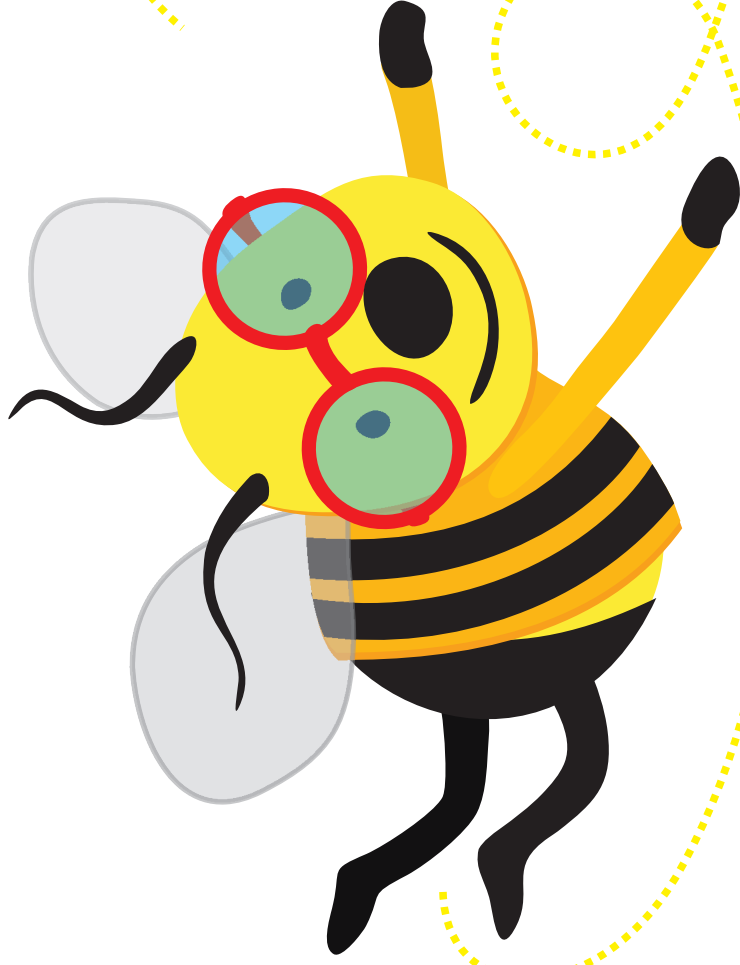


But, what IS kindness? Do you know?
What does it look like, sound like? How does it go?

Why do we need it? What is it for?
Who are the visitors that walked in your door?

Meet your **Big Buds™** – my special friends!
Keepers of kindness, so it never ends!

They will share the answers that you seek
if you can **BEE** quiet and listen as they speak!



**YOU TOO
CAN BEECOME
A BIG BUD
SOME DAY!
START BY
BEEING SWEET
IN WHAT YOU
THINK, DO AND SAY!**

**EACH DROP OF KINDNESS
CAN CHANGE THE WORLD!**



IN OUR GARDEN, **BLOOM**
TOGETHER, WE'LL

Thinkerbee™ dances through the garden as **Solar Sally™** shines on. The **Worm Fuzzies™** squiggle by with big smiles, giving everyone happy, warm, fuzzy feelings inside! When we receive kindness, it's so easy to pass it on - sprinkling **Seeds of Kindness** everywhere we go. As we continue to shower each other with care and respect, the seeds fill with happiness and burst into **Buds** that soon begin to **Bloom!**



What does “being kind” mean to you? Think of a time when someone was kind to you. Describe what happened!

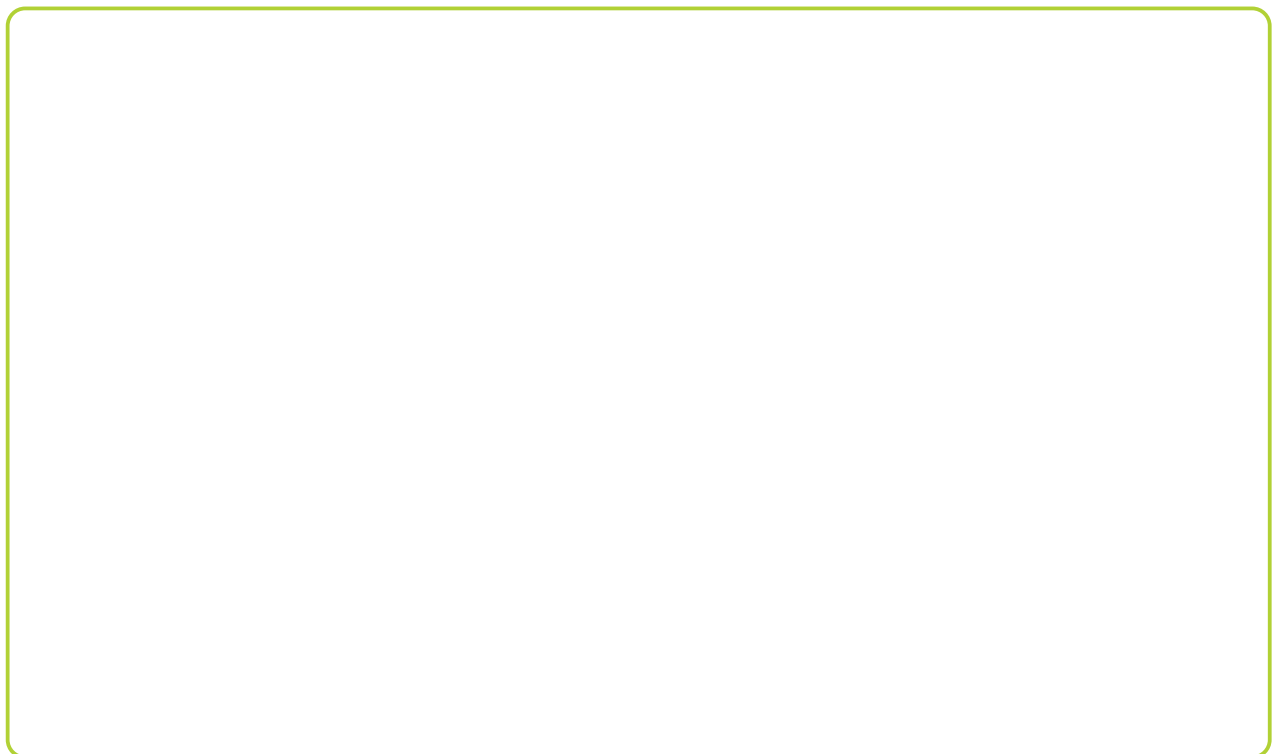
What did it make you think?

How did it make you feel?

Let's write or draw about a time when someone was kind to us. What happened first? What happened next? How did the story end?



Now, let's write or draw what kindness is. How do we know it, live it and pass it on?





The Bud Badges

INSTRUCTIONS:

(Check with the teacher to see if she or he has printed as many Bud Badges as are needed for the class, and if they are precut and laminated.)

Help children cut a badge out within the gray dotted lines and write their names in the blank blue box.

Stick the badge to the front of their shirts or their desks with tape, or pin to a wall cork board (per the teacher's preference).

If using the badges on a regular basis, laminating the badge will help it last much longer. You may want to discuss the teacher's plans regarding this.

OPTION 1: If lamination is possible, the tags would be precut and ready. The holes can be punched in each of the top two corners of the badge. Run a piece of yarn or string through the holes to hang around the children's necks, cubbies or chairs.

OPTION 2: If lamination is NOT possible, cut out the badge and glue it to a heavy piece of cardboard, punch the holes and string it as in option 1.

(The badges may be hung on a hook in the classroom at the end of the day so they aren't lost going home with the children.)