

Two by Two[®]

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT



Funding Toolkit

Tools to help you succeed!



Building Character...Changing Lives

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Funding Sources

Service Organizations

- Rotary Club
- Optimist Club
- Kiwanis Club
- Mosaic Lodge
- Eagles Club
- Sertoma Club item
- Lions Club
- Knights of Columbus



Other Opportunities

PTA/PTO (Parent Teacher Association/Organization)

Parent organizations LOVE to support the Kindhearted Kids Program, especially if they have experienced the joy of caring for one of the Two by Two pets at home!

Community and School Foundations

If you have a Community Foundation in your area or School Foundation, check with them about local grant opportunities. They may even have a specific donor that would like to support your request!

DonorsChoose.org

DonorsChoose.org is an online charity that makes it easy for anyone to help students in need. Public school teachers from every corner of America can post classroom project requests on the site, and donors can give any amount to the project that most inspires them. Go to [DonorsChoose.org](https://www.donorschoose.org) to post your request for character education resources!

Writing Successful Grants

Search for grantors in your area who focus their charitable giving on education, character education, youth and/or animals. **See below for grant writing hints!**

**Many of the following topics are on grant applications.
We hope the information below is helpful!**

1. Character Development Definition

Character education is an educational method focused on teaching and instilling positive attitudes, values, behaviors, and social and emotional skills in students. This method aims to prepare students to become responsible, compassionate citizens who will positively contribute to society.

2. Importance of Character Education

Character education is important in every facet of a child's life, from their home life to their school life and extending into their community involvement. Character education can also help students succeed not only academically, but also help them to become socially responsible citizens.

3. Include Statistics!

Data-driven reasons WHY we need character education programs like the *Kindhearted Kids*:

The NEED:

- The plugged-in, high-pressure culture is leading to a mental health epidemic among young people. One in five youth meets the criteria for a mental disorder in their lifetime.¹
- There is a measurable dip in empathy among today's youth. Teens are 40% lower in empathy levels than three decades ago, and narcissism has increased 58%.¹
- 25% of primary school parents report that their child had been verbally harassed by other students more than once in the prior month.²
- Shockingly, 46% of new employees are either fired or quit within 18 months, and 89% of them fail because they lack soft skills, such as the ability to coexist with other workers and professionalism.³

¹Michele Borba, Ed.D, *Unselfie: Why Empathetic Kids Succeed in Our All-About-Me World*. Touchstone, May 2016. P. xv-xvi

²Hanover Research. (2022, August) *The Current State of School Climate in Public Schools*.
<https://insights.hanoverresearch.com>

³SHRM, Jathan Janove, J.D., 2020, *Leaders and Employees Need Soft Skills Now More than Ever*, accessed May 2024, <https://www.shrm.org/topics-tools/news/humanity-hr-compliance/leaders-employees-need-soft-skills-now-ever>

The *OUTCOME*:

Children with well-developed character skills tend to be happier, kinder, healthier (especially mentally), successful (i.e. – higher income and education level) and have stronger relationships with family and friends.¹

4. Include Evidenced-Based Facts

Evidenced-Based practices are utilized in the Kindhearted Kids Program. According to the ESSA Tiers of Evidence, Kindhearted Kids is categorized as a Tier 3 – Promising Evidence. Our study design includes a well-designed and implemented correlational study, statistically controlled for selections bias. The results show a statistically significant positive effect on students who participated in the Kindhearted Kids Program, finding them to be more kind, responsible, and empathetic toward all living things.

5. Include Testimonials

Testimonials from:

TEACHERS

- *“I love the program because it uses a creative approach in teaching our children responsibility, caring, and empathy, through the care of a pet. The Kindhearted Kids Program is helping us create future leaders who are caring, empathetic, and responsible!”* – Kim Foy, 2nd grade teacher/Dubuque, IA
- *“The Kindhearted Kids Program covered many of the social-emotional learning skills, like respect, responsibility, empathy, and kindness. It really taught students how to put something first over themselves.”* – Danial Ortiz, 3rd grade teacher/Oxford Junction, IA

COUNSELORS

- *“Respect and empathy were the kids’ biggest take aways. We also loved the financial literacy piece that helped the students make good decisions when it came to figuring out the costs of a pet.”* - Laura James, School Counselor/Indian Creek Elementary - Marion, IA
- Video Testimonial – Just Moody, School Counselor, speaks about his experience with the Kindhearted Kids Program. [Click here for video testimonial.](#)

Building **Character**. Changing **Lives**.

¹BEGIN, Dr. Jody Sherman LeVos, 2023, Building Strong Character in Children: A Developmental Guide, Conscious Content Media, Inc., accessed April 2024, <https://www.beginlearning.com/parent-resources/character-how-kids-interact-with-the-world/>

CHILDREN

- *“During Kindhearted Kids class, I learned to be kind to every living thing. My favorite part was when I got to see my Two by Two pet for the first time! It was so cute, fluffy, and sweet. I will show how I’m a Kindhearted Kid when someone is sitting on the Buddy Bench at school, as I know they need a friend. I will ask them to join our game.”* – Abby, 2nd grader
- Video Testimonial – Former Kindhearted Kid, Devin, speaks about his experience. (Now a Freshman in High School!): [Click here for video testimonial.](#)

A PARENT

- *“Our child goes to the beat of a different drum. Her mind is a wonderland we strive to support and understand. Thank you, Two by Two for the Kindhearted Kids Character Education Program. Through her pet, Pepper, she was able to connect to other children in a new, for her, level. Normally, when I would pick her up after school, she would be standing alone. Now when I pick her up from school if another child has their pet carrier, she approaches them and asks to see their pet and ask what their pet’s name is. So, did our daughter learn? Yes. And more what she experienced from the Kindhearted Kids Program was kindness and empathy from the other students. I believe these children made a good decision by choosing to share with a child that is different from themselves. So, our child grew, her world got a little larger and she was able to connect with other children through your program, and them with her. Thank you!”* – Parent of a 2nd grader, Kennedy School, Dubuque, IA
(Prefer to see this on video?) [Click here for video testimonial.](#)



Pay It Forward Program

Another way you can raise funds for the Kindhearted Kids Program is through a program called "Pay It Forward." It is exactly what the name says...Parents **"Pay It Forward"** to the next group of Kindhearted Kids!

[Click here](#) for a sample letter you may send to your group of parents whose kids are currently participating in the program.



Sponsors

You are educating our future employees; therefore, many businesses and individuals are interested in funding character education efforts. You just have to make the “ask,” which sounds scary, but we will help you out!

Reach out to people you have a connection with at a business or personally. Either send a letter first, and then follow up with a phone call. Or call first and follow up with a letter.

Below are documents that will help you make the ASK!

LETTER to a BUSINESS or INDIVIDUAL

[Click here](#) for a **form letter to send** to a business or individual. Personalize the letter with your name, school, etc. If possible, print the final letter on your school stationary.

SPONSORSHIP BENEFITS FLYER

[Click here](#) for **sponsorship benefits** that you may send to a potential sponsor.

