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Whatever message your school chooses to send, make sure that it is one that is inclusive, intentional, clear, and friendly.

3. UTILIZE TECHNOLOGY.

Often, there are parents who just can't make it into onto campus, for whatever reason. Ask, then, how can we include parents via technology they're already using?

Consider setting up a classroom Facebook page for parents, highlighting some of what happens during the day. (Label it "secret" so it's only visible to those you invite.)

To combat parents getting the standard answer to "What happened in school today?" ("Nothing!"), one teacher set up a Twitter account and, each day, tweeted three specific questions parents could ask their children about that day's goings-on.

4. REVERSE THE EXPECTATIONS.

When we think about it, we know that an inclusive school culture is formed outside of school as well as inside. So we must ask: what efforts are we making to get our school staff into the community?

Instead of a "welcome back luncheon" for school staff in the teacher's lounge each year, consider doing what one principal did and team up with parent liaisons to host small groups of staff members in their homes, and begin parent-school bonding before classes even begin.

You can also cut short a staff meeting and get teachers out into the community they serve – explore the neighborhood, cultural facilities, or watch a soccer game many parents are already attending.

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MAKE KINDNESS GO VIRAL IN THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR!

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The major theme of this year's IBPA annual conference is kindness, and with the new school year upon us it is critical to build prevention efforts with this concept front-and-center. We don't want youth to simply not do the wrong thing, but do what is right instead – treat their peers with respect, compassion, and empathy. To be sure, sometimes educators naively expect kids to know and apply the Golden Rule in all their interactions from early childhood. However, without intentional efforts to instruct and cultivate kindness, your students are simply not going to be others-focused by default. With that in mind, here are some ways you can encourage the children and teens in your life to make kindness go viral at the beginning of this school year.

Set Up a Social Media Compliments Page

Most teens have a profile on one or more social networking platforms and are very comfortable navigating these environments. Perhaps you could encourage them to set up a separate account for the purpose of dishing out anonymous accolades to their classmates. This idea was made famous by Kevin Curwick's "OsseoNiceThings" Twitter feed and Jeremiah Anthony's "West High Bros" Facebook compliments page. Now dozens of social media accounts have been set up by teens for the purpose of encouraging and praising their peers.

Participate in Random Acts of Kindness

More and more individuals in all walks of life are realizing that it's actually really cool to be kind. It's even cooler when kindness is dished out anonymously and unexpectedly. Encourage your students or children to engage in random acts of kindness in their school or broader community. Search online for examples of young people being kind to others to give them inspiration. Dozens of videos and even a Twitter hashtag (#RandomActofKindness) can direct you to ideas as well.

Create a Public Service Announcement

Many teens have great ideas for promoting positivity that they would love to share with others. Give them creative freedom and let them loose to script out and record a short video with the simple purpose of encouraging others to be kind. They could interview their classmates or "famous" people in their school or community (like the principal or mayor). Leave it up to them about how to approach the activity—they'll surprise you and hopefully come up with something really compelling! Then you can upload it to YouTube, your school's Web page, or social media accounts, and otherwise use it as a teaching tool to reach so many others!

Make Posters

A simple activity that kids of all ages can tackle is to design inspirational posters that can be plastered on walls around the school. It doesn't take much artistic talent to

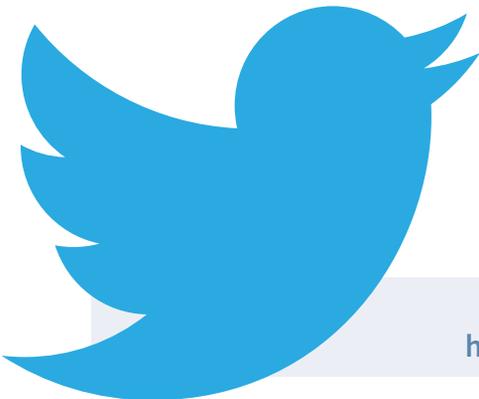
inspire others to be kind with drawings or creative slogans. Teachers could work with a particular class or a specific subset of students to produce posters that could be covertly placed all over the school on Friday afternoon or over the weekend. The rest of the student body will return on Monday and be totally inspired by what they see all around them.

In closing, remember that promoting kindness doesn't have to be a big production. The best ideas are often among the simplest. Working together, parents, teachers, and teens can make tremendous strides toward combating cruelty in all its forms during this new school year. Hopefully, as you share these ideas and stories of kindness, your teens will feel compelled to write their own!

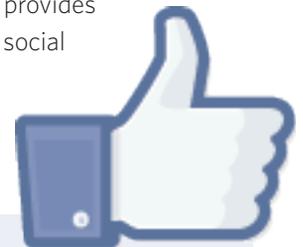
Dr. Sameer Hinduja is a Professor at Florida Atlantic University and Dr. Justin W. Patchin is a Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. Together, they co-direct the Cyberbullying Research Center (<http://www.cyberbullying.org/>), which is intended to be an information clearinghouse for educators, counselors, mental health professionals, law enforcement, and others who work with youth. The Center provides bullying and cyberbullying statistics, resources, presentations, downloads, activities, events, facts, examples, stories, and so much more to help you prevent and respond to victimization. Hinduja and Patchin's latest co-authored book *Words Wound: Delete Cyberbullying and Make Kindness Go Viral* was written specifically for teens and comes with a free Leader's Guide. In addition, their latest book for educators *Bullying Beyond the Schoolyard: Preventing and Responding to Cyberbullying* was just completely updated and released in its 2nd edition.



Educators Guide to Social Media



Just in time for back to school our friends at Connect Safely have published an "Educators Guide to Social Media." The downloadable guide provides many tips for educators on how to safely and effectively use social media in class and professionally. It includes tips on how to protect both student and personal privacy and how to manage potential risks.



You can download the guide at:
<http://www.connectsafely.org/eduguide/>