

## KindSpring's Top 10 Kindness Stories of 2016 by KindSpring

Every year KindSpring shares a selection of the most powerful stories they've received over the last twelve months. In the spirit of anonymity these real-life stories are often posted by people who choose to use a "Kindness alias". Some of the stories are about children and teenagers who have stumbled on creative ways to flex their kindness muscles, others are about adults of different ages, nationalities and backgrounds who regularly go out of their way to make our world a kinder, brighter place. Whether the stories describe a small act that made someone's day, or a gesture that forever altered the trajectory of a life, they all share one thing in common: a very big heart.

### A Holiday Act of Kindness After Losing His Job

We tend to think that it is easier to give when we have extra or more than we need. After losing his job, this generous man demonstrated that abundance is about the size of your heart not your paycheck. Where others might have felt scarcity and tried to cut back on giving gifts, this man instead asked his wife to go ahead and spend \$100 to buy gift cards to share with hard-working hospital staff . (More)

### Mitzvah for the Syrian Refugees

The temple she works at is involved in helping Syrian refugee families. She took time to go to their homes personally. After seeing what was needed, she worked with her husband who is in wholesale furniture business, to get donations of furniture they really need. The kids will now have mattresses and a bunk bed. Her "mitzvah" (a good deed in Jewish) brought two families together in the truest sense of the word. (More)

### The Giving Plate that Keeps on Giving

This Giving Plate originated in Detroit and made its way to the mother of a special needs child in California. The message on it begins with these words: "This plate shall have no owner, for its journey NEVER ends, it travels in a circle of our family and friends. Its carries love from home to home for everyone to share." It deeply touched this mother who is inspired to keep the spirit going. (More)

### A Third-grader's Gift-Economy Experiment

This class experiment teaches third graders about money. And just like the “real” world, they get paid weekly, pay monthly rent for their desks, maybe even become landlords by buying desks from their classmates. However, one little kid with a heart of gold saved all his funds to order a “Random Act of Kindness” for his entire classroom, and in the process restored our faith in the next generation. (More)

### What I Learned From A Little Girl At A Train Station

This traveler and self-described cynic was moved to befriend a young beggar when she was kicked off his train. He offered to buy her whatever she wanted to eat. The little girl gestured that she was hungry and then gathered more food than her little body could possibly devour. When he followed her, the traveler was blown away to find her happily feeding a small group of children. A poignant lesson in real generosity. (More)

### The Small Act That Was Not So Small

Every Tuesday this exercise instructor at a retirement home stops by a particular resident’s room to give her a hug given that she’s now too frail to attend classes. On a day when she’s badly hurt and bruised from a fall, the resident still looks forward to her hug. As the instructor notes, “It seems like a small thing to give a hug every week. To her it is a big thing.” A reminder that so often in life the small things ARE the big things. (More)

### When the Student is the Teacher

When a student received a mean message on his locker, this teacher set time aside to discuss the issue with him at recess. But instead of one boy, two boys came to her at recess. The boy who had received the note, and the boy who had written it! Not only did he write an apology, he also created 150 Post-its with kind sayings on them and placed them in different lockers, “to make up for my meanness.” (More)

### Projecting Light into the Neighborhood

When their holiday light projector was stolen out of their yard this kind being posted a compassionate note about the theft on a neighborhood social network. Soon after a family from the area stopped by to introduce themselves -- and to drop off a brand new projector. Their explanation, “We didn’t want you to lose your faith in humanity.” (More)

### The Meaning of Family

Adopted by her grandparents at 11, Kristi’s life changed again at 16. Her grandfather’s drug addiction led to the loss of their house, their car -- everything. “Kristi, I love you. Now you can come with me or you can stay in an orphanage,” offered

her grandmother. That's when Kristi's best friend Jayce and her family stepped in. They took Kristi in to their home and gave her the gift of a beautiful future and a loving family. (More)

## The Flower Road in Japan

It's a tradition. On one hot June Saturday in Japan, you can sense a spark of something in the air. It's the day of the Fourth Annual Beauty and Smiles Creation. Kneeling alongside the road, backs braced wide against the sharp rays of summer sun, ninety individuals converge for the sweaty work of planting 11,000 flowers. Shoulder-to-shoulder teachers and students, the old and the young work together -- to spread joy. (More)