



Connecting Generations Through Performing Random Acts of Kindness

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Ka 'Aha

Weaving Generations to
Build Healthy Communities

An Intergenerational
and Aging Program

Fun, daily activities that focus on strengthening connections between different generations help to build strong, healthy communities.

For more information about the Ka 'Aha program and other intergenerational programs, visit www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/kaaha

There is tremendous power and positive energy in giving. According to Wikipedia, a random act of kindness is a selfless act performed by a person or persons wishing to either assist or cheer up an individual. There is generally no reason other than to make people smile, or be happier.

How can one ordinary person make a positive difference in this world? One way is the practice “paying it forward.” Many of you have seen the movie or read the book “Pay It Forward,” a story about a young boy who did three good deeds for others in need. In return, all he wanted was that they pass on the good deed to three other people and keep the cycle going.

How can we pay it forward?

Be attentive wherever you are looking for opportunities to help someone. Even small acts count towards making the world a friendlier place!

Do something nice for someone you don't know (or don't know very well). It should be something for a person from whom you expect nothing in return.

Spread the word. If the person thanks you and wants to “repay” you, let them know that what you would really like is for them to “pay it forward”—you would like them to do something nice for three people they don't know, and ask those three people to do something nice for three more people. The idea is to consciously increase the goodness of the world.

Intergenerational pay-it-forward ideas

Send a hand-written note of thanks to a child or elder.

Give a young mother a break by watching her children while she runs errands.

Pump gas for someone in need—a family with young children, or an elder.

Put some coins in someone else's parking meter.

Give a compliment about your waiter or waitress to his or her manager.

Stop and help someone replace their flat tire. Let someone go before you in the check-out line.

Hold the door open for someone, especially those who have mobility challenges.

Give up your seat for someone, not just an elderly person.

Pick up some rubbish in the road which would otherwise be lying around.

Compliment a work colleague for their excellence.

Give another driver your parking spot.

Help an elderly neighbor carry the rubbish out.

Smile a lot.

Tip

Most nice things done for strangers will be one-time efforts, so don't give out your name or phone number. Also, some people may not act grateful, but the benefits may still come around when you are not there to see it. What goes around is sure to come around—happy helping!