



Fresh Ideas! Sheet 1

"In my life I want to become better and do a little good."
Frederic Ozanam

Mini Vinnies Games

STICKS AND STONES...

1. Provide each child with a small paper cutout in the shape of a human-- or have students cut out their own paper figures.
2. Ask each student to write his or her name on the cutout.
3. Have students form a circle; have them pass the cutouts to the person on their right.
4. As the cutouts are passed around the circle, have each person make a small crumple or tear in the cutout and add a pencil mark.
5. When the cutouts have made their way around the entire circle, have students try to repair their own cutouts by flattening, erasing, and taping.
6. After cutouts are repaired as well as can be, discuss the activity. Talk about the effects of unkind words and hurt feelings –how damage has lasting effects.

You might display the cutouts on a bulletin board as a constant reminder of the effects of hurtful actions.

TOOTH PASTE AND WORDS...

During the first weeks of the new school year, purchase travel size toothpaste and bring it to school.

Ask the kids if anyone thinks they can squeeze the entire tube of paste out... and then put it back into the tube? No one will think they can...Proceed to squeeze the entire tube onto a paper plate and show how it cannot be put back in.

Compare it to our words and how we treat one another. Kids will get the visual of how once we say unkind words... we can't take them back. We can apologise but it's still out there and has hurt our friends.

This is a wonderful visual; refer back to it throughout the year.

THE COMPLIMENT GAME

This game is good to play when you have a group, especially if they tend to have a lot of personality conflicts. Break children into small groups; give each child a piece of paper. Ask them to tear it into pieces--one for each child in the group.





On each piece of paper they should write the child's name, and then list all of the positive characteristics they can think of about that child. Try to have them focus on personality traits and behaviors, not physical attributes.

When each child has completed their lists, they should put all of them into a box.

The teacher can then read aloud all of the positive comments about each child. The children are usually very surprised at how many great things are said about them.

If they would like, the children can keep their lists in a folder or notebook. Then, when they're feeling a little down about themselves, they can read about how wonderful other people think they are.

Activities to involve the local community

- Help fix / clean up a run down park or playground in the area
- Host a picnic for families doing it tough in your local area on International Picnic Day, **June 18**
- Ensure students smile at everyone they meet before and after school in the area on National Cheer Up Day, **July 11**
- Organise a new comers group in your school to welcome new families to the area
- Cook dinners for families in the area with sick children, or those doing it tough
- Make simple reading and math flash cards for local refuges
- School in the park - hold a meeting in the local park or playground
- During Education Week, apart from inviting parents and friends, invite local business owners and council/ community representatives
- Hold a Young Leaders' Day and invite staff members from branches of local charities to talk about their own leadership journey
- Run a photo competition of Social Justice Images the students see and invite local businesses to display the images in their stores for a week
- Approach local businesses and ask them to display the artwork, posters, letters to raise awareness of certain issues
- Arrange for students to spend a few hours helping a local business or charity
- Read books or newspapers to the older residents of the community or those who are intellectually impaired
- Invite elderly residents from the community to come to complement learning such as computer or social media skills
- Create awards for people in the local community and invite them to assembly to receive them.

Practical Activities for Mini Vinnies

- Make gifts and/ or cards for sick children (and/or adults) at the local hospital
- Design a help-o-metre for each Mini Vinnies member to track the amount of hours they spend doing good things or learning about Social Justice, share this information at the end of year assembly
- Plan and implement a Social Justice Awareness Day - look at a different issue each term
- Make birthday cards for the elderly and homeless and/or clients of Vinnies' centres like Mary Mackillop Outreach Centre and Como Leisure Centre
- Assemble a 'new parent kit' for new mums in local refuges
- Grow flowers at school and deliver them to residents at the local nursing home
- Create first aid kits to be distributed at Night Patrol and Brekky Van





- Invite former high school students to come in and talk about their involvement in Social Justice – invite students who are currently in Year 9 or 10
- Bake nutritional treats for animals to be distributed at Night Patrol and Brekky Van
- Each member designs a bag and throughout the year other members need to write notes of appreciation and place them in the bag. At the end of each term each Mini Vinnies member will have a personal bag to open, read and take home
- Design a welcome banner for new students, parents and friends to the school

Practical Activities for High School Students

- ‘Rent a Youth Day’ – choose some students to participate and rent them out for the day to raise funds for Vinnies
- Set up a buddy system for students with special needs from the younger grades or primary school
- Organise a coat drive at Winter to give coats to those doing it tough
- Surprise a family member and offer to babysit or hang out with someone younger
- Buddy up with someone in a younger grade who’s doing it tough at high school
- Set up a homework help system for students at the local primary school who are having learning difficulties
- Set up a buddy system for migrant or refugee students from the local primary school
- Head to a local nursing home and learn how to lay old school card games from the residents
- Write an article for the local newspaper to encourage other students to be involved in Social Justice
- Host a morning tea for new mums from the school

Practical Activities for any age

- Pick up jumpers or hats if you see them fall from chairs or when other children are playing and teach to verbalise the gesture and thanks
- Ask someone new to play with you or sit with you at recess and lunch
- Share your lunch with a friend
- Write a letter for their teacher (or other staff member) complimenting them on the effort they’ve made throughout the week
- Make cards for your classroom teacher to thank them
- Help teachers carry their books or boxes or items when you see they are struggling
- Take homework home to a sick classmate and assist
- Clean up in the classroom or playground
- Leave a nice note on someone’s desk for no reason
- Bring home-made treats in for your class or homeroom
- Offer to let someone go before you in the canteen line
- Hold the door open for those behind you
- Be extra kind to the bus driver – thank them when getting on and off

*** Please note all of the above can be modified or adapted to suit each school community or age group...and you’d do variations of these and many more which we’re always eager to hear about.

