

Community Development Project
EDCI 456
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Reflection

Although I consider this class just another hoop I have to jump through to receive my Bachelor of Education, I have found it somewhat enjoyable. It has been fun to come back and be reunited with friends and work together to finish one last assignment. Fortunately, this course unlike most education courses, allowed our group to pick a topic that we were passionate about and develop a community project.

When discussing what type of project we wanted to develop we discovered we all connected to Raffi's child honouring principles of "respectful love" and "caring community." Thus, we chose to build a project based on good deeds, where students learn how to be kind to others. Ideally, the program would help students turn their focus from themselves on to doing kind acts for others. We named the project "Got Kindness?"

Looking back the project was not exactly how I had envisioned it. The picture I had in my head was much grander. I thought students, even at the grade 2/3 level would be able to think of grand kind acts to do for others. Much to my surprise we found we had to adjust our expectations for what kind of acts the students would end up completing. Many students reported completing an act that an adult would consider to be common courtesy (i.e. lending a pencil to a friend), however, at

their developmental level they were clearly still learning basic manners and social etiquette and not ready to move on to higher order thinking and behaviour. I was disappointed that I had to change my expectations, but this was necessary as we needed to meet the kids at the level they were at and start building the project from there.

In the end I believe the project was successful as the students were making conscious efforts to do good acts for others. The children seemed genuinely excited about the tasks they had completed. They were so excited to share their stories. My favourite part about the project was knowing that although I wasn't going to be there to ensure its sustainability it was clear that this was a project my mentor planned to continue and expand.

Got Kindness? has so many levels and possibilities. The project could be adapted for older grades and adopted as part of the school philosophy. This project could be something that just one teacher decides to do with their class or it could become a school wide initiative. The possibilities are endless.

When I have my own classroom I will begin the Got Kindness? project at the beginning of the year. This project will help set a healthy caring atmosphere, as students learn to be kind to one another. The project would continue throughout the year building in complexity and grandness. I believe the learning that takes place through this project

supersedes all the traditional learning outcomes. What could be more important than kindness?!