

About Us

Kindness Australia - at a glance A brief overview of the Australian Kindness Movement for those in a hurry The "AKM" has been promoting kindness since 1994. The group was formed to help overcome the apparent drift toward a cold and impersonal society. Our major goal is to generate a greater sense of friendliness in the community through the medium of simple acts of kindness. When this is achieved, citizens will experience higher levels of caring and safety in the community. Staffed by volunteers, our funding is by way of small donations from people who share our vision of a kinder, friendlier world. Being a totally autonomous group, there are no affiliations with religious, political, or philosophical bodies. Our quarterly newsletter, The Kindness Network, was also established in 1994. This publication keeps kindness at the forefront of our member's minds with positive stories, contributions from members, kind and uplifting quotations, book reviews, and so on. In 1996 we initiated Australia's first National Kindness Day. Held annually on the 6th November, this day celebrates the positive impact that kindness has on ourselves, our community, and our country. In 1998 Australia's National Kindness Day was incorporated in an eight day celebration of kindness, titled The 8 Days of Kindness. The following year (1999) the celebration was extended to twelve days, and in 2003 it was expanded again, and is now known as The 16 Days of Kindness. The celebration includes World Kindness Day (13th November), UNESCO's International Day of Tolerance (16th November), and the International Day for Children (20th November). The celebration is conducted from the 6th to 21st November. For more information on this celebration, click on The 16 Days of Kindness. In 1997 we became a foundation member of the World Kindness Movement (WKM). Foundation countries are Australia, Canada, England, Japan, Scotland, Singapore, Thailand and the USA. Countries that have joined since 1997 are India, Italy, Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria and South Korea. The combined membership of the organisations belonging to the WKM is almost 3 million people. In 1999 we established our web site. In 2001 we began sending out a monthly bulletin in response to requests from people who visited our web site. If you wish to receive this bulletin, please e-mail your address to enrol@kindness.com.au. We keep the addresses confidential, so we can guarantee our mailing list will never be sold to a spammer. We organise the '16 Days of Kindness - a Glimpse of the Future' every year. Incorporating World Kindness Day, Australia's Kindness Day, UNESCO's International Day of Forgiveness, and International Day for Children. People often wonder about the future. What effect will it have on our generation, future generations, and this wonderful planet of ours? In a survey conducted in 1999, Australians used the following words to predict future lifestyle - "frightening, confused, chaotic, traumatic, insular, dangerous and decadent" (Colmar Brunton survey). If someone was able to travel through time, and they ventured say, 20 years into the future, what would they tell us upon their return? Would there be stories that would promote happiness within us, or would we experience feelings of fear? In that same survey, Australians used these words to describe the future they desired - simple, happy, peace, the possible return to religion, community, safe, ordered. You may not have thought about it, but what we do now can have a profound effect on the future. As Chief Seattle said many years ago, we are caretakers of the planet for our children. What you do (or don't do) now, will have an impact on the future in some way. If you care about your children, and the children of the world, you will want them to have a bright future where they can live their lives with as little hardship and despair as possible. How then do we achieve the desired 'simple, happy, peace', etc.? By being and promoting these things wherever we are, through the use of kindness, friendliness, caring, and so on. And it's easy. We don't need to learn how to do these things - we already know. Our November celebration, encompassing sixteen days of kindness, gives you the opportunity to fine tune your skills in this area. It will also give you a glimpse of what a simple, happy, peaceful, safe, community orientated (as well as rewarding, fulfilling, and so on) future is like. If this is the future you desire, we give you sixteen days to practise, after which you can go off and fulfil your destiny - that of making yourself, and others, happy. And if you ever need a refresher course, there's one in November every year. Kindness is a very personal thing, it is a "heart to heart" experience. And the more personal and spontaneous your kindness becomes, the greater the positive effect on both you and the receiver of your kindness. Planned acts of kindness tend by their very nature to be contrived, but are necessary to develop the conscious response into a habit. In the "16 Days of Kindness" celebration we give you sixteen themes to plan your kindness around. After these sixteen days you will find your kindness has become more habitual and spontaneous, and personally more rewarding. If you can involve a friend or friends to assist you, the positive effect will be even greater. You will find it not only rewarding, but also empowering.

The first day - 6th November - *Australia's National Kindness Day. This day has been created to express the pride of living in Australia, and to celebrate our national identity, which has become wonderfully diverse through the assimilation of the many cultures that are now part of our society. It is also an opportunity to express the ANZAC spirit of 'doing the right thing', regardless of the odds or fears. The second day - 7th November - Good Neighbour Day. This gives you the opportunity to interact with the neighbours and the neighbourhood. Getting to know and react with the people who live in your neighbourhood, and being involved in small acts of kindness toward your community. The third day - 8th November - My Day. A day to be kind to yourself, to pamper yourself. Who else is more deserving than you? The fourth day - 9th November - Special People's Day. A day to acknowledge the special people in your life - loved ones and friends, as well as those who have made a positive impact upon your life. The fifth day - 10th November - Work Day. A day to be kinder to your boss, your friends and associates at work, and also your customers and suppliers. The sixth day - 11th November - Teacher's Day. A day to honour our children's

educators, to acknowledge their dedication and hard work. The seventh day - 12th November - Youth's Day. A day to honour youth, a day to concentrate on their many positive aspects such as their energy, creativity, their honesty of expression, and their idealistic endeavours to right the wrongs of the world. The eighth day - 13th November - *World Kindness Day. A day to celebrate your role as a world citizen, a member of the global village, to discover the many similarities between yourself and people of different nations and cultures. The ninth day - 14th November - Stop and Smell the Flowers Day. A day to consciously step off the whirling merry-go-round of life, to practise being in the moment, or mindfulness. This allows you to appreciate the myriad of precious moments you miss by your rush to be somewhere else. The tenth day - 15th November - The Environment's Day. A day for the environment, our eco system. An opportunity to support and give back to the environment, helping to reverse the trend of taking, destroying, and abusing. The eleventh day - 16th November - *International Day of Tolerance. An opportunity to acknowledge all you meet, of giving people a 'fair go'. A day to tear down the walls that separate, and build bridges that join. A day to make a resolution to practice tolerance in every facet of your life. A day to do more than tolerate others, but to accept them with open arms. The twelfth day - 17th November - Inner Peace Day. A good day to follow the International Day of Tolerance. World peace depends on peaceful co-existence, which is accepting others who we might perceive to be 'different' from us in some way - in race, religion, culture, and so on. We have inherited prejudices that are not based on fact, and these separate us from others. As long as these prejudices continue to exist, there will never be global peace. There is also another factor, and that has been identified by the Dalai Lama: "Without inner peace, it is impossible to have world peace." The thirteenth day - 18th November - Forgiveness Day. A day to forgive and mend any squabbles and misunderstandings, a day to right past wrongs. Both to and from ourselves, groups, and nations. The fourteenth day - 19th November - Senior's Day. A day to honour senior citizens, who represent the past, and who display the wisdom that age bestows upon people. There is a huge pool of experience and wisdom amongst seniors that has yet to be used to the best advantage. The fifteenth day - 20th November - *National Children's Day. A day to honour children, who represent the future. A day to begin nurturing their kindness to ensure they will mature to be caring and responsible adults. The sixteenth day - 21st November - Health Care People's Day. A day to give thanks to those in the caring professions - nurses, doctors, practitioners of all kinds, ambulance officers, carers and so on. You can, if you wish, celebrate the intermediate days in any way you desire. Intermediate days are those that are not marked thus *. How do we achieve the future so strongly desired by the Australians? It is accomplished by incorporating these things into our daily lives, by us being and promoting these things. This involves people like you and me going about our daily activities with a calm, caring and cheerful attitude, unaffected by whatever chaos may be going on around us. We can choose not to be caught up in the frustration, anger and meanness of our surroundings. It will work if I remember the little things - smiling at everyone I make eye contact with, giving my full attention when someone is talking to me, staying calm, not taking negative comments from others too seriously, not focussing on things that may annoy me, counting my blessings, complimenting, doing things that I enjoy, being supportive, or any other little act of kindness toward myself or others. It is important that The 16 Days of Kindness be given as much publicity as possible, because its positive effect will then be felt by far more people. If it is our wish that world peace and harmony prevail, the greatest number of people will need to be involved. You can assist in this by contacting newspapers, radio stations and television stations in your area, informing them about the celebration, and directing them to our Web site. The wider the publicity, the more impact it will have, which will help to improve everyone's quality of life. If you plan to organise something in the community for any of the days, advise the local media as they will more than likely send a reporter to cover the event. Are you involved with any organisation that is associated with the people mentioned in our 16 Days?

For example, teachers, nurses, young people, seniors, and so on. If you do, the organisation may wish to advise their members about the celebration, or even play some roll, such as organising a gathering.