

# Character Clips

## 1 Purpose

- To teach your child to focus on good character throughout his/her day.
- To provide an encouraging system of teaching and reminding your child to make kind and loving choices.
- To create a visual reminder to help him/her to think about his/her words and actions.

## 2 Materials

- 3 clothes pins
- Kindness and Love Chart/Oops Chart
- Markers
- Love and Patience

## 3 Before you begin...

- Have a heart-to-heart with your child. Let them know that you love him/her and you want to help them learn to be a kind and loving adult. And that behavior starts now. And the most important people to practice on is his/her family.
- Remind him/her that you are there to help them and encourage them. And that your job is to teach them what kindness and love looks like.
- Share with him/her that Jesus says that the most important things for us to do in this world are: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength... and to love your neighbor as yourself.” We are called to love God, love ourselves, and love others and you want to help him/her live his/her life that way.
- Let them know that you are going to work with them on showing kindness and love and building their character using a Kindness and Love Chart and an Oops Chart (see below for how to use it).
- Practice positive phrases to your child:
  - “I believe in you.”
  - “I know you can be kind and loving.”
  - “Can you try that in a kind and loving way?”
  - “How did you show kindness and love today?”
  - “How can I help you be more kind and loving?”
  - “Let’s keep trying together.”
  - “I know you can do this.”
- Do as many relationship-building activities with your child as often as possible. Oftentimes disrespectful behavior and unkind choices can be improved simply by spending more time and giving more positive attention to that child.
  - Read a book together.
  - Have a special chat each night at bedtime.

- Hug.
- Tickle.
- High five.
- Have a pillow fight.
- Go out for ice cream.
- Throw a football.
- Play a game.
- Have a “date” night.
- Do something they want to do on the day of the month that they were born and write it on your calendar each month.
- Sit with them while they do their homework.
- Interview them: find out their favorite color, book, TV show, movie, hobby, etc.
- Read bible stories with them.
- Watch silly YouTube videos with them.
- Ask them about their day.
- Rub their back.
- Give them a small gift.
- Write a note that says “You’re awesome because...”

## 4 How It Works

- Print the Kindness and Love and the Oops chart. Have your child decorate it.
- They can even color the different boxes and clothes pins different colors.
- Let them know that each day, they will start with 3 clips on their Kindness and Love Chart. Their goal is to be kind and loving throughout the day as we are called to do and to keep all three clips on their chart all day, but that you understand that they are not perfect and will make mistakes so if they have at least one clip left on their chart, they will get to do something special with you.

## 5 What You Do:

- Remind them every day of their goal to be a kind and loving boy/girl.
- If you see them or hear them being unkind or unloving, have them try again. No one is perfect. Everyone makes mistakes, so give your child a chance to try to say something or do something again in a kind and loving way.
- If they refuse to try again or if they are just blatantly disobedient and disrespectful, you will move one of their clips from the Kindness and Love Chart to the Oops Chart.
- They may get upset, but it’s OK. You don’t have to discuss it or change their minds. Just encourage them that they have two more clips left and walk away. It’s perfectly normal for them to be upset. Just give them space to compose themselves. Stay strong.
- Don’t engage in arguments about the clips. That’s the rule and they know it. And don’t put clips back on for “good” behavior. You don’t want to learn the art of “acting”. Remind them that it’s just an “Oops” and they can try again!
- Making mistakes is about learning, apologizing, and trying again.
- Continue to move clips throughout the day as necessary to the Oops Chart.

- If they keep at least one clip on their Kindness and Love chart then they will get to do something special like stay up 10 extra minutes at bedtime and have Special Time with mommy/daddy. Please do NOT offer a treat or reward or a gift or anything like that. Try to put the value on spending time with you! If you can't do it at bedtime, find another time during the day that you can offer some special time... even if it's an extra book or 200 tickles at breakfast. Be creative and find what works for you and your child. 😊
- If they don't have any clips left at the end of the day, they get to try again tomorrow.

## 6 Other Tips

- Encourage your child with every small step forward they make.
- If your child is really struggling to “get this”. Again, be encouraging, but let them know that you have noticed that they are having a hard time keeping any clips on their chart. You can:
  - Start marking down the time each day that they lost their last clip and see if they can go longer the next day.
  - You can even start sending them to bed 7 minutes earlier if they really aren't getting it. Maybe not enough sleep is a factor.
- Take opportunities to point out big and small ways that they showed kindness and love. Increase their awareness of what that means to a little kid.
  - They shared a toy with a sibling or friend.
  - They took turns playing a game.
  - They did their homework without being asked.
  - They took their plate to the sink.
  - They got a project done on time.
  - They took the trash out.
  - They completed a chore without complaining.
  - They obeyed you the first time you asked them to do something.
  - They listened to their body and took a rest or went pee pee.
- “Catch them being good.” Thank them in the moment for showing kindness and love.
- Again, encourage them with “You're going to get this!”
- Don't give up. Teaching your child to show kindness and love is truly a life-long gift!

# Kindess and Love

# Oops
