Hello 7th and 8th grade Homebase Teachers!

The following are some activities to be used from now until homecoming on October 9 (of course, if you don’t get to them all, they can be done after.)

In your mailboxes or attached to this document, you will find the materials for the following ideas (please make sure to do #1 and #2):

1. Hand out the orange pay it forward bracelets.
2. Brainstorm: What can I do to make Riverview a better place? Use Acts of Kindness sheet and/or 100 acts of kindness sheet if you’d like. Also for ideas see “Pay It Back Random Acts of Kindness” sheet, “Take the Challenge Now-Pay it forward-Show your Positive Panther Pride” sheet, and “Different ways to show students you care” sheet. Then with the orange strips provided, have students write a kindness that they have done or will do. Revisit the sheets daily and have them fill out a strip if they can. Link the strips together. If you run out of strips, let Matt or Robin know and we’ll get more. Let’s make our chain fill the office display window.
3. Read the story *Backfire* from Chicken Soup for the Preteen Soul. Stop and discuss when prompted. At the end, discuss.
4. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJeWFoKZ63U>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=frpp6DjCaJU> (part of this video is in the one below)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PT-HBl2TVtI>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2x_Fl3NQVd4> (may need to have students recap what happened…How did kindness pay back 30 years later?)

Discuss any or all of these videos. How would acting like this here at Riverview change our community?

1. THANKS FOR THE COMPLIMENT!   
   Need: Paper, markers, tape   
   Everyone gets a piece of paper taped to their back. (Make sure their name is at the top of the paper.) Each person is given a marker. Each person in the group must walk around the room and write a compliment or positive remark about that person on their back..... NO PEEKING! When everyone has written something positive on each other’s backs, everyone returns to their seat. With a smaller group, everyone exchanges papers without looking at their own. Each participant can take a turn at reading off the person's list to that person aloud. (Adjust for a larger group)
2. Challenge the kids to Say Something Nice! Each student should approach at least one person that day and finish this sentence: “One of the things I like about you is\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.” The next day, share your experiences.
3. Really focus on appreciating each other this week. During your homebase, do any simple Ice breakers and then at the end have a community circle where students share out what they appreciated about the experience. Statement starters: “I liked it when…”, “Thank you for being…”

**Backfire!**

Actions, not words, are the true criterion of the attachment of friends. –George Washington

It was spring at last. The sun was high in a cloudless sky. Birds sang. Flowers bloomed. Best of all, it was Saturday-a perfect day to be out playing with friends. The problem was, we’d only been in town two months so I hadn’t made any friends. My family moved a lot. It’s hard when you’re always the new kid on the block.

So, here I was, stuck with my baby brother John and Mary, the new sitter, while Mom and Dad were out of town on business. It was not going to be a fun day!

Just as we started lunch, the phone rang. I hopped up to answer it. “Hello, Morrell’s residence. Lou speaking.”

“Hi, Lou. It’s Alicia.”

My heart did a rapid pit-a-pat-pat. “Alicia Whitmann?”

She giggled. “You know another Alicia?”

“No.” There was only one Alicia: The most popular, prettiest, richest girl in my class.

“I called to invite you over to my house this afternoon. We can ride my horse.”

“Hang on. I’ll ask.” Heart racing, I ran to the kitchen. “Mary, can I go Play with my friend Alicia this afternoon?”

Mary was scooping the peas off the floor faster than my brother dropped them. “Where does she live?”

“Only a few blocks from here,” I said, picturing the fancy brick house that we passed on our way home from school. I held my breath.

“Would your mom let you go?”

“Sure, she would. Please, Mary. Please, please, please.”

John dumped the whole dish from his highchair.

“Oh, all right.” Mary said with a sigh.

I rushed back to the phone. “Alicia, I can come. What time?”

“One o’clock?”

“Great. See ya then.”

I was so excited I could hardly breathe. I was going to hang out with Alicia Whitman! Ride her horse. Every girl in class wanted to be Alicia’s friend.

“Come eat your lunch,” Mary called.

“I’m not hungry, I have to get ready.”

I chose my outfit very carefully; my best shorts, clean T-shirt and brand-new shoes. I even washed my face and combed the tangles out of my hair. When I was satisfied, I called, “I’m going now, Mary.”

I set off. The sun beat down on my back and bounced off the sidewalk. Cars and trucks swished by on the highway. I didn’t care about the heat or the noise. I was too busy daydreaming about the possibility of becoming good friends with Alicia. I liked Alicia from the first day. We were a lot alike. We both loved to read. Our hands were the first up to answer questions. We mostly got A’s. We both liked to play sports, although Alicia was always picked first and me last. And we both were horse-crazy. I just know we could be best friends-if we had a chance.

The sidewalk stretched on forever and ever. It hadn’t seemed this far in the car! My shirt was getting sweaty and one heel in my new shoes hurt like crazy. I stopped and pulled down my sock. A big, fat blister had bubbled up. Youch! I kept going, walking on my tippy toes. It couldn’t be that much farther now, could it?

Several blocks later, across the highway, I saw the meadow with Alicia’s horse, Buttercup, in it. Now all I had to do was cross four lanes of traffic. I sure hoped I wasn’t late!

Cars and trucks whizzed past me. I waited the longest time for a break. When it came, I made a mad dash to the other side. Whew! I was there.

The Whitman house was surrounded by big, old trees. The cool shade felt wonderful. I smoothed my hair and my shorts. My mouth was dry. I hoped Alicia would offer me a cold drink right away. I walked up to the front door and rang the bell.

No one answered.

I rang again, then knocked. No one came to the door.

Maybe they were out back? I walked around the brick wall. There were no cars in the driveway. No one on the fancy rock terrace either. I knocked on the back door.

Nobody came.

Alicia’s tree house was empty, too. I climbed up to check. Except for Buttercup, the whole place was deserted!

I couldn’t believe it. Had I heard Alicia wrong? Didn’t she say today? Why would she invite me and leave? Maybe she’d gone to pick me up? That was it! Alicia didn’t walk to school or ride the bus. A shiny black car brought her and was waiting when school was out. She wouldn’t expect me to walk all the way out here. We’d just missed each other.

Happily, I went back and sat on the front steps. I waited and waited and waited. It got later and later. No Alicia. No Whitmans. Nobody came.

I sat there with my head in my hands, growing more disappointed and confused by the minute. I finally decided that Alicia wasn’t coming, so I got up and trudged home. I was ashamed of myself. I’d been so hungry for a friend that I’d fallen for a mean trick.

By Monday morning my shame had turned to anger. Being pretty and popular didn’t give someone the right to trick people! I spotted Alicia on the playground, surrounded by the usual group of girls. I pushed my way into the circle.

**[Stop Story Here]**

**Discussion: How do you think this story ends? Have you ever experienced being tricked, left out teased, etc.? How did it make you feel? Did others see the teasing happening? What did they do? Have you ever been a witness to teasing, bullying, etc.? What did you do?**

**[Read the rest of the story]**

“What you did was mean, Alicia Whitmann. I don’t want to be your friend, now or ever!” I stomped away.

“Wait!” Alicia cried. “What did I do?”

Right there, in from of God and all her friends, I told her.

Alicia was shaking her head. “I didn’t call you, Lou. It wasn’t me. We were out of town all weekend.”

Someone giggled and said, “Miss Brainiac got fooled.”

I ignored the name-caller. “Then who called me, Alicia? Who played the dirty trick?”

Alicia looked around the group. Her gaze stopped on Morgan, who was trying to hide the fact that she was laughing to herself. “It was a dirty trick, Lou. I don’t know who did it-for sure. But that person’s no friend of mine.”

Morgan turned bright red. “It was just a joke. Can’t you take a joke, Lou?”

“Some jokes aren’t funny. Right, you guys?” Alicia said, taking my arm.

Everyone nodded and closed in behind Alicia and me. Morgan’s hurtful joke backfired. We all walked away, leaving her standing along on the playground.

-Lou Kassem

**Discussion: How was Alicia’s reaction was an act of kindness. How would you feel if you were Lou? How would you feel if you were Morgan? How could Alicia’s actions change a community?**

Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Acts of Kindness**

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**100 Acts of Kindness**

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**Take the Challenge Now**

**“Pay It Forward”**

**Show your “Positive Panther Pride**

A few ideas:

* Hold the door open for those behind you.
* Say good morning to your teacher, principal, and classmates.
* Offer to let your classmate go first.
* Offer to take your neighbor’s dog for a walk.
* Invite someone new over.
* Collect foods and canned goods for a food bank.
* Volunteer to be a tutor or mentor in school.
* Give someone a compliment at least once a day.
* Color a picture, make a craft or send a treat to a senior center or nursing home.
* Donate your unwanted toys and books to the children in need.
* Write a thank you note to your teacher, your coach, a firefighter, or someone who has influenced you in a positive way.
* Clean up the area around your school or a local park, picking up trash and putting it in the garbage can.
* Help your teacher clean up the classroom.
* Be extra kind to your bus driver. Say hello when you get on the bus and say thank you when you get off the bus.
* Call your grandparents or other special family members who you do not see often.
* Donate your unwanted toys and books.
* Write a note to your parents or grandparents and tell them why they are special to you.
* Help around the house without being asked to do so, such as cleaning your room, taking out the garbage or helping the laundry.
* Going to new school can be really scary so be friendly to the new students in your class or grade.
* Organize the clothes you don’t wear anymore and donate them.
* Smile. Smiling is easy and happiness is contagious.

**Pay It Back**

**Random Acts of Kindness**

* Eat with someone who seems left out often-invite them to your table and include him/her in your conversation.
* Help a classmate study for a test or quiz.
* Help someone organize their locker.
* Say only kind works and do only kind actions for one complete day, notice what happens as a consequence.
* Tell others that are gossiping to knock it off-defend the person being picked on. Don’t start or take part in gossip.
* Include everyone at lunch recess.
* Give a thank you note, flowers, etc. to a staff member that has helped you out.
* Make or take a treat to share with your classmates and teacher for no apparent reason (not to celebrate a birthday or holiday).
* Clean up an area of the school for the custodians.
* Make a point to give a friendly smile to everyone you come in contact with for a complete day, notice how others react to you.
* Write a thank you note to someone at school to show appreciation.
* After school hours, spend time cleaning up the school grounds.
* Pick up paper and trash in the hallway at school when you notice it as you walk to your classes in front of classmates. If you do it for a week, notice how the trash becomes less, do you think it is because your classmates notice what you are doing?
* Volunteer to tutor students who need help.
* For one week, act on every single thought of generosity or kindness that comes to your heart/thoughts, and notice what happens as a consequence.
* Take the last five minutes of lunchtime and clean up the cafeteria.
* Offer to wash the lunch tables.
* Praise someone who gets very little positive feedback from his/her classmates. Do it in front of others.
* When at a dance, dance with a person who isn’t being asked to dance and smile.
* Put something positive in everyone’s yearbook. Look happy to sign everyone’s book and thank the person who asked you to write in his/her yearbook.

Different Ways to Show Students You Care

\*Acknowledge them \*Inspire their creativity

\*Be consistent \*Remember their birthday

\*Tell them how terrific they are \*Unwind with them

\*Set boundaries to keep them safe \*Play with them

\*Expect their best; not perfection \*Catch them doing something right

\*Give them immediate feedback \*Create a safe, open environment

\*Trust them \*Display their work

\*Ask them to help you \*Find a common interest

\*Show up at some of their extra-curricular events \*Give them compliments

\*Point out what you like about them \*Give them space when they need it

\*Encourage them to think big \*Have fun together

\*Ask for their opinion \*Help them learn something new

\*Respect them \*Hug them

\*Notice when they are acting differently \*Introduce them to people of excellence

\*Be sincere \*Laugh at their jokes

\*Discuss their dreams \*Let them act their age

\*Tell them about yourself \*Let them make mistakes

\*Be flexible \*Let them solve their own problems

\*Be understanding when they have a difficult day \*Listen to them

\*Be silly together \*Let them tell you how they feel

\*Be yourself \*Look them in the eye when talking

\*Ask them about themselves \*Make yourself available

\*Empower them to help themselves \*Meet their friends

\*Meet their parents \*Notice when they are absent

\*Follow them when they lead \*Play outside together

\*Present options with they seek your counsel \*Praise more, criticize less

\*Talk with them openly \*Respect the choices they make

\*Give them good choices \*Seek them out

\*Learn their name \*Share a meal together

\*Tell them what you expect of them \*Smile

\*Notice them \*Surprise them

\*Help them learn from mistakes \*Tell them how proud you are of them

\*Be available \*Thank them

\*Learn what they have to teach \*Welcome their suggestions

\*Keep the promises you make

\*Encourage them to help others

\*Accept them as they are

\*Admit when you make a mistake

\*Answer their questions

\*Apologize with you have done something wrong

\*Be happy

\*Be nice

\*Be relaxed