

## **Invest in A Kinder World**

What is kindness? Is it donating money to a charity? Is it spending time making crafts with disabled children? Is it saying "Hi" to someone who's looking a little down? The truth is, they're all ways of being kind; and in a perfect world, everyone would take the time to do at least one of them. Mount Slesse middle school has taken up the coinspiracy project, and for us that means considering all aspects of kindness, and doing our best to fulfill them all. To fit the requirements of the project, we knew we had to perform kind acts to others, the environment, and ourselves.

Within a week of our registration as part of coinspiracy, four other students and I organized a fundraiser for the Ann Davis Transition society. We spent six hours at the local mall raising funds for the cause. Our leadership class had spent a whole class making customized paper stars to hang on a Christmas tree, and everyone who made a donation picked one to sign and hang up. A local business donated a helium tank and balloons, and we were able to give them out to children at the mall. By the end of the day we had raised \$362.48. The money went to buying Christmas presents for the children who would spend their Christmas in the transition house.

A few days later our entire class spent the evening at a silent auction, which raised funds for the Youth Restorative Justice and Division Society. A couple of weeks after that, we went ice-skating with some kindergarten kids from our local elementary school.

And so, we all went off to Christmas break feeling "warm and fuzzy" inside after helping within our community. Our kind act to the environment was tricky to figure out. We wanted to do something slightly more meaningful than picking up garbage (which, of course, as leadership students we always do anyway) In January of 2004 we went to the blue Heron Nature reserve and planted over 50 sapling trees and shrubs. They will serve to enrich the eco system of the reserve, making it possible for more animals to live there in safety.

Our kind act to ourselves was probably the most memorable experience I have ever had. All the leadership students in the school went on a three-day retreat to Manning Provincial Park. When we weren't carving the slopes, we found ourselves sitting in the rec room planning fundraisers. We launched the "Best Money I Ever Spent" event, which we wrapped up not long ago. It was a great teambuilding experience, and I feel that it strengthened our Leadership class as a whole.

Now, you may think that our Kind act to Another was one of the few mentioned above. Well, you thought very, very wrong. We were just warming

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up! We decided that we wanted to pass our Uni coin out beyond the borders of our community. To do that, our wonderful Leadership teacher, Mrs. Waddington, got in touch with Anja Hamon from the room to read program. This program raises funds to build schools and Libraries in developing countries. We held a school wide read-a-thon, and raised nearly \$7500.00 for this cause. We presented the check to Anja at our Kindness and caring assembly on February 13<sup>th</sup>. The money we raised built four libraries in Cambodia, Vietnam, Nepal, and India.

The "Best Money I Ever Spent" event was a talent show held at our school, and it raised almost \$700.00 for the Chilliwack Society for Community Living. As a bonus, we helped out with some of the disabled children that attend the programs. I spent an evening with them, and plan on going back regularly to help out.

In the future we are helping with fun fairs, MS marathons, and many other events, and we hope that our efforts will bring us one step closer to the kinder world we all imagine.