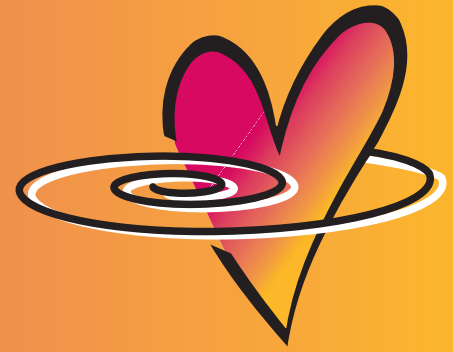


# the Kindness Connection



Connecting Communities Through Kindness

## Special Edition: Celebrating Our Successes

### *A Simple Way to Make a World of Difference*

*"It is a bit embarrassing to have been concerned with the human problem all one's life and find at the end that one has no more to offer by way of advice than 'Try to be a little kinder'."*

*- Aldous Huxley*

Sometimes the simplest ideas have the most profound impact. When I think back to how KindActs came to be, it started with a 1998 Vancouver-based street campaign and a belief in the powerful rippling effect of kindness. Our intention was to touch hearts through random acts of kindness, and in so doing, start a chain reaction of kindness that would result in a kinder world, one act at a time. And ripples it created...

Since the launch of this campaign, KindActs has grown into a BC-based network of communities that now participates at a provincial, national and international level. Joined by our BC partners, the Victoria Kindness Group and Abbotsford's Kindness is Cool Team, we were able to expand the range of our programs and the scope of our impact. Through our millennium project, **Cycling for Kindness** (a journey to join and touch hearts around North America), we connected with kindness groups and enthusiasts from around the continent. As groups discovered each other, alliances were formed and the desire for a national kindness network was expressed. In November 2000, I was invited to represent KindActs at the Third Conference of the World Kindness Movement (WKM), hosted in Singapore. As delegates flew in from more than 16 countries to participate in a plenary session on the future of the WKM and a conference officially opened by Singapore's President, Mr. S. R. Nathan, the profound value and timeliness of kindness was powerfully affirmed.



Happy 2001 from our team to yours! Vancouver KindActs team members, from left to right.

Standing: Nadine Marshall, Lauren Connell, Janine Tasaka, Bruce Sandy, Madeleine Guenard, Wilma Fuchs, Barry Bechta, Toni Crawford. Sitting: Alannah Haynes, Robert Baker, Karen Price, Alix Larson, Olivia McIvor. Kneeling: Amy Dauphinee, Ruth Ho and Linda Buker. Absent: Brock Tully, Richard Wang and Cathy Varsek.

Kindness is the universal language that transcends all barriers of age, race, religion, culture and politics. In speaking to our shared bond - our humanity - kindness unites us and brings meaning and joy to our lives. It provides us with a powerful, actionable way to positively impact all aspects of our daily lives - from our workplaces, schools and communities to our own selves.

In this special edition, we offer you a glimpse of some of our programs and the impact they are having in their respective communities. We hope you enjoy this edition and that, in your unique way, you will choose to join and support us in making this a kinder world, one act at a time.

Kindest regards,

*Nadine Marshall*

KindActs Co-Founder & Program Director

# Our Millenium Project: Cycling for Kindness

- A Journey to Join and Touch Hearts

On February 26, 2000, the **Cycling for Kindness** Road Team set out on a journey to join and touch hearts around North America. The Team traveled from Vancouver; down the West Coast to La Jolla, California; across the southern States to Tallahassee, Florida; up the East Coast to St. John, New Brunswick; then across Canada and back to Vancouver. The purpose of the journey was to raise awareness for kindness and inspire people to take positive action in their lives, schools, workplaces and communities. After 205 days and 17,764 km (10,966 miles) on the road, through wind, snow and temperatures of 108 degrees, a record 20 flats in two days, encounters with an alligator, snake and more, the Team returned to their very starting point and hometown, Vancouver, on September 17, 2000.



Total Media and Presentation Successes in 205 days:

- 121 newspaper interviews
- 45 television interviews
- 44 radio interviews
- 33 speaking engagements
- 12 Kindness Conferences
- 12 school presentations – 1407 students
- 11 Internet interviews
- 7 personal deliveries of kindness stories to officials
- 6 call-in reports to Vancouver's Porridge for the Soul event

While the miles, days and media successes can be counted, what is immeasurable are the number of people touched and lives transformed through the rippling effects of kindness.

The journey not only succeeded in its purpose of raising awareness for kindness but also increased awareness of the existence of kindness groups and enthusiasts around the continent. As more groups are finding out about each other, a kindness network is being formed and the voice of kindness is becoming more united and powerful than ever.

**For more information, visit [www.kindacts.net/cycle](http://www.kindacts.net/cycle) or contact Brock Tully and Wilma Fuchs at (604) 687-1099, [speak@kindacts.net](mailto:speak@kindacts.net).**

## ★ An Amusing Anecdote from Our Cyclists, Brock Tully and Wilma Fuchs

In the 'middle of nowhere' in New Hampshire, U.S.A., our eyes lit up and our stomachs got excited when we saw huge signs saying "Bikers - free food - 3 miles", then at two miles and again at one mile. When we were passing the huge outdoor tent, full of big tough 'Motor' bikers, I (Brock) said sheepishly, "Aren't we bikers too?" "Of course," they smiled and invited us in, not realizing long distance bicyclists could easily "out-eat" any 300-lb 'biker'. We left our new 'friends' with lots of laughter as I mockingly traded my bicycle for a huge Harley Davidson motorbike. I don't know which looked funnier - me, wearing my bicycle helmet on this huge 'Hog', or the 300-lb fully bearded 'biker' on my tiny bicycle.

## ★ The World Kindness Movement

On November 17 and 18, 2000, the Singapore Kindness Movement (SKM) hosted the Third Conference of the World Kindness Movement (WKM). Delegates flew in from over 16 countries to participate in a plenary session on the future of the World Kindness Movement and a Conference where

WKM members would have an opportunity to share their successes and challenges in spreading kindness in their own countries. The Conference, attended by delegates and over 600 members of the Singaporean public, was declared open by the country's president Mr. S.R. Nathan. Beyond the official meetings, the SKM had also prepared an entertainment program that took delegates from the depths of the jungle in the Night Safari to the heights of the Compass Rose for Hi-Tea. Laughter and stories were shared and new alliances were formed. Representing Canada were Debbie Riopel from the Canadian Kindness Movement Foundation in Edmonton and Nadine Marshall from KindActs, British Columbia. (In centre of picture above)



The World Kindness Movement was originally formed in 1997 to acknowledge the fundamental importance of simple human kindness as a basic condition of a satisfying and meaningful life and to join together the individual networks of member countries to build a kinder and more compassionate world. In order to provide a focus and springboard for the promotion of kindness, a **World Kindness Day** was declared for November 13. It was decided that on this day, the best of the human spirit would be specially honoured and celebrated around the world.

**Back in British Columbia**, the Vancouver KindActs Team launched **World Kindness Day** with a street celebration involving media, local businesses, residents and visitors of the West End. The streets were filled with balloons, posters, smiles and stories of kindness. In Victoria, our partners in kindness reinvigorated the highly successful '**Ride Kind/Drive Kind**' campaign - a cooperative effort between BC Transit and ICBC, aimed at improving road safety through the promotion of kindness and courtesy. The University of Victoria organized their second '**Lightness and Kindness**' program to coincide with the week leading up to **World Kindness Day**. The program, whose aim is to lighten the 'halls of higher learning' with kindness, succeeded in rekindling camaraderie, laughter and connection while leaving a trail of declared "happiest office on campus" champions. In Langley, posters were distributed to over 150 businesses, 56 schools and several community centres. Mayors of the City of Langley and the Township of Langley showed their support by jointly writing a letter of endorsement for the day.

**For more information and pictures, visit [www.kindacts.net](http://www.kindacts.net).**

## ★ Kindness in the Workplace

The **Kindness to Colleagues** program, launched in 1999, was developed to counter the increasing and often hidden violence in the workplace. The program's starting point was to infuse heart and soul into the workplace by creating a more authentic working environment. Olivia Mclvor, who at the time was Human Resources Manager of Canada Trust for BC, recognized the need to integrate the company's existing programs, covering themes like honouring diversity, healthy living, anti-violence and building community, under one actionable umbrella called kindness. She understood that if the program was to succeed and be effective, it would need to be integrated and woven into the cultural fiber of the organization. This strategy, coupled with a determination to put the 'human' back into Human Resources, produced outstanding results. These included more positive employee relations, marked improvement on employee opinion surveys, decreased stress claims and an overall sense of a more caring employer.

The program has since generated interest from other businesses and has been the topic of several conferences. Our partners in Victoria built on the success and interest of the program by organizing and coordinating presentations on the topic of Corporate Soul. In November 1999, Arensha Garrison, a Victoria Kindness ambassador, independently sponsored and organized a wonderful seminar for 250 people to hear one of North America's renowned speakers, Mr. Lance Secretan. Craig Harrold, as part of a KindActs effort, also succeeded in organizing presentations and introducing speakers such as John Izzo into businesses. The feedback has been absolutely amazing.

**For more information, visit [www.kindacts.net/workplace](http://www.kindacts.net/workplace) or contact Craig Harrold in Victoria at (250) 477-1256 or Arensha Garrison at (250) 656-3808. In Vancouver, contact Olivia Mclvor at (604) 515-KIND (5463) or [olivia@kyoseiconsulting.com](mailto:olivia@kyoseiconsulting.com).**

## ☆ Kindness in Schools

As the *Cycling for Kindness* Team traveled the continent, visiting and touching communities with the message of kindness, schools joined in on the action with stories and kindness initiatives of their own. In Vancouver, the starting point of the North American trek, Crofton House students chose to follow the journey by running a mile for every mile cycled by the Team. In Abbotsford, the Kindness is Cool Team, with the support of local schools and community groups, organized a fair to welcome the Cycling Team home after 205 days on the road. Over 1,000 people attended the fair. Entertainment included Le Musician Sylvain, the Dinotown characters, Abbotsford Fiddlers, Kizzie and Kuddles the Kindness Clowns, and kindness crafts and activities like the Children's Kindness Wall Hanging and 'Kind Remind' Bracelets. The fair was a heartwarming success, its impact continuing to be felt long after the event. As John Smith, Chairman of the School Board, District #42 observed, "**Stay enthusiastic, you're just what our schools need and you are in line with our directive.**"

For more detailed information and ideas, be sure to visit us at [www.kindacts.net/schools](http://www.kindacts.net/schools). Plans are well underway for a significant expansion of our Programs for Schools' web presence. The goal is to create a user-friendly, self-servicing resource that will facilitate schools becoming agents of social change, cultivating caring, respectful and safe learning environments through the fourth "R": relationship.

For school programs in Abbotsford, contact Gail Smit or Suzanne Bubel at (604) 504-4242 or [casey.gail@mybc.com](mailto:casey.gail@mybc.com). In Vancouver, contact Toni Crawford at (604) 515-KIND (5463) or [kindsolutions@telus.net](mailto:kindsolutions@telus.net). In Victoria, contact Tara Neate at (250) 479-7709.

## ☆ Canada Day 2000

Over 10,000 spectators lined the streets in Abbotsford to watch the Canada Day parade and witness the launch of the Kindness is Cool float. As members of the kindness team walked alongside the float handing out silk flowers and

their 'I'm a Kindness Kid' badges, they were greeted with thumbs up, applause and words of encouragement like, "It's about time", and "What a great idea". The float not only won the hearts of the crowd but also won first prize in their category!



## ☆ Kindness in Universities & Colleges

In February 2000, the University of Victoria in BC, the first known university in Western Canada to organize an initiative promoting kindness, launched their '*Lightness and Kindness*' program. The initiative was developed to introduce an element of fun and balance to the sometimes serious mood that can prevail in the 'halls of higher learning'. After leaving a trail of laughter, camaraderie and declared 'happiest office on campus' champions, the University of Victoria decided to organize a second '*Lightness and Kindness*' program to coincide with the week leading up to *World Kindness Day* on November 13. Activities included a walkabout and funfest with U Vic's President Dr. David Turpin and an impersonator of the Queen, an entertaining session with vocal coach Ms. Bisia Beline and countless stories and acts of kindness.

For more information, visit [www.kindacts.net/university](http://www.kindacts.net/university) or contact Kathy Harris at (250) 721-6163 or Linda Sproule Jones at (250) 721-8496.

## ☆ Kindness on the Streets

### Ride Kind/Drive Kind: The Victoria Example

To usher in the first *World Kindness Day* of the millennium, the Victoria Kindness Group, in partnership with BC Transit and ICBC, reinvigorated their highly successful 1996 *Ride Kind/Drive Kind* campaign – an initiative that recognizes the direct relationship between kindness, courtesy and road safety. Elementary students were invited to create posters depicting the importance of kindness in promoting road safety. Selected artwork and slogans were then displayed on over 210 buses and were seen by as many as 70,000 bus riders and an even greater number of auto drivers daily!

For more information, visit [www.kindacts.net/street](http://www.kindacts.net/street) or contact Anita Wasiuta at (250) 995-5613, [anita\\_wasiuta@bctransit.com](mailto:anita_wasiuta@bctransit.com).



### Take it to the Street: The Vancouver Example

On December 25, 2000 the streets of Vancouver were filled with the true spirit of Christmas. Businesses, community-based organizations, school children and over 120 volunteers shared Christmas Day with the Vancouver street community. The *Take it to the Street* Team has literally been taking Christmas to the streets since 1996 – bringing food, clothing and gifts directly to the community. While this project has been a heartwarming success from the very beginning, this past year, thanks to the generosity of many, the Team was able to reach hundreds more people in the community with dearly needed support. For the first time, they were able to purchase warm winter clothing from a thrift shop. New hats and gloves were added to the donation of 500 pairs of thermal socks. A tree was gifted and school children handcrafted decorations for the occasion. The Team was also able to share their gifts with local missions and shelters.

Gifts of clothing and food are however only part of what gets shared that day. Often underestimated is the need for belonging or purpose and desire for connection – not only on the streets of Vancouver but in the hearts of the wider community. The benefits of the *Take it to the Street* program are felt by everyone involved. As Erich Fromm remarked, "The deepest need of man, then, is the need to overcome his separateness, to leave the prison of his aloneness."

Building on the program's success, the Team now intends to present businesses and individuals with ongoing community projects to nurture this spirit of giving, cooperation, connection and shared purpose.

For more information, visit [www.kindacts.net/street](http://www.kindacts.net/street) or contact Ruth Ho at (604) 876-2610, [ruthho@axion.net](mailto:ruthho@axion.net).

"I feel no need for any other faith than my faith in the kindness of human beings. I am so absorbed in the wonder of the earth and the life upon it that I cannot think of heaven and angels."  
- Pearl S. Buck

"Through we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us, or we find it not."  
- Ralph Waldo Emerson

## ★ Kindness in the Arts

"Absolutely staggering beyond belief" is what Sarah, age 9, had to say about Kindness through the Arts' **Visual Diary Program**.

Catering to the child in everyone from the age of 5 to 105, the **Visual Diary Program** is an inspirational and interactive workshop that encourages kindness through creativity. Facilitators Barry Bechta and Stephen Unser provide students with the necessary tools and individual instruction to unleash inherent talents in the areas of writing and drawing.

The **Visual Diary Program** began through the Artist-in-the-School program in School District 43 in BC and has since touched over 2000 people in schools, libraries and community organizations in the Lower Mainland.

For more information, visit [www.kindacts.net/arts](http://www.kindacts.net/arts) or contact Barry Bechta at (604) 733-3934.

## ★ Kindness in the Media

**BeKind**, our media partner in kindness, launched its heartwarming and inspirational weekly newspaper column in Canada. Created in response to a widespread public interest in touching, true-life stories that expose humanity's virtue, **BeKind's** aim is to provide an interesting and entertaining column for community newspapers, while simultaneously inspiring people to act in kindness. The response from readers has been affirming of **BeKind's** timeliness and positive impact:

Nicole Palfy from the Dawson Creek Mirror writes, "People are contacting us telling us not to stop the **BeKind** column, and that we need more of that." Rob Lidkea, a Vancouver Sun reader comments, "I think what you're doing is great. We need more stories about kindness in the paper."

**BeKind** currently reaches an average of 50,000 readers per week - for an annual reach of over 2.5 million. While presently Canadian in scope, our partner in kindness plans to expand into the U.S. in 2001.

For more information, visit [www.kindacts.net/media](http://www.kindacts.net/media) or contact Amy Dauphinee at (604) 684-5756, [info@bekind.nu](mailto:info@bekind.nu).

## ★ Kindness in the Legislature

What kind of example are our leaders?

A Victoria politician comments, "In some ways, it is understandable that MPs lose their cool from time to time and resort to heckling or making speeches designed more to embarrass than to inform. However, while it is understandable, it is NOT acceptable. Party volunteers put in hundreds of hours to get MPs elected and voters put their trust in us to represent their views in Ottawa. Canadians deserve responsible legislators, not school yard bullies."

The Kindness in Legislature initiative is currently at a visioning stage and is being developed to encourage a higher quality of interaction and respect among our country's leaders by exploring more creative, cooperative and collaborative problem-solving approaches.

For more information, visit [www.kindacts.net/legislature](http://www.kindacts.net/legislature) or contact Craig Harrold at (250) 477-1256 or Roger Colwill at (250) 598-0077.

## ★ Kindness to Oneself

Kindness to Oneself is about creating an environment within ourselves that promotes optimum health and wellbeing. This inner sanctuary is like our own private wellspring that nurtures, revitalizes, balances and beautifies us.

For information on Kindness to Oneself presentations and how you can enjoy a more enriched life, visit [www.kindacts.net/oneself](http://www.kindacts.net/oneself) or contact Robert Baker at (604) 688-2093, [robertbaker@telus.net](mailto:robertbaker@telus.net).

## ★ The Speakers Alliance

The Speakers' Alliance is an alliance of professional speakers providing individuals and organizations with seminars and workshops that offer inspiration, tools and resources for living a more fully enriched life.

The Team is pleased to present the **Employee Appreciation Benefits Package**. Features include:

- **Kindness to Colleagues** - an actionable program for creating a more fulfilling, harmonious and kinder work environment.
- **Kindness to Oneself** - creating and nurturing an environment within oneself that promotes balance, health and wellbeing.
- **Chair Massage** - a revitalizing experience that melts away stress and frees up creative energy. An excellent way to reward employees after a long stressful project!

## • Community Projects

Our programs present businesses with a powerful and enjoyable venue for:

- team building and increasing employee and management morale
- demonstrating social responsibility and measurable contribution
- creating positive visibility in the community

For more information, visit [www.kindacts.net/speakers](http://www.kindacts.net/speakers) or contact Robert Baker at (604) 688-2093, [robertbaker@telus.net](mailto:robertbaker@telus.net).

## ★ Porridge for the Soul

A unique and uplifting monthly breakfast gathering, **Porridge for the Soul** mixes an inspiring keynote speaker with an opportunity to connect and network with like-minded individuals interested in creating positive change in their communities and workplaces. Monthly speakers are local heroes from the community who share their personal journeys of the heart and in so doing, reawaken us to our own potential as individuals, to make a profound difference in this world. Since its launch in November 1998, **Porridge** has touched thousands with its empowering messages. In October 2000, the organizing Team restructured the event to include sponsorship collaboration and a fundraising component for **KindActs**. Since the change, the event, co-created by host Brock Tully, **Shared Vision Magazine** and a team of dedicated volunteers, has managed to dramatically increase its reach as well as raise awareness for kindness and much needed funding for **KindActs**. Join us the first Tuesday of every month at the Canadian Memorial Centre for Peace at 1825 West 16th Avenue. Breakfast begins at 7:14am and the program runs from 7:30 -8:49 am. Cost is only \$12 and includes a light breakfast. Parking is free.

For more information, visit [www.kindacts.net/porridge](http://www.kindacts.net/porridge), pick up a **Shared Vision magazine** for the upcoming speaker lineup or call Brock Tully in Vancouver at (604) 687-1099. For information on Victoria's upcoming **Porridge for the Soul**, starting in the Spring of 2001, contact Craig Harrold at (250) 477-1256

## ★ Clam Chowder for the Soul

... Feeding your spirit with a generous helping of inspiration from business and community leaders ...

This yearly special one-day event has been a heartwarming success from the very beginning, touching thousands with its empowering and inspirational messages.

With September 2000's event being the "4th Helping" of **Clam Chowder for the Soul**, the event was able to take the scope of media sponsorship to a whole new level. Official Media Sponsorships were developed for seven key media categories including TV, Daily Print, Radio, Business Print, Social Publications, Community News and Lifestyle Publications. A record reach of over 13.5 million readers and listeners was achieved through the following media partners: Global TV, The Province, 97-KISS FM, BC Business, TV Week Magazine, Vancouver Magazine, Western Living Magazine, The Phoenix and Shared Vision. **Clam Chowder for the Soul** would like to thank all its new and established sponsorship partners for their ongoing support of the event and **KindActs**.

Join us on September 22, 2001, at the Chan Centre, UBC for this year's **Clam Chowder for the Soul**.

For more information visit [www.clamchowderforthesoul.com](http://www.clamchowderforthesoul.com) or call (604) 944-6282.

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