

## BUDDY UP CAMPAIGN

# LIFT UP FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION

Acts of kindness and moments of social connection prevent suicide and build resilience. This Buddy Up mini-campaign is about promoting acts of kindness – this week, do something thoughtful for a buddy or for others in your life. This is a tangible way to show them you care and that you're there for them when they need you.



## HOW TO PARTICIPATE

**Decide what you'll do this week as an act of kindness. Consider what you already do for others and build on that.**

Here are some other ideas:

-  Take a buddy for coffee
-  Volunteer for a charity (e.g. the food bank)
-  Bring snacks to work

## KINDNESS AND CONNECTION ARE LIFE-SAVING

**Acts of kindness help build connection with others, and connection is a strong protective factor.** There have been numerous studies of the “caring letter” phenomenon whereby a patient discharged from psychiatric care for attempted suicide receives letters asking about their well-being. Those who received letters were less likely to re-attempt than those who did not. These seemingly small gestures of connection are life-saving (Motto & Bostrom, 2001). In an article describing how he recovered from depression and thoughts of suicide, Jeffrey Ruoff, a filmmaker and professor, credited postcards sent to him from his brother as one powerful factor in aiding in his recovery. On the postcards, his brother wrote all kinds of messages, including messages of hope. “Whatever he writes,” Ruoff said, “The message is love” (2022).

When people experience connection and positive social interactions – like receiving acts of kindness – they feel like they belong, like they're part of a greater community, and that they're cared about. Belonging is an especially strong protective factor that can protect us from developing suicidal behaviours when faced with stressful life circumstances (Conwell, et al., 2011).

## KINDNESS IS CONTAGIOUS

Research has also found that when people witness acts of kindness, they are likely to model that kindness in their own actions. “People resonate when they watch someone do something good,” says one study's lead researcher, Haesung Jung. “In organizations, educational settings, and just everyday life, it's important to highlight kindness (and caring... Doing good has a much larger impact than people realize” (Jung et al., 2020).

**“Doing good has a much larger impact than people realize.”**

– Jung et al., 2020

**Lift Up: Acts of Kindness**, the third quarterly mini campaign of the expanded, year-round Buddy Up Campaign, runs from February 13–19, 2023. Learn more about [how to participate](#) and [become a Champion](#) for Buddy Up.

References: [bit.ly/3QqdDal](https://bit.ly/3QqdDal)