

**Search**

INSTITUTE

## 50 Ways to Show Kids You Care

By Jolene L. Roehlkepartain

*Everyone in a community can make a difference in the lives of children and youth. Even if you don't think you can tackle tough problems such as violence, alcohol and other drug use, or school problems, you can make a difference by being a caring, responsible friend for young people. Need some ideas for what you can do? Here are 50 of them:*

1. Notice them.
2. Smile a lot.
3. Acknowledge them.
4. Learn their names.
5. Seek them out.
6. Remember their birthdays.
7. Ask them about themselves.
8. Make eye contact when you talk.
9. Listen to them.
10. Play with them.
11. Read aloud together.
12. Giggle together.
13. Be nice.
14. Say yes a lot.
15. Tell them their feelings are okay.
16. Set boundaries that keep them safe.
17. Be honest.
18. Be yourself.
19. Listen to their stories.
20. Hug them.
21. Forget your worries and concentrate on them.
22. Notice when they're acting differently.
23. Present options when they seek your counsel.
24. Play outside together.
25. Surprise them.
26. Stay with them when they're afraid.
27. Apologize when you've done something wrong.
28. Suggest better behaviors when they act out.
29. Feed them when they're hungry.
30. Delight in their discoveries.
31. Share their excitement.
32. Send them a letter or postcard.
33. Follow them when they lead.
34. Notice when they're absent.
35. Be consistent.
36. Notice when they grow.
37. Give them space when they need it.
38. Contribute to their collections.
39. Discuss their dreams and nightmares.
40. Laugh at their jokes.
41. Be relaxed.
42. Kneel, squat, or sit so you're at their eye level.
43. Answer their questions.
44. Learn what they have to teach.
45. Use your ears more than your mouth.
46. Make yourself available.
47. Attend concerts, games, and events.
48. Find a common interest.
49. Include them in conversations.
50. Trust them.

Adapted from *150 Ways to Show Kids You Care*, Search Institute, Minneapolis, MN 800-888-7828. [www.search-institute.org](http://www.search-institute.org).