

The INCREDIBLE INFLUENCE of You

MATERIALS

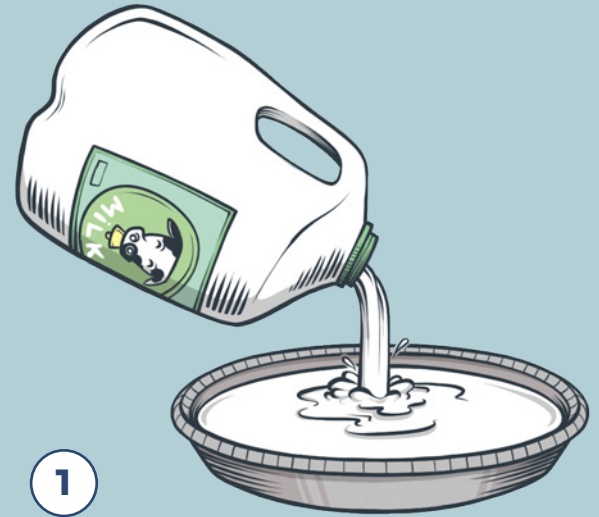
- WHOLE MILK (low-fat milk won't cut it)
- DAWN® LIQUID DISH SOAP in a small cup
- COTTON SWABS
- FOOD COLORING in various colors
- ROUND PLATE OR PIE TIN with recessed edges

Ever wonder how far your acts of kindness spread? Grab some milk and find out.

Doesn't the world seem awfully big sometimes? Whether you live in a sprawling city or in a place so rural that there are more cows than people, it's sometimes easy to glance around and feel like the tiniest dot on the

landscape. And how much influence for good can a tiny dot have anyway? Plenty! Not convinced? You can prove it during your next family home evening. Object lesson time!

WHAT A DIFFERENCE YOU MAKE



1

Read a few of your favorite scriptures on service or kindness (such as Matthew 7:12 or Moroni 7:47). Spend time talking with your family about the importance of kindness, and then pour milk into the plate. Explain to your family that the milk represents the world around you. You can decide whether that means your school, your ward or branch, your neighborhood, or something else.



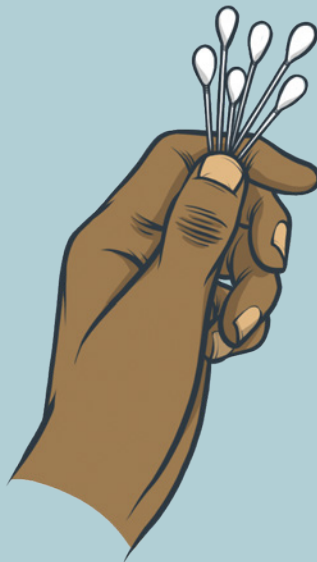
2

Squeeze a few drops of each color of food coloring into the milk toward the edge of the plate. Be sure to keep the colors separate. The drops of color represent the people you interact with.

3

Chat with your family about how acts of kindness and service enrich our lives. You might share the following quote from Sister Neill F. Marriott, second counselor in the Young Women general presidency:

.....
“Our small acts of faith and service are how most of us can . . . bring eternal light and glory to our family, our friends, and our associates. You truly carry a circle of influence with you!”¹
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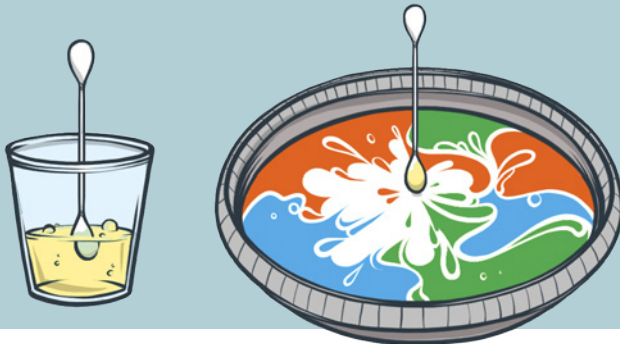


4

Hold up your cotton swab and point out that it represents a single person. Each member of your family should pretend that he or she is this cotton swab. It's time to demonstrate that “circle of influence” in action.

5

Swirl the end of your cotton swab through the soap. Explain that the soap represents acts of service and kindness. Place the heavily soaped end of the cotton swab straight down into the milk and hold it steady (no stirring). Try not to pass out from amazement the first time you do this. Maybe have smelling salts just in case.



FHE

Object Lesson

WARNING:
The awesometer in this particular lesson is very nearly pegged. You may need to keep smelling salts handy to revive those overwhelmed by the excitement.

YOUR GOOD DEEDS IN ACTION

Due to some awesome science at work, the cotton swab causes movement in the milk that seems to defy physics. It's nothing at all like dropping a pebble in a pond. It's more like dropping a water pump into the pond that pushes water outward in all directions. Soon the food coloring will move around, mixing with and influencing the other colors.

This represents how your kindness not only helps other people but also helps them to help others as well.

Pull the cotton swab out of the milk and place it straight down in it again, this time in a different part of the plate. The same result will occur but with an added twist—the outward motion should still be happening from the *first* place you placed the swab! The influence lasts.

Point out that this is what happens as we provide service. When we brighten somebody's day, we change the world a little.

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin (1917–2008) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said, “Kind words not only lift our spirits in the moment they are given, but they can linger with us over the years.”²

Kind words and deeds tend to have a domino effect. Show kindness to somebody and that somebody might be so cheered up that he or she passes it along to another. That's a cycle that can keep on turning forever.

The world might indeed be a big place. But you can be a mighty big part of it too. **NE**

NOTES

- 1. Neill F. Marriott, “Sharing Your Light,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2014, 119.
- 2. Joseph B. Wirthlin, “The Virtue of Kindness,” *Ensign*, May 2005, 26.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY DAVID HABBEN