



# United States of Kindness

## New Student Welcome

Ideas and ready to use language to help new students feel welcomed, seen, and connected during their first week on campus.

**The goal is not to add another campus program. It is to make welcome and connection more visible in the moments that already shape student life.**

### Start with the student experience

The first few weeks for new students are full of information, unfamiliar spaces, and new relationships. A strong welcome activation should be easy to join and visible across campus. It should help students see that kindness is part of the campus culture from day one.

#### Three principles

##### Make it immediate

Give students one simple action they can take during move in, orientation, or the first day of classes.

##### Make it personal

Invite students to notice a person, offer help, share encouragement, or name someone who made the day easier.

##### Make it visible

Use signs, digital screens, student leaders, and shared stories so students can see kindness happening around them.

##### Make it repeatable

Choose ideas that can continue through the first month instead of ending after one event.

### A simple welcome week model

1. **Welcome:** Introduce USK as a campus invitation to notice, practice, and share everyday kindness.
2. **Act:** Ask each student to complete one intentional act of kindness during the first week.
3. **Connect:** Build in one small conversation or shared activity that helps students meet someone new.
4. **Share:** Invite students to submit a short story about kindness they received, saw, or passed on.
5. **Continue:** Use residence life, student organizations, athletics, and campus communications to carry the invitation forward.



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## Activation Menu

Choose one campus wide idea or combine several smaller ideas.

### The First Hello

Student leaders challenge each new student to introduce themselves to one person they do not already know. Provide a simple prompt: name, hometown, and one thing they hope to experience this year.

### Welcome Notes

Set up a table where returning students, faculty, staff, and alumni write short notes of encouragement for incoming students. Place the notes in residence hall rooms, orientation packets, or dining areas.

### Kindness Map

Create a large campus map and ask students to mark where someone helped them, welcomed them, or made campus easier to navigate.

### Ask Me, I Can Help

Give orientation leaders and volunteers visible buttons or cards that invite questions. Encourage them to walk students to destinations instead of pointing.

### One Good Thing Wall

Invite students to post one good thing they noticed during their first day. Keep the wall up through the first month.

### Pass It On Cards

Distribute small cards with a simple request: Do one kind thing, write what happened, then pass the card to someone else.

### Campus Kindness Passport

Offer a short list of actions such as thank a staff member, invite someone to sit with you, visit a support office, and attend one student organization event.

### Welcome Table With Purpose

Pair giveaways with connection. Ask students to answer a prompt, write a note, or learn the name of another person before receiving an item.

## Conversation prompts for small groups

- What helped you feel welcome today?
- What is one thing that would make this campus easier to navigate?
- Who is someone you can ask for help this week?
- What is one way you can help another new student feel less alone?
- What does kindness look like when people come from different backgrounds or experiences?