

FREE UMBRELLAS ON RAINY DAYS AIM TO INSPIRE KINDNESS



NONPROFIT & SOCIAL CAUSE

Kindness is a goal whose merit few would dispute, which is why we've seen myriad cards, games and even a clothing brand focused on inspiring it. Until recently, however, we hadn't yet come across Pittsburgh's [Here You Go](#), which gives out umbrellas on rainy days with just a request to spread the kindness in return. Equipped with a stock of 1,000 umbrellas, Here You Go has outfitted a staff of some 50 volunteers for random acts of kindness on Pittsburgh's many rainy days, according to [a report in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#). Specifically, those volunteers watch for sodden individuals without umbrellas on the city's soggy streets and then cheerfully give them one of Here You Go's bright yellow offerings. Attached to each specially designed umbrella is a waterproof postcard encouraging the recipient to do something kind for someone else in return; if they do, they're invited to describe their kind act on the card and mail it back to Here You Go, which then posts the story on its site. Umbrellas also feature prominently, incidentally, in the eco-minded [Shibu-Kasa](#) project in Japan, whereby students from Aoyama Gakuin University have set up an effort to encourage reuse of the disposable umbrellas dispensed by many Japanese convenience stores; people who return a free 'Shibu-Kasa' umbrella to a participating store can now receive a ticket called 'Earth Day Money' good for a JPY 50 discount. Either way, it appears the humble devices are good for more than just staying dry. Here You Go has already received queries from like-minded individuals in Seattle, Baltimore and Sydney, Australia, the Post-Gazette reported, with an eye toward expanding the program. Spotted by: Jim Stewart and Miriam Brafman

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