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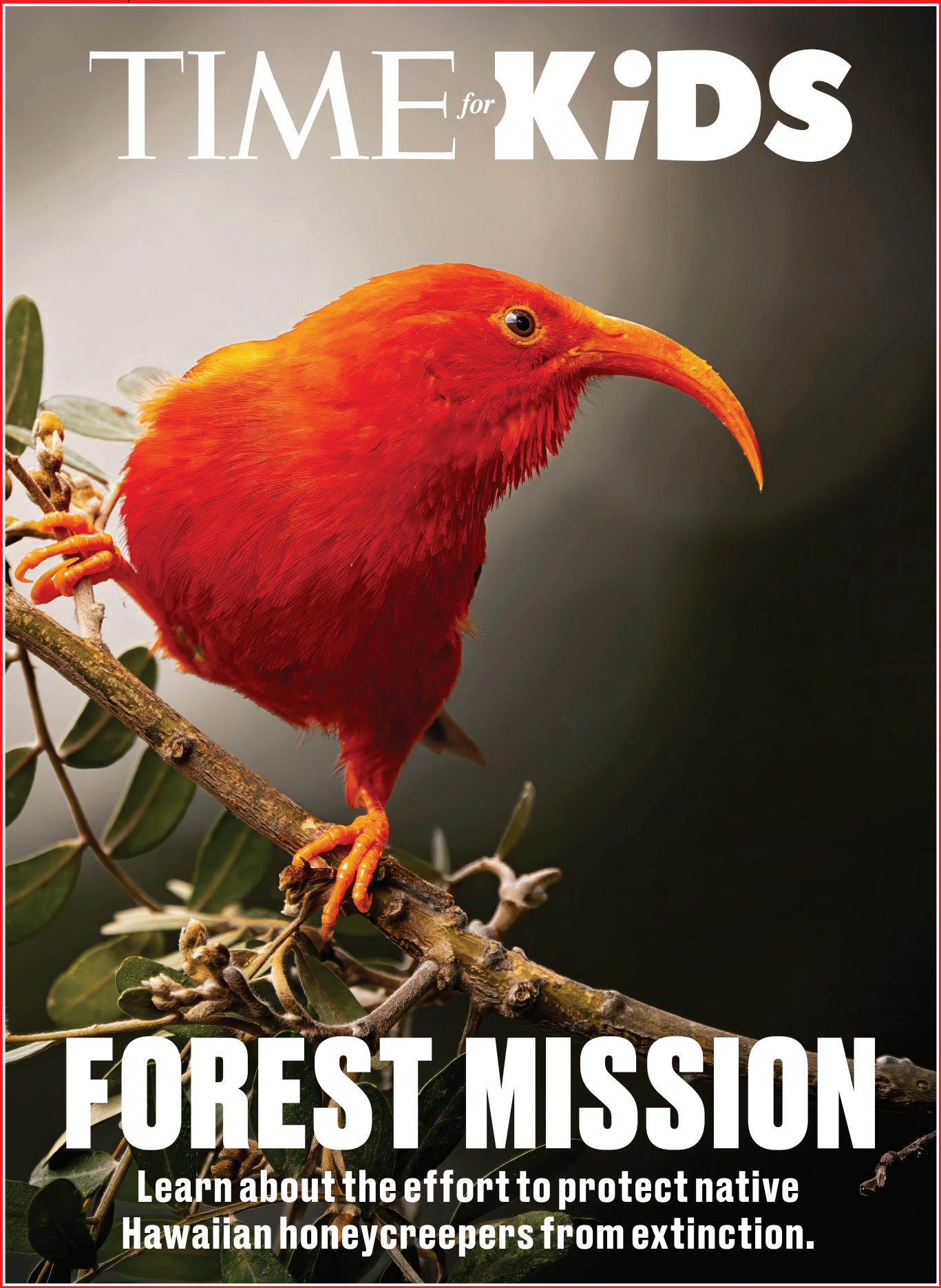
TIME for KiDS

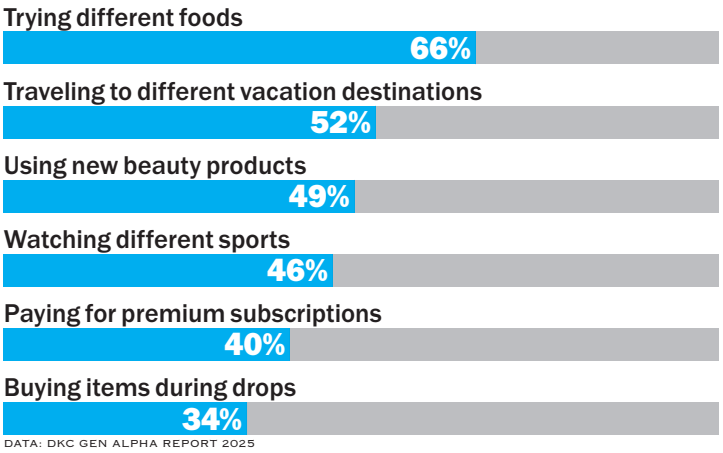


FOREST MISSION

Learn about the effort to protect native Hawaiian honeycreepers from extinction.

timeforkids.com

ALEX POTEMKIN—GETTY IMAGES



DATA: DKC GEN ALPHA REPORT 2025

GIVE IT A TRY A new report says parents are having new experiences thanks to the influence of their kids (see chart).

GEN ALPHA'S IMPACT

By Lillian Stone

Members of Generation Alpha are introducing their parents to a whole new world. In July, public relations firm DKC released a report. It focused on parents of kids ages 8 to 14. These kids are often referred to as Generation Alpha, or Gen Alpha. The report says their parents are trying new things because of their kids' influence.

The report calls Gen Alpha "culture-shaping." It says kids of this generation are pushing their parents to try new things. For example, 66% of parents say they've tried new foods on the advice of a Gen Alpha kid. And 40% say they've signed up for a subscription service because of their kid. (You can see more examples in the graph above.)

Members of Gen Alpha might be too young for jobs of their own. But they're still influencing their parents. This affects the economy in a big way. DKC president Matthew Traub told *Axios* that these kids are "influencing the entire household's spending."

Stop and Think!

WHY does this article include a chart? How do the numbers help you better understand the story?

020 CREATIVE/GETTY IMAGES

YOUR SERVE! More adults in the U.S. are exercising, in part because of the rising popularity of pickleball.

AMERICANS ON THE MOVE

By Jeffrey Kluger for TIME

About 80% of adults in the United States get regular exercise, according to a report from the Sports and Fitness Industry Association (SFIA). That's 247 million people.

The number has gone up in recent years. The rise has been driven by growth in one sport in particular: pickleball. Pickleball saw a 46% increase in players from 2023 to 2024.

The authors of the report analyzed interviews with 18,000 people. They found that the most popular physical activity is walking. After that? Trail hiking, treadmill running, free weights, and jogging.

But in terms of the fastest-growing activities, "racquet sports are number 1," Alex Kerman says. He's the SFIA's senior director of research operations and business development.

COVER: KAAICOBBADAMS—500PX/GETTY IMAGES

NEWS STORIES MAY INCLUDE REPORTING FROM THE ASSOCIATED PRESS. TIME STORIES HAVE BEEN ADAPTED BY TFK EDITORS.

SNAPSHOT

LITTLE LEGS Corgi owners release their pups during the Corgi Race Vilnius 2025. The annual event took place in Vilnius, Lithuania, on August 23 and 24. Corgis competed in races and a costume contest.

PETRAS MALUKAS—GETTY IMAGES

PHONE-FREE SCHOOLS

By Charlotte Alter for TIME

A Pew Research Center study released in July found that 74% of U.S. adults support banning phones in middle and high school classrooms. That's up from 68% last year.

State lawmakers are listening. So far, 37 states have passed laws banning phones during class. "The fact that so many of these bills have already passed is a testament to how quickly this movement is coming together," says phone-free-school advocate Josh Golin.

GENARO MOLINA—LOS ANGELES TIMES/GETTY IMAGES

LITTLE LEAGUE WIN

By Lillian Stone

Twenty teams competed at the Little League Baseball World Series from August 13 to 24 in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. Ten teams represented the United States, and 10 teams were international. The team from Taiwan (pictured above) won the championship game on August 24. Twelve-year-old Lin Chin-Tse, the winning pitcher, threw fastballs more than 80 miles per hour. "I am very excited," he said, through an interpreter.

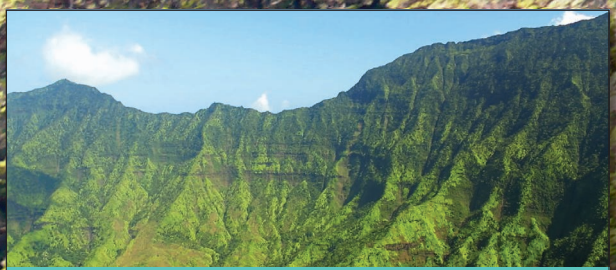
PATRICK SMITH—GETTY IMAGES

SPOTTED! A scarlet honeycreeper, once common in Hawaii, is now a rarer sight.

ROBBY KOHLEY

YELLOW FLASH A Maui parrotbill is a type of honeycreeper named for its beak.

ROBBY KOHLEY



FOREST VIEW Forests in Hawaii are teeming with wildlife, including many birds that are unique to the area.

IAN NELSON

READY TO FLY Drone pilot Adam Knox prepares to send a drone over the forest to release mosquitoes earlier this year.

AMERICAN BIRD CONSERVANCY

DROP DOWN A pod of about 1,000 mosquitoes is dropped into a Hawaiian forest by drone.

ADAM KNOX—AMERICAN BIRD CONSERVANCY; BACKGROUND: GEORGE WALLACE—AMERICAN BIRD CONSERVANCY

Power Words

biodegradable *adjective*: capable of being broken down naturally

extinct *adjective*: no longer existing

BIRDS IN TROUBLE

In Hawaii, conservationists are using drones to save endangered birds.

Twice a week, Adam Knox jumps into a pickup truck. He drives to a forest high in the Hawaiian mountains. "You feel like you're in *Jumanji,* or one of those adventure-type movies," Knox tells TIME for Kids. "This is where the native birds live."

He's talking about honeycreepers. They're in danger of going extinct because of avian malaria. That's a disease spread to birds by mosquitoes. Knox is a drone pilot for the American Bird Conservancy (ABC). He goes into the forest to release more mosquitoes.

That may sound strange, but it's cutting edge. "This technique uses mosquitoes to fight mosquitoes," says scientist Christa Seidl. She works for the Maui Forest Bird Recovery Project. The group, along with ABC, is joining forces with others to save honeycreepers. (See "Working Together.")

The mosquito project began in 2023. Insects were delivered by helicopter then. Now, mosquitoes go to the forest by drone. "It's been a long road to get here, with a lot of trial and testing," Knox says. Drones are quieter. They cost less. They allow for more-flexible timing. Since April, Knox has been using drone technology to help drop half a million mosquitoes a week.

INNOVATION AT WORK

Honeycreepers live only in Hawaii. There used to be more than 50 types. "Now there are only 17," says Chris Farmer, ABC's Hawaii program director.

Mosquitoes are not native to Hawaii. And they are not good neighbors. A single mosquito bite can kill a honeycreeper.

The mosquitoes Knox drops into the forest are in biodegradable pods. Each holds 1,000 insects. The mosquitoes are males. They don't bite or transmit disease. Pods are loaded into the drone at the launch site. After liftoff, Knox releases them by remote control.

The dropped mosquitoes are bred in a lab. When they mate with wild ones, the eggs won't hatch. "This lowers the mosquito population over time," Seidl says, especially since most females mate only once. It also gives honeycreepers time to bounce back. "The goal," Farmer says, "is to get them off the endangered species list."

ON A MISSION

Conservationists aren't sure how long the recovery will take. Until then, Knox will continue doing drone drops. And Seidl will continue tracking mosquito numbers and honeycreeper health. That means hiking deep into the forest. "It's pretty muddy," Seidl says. "Mosquitoes love muddy, wet areas."

"Everyone is so committed and works so hard because we understand that it is our responsibility, our *kuleana,* to save these birds," Farmer says. "And we can do that. We have the technology."

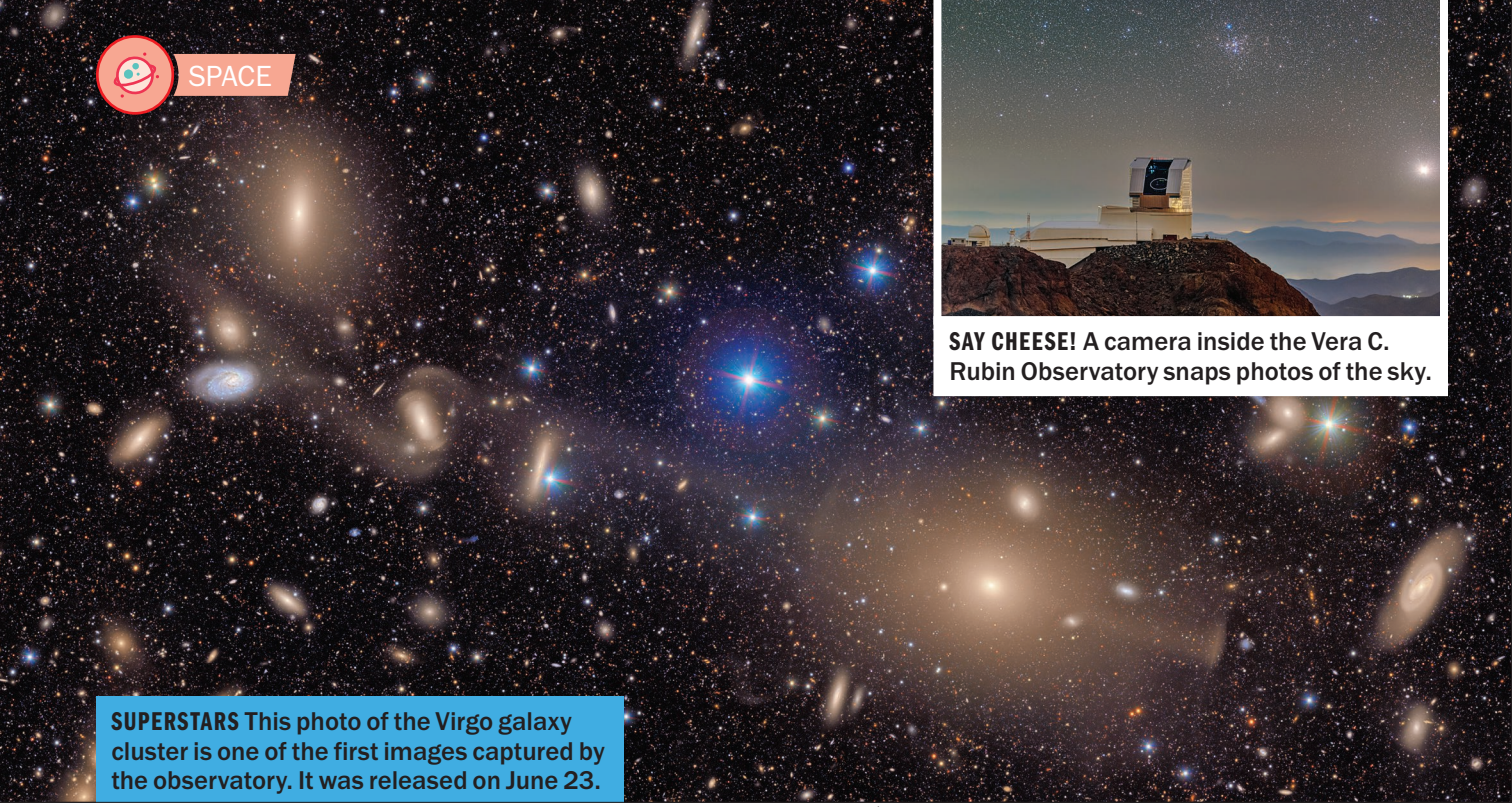
—By Jaime Joyce

CHRISTIAN NAFZGER—GETTY IMAGES

WORKING TOGETHER

Birds, Not Mosquitoes is a partnership working to save endangered honeycreepers. It's made up of 13 organizations and government agencies. "Everybody involved in conservation is part of this," ABC's Chris Farmer says.

The partnership's drone drops take place near Haleakala National Park (left), on Maui. The Birds, Not Mosquitoes motto is *I ola nā manu nahele.* In English, it translates to "So the forest birds thrive."



SUPERSTARS This photo of the Virgo galaxy cluster is one of the first images captured by the observatory. It was released on June 23.

SAY CHEESE! A camera inside the Vera C. Rubin Observatory snaps photos of the sky.

NSF–DOE VERA C. RUBIN OBSERVATORY; INSET: P. HORÁLEK(INSTITUTE OF PHYSICS IN OPAVA)—RUBIN OBS/NOIRLAB/SLAC/NSF/DOE/AURA

WATCHING THE SKIES

Atop a mountain in a Chilean desert, the world's largest digital camera is changing how people see the universe.

Space is full of mysteries, from black holes to dark matter. Now, astronomers have a new view of the universe. They can see the stars with the world's largest digital camera.

The device is called the Legacy Survey of Space and Time (LSST) camera. It is part of the Vera C. Rubin Observatory. It sits atop a mountain in Chile. The camera is part of a 27-foot telescope.

On June 23, members of the Rubin team held a press conference. They released the camera's first images. These images were all captured in just a few days. They showed stars, galaxies, and thousands of previously unseen asteroids.

COLOSSAL CAMERA

The LSST camera took 10 years to build. Željko Ivezić directed its construction. During the June 23 press conference, he called the camera "the greatest astronomical discovery machine ever built."

It's certainly powerful. The new images reveal two nebulas. They're located thousands of light-years from Earth. (A light-year is the distance light travels in a year, nearly 6 trillion miles.)

Margaux Lopez is one of the camera's mechanical engineers. She told TIME for Kids the camera is one of a kind. First of all, it's huge. It's about the size of a car. It's also fast. The camera can take 1,000 images of the sky every 24 hours. That's important, because space is vast.

"We can only see a little bit of what's out there, and everything's really spread out," Lopez says. "In the first year, we are going to take more data than every telescope in the history of humanity combined has ever taken."

—By Lillian Stone

Power Words

dark matter *noun*: an invisible form of matter that astronomers believe makes up a large part of the universe

nebula *noun*: a cloud of gas and dust in space

CANINE CARE

A new study shows that therapy dogs help young emergency-room patients and their families.

Think of a situation that makes you nervous. Maybe you're taking a test. Or maybe you're at the doctor's office, about to get a shot. Your mind races. Your heart pounds.

Just then, comfort walks in. A dog! You give it pats and belly rubs. Your nerves melt away.

People who love them know that dogs can brighten a tough day. Therapy dogs have calm personalities. They stay relaxed in high-stress situations. Therapy-dog programs pair trained dogs with people who need to be comforted.

Dr. Jeffrey Kline is an associate chair of research. He works in the Department of Emergency Medicine at Wayne State University, in Indiana. He knew that therapy dogs are proven to reduce stress for adult patients in emergency rooms. He wondered if the dogs would help kids. The results of his study were released in *JAMA Network Open* in March.

IN PRACTICE

Kline conducted the study at Riley Children's Hospital. That's in Indianapolis. The study included 80 kids who were emergency-room patients. All got care from a specialist trained to help patients handle stress. Half the group also got a visit from a therapy dog.

According to the study, patients who spent 10 minutes with a dog saw their anxiety level drop by nearly half. The effects lasted for two hours. Both the kids and their parents "had faster and more resolution of anxiety," Kline told TIME for Kids. "[This supports] the role of therapy dogs in pediatric emergency departments."

Kline expects demand to grow for therapy dogs around the country. He says his team is working on a plan to provide "dog on demand" to patients.

—By Rachel Silverman

FURRY FRIENDS A young hospital patient spends calming time with visiting therapy dogs.

JAVIER TORRES—AFP/GETTY IMAGES

SHOULD PEOPLE BE POLITE TO AI?

TIME for KIDS KID REPORTER

Artificial intelligence (AI) is quickly becoming part of everyday life. According to a 2024 Pew Research survey, most AI experts say adults in the United States interact with AI several times a day. That means chatbots, such as ChatGPT, and other AI-driven tools. Should people be polite to AI? Should we say please and thank you to chatbots? Here's what four TFK Kid Reporters had to say about it. What do you think? *—By Lillian Stone*

YES

AUBREY LAMIRAULT, 11
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Being polite isn't just about being well-mannered. It can also lead to better results. AI systems learn from interacting with people. This means a person's behavior influences AI's responses. Using polite language in your prompts is a good idea. It can lead to better information with fewer errors. On the other hand, impolite or rushed prompts may lead to less-thorough answers.

Basic manners improve human conversations. They also improve AI's responses. Kindness goes a long way!

NO

HANMING WANG, 10
SARATOGA, CALIFORNIA

AI doesn't have feelings. It's just a tool, like a computer. Do you say thank you to your computer after you use it?

Sometimes, being less polite means being more honest. You can say exactly what you mean. Too many polite words can confuse AI. Someone might use AI to edit a paragraph with a lot of errors. But if they say, "Could you please make some small tweaks?" it might make only tiny changes. In this example, being too polite hides how big the problems are. The AI won't do what you need.

YES

ETHAN YU, 12
QUEENS, NEW YORK

Our world needs more kindness. When we practice it, whether toward people or technology, kindness can spread. Being kind, even to AI, reinforces good habits.

Some argue that there's no need to be polite to AI. It doesn't have feelings. Plus, the more words a person uses, the more work the AI has to do to answer. So some people think we should keep things short. But being polite to AI can help us become more thoughtful. It's a small choice, but it can make a big difference.

NO

ASHA CURLEY, 11
SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA

AI lets people be more efficient. But does AI really need to see the words please or thank you to give a response? No. You don't have to be rude to AI. Just focus on being succinct. This is good practice in business and technology.

Being polite to living creatures is important. But being sensible about the use of AI holds more value than worrying about being polite to a machine. Let's lead our lives with honesty and kindness. But let's also focus on using technology for efficiency.

THE NEXT DEBATE Would you trust a robot dentist? Email your opinion to *tfkeditors@time.com* by October 2. Your response might be featured in an upcoming issue.

SUBMISSIONS HAVE BEEN EDITED ONLY FOR LENGTH AND CLARITY. THEY ARE NOT INTENDED TO REFLECT THE VIEWS OF TIME FOR KIDS. AGES ARE ACCURATE AS OF THE TIME OF SUBMISSION.

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