

## **How to Build Giving Practices with your Children/Grandchildren**

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It's our values that make us who we are. They guide our interactions with others, and they offer a roadmap for life decisions. Sometimes evolving over time, and oftentimes staying the same for years, our values are of utmost importance. Giving and philanthropic activities are inspired by our personal values and interests that lie closest to our hearts.

So, where do those values come from? Many are learned from those closest to us - our family. As a parent or grandparent, your role is to pass your values down to the children in your life, and let them develop strong values of their own

Being a member of NDPC tells us that you value philanthropy and giving back. In your hands is a tool to help foster a spirit of giving in your community, family, children or grandchildren. It's a catalyst to bring your family together around your philanthropic values. Giving can spark conversations over the dinner table. know each other on a deeper level and strengthens your relationships, making your family closer. It starts with you.

Before starting the exercises in this book, think about your values. What matters to you? Drives you? Reflect and decide what you most want to impart and pass on to your children or grandchildren. Why is philanthropy one of your core values?

Think about your giving style. Are you private or open? Strategic or impulsive? Why are you committed to philanthropy?

### **INTRODUCING GIVING TO CHILDREN**

#### **K-2**

Children love to give. They long to contribute, to help, to participate. Even young children can understand what it means to give when you explain giving in language they can understand.

Why do people give? Because giving is an act of kindness that, like all acts of kindness, makes you feel amazing. By helping others, you experience a positive feeling that comes from doing something good for someone else, not because you have to, but because you want to.

A simple way to introduce more giving opportunities into your busy family life is to start with what you're already doing. If you belong to a house of worship, see what

volunteer opportunities would work for your family. If your child is in scouts, seek out badges such as the Philanthropist badge for Brownies. Start small and local, by delivering cookies to a new neighbor or writing thank you notes to the firefighters at your local station.

Small children have opinions too! But how do you find out what matters to them? Ask them to name three things they really like or are good at and three things that make them upset. Those six items can be the beginning of their “passion” areas. For example, if they like playing the clarinet, you can donate old musical equipment to nonprofits teaching after-school music lessons.

### **Philanthropy at home:**

- When planning the family calendar for the following month, reserve at least one date for volunteering. Discuss as a family what everyone wants to do. Give everyone an equal vote. Often times, parents or older siblings feel they should have a greater say, but younger children may surprise the family with creative suggestions. If it’s someone’s birthday month, let that person choose the volunteer project.
- Draw pictures together that illustrate helping others. Post them prominently in your home.
- Talk often about how it makes you feel when you do something kind for someone else.
- Giving begins at home. What can you do for your family? Your pet? Your friends? Your school? Make a list and check off activities as your family completes them.
- Go through the Community Foundation’s Extra Wish catalog together and talk about which projects you would like to fund and why.

### **Philanthropy in your community:**

1. Talk about the community helpers who are rarely recognized for what they do. Make a list of unsung heroes, such as firefighters, school custodians, bus drivers and mail carriers. Think of nice things your family can do for them such as make cards or deliver baked goods.
2. Help your child have a bake sale or a lemonade stand – or a combination of both – to raise money for a special cause.
3. Plant a tree together. Fruit trees give back for many years to come. You can then donate produce to “Plant a Row” organizations.
4. Make hygiene kits for people experiencing homelessness. Fill reusable bags with a granola bar, notepad, pencil, tissues, toothpaste, a toothbrush, mouthwash and other hygiene items. You can also stuff the item into a sock. Roll the second sock and stuff it in the toe and deliver them to a homeless shelter.

5. Go through your child's library and toys together and collect things they have outgrown. Hand them down to a younger child or donate them to a library or preschool. Talk about how this provides for people who have less than they do. There are many child care facilities in need of age-appropriate reading materials.
6. Make a care package for your local children's hospital or for foster care support organizations. Fill it with new craft supplies, books, jigsaw puzzles and other items.
7. Buy extra school supplies and donate them to a school in need. These can be placed in a new backpack.
8. Pass out cold bottled water to workers outside in the heat or people waiting at a bus stop. If you have workers helping in your home or yard, remember that they may appreciate the thought as well.

### **Big impact philanthropy:**

Drives are fun and rewarding projects for kids of all ages, and they work especially well with younger kids who enjoy counting and sorting donations. When planning a drive, consider something that is easy and inexpensive to purchase and something that is needed at your local shelter or other nonprofit organization.

Here are some ideas:

1. Diapers
2. Packaged snacks
3. Board books
4. Coats
5. Socks and underwear

### **Tips for a successful drive:**

- Before deciding on an item to collect, make sure an organization needs this item. Many organizations post wish lists on their websites. Call and talk to your selected organization to confirm that they need the items.
- Set a beginning and end date for the drive.
- Determine drop-off locations. Your local city hall or a family-friendly business might be willing to accept donations for your child's drive.
- Have your children decorate large cardboard boxes for donations. Ask friends to come over for a decorating party to get them engaged.
- Design and post a colorful flier about the drive. Publicize your drive through social media channels as well as your child's school, your faith institution, your city and other venues. Be sure to ask before posting any flyers.
- Take photos and videos as the items pile up and post on social media to encourage others to participate. Create your own hashtag and ask others to post and use your hashtag.

- Enlist your child to count every item that comes in. Supporters like to know their donation is joining others to make a large gift. Keep track of items on a spreadsheet or graph paper that is posted in a prominent place so you can all see it easily.
- Take a photo when you drop off your donation to let your supporters know the drive was a huge success. If someone provides a significant donation or is helpful, turn your photos into postcards and write a thank you on the back.

### **The hard conversations:**

Children often observe societal problems before they are old enough understand them. Why do people stand by the side of the road with signs asking for money? Why do some children have comfortable houses, while others sleep in shelters? Why do some people shop at a food pantry instead of a grocery store?

This is an opportunity to teach your child about compassion and empathy, and how they reflect your family values. Talk about issues in your community and why such problems persist, even when organizations, professionals and volunteers work hard to solve them. In what ways are problems like homelessness complicated? What does your family do when you see someone who is homeless and why? Discuss how giving someone money might encourage unhealthy choices, but it could also enable the person to buy food to eat. By making such conversations routine, your children will feel free to ask questions and learn to think deeply about why and how they give.

### **Books that promote giving and kindness:**

"Each Kindness" by Jacqueline Woodson and E.B. Lewis

"How Full Is Your Bucket? For Kids" by Tom Rath, Mary Reckmeyer, and Maurie J. Manning

"The Kindness Quilt" by Nancy Elizabeth Wallace

"The Lion & the Mouse" by Jerry Pinkney

"Ordinary Mary's Extraordinary Deed" by Emily Pearson and Fumi Kosaka

"The Three Questions" by Jon J. Muth

### **GRADES 3 – 5**

Giving makes you feel good. Children in grades three through five are old enough to understand that philanthropy is a powerful act that makes you feel fantastic. But they are likely to have questions, such as: Why is my money needed? Where does my money go? Does my money really help people in need? How do I decide where and how to give?

There are many opportunities to start a conversation about giving with kids in this stage of extreme curiosity. You open the door every time you give to a nonprofit organization, serve on a board or volunteer your time. Talk about what you're doing and why. For example: "I am so excited to volunteer to help build a house. It will give a family in need a place to call home and they can continue to make wonderful memories in the new house where they will be warm and safe at night."

Often children will want to give directly to a person in need. Tools like GoFundMe have made it easier to make this type of personal connection and contribution. Emphasize that by giving to a nonprofit organization, your child's money may have a greater impact. Many people working together toward a shared goal can make change happen on a larger scale, improving many lives.

Donors and children can ensure their money is being properly spent by looking up the nonprofit on Guidestar. You can review the nonprofit's website and financial information (Form 990) from Guidestar, paying special attention to how nonprofits spend and save money.

### **Philanthropy at home:**

- When planning the family calendar for the following month, reserve at least one date for volunteering and discuss as a family what everyone wants to do. Make sure everyone's voice is heard and if it's someone's birthday month, let that person choose the volunteer project.
- Teaching kids how to be responsible with money is a task in and of itself, helping them understand how to manage it and even allocate some to **give** to others, can be difficult. Encourage your child to keep share/save/spend jars. Check out the pocket at the back of this section for stickers to make your own. While you craft, discuss how people decide how much money gets allocated towards each jar per month.
- Share stories of your own giving. What are some of the meaningful experiences you have had? How did your parents or grandparents encourage philanthropy?
- How did you discover your passion? Discuss why having passions can help you be most effective with your giving strategy. Once your child identifies a passion, you can help seek out opportunities to make a difference by researching local nonprofit organizations.
- Parents can offer to "match" a child's donation to double the impact.
- Invite your children to come with you to present one of your own donations. Consider having them physically hand over the check.
- Go through the Extra Wish catalog together and talk about which projects you would like to fund and why.

### **Philanthropy in the community:**

1. Make sandwiches for people who are hungry. Decorate paper bags and include a note in each bag. Fill with sandwich, chips, fruit and juice box. Include a napkin. (See sidebar on how to find an organization that accepts sack lunches.)
2. Make table centerpieces or door decorations for a retirement home around a holiday such as Valentine's Day or a theme such as spring.
3. Hold a car wash or a bake sale to raise money for your favorite nonprofit organization.
4. Go through the pantry and pull out unopened foods that can be donated to a food bank, especially those that are high in protein, like beans. Be sure to check the expiration date on them first.
5. Surprise your friends by writing kindness messages in chalk on their driveways or leaving nice notes on their desks. Or write thank you notes to teachers.
6. Sign up for a fundraising walk or fun run to benefit a cause or nonprofit organization.

### **Big impact philanthropy:**

Have a giving theme at your child's birthday party. You can start with a focus like rainforest conservation and use that theme to inspire decorations and the cake, or you can keep it much simpler. Here are some ideas:

- Have guests bring spaghetti and jarred marinara sauce or some other needed food pantry item instead of gifts.
- Ask for gifts to be from a wish list of a nonprofit, then the birthday child and parents can deliver the gifts in person and get a tour of the facility. Take a photo at the nonprofit and use the photo as your thank you card to guests.
- Have supplies available for guests to pack hygiene kits for people experiencing homelessness or to make cards for troops or residents of a senior center.
- Collect loose change and invite guests to bring their spare change. Have the birthday child select a favorite nonprofit organization or put the names of several organizations in a bag and have the child pick one. Guests can sort the change and sign a card for the organization.

### **The hard conversations**

At this age, your child is starting to understand the value of money and may have questions about how money, or lack of it, impacts how people live. Why do some people work hard and get to live in a nice house and others work just as hard but cannot afford a house at all and must live in substandard housing? Continue to talk about the problems in your community that people seem reluctant to talk about, like the public school that looks poorly maintained and gloomy compared with the

more highly rated public school down the street. How does giving help to make an impact on issues like these?

**Books:**

“Real Kids, Real Stories, Real Change: Courageous Actions Around the World” by Garth Sundem

“The Kids Guide to Service Projects” by Barbara A. Lewis

“Four Feet, Two Sandals” by Karen Lynn Williams and Khadra Mohammed

“Animal Stories: 37 Inspiring Stories of Courage and Heart from the Animal Kingdom” by Jennifer S. Holland

**GRADES 6 – 8**

Doing good is awesome. When your child reaches middle school, opportunities to give and to serve expand. They understand more and can do more. Many organizations allow older kids to participate in a variety of projects, and middle school kids may have more ways to earn money that they can donate to their favorite causes.

A challenge with this age group can be finding time for giving and volunteering. Students are busy with homework, sports, activities and social lives and may need help prioritizing and managing their time. You can help your child find time for giving and service by modeling the giving life and finding opportunities to volunteer and discuss philanthropy as a family.

At this juncture, kids may be interested in the ins-and-outs of giving - how grants get made and how donor funds flow to the people who need help.

Grantmaking is the process nonprofits go through to receive money from foundations and donors. Many foundations have an application process, and nonprofit organizations go through that process to see if their goals are in sync with the goals of the foundation. For example, a nonprofit that provides mentoring and college scholarships might be a perfect fit for a foundation that wants to assist for hard-working young people. Nonprofits typically rely only partly on grants, with the remainder of their budget funded through individual donations.

When you donate money to an organization, either to a capital campaign for a new building, a program, or its operating budget, your money is pooled with dollars donated by others. This enables organizations to make a big impact.

**Philanthropy at home:**

- When planning the family calendar for the following month, reserve at least one date for volunteering and discuss as a family what everyone wants to do.

- Share stories of your own giving. What are some of the meaningful experiences you have had? Talk about how you were raised to be philanthropic.
- How did you discover your passion? Discuss why having a specific passion can help you be most effective with your giving strategy.
- Consider giving up a favorite treat at home for one week and donate the amount that you would have spent to an organization that addresses one of your passion areas. For example, skip the Starbucks or trips to the local ice cream shop and instead donate \$20 to an animal rescue group.
- Talk about what it means to be an advocate. Volunteering is one way to help people in need, and another is to be an advocate for an issue. Encourage your child to create posters and fliers, hang them up and circulate them via social media. Or help your child create an advocacy video using a smart phone or an online tool such as PowToon.
- Encourage your child to make a Pinterest board about a passion such as the environment or veterans. Make your own Pinterest board and compare them.
- Use Community Foundation tools to envision your legacy and values as a family.
- Go through the Extra Wish catalog together and talk about which projects you would like to fund and why.

### **Philanthropy in the community:**

1. Interview an older family member about childhood memories. Record the conversation and share the video with family members who might not know the relative's story.
2. Offer to read to younger neighborhood children or host a story-time.
3. Plant a garden and have a neighborhood produce sale. Donate the funds that you raise to an organization that feeds hungry people.
4. Hold a multi-family yard sale and donate the profit to a local nonprofit organization.
5. Make a random act of kindness video together and share with extended family and friends or on social media.
6. For your child's birthday, brainstorm a random act of kindness for each year your child has been alive. Make a list and check them off as you complete them.

### **Big impact philanthropy:**

Build and fill a Little Free Library for your community. A Little Free Library, a small cabinet filled with books that neighbors are free to borrow, is a fantastic way to encourage reading. You can buy a library pre-built, buy a kit or make one. Here are some tips for assembling a fantastic book resource:

1. Decide where to put it. If your street gets a lot of foot traffic, your front yard might be ideal. Parks and schools also make great locations. Consult the government agency in charge of parks or the school principal for permission.
2. Buy, assemble or build the library. With supervision, kids can do a lot of the work themselves.
3. Paint your library and decorate it. Decoupage is a fun technique.
4. Place a note somewhere inside or outside your library explaining that anyone is free to borrow a book, but please be sure to return it. Invite people to contribute their favorite books.
5. Fill your library with books!

### **The hard conversations:**

Bullying is an unfortunate reality many middle school students experience and witness. Talking about bullying and the complex social dynamics at play is an important way to help middle school kids cope. Has your child or grandchild felt bullied? How did it make them feel? Have they seen someone else bullied? What are some ways to stop it?

You can use giving and serving as ways to address bullying, by framing bullying as an opportunity to counter cruelty with kindness. Being bullied or watching someone else being bullied makes you feel powerless and terrible. Giving and serving make you feel powerful and amazing. Being part of an effort to make life better for others builds confidence and that confidence can inspire your child to stand up to bullies. Setting a good example can be hard sometimes, as it takes courage to do it. Having a cause can offer a broader sense of purpose and help your child rise above social drama at school.

### **Books:**

"Pay It Forward" by Catherine Ryan Hyde

"I Am Malala" by Malala Yousafzai

"Be a Changemaker: How to Start Something That Matters" by Laurie Ann Thompson

"The Kid's Guide to Service Projects" by Barbara A. Lewis

### **Grades 9-12**

It's time to empower your child for full-fledged philanthropy. High school is a great time for young people to try different types of volunteer work, support a favorite cause, learn about themselves and expand upon their passion for giving. They can inspire their peers, organize fundraisers, and embrace giving and serving as central to who they are. The challenge may be finding time amid schoolwork, preparing for college and socializing.

You can help your high schooler grow into a passionate philanthropist by modeling giving as a way of life and educating your child about how philanthropy works.

First, you can teach your child a little about how money flows from donors to people in need. Nonprofits typically rely on individual donors for a significant chunk of their budget. They may also receive government funding and gifts from corporations. Many seek grants from foundations, and that's where the Community Foundation steps in, by vetting nonprofits and managing the grantmaking process.

Just like the Foundation holds nonprofit organizations to a high standard, so should individual donors. Your child can research organizations on Guidestar to see how well the organization manages its funds and whether it is run according to best practices, such as disclosing its CEO's salary and maintaining board minutes. Many of those items are completed by the nonprofit, so the best place to look for information is its 990, which is an official tax document. Reviewing an organization's website in depth is another way to get a feel for how it is run. You can ask specific questions through the website's "Contact Us" feature. A Google News search will turn up any recent media reports on the organization. No organization is perfect, but organizations that adhere to best practices and spend donor money wisely are most effective at fulfilling their missions. Ask your philanthropic advisor for a copy of our Managing for Excellence Best Practice Checklist, a helpful guide for identifying the aspects of a stable and strong nonprofit.

Another way to help your child narrow down organizations to support is to encourage a think-globally-act-locally approach. For example, if your child is interested in the environment, the global options can be overwhelming. By working with a local conservation organization or a local chapter of a larger nonprofit, your child can have a significant impact and possibly a leadership role.

Emphasize to your child or grandchild that it's not a race to see how many volunteer hours you can log. It's about having a meaningful experience and giving back to your community in a way that is in line with your values and your interests.

### **Philanthropy at home:**

- When planning the family calendar for the following month, reserve a few dates for volunteering and discuss what everyone wants to do. Your child might have required volunteer hours now and it's fun to accomplish them together.
- Talk about how you fit volunteering into your busy life, and help your child figure out how to make room for giving amid schoolwork, activities and socializing.

- Use Foundation tools to envision your legacy and values as a family. Your philanthropic advisor has a variety of fun and engaging options.
- Go through the Extra Wish catalog together and talk about which projects you would like to fund and why.
- Talk about financial literacy. Help your child start a savings account and discuss how savings can be a foundation for college, the future, helping others.
- Plan a family movie night, and watch a movie that has a giving component, such as *It's a Wonderful Life*, *The Pursuit of Happyness* or *The Blind Side*.

### **Let's talk about money**

It's important for adults to talk honestly and openly about money with their children and grandchildren. Kids who have a realistic understanding of their family's financial situation are better equipped to be financially responsible adults. But how do you have those conversations? Be transparent – talk about how much things cost, the family budget and how your finances are structured. When you make big changes or decisions, involved them and let them know why. We recommend "The Opposite of Spoiled: Raising Kids Who Are Grounded, Generous, and Smart About Money" by Ron Lieber to help fuel this conversation.

### **Philanthropy in the community:**

1. Hold a drive for new socks for homeless people, books for a family shelter, peanut butter for a food pantry or some other needed, specific item. (For tips for a successful drive, see our chapter on K-2 giving.)
2. Offer to rake leaves or help with other tasks for an older neighbor.
3. Tutor children in the subject you are strongest in. Put out a call to your neighbors or offer to tutor at your local elementary school's after-school program.
4. Volunteer as a docent at a local theater. You will probably get to see the show for free!
5. Coach or referee a youth sports team.
6. If you play an instrument, offer to perform at a senior home.
7. Participate in a cleanup day at a school or park.

### **Big impact philanthropy:**

Tackle a big, entrepreneurial project. Here are some ideas to get started:

- Think about the project you want to take on, but starting with your community's needs. What needs to be done that no one is doing? What do you want to accomplish – how should things look once the project is done? Think about sustainability too. Can you continue this project or pass it along to others?

- Think about the skills you already have as well as skills you could learn. If you love to build things, think about what you could build that your community would enjoy. For example, you could build birdhouses and some picnic tables for your local park, or you could build a composting station at a local elementary school that has a garden. Speaking of gardens, you could install raised beds at a senior center.
- There are many projects that don't involve a hammer and nails. You can create a curriculum to teach middle schoolers about personal finance or make a documentary about the history of your town.
- Before embarking on such a large endeavor, make sure you are not duplicating something someone else is doing or creating something that the community doesn't need. Oftentimes organizations have programs in place but just need the human-power to implement or execute them. You can make the difference between that happening or not.
- Identify a nonprofit organization or other community partner to help you with supplies and offer advice.
- Work up a flexible project plan so you'll be able to deliver your finished project on time and on budget.
- Don't be shy when your project is complete. Let the community know via social media or local newspapers. Create your own hashtag and ask people to cross-post or share.

### **The hard conversations:**

High school students are often interested in social justice and race, but they may not be comfortable talking about the underlying reasons behind injustice and racism. You can start a conversation by telling stories from your past. When have you observed injustice and racism? What was it like when you were in high school?

It may be tempting to suggest a colorblind approach, with a goal of not focusing on people's skin color. But children respond better to honest, open discussions about skin color, privilege and inequality. You can help your child process the complex world we live in by exposing your child to diversity through experiences, books and media, and then talking about your feelings and observations. A great place to start is talking about a story in the news media that addresses racial disparity.

Volunteering is a great way to foster an understanding of how everyone in the community is connected. Seek out opportunities that involve volunteers from diverse backgrounds, so your child doesn't feel like giving back is about affluent people doing favors for low-income people. Activities with an all-in-it-together feel will give your high schooler a sense of purpose and feeling of hope for a more equitable world.

**Books:**

"Black Like Me" by John Howard Griffin

"Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City" by Matthew Desmond

"Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting by in America" by Barbara Ehrenreich

"Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption" by Bryan Stevenson

**RESOURCES FOR PARENTS****Books:**

"The Opposite of Spoiled: Raising Kids Who Are Grounded, Generous, and Smart About Money" by Ron Lieber

"Give Smart: Philanthropy that Gets Results" by Joel L. Fleishman

"The Secrets of Happy Families: Improve Your Mornings, Rethink Family Dinner, Fight Smarter, Go Out and Play, and Much More" by Bruce Feiler

"Raised Healthy, Wealthy & Wise: Lessons from successful and grounded inheritors on how they got that way" by Coventry Edwards-Pitt

"Raising Financially Fit Kids" by Joline Godfrey

"Giving 2.0: Transform Your Giving and Our World" by Laura Arrillaga-Andreessen

**Digital Resources:**

**DonorsChoose.org** – This organization can help you find a local project to support.

**DoSomething.org:** This national organization promotes positive change through campaigns that harness the efforts of young people around the world.

**GenerationOn.org:** This national organization has project ideas, tracker tools and other resources for young volunteers.

**Hands on Atlanta:** An established presence in Atlanta, this nonprofit organization matches individuals, families, community groups and corporate teams with volunteer activities. [handsonatlanta.org](http://handsonatlanta.org)

**PebbleTossers:** This nonprofit organization has been helping families find age-appropriate volunteer projects since 2008. [pebbletossers.com](http://pebbletossers.com)

**The Packaged Good:** This Dunwoody store gives families the opportunity to come in and do a community service activity. [thepackagedgood.org](http://thepackagedgood.org)