



Wee Learn

Wee Mentors
(6+ years):
Teaching Kids About
Charity



Inspired Giving

Many parents use the holidays as an opportunity to help children learn about charity and the importance of reaching out to others in their time of need. The ideas below are ways to teach children that charity isn't a one-time occurrence and that the spirit of giving can be a way of life for their children. To help your children acquire the habit of charity, consider implementing as a family the strategies, which follow:

1. Donate clothes. Periodically go through your closets rooting out clothes you haven't worn in a while, which can be given to the Salvation Army or Goodwill for distribution to the needy. Encourage your children to do the same. Allow them to select which clothes or toys they wish to donate. The value of this activity is diminished greatly if you go through their closets for them without their presence. For maximum benefit, get your children involved in choosing the appropriate items. Take your children with you when you drop the items off at the charitable destination.

2. Help neighbours. Regularly engage in a service-oriented project. Rake the leaves of an elderly couple. Bake cookies for a serviceman or servicewoman. Bake bread and deliver it to the homeless feeding station in your community.

3. Deliver nutrition. Build food baskets around the holidays and give to a needy family suggested by your church or school. Involve your children in selecting canned goods, fruit, and other treats to include. Decorate the gift package and deliver it together, as a family.

4. Change for a difference. Create a charity jar to be used by the family when allowances are distributed. Invite children to share some of their allowance with others through donating to the jar. As the jar fills, decide as a family where to contribute the contents. You may choose to save a whale, buy gloves for needy children, or contribute to a cancer charity among others. Read about various charities on the Internet and share this information with your children to help them make an informed decision.

5. Help elders. Do things for the elderly that they have trouble doing for themselves. Pick up sticks in your neighbour's yard after a big windstorm. Mow the grass for Grandma. Wash Grandpa's car. Clean their windows in the spring. Help them plant flowers.

By implementing some of these ideas or others like them, you will be teaching your children that charity is not reserved only for emergencies. You will be helping them appreciate that reaching out to others in need is a way of life, rather than a moment in time when a catastrophic disaster occurs. Remember, while you are giving to others, you are giving your children important messages about your beliefs concerning the spirit of giving.

