

My First Giving Memory

Braden Tellepsen

When I was 8 years old, my dad took my sister and me to Kids' Meals, an organization that provides low-income families with meals for their young children. My dad explained to us that we were going to ride in the "Meals on Wheels" Kids' Meals van and deliver lunches that volunteers had made for children who needed them. I helped load up the van with boxes full of sandwiches in brown paper sacks. I wasn't sure what to expect. I was a little nervous at first, because we were driving around through unfamiliar neighborhoods. We pulled up to one apartment complex that seemed vacant and the driver honked the horn with the signature "Kids' Meals" honk. All of a sudden, kids started pouring out of their apartments and running towards the van. We handed out meals to each one of them. That morning, we visited at least seven different apartment complexes and each time I loved it more and more. Seeing these kids' faces light up with joy once they received their meal made me feel rewarded because I was helping others and making a difference in someone else's life. It made a big impression on my 8-year old brain.



I also realized how truly blessed I was to be able to walk to my pantry and pick out any food instead of having to rely on a van to bring me my next meal in a brown paper bag. Remembering this day has impacted me and the way I view the world and my life – even to this day. It helps me put my difficulties in perspective. This one memory has made me understand the true meaning of the saying, "giving is far better than receiving."

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