



November 2018

parenting CHRISTIAN kids



Help Your Kids Develop a Heart for Service

POWERSOURCE

ASK JESUS:

1. To help you incorporate service into your family's "culture."
2. To broaden your ideas about what constitutes service—and how your kids can serve.
3. To help your family members find joy in serving others.

Despite being the One True God and the King of kings, Jesus humbled himself to become our Savior. By serving us here on earth, Jesus modeled how we are to lovingly serve others.

Serving is a privilege—one people of all ages can engage in daily. Major projects and trips aren't required!

When we teach children to serve, we're also teaching them to become servants for life. That's because kids who serve become adults who serve.

Consider these findings from the Independent Sector.

- Two-thirds of adult volunteers began serving as children.
- Adults who volunteered as

children give more money and volunteer more time than adults who began serving later in life.

- Across incomes and age groups, people who volunteered as children give and volunteer more than those who didn't.
- Those who volunteered as youth and whose parents volunteered became the most generous adults when it comes to giving their time.

This month, as your family focuses on thankfulness and blessings, put your faith and gratitude into action by serving each other—and Jesus.

Read on for fun, practical ways to build serving into everyday life.

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TEACHABLE MOMENTS

Color Me Happy

You'll need new coloring books, crayons to use, and new boxes of crayons to give away.

Read aloud Acts 9:36-39 and discuss how Tabitha was always doing kind things for others and helping poor people. Say: **We can do something kind and colorful for children in need.** Talk about why kids might be in the hospital, as well as any experiences your family members and friends have had with illness or surgery.

Give each family member a coloring book. Say: **Serving other people adds color and joy to their lives, especially when they're going through a tough time. Let's make special gifts for kids in the hospital.**

Have family members each color the first page of their book and write a short message to the child who will receive it. (Younger kids may need help.) Together, pray for the recipients and then deliver the coloring books—along with new boxes of crayons—to a local hospital.

Make Serving a Way of Life

Fitting big service events into busy family schedules isn't always possible. The good news is that not every service project must be "XXL." The truth is, Jesus loves and honors service of *every* size. As we model giving aid and encouragement in our homes and beyond, children learn that service is a way of life, not necessarily just a single event. Use this list of ideas to jump-start your thoughts about how your family can serve. Just be warned: Coming face to face with human needs—and helping to meet them—is truly transformational! Hearts and lives are bound to change as you step out as a family and make a difference in Jesus' name.

- Help a charitable organization prepare bulk mailings.
- Promote fund-raisers on behalf of a service agency.
- Paint furniture, walls, or items that don't need to be "perfect."
- Organize the canned and boxed goods at a food pantry.
- Gather and deliver items for people in need (examples include inmates' families and teenage or single moms).
- Paint over graffiti.
- Clean and organize give-away clothing closets.
- Sort through and organize donations given to agencies.
- Help prepare and serve food at a soup kitchen or hospice.
- Set up, serve, or clean up at any church or community event.
- Perform puppet shows, musicals, or concerts at shelters or nursing homes.
- Do yard work or general cleanup—from weed pulling to vacuuming—at any facility.
- Play with homeless children on day visits or sponsor a trip for kids in shelters.
- Visit the elderly and assist them with indoor or outdoor chores.
- Work at the Special Olympics.
- Prepare a picnic for your pastors and their families.
- Volunteer to clean the toys in your church nursery.
- Make care packages or sandwiches for people on street corners asking for help.
- Plant trees and shrubs at places that need some environmental care.
- Donate gently used toys to a group that gives them to children at Christmas.
- Help neighbors (without pay) by raking leaves, shoveling snow, putting away trash cans, washing cars, or walking dogs.
- Challenge kids to complete one act of kindness for each family member during the week.
- Read to young children or to people in nursing homes.
- Tutor or mentor children through an after-school program.
- Pack shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child.
- Deliver cookies and thank-you notes to police officers, firefighters, and paramedics.
- Give family members a back rub (or foot rub!) after a long day of work or school.
- Pitch in together at a church work day and then grab pizza.
- After a natural disaster, donate money or needed items to the American Red Cross.
- Stock up on clearance-priced school supplies and paper goods you can donate.

"For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many." —Mark 10:45

MEDIA MADNESS



MOVIE

Title: *Ralph Breaks the Internet*

Genre: Animation, Adventure, Comedy

Rating: PG

Cast: John C. Reilly, Sarah Silverman, Gal Gadot, Kristen Bell, Mandy Moore

Synopsis: In this sequel to the 2012 Disney hit *Wreck-It Ralph*, Vanellope and Ralph embark on new virtual adventures, encountering a wide range of popular animated characters along the way. After Vanellope learns that she's royalty, she helps the iconic Disney princesses adapt to the modern, feminist-friendly era.

Our Take: With a variety of characters, this film will appeal to both boys and girls. It's sure to spark discussions about identity and friendship. Because the movie opens at the start of the holiday season, merchandising tie-ins will abound.



BOOK

Title: *The Rough Patch*

Author: Brian Lies

Synopsis: This touching, beautifully illustrated book tells the tender story of Evan the fox, whose beloved dog companion dies. Due to grief, Evan loses interest in his gardening hobby. But then a giant pumpkin grows amid the weeds, winning Evan a county-fair prize—of a new puppy.

Our Take: In a powerful yet sensitive way, this book tackles the joys of friendship as well as the challenges of loss, grief, and recovery. The dog's death is handled with restraint, using just six words and a touching image. The book, geared toward children ages 4 to 8, will help families explore tough topics because it shows in kid-friendly ways how happiness and hope can spring from sad situations.

Games, Websites & Apps

The King's Bird

Combining parkour, precision, and aerial movement, this physics-based "platform jumper" is filled with obstacles. When players "die," the screen simply fades to black. The artsy game is voiceless, with simple music. It's available for download on Windows PC and is best for kids ages 10+.

JAM.com

At this video-based learning site, kids take online courses and complete fun projects. Topics range from drawing and cooking to inventing machines. Families must subscribe, but then the videos are ad-free. Moderators give positive feedback and monitor comments. Best for ages 7 to 16.

Khan Academy Kids

The popular website for school-age kids now has a free app geared toward early learners. Children ages 2 to 5 can jumpstart their beginning math and reading skills through sing-alongs, counting, drawing, and reading. Friendly characters help make learning even more enjoyable.



CULTURE & TRENDS

Forward Fashion Personal style services such as Stitch Fix Kids, Kidbox, and Rockets of Awesome will send customized outfits to your children on a regular basis—for a fee. And Target's popular Cat & Jack clothing line now offers adaptive apparel for kids with special needs. (*various websites*)

Bad "Breath" Consuming foods prepared with liquid nitrogen can be hazardous, according to the FDA. For example, frozen treats (now common at mall kiosks) that give the eater "dragon's breath" can cause breathing difficulty in kids who have asthma. (*fda.gov*)

QUICK STATS

ADHD Diagnoses A new study reveals that 10% of U.S. children are diagnosed with ADHD. That represents a significant increase from 20 years ago. Some experts say the Affordable Care Act has led more families to seek treatment, which has led to more diagnoses. (*JAMA Pediatrics*)

Snack Facts Two-thirds of moms admit they hide a secret stash of treats from the rest of the family. Almost half of parents (48%) say their child brings home an uneaten healthy snack from the lunch box at least once a week. (*crispygreen.com; kindsnacks.com*)