

Five Great Ways to Teach Your Child about Philanthropy

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It is never too early to instill philanthropy in a child; yet, teaching them that it is better to give than to receive can be a difficult task. Children should learn that philanthropy is not just for adults or for the wealthy, but that anyone making an attempt to better society is a philanthropist. Here are five great ways to teach your child about philanthropy and charity. These ideas are easy and straightforward and can be as simple or elaborate as you make them.

- Spend time with your child by going through their winter clothes from last year. Any item that was lightly used and no longer fits should be placed in a pile to donate to a reputable local clothing drive. You can teach your child that another child will be able to use this clothing to keep themselves warm this winter.
- Go through the cabinets with your child and collect canned fruits and vegetables or other non-perishable items that can be donated to a local food bank or pantry. You could also go to the store and have your child pick out food items for your donation. Explain to your child that your donation will prevent other people from going hungry.
- Take your child to the local toy store and have them pick out an item for a less fortunate child. Many programs that work with children, including shelters and mental health centers, accept new toys year-round.
- Teach your child about charities and the services that they provide. Help him find a cause that is meaningful to him and make a donation in his name. If your child receives an allowance, encourage her to donate a portion of her allowance to the charity of her choice. Many children are eager to help other children in need, but don't understand how to help.
- Volunteering is a fantastic way to get your child involved in philanthropy. The opportunities available expand as your children get older, but there are plenty of chances for children of all ages to help. For example, your little ones can help visit seniors in nursing homes, your adolescents can join an environmental group to clean up a dirty beach, and your teenagers can serve as mentors or tutors at after-school programs.

It is important to remember that the spirit of philanthropy is not about what or how much you give but rather about the feeling that you are helping others in need.