

HELPING YOUR KIDS SEE THEIR GIFTS

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A while back, I saw a comic strip with a father letting his daughter use a hammer. In one panel, someone warns him that it wouldn't turn out well. The dad responds that while it might not start out all that great it would work out in the end. The last frame shows the daughter, all grown up, telling her dad that she'd just fixed his roof. That comic-strip dad had been willing to take a chance in the moment on his daughter breaking something or hurting herself so that she could begin to learn a useful skill that would last her a lifetime. She didn't have the skill to fix a roof the first time she held a hammer; people along the way would have to show her how to use the hammer. As she learned, there would be small victories—putting a nail into a board, fixing a broken step; and there would be small setbacks—hitting her thumb, bending the nail. But through all of these there would be people to encourage and support her; they would see what she could become, and not just who she was at the moment.



That comic reminds me of how God worked through Miriam in Exodus 2. Miriam would later become a leader for the people of Israel as they left Egypt, but right now she was a big sister watching her baby brother. Even though she was “just a kid,” God used her to save her brother, and ultimately her people, when she spoke up to pharaoh's daughter. Here we can see hints of future leadership skills, but as she grew, she would need others to help her develop them. How do we help our kids not only develop their gifts for the future, but realize they can use them right now?

Pray for your kids

You could pray a prayer like this:

“Dear God, thank you that you have given _____ gifts to serve you. I pray that you would give me the eyes to see their gifts and the words to encourage them to use them. May you help _____ to not only realize their gifts, but to follow the Holy Spirit's leading to use them to serve you.”

Encourage your kids

When your kids do something that blesses someone else, be sure to praise them. Point out gifts that come naturally to them, and help them think of ways they can use those gifts to bless others. Your encouragement might be the motivation they need to see their gifts and develop skills around them.

Try new things with your kids

Be willing to try something new with your kids, even if it makes you feel silly. Having Mom or Dad show interest in their new passions and cheering them on may make trying something new a little less scary.

Find mentors for your kids

It's true that it takes a village to raise a child. Match up your child with trusted family, friends, neighbors, and church family who can help your child grow their interest in a new skill, sport, or hobby. They can learn cake decorating, small engine repair, or model flying!

Helping our kids see how they can bless others and allowing them the freedom to do those things may seem scary at first. Thankfully, we are not alone. God has not only given your kids gifts, but he has gifted you as well! When you use those gifts to bless those around you, God will use your actions to encourage your kids to do the same.

Want to dig deeper? Check out Family Fire's article "[Helping Kids Discover Their Gifts.](#)"

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