

LOVE SERVICE

June 20, 2021

My wife and I have worked to instill in our kids a love for others and a passion for service. We take them along on service trips to serve together as a family. We talk to them about why we serve. We also pray with them for the ability to see where other people are hurting and—through service—bring God's love into those moments.

As you teach your children about service, try some of these ideas:



1. **We serve others out of gratitude for what Christ did for us.** Discuss how Jesus came to live, die, and be raised again from the dead for each one of us. We serve others out of gratitude for what God has done for us through Jesus. Our service *doesn't* earn us God's love, but it *does* reflect God's love to the world.
2. **Follow the example of Jesus.** Read the action-filled stories about how Jesus served others. The story of Jesus washing his disciples' feet is a particularly good example, but take note of all the times Jesus fed and healed people. They're all examples for us to follow as we serve.
3. **Learn by doing.** The best way to learn about service is by serving together. There are lots of age-specific ideas and advice out there about how to serve with your children. I'll add two suggestions to the list.
 - Invite your children's friends along to serve with you. This gives kids an opportunity to do something constructive together while having the safety of being with people that they know. They will also learn a lot about their friends while they serve together.
 - Match the service opportunity to your kid's specific gifts and passions.
 - If your children love to work in the yard or garden, then find someone who needs yard work done or work in a community garden.
 - Do they like to prepare food? Work at a soup kitchen.
 - Are they good at organizing? Work at a clothes bank.
 - If they enjoy painting, volunteer with a local organization that helps paint houses.
 - They're more likely to enjoy the opportunity, and they'll learn that service doesn't have to be something unfamiliar.

4. **Teach your kids to look beyond themselves.** Selfishness and inward thinking are very common in our culture today. Teach your kids from an early age what it means to have empathy for others. When you serve together, wonder out loud what it would be like to be the one in need. By putting themselves in other people's shoes, kids get a better understanding of why we serve.

5. **Look for opportunities to serve together in church.** Maybe you can serve together in children's ministry or as greeters or serving refreshments. If you need to, talk to your pastor about building in opportunities to serve the church. Children benefit when they hear the reasons why we serve, both at church and at home. When families serve together, the body of Christ is strengthened and our community continues to grow.

Teaching our kids why we serve and how to serve is so important for their faith development. Develop that desire in them from an early age so they can grow more and more in their faith and desire to follow Jesus.

Want to do a deep dive? Check out Family Fire's articles [Serving With Children](#) and [Missional Living: Serving Your Community](#)

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