

Volunteering: Basic Information for Families

“To do more for the world than the world does for you, that is success.”– Henry Ford

Getting Started:

- Passion – assess your family’s interests and identify a cause/social issue that is important to the members of the family. How are volunteers currently utilized by the identified cause/organization?
- Consider your strengths – Ages, personality and capabilities of each family member.
- Calendar – How many hours will you family be able to dedicate to volunteerism.
- Read books – Read to your kids prior to the volunteer opportunity. Help them understand the value of volunteerism.
 - The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein
 - The Berenstain Bears Think of Those in Need by Stan & Jan Berenstain
 - The Kid’s Guide to Service Projects: Over 500 Service Ideas for Young People Who Want to Make a Difference by Barbara A. Lewis
 - The Busy Family’s Guide to Volunteering: Do Good, Have Fun, Make a Difference as a Family by Jenny Lynn Friedman

Points to Ponder:

- Consider volunteer opportunities already within your family’s schedule:
 - Volunteer at church
 - The library
 - School functions
- Nonprofits may have questions too. Agencies might want to interview or meet new volunteers. Training or background checks may be necessary before beginning actual volunteer work.
- Think about your family’s compatibility with the volunteer opportunity. Is your child able to read? Stand outside for a couple of hours?
- Increase impact by working with organizations around current needs rather than creating more work by introducing new projects.