

Centsible parenting

▶ A newsletter for parents of fifth grade children

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Amanda dashes in the back door after school and asks, "Mom, do you know the new family that just moved in down the street?" "No," answers Mom, "why do you ask?" Amanda replies, "Well, when we were walking home from school I met the two kids and they did not have any hats or mittens. I know they were really cold."

(See end of newsletter for a possible answer.)

When children are little, parents are anxious to teach them to share their toys with brothers, sisters, and friends. As they grow up, we want them to continue sharing.

Children soon learn people do not have the same resources. They notice the differences in clothes, toys, homes, cars, and other material possessions.


At the same time, children also know it takes money to buy all these things. As your child makes decisions about earning, saving, and spending money, you can help the child develop a habit of sharing with others.

DEVELOPING THE GIVING HABIT

Start by talking to your child about what you do to share what you have with others. Point out the agencies, churches, or various causes you support. Then help the child set realistic goals for his or her own giving and sharing.

Next, spend time talking with your child about all the resources he or she has to share. The child may first think just of money. But remind the child about time, talents, and ideas.

Here are some additional ideas to help you teach your child the giving habit.

- Put a box in your child's room to put outgrown clothes and unwanted toys in. 
- Have your child go with you to take the clothes and toys to the church rummage sale, the neighborhood center's clothing drive, or the Salvation Army.
- Take your child with you when you volunteer. As the child gets older, encourage him or her to volunteer too.
- Identify a community project that your entire family can devote time, money, or materials to.
- Make plans for giving gifts for birthdays, holidays, and other special occasions. Help your child think about alternatives.

LEARNING TOGETHER

As you discuss sharing and giving with your child, use some of the words listed below. Then have him or her complete this activity by drawing a line from the word on the left to its meaning on the right. It may be necessary to use a dictionary for some of the words.

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| 1. Volunteer | a. things available for use |
| 2. Gift | b. a thing of real importance |
| 3. Resource | c. contribution |
| 4. Share | d. help for the needy |
| 5. Charity | e. something given to another |
| 6. Thoughtfulness | f. person who offers self freely |
| 7. Donation | g. attentive to another's needs |
| 8. Cause | h. give to others |

Answers: 1f, 2e, 3a, 4h, 5d, 6g, 7c, 8b

CONSIDER THIS

"Gee Amanda," says Mom, "what do you think we could do to help?" Amanda replies, "I have extra hats and mittens I could give them." Mom adds, "That sounds great. I'll bake cookies and we can take them Saturday morning to welcome the family to the neighborhood. While there we can ask if the kids could use any extra hats and mittens."

COMING IN MARCH: UNDERSTANDING FAMILY AND MONEY

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... and justice for all

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This newsletter is published for families with fifth grade children by Iowa State University Extension. For more information about parenting education, contact your local county extension office or access the Iowa State University Extension to Families website, www.extension.iastate.edu/families.