

Volunteer Tips: Families

1. Sometimes busy schedules can allow for less family time. Volunteering is a great opportunity to devote time to spend together. You can bond together as a family while also giving back to the community.
2. Life lessons can be taught through service. By volunteering as a family, you have a chance to expand the perspectives of your children and make them aware of new issues. Talking them through the activities can help them reflect on their experience and grow in their understanding.
3. Encourage life-long volunteering. When families volunteer, children are more likely to develop the habit of giving to their communities, and are more likely to volunteer on their own in the future.
4. Start your own family tradition. It may be ringing bells to raise money during the winter or volunteering on a Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service project every January. You can start a tradition of service that will create life-long memories.
5. Invite the whole family. Use your volunteer activities as an opportunity to spend time with family members you don't see every day. Strengthen your entire family by including grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins in your volunteering activities. You could even plan your own event.
6. Choose an activity together. Discussing possible volunteer opportunities can be a great way to help kids think about what matters to them and can help you learn about each other as a family in new ways. Making the decision together is also a great way to ensure that everyone is excited about the activity.
7. Not sure where to start? The website www.volunteercenterjwc.org will help you locate opportunities in our area, as well as your area of interest. Contact the United Way Volunteer Center to learn more about opportunities and ways to get involved. Check out the Youth & Teen Volunteering Guide.
8. Consider letting kids bring their friends. This may make the service experience more fun for them and could also inspire more families get involved in volunteering.
9. Volunteer as part of a family vacation. Serving together can be a great way to have lots of fun, explore a new place together, and make a difference at the same time.
10. Look into volunteering events in order to get a taste of volunteering if you're not sure about committing right away. Make a Difference Day, Summer of the Arts, FRY fest, One Book Two Book Children's Book Festival and many other one-day events are scheduled throughout the year.
11. Look for opportunities that can accommodate the skills, interests, and maturity of all family members, especially the younger children.