

Family Serving Ideas

Sometimes we hear from parents of young children that they want to serve with their kids, but they do not know where to start. Service opportunities are not always easy for the parents, the kids, or the organizers!

Little ones need a bathroom, snacks and water and probably will not have a long attention span or even understand why they are doing what they are doing. But finding the right project to serve can be worth the effort.

Why is it important?

- Because of the greatest commandments, found in Mark 12:30-31: love God and love others. Serving with your kids demonstrates to them that your family makes loving and serving others a priority.
- Because this can be the beginning of discovering your child's gifts and heart for service.
- Because this is training them. When we serve together, we are laying the groundwork for them to grow into individuals who know what it means to serve others.
- Because it leads to great conversations.
- When we use our time to serve others, it shifts our focus away from ourselves.

Potential Family Projects

I. Birthday in a Bag

Project: Gather supplies and put together a “birthday-in-a-bag” to donate to Go Local Partner Birthday Joy Program or Lighthouse Christian Ministries (or contact other food pantries to see if they take birthday supplies). Involve the children by making birthday cards to include in each bag.

Supplies | Preparation

- Each bag will need a box of cake mix, a can of frosting, a gift bag to hold all the supplies, and miscellaneous party supplies (balloons, candles, streamers, hats, etc).
- Supplies can be gender-specific or themed, or they can be for a general birthday party.
- Use markers / crayons, construction paper, stickers, etc., to make a birthday card to include in the bag. Kid-decorated cards could say “God made you, and you are special!”

Discuss with kids

- What is your favorite birthday treat?
- What is your favorite thing to do on your birthday? Do you feel special on your birthday?
- Share why you are putting together a bag full of party supplies to help financially challenged families celebrate.
- Pray for the child that will be receiving your birthday bag.

Additional Information

- Reach out to the organization to make sure they are open when you plan to deliver. You may also be able to get a tour of the facility, which is a great chance for your kids to see how that organization serves those in the community.

II. Soldier Letters

Project: Have kids design art & letters to soldiers. This project focuses on the value of service and encouraging others.

Supplies | Preparation

- Use markers/crayons, construction paper, stickers, etc., to create the letters. The letters do not need individual envelopes if you are mailing a bulk collection to “A Million Thanks” or similar organization.

- A Million Thanks collects and distributes letters of thanks and support and sends them directly to active, reserve, and veteran military. They will mail the letters after reviewing them for safety. Mail to

A Million Thanks
17853 Santiago Blvd, #107-355
Villa Park, CA 92861

- “A Million Thanks” says it is acceptable to send scripture and prayers on their letters. More tips can be found [HERE](#)
- If children include their address, a soldier may write back!

Discuss with kids

- Who are soldiers? What are they tasked with doing? Why is their job hard?
- Who are other people we can encourage? What can we do for them with our words and actions?
- How can God use little kids to encourage others?
- We need to always remember to look for people that might need to be cheered up along their way!
- Before or after the project, pray for soldiers with your children – for their safety, for their endurance and that they would know who Jesus is.
- If appropriate for your kids' ages, discuss more deeply the role of those in our Armed Forces, and the way God uses government for our good. (Romans 13:1-7 is one place to start.)

Additional information

Postage donations are suggested (a dollar per letter) but not required.

III. Park Pick-Up

Project: Pick up trash, wipe down benches, and picnic tables at a local park.

Supplies | Preparation

- Gather disposable gloves, hand sanitizer, 3-4 plastic grocery bags, a spray bottle with water, and paper towels or rags.
- Remember sunscreen and water!

Discuss with kids

- Look around. What is something you see that God made?
- What would it be like to come to the park to play and it was filled with trash, no one had taken care of it?
- How can we help take care of the world around us?

Additional information

- Remember to tell kids to be cautious with what they pick up – if they see anything sharp (broken glass, nails, needles, etc.), tell them not to touch it and to find a grown up. Anyone too young to discern what is sharp should have an adult with them.

IV. Senior Center Visit

Project: Visit a local Senior Center (Retirement Center, Assisted Living, Nursing Home) and love on the residents by singing songs and passing out homemade cards.

Supplies | Preparation

- Find a local facility that you would like to visit as a family or go with your small group.
- Call ahead and ask for the Activities Director. They might want to organize an event around your visit, or they might have a recommended time for your visit (i.e., just before or after mealtime in the dining room when all the residents are gathered).

- Use markers/crayons, construction paper, stickers, etc., to make cards of encouragement and love for the residents.
- Select kid friendly songs that your kids know and love and most importantly highlight God's love and care for us. Maybe some songs they know from Sunday morning Creek Kids:

Seven - Touch the Sky by Singing Praise Tots

Music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6u81F710Ypc>

God Made Me - Reach Up High by Singing Praise Tots

Music: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R_Uv2MEq40k

God Is Good - Touch the Sky by Singing Praise Tots

Music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y6Sbfq37CFQ>

Jesus Loves Me All the Time - Touch the Sky by Singing Praise Tots

Music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0JsmJOpUIFU>

Dance Shout & Sing by Singing Praise Tots

Music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q0C5DV7wfM>

God You Are Great by Singing Praise Tots

Music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mzv69I9PgiY>

I Wanna Be Like Jesus by Singing Praise Tots

Music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yMMxzSC8-HQ>

Let's Go by Singing Praise Tots

Music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n5l3VhZEYpg>

God is Number One by Singing Praise Tots

Music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DiyXnSCpOkk>

B-I-B-L-E Bible! by Singing Praise Tots

Music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qNFStjn1Eus>

My God Is So Big

Music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LI61qI-P8mk>

Discuss with Kids

- What are their favorite songs that they love to sing to God?
- What are other ways that we can offer praise to God? (prayer, share His love with others, sing)
- Discuss with your kids that the residents may be about the same age as their grandparents and may not see their family very often, so they love visitors.
- Read Luke 10:25-37. Discuss how God desires us to love Him and our neighbors. And part of loving others is loving others that might be different than us.
- Before and after the visit, pray for the residents – that they will feel loved by the visit and that they know God's love.