

Becoming Rich: What Kids Get from Giving

One aspect of learning how to manage money actually involves *giving it away*. Acts of charity are important for many reasons, including the benefit of promoting happier and healthier development in young people.

Acts of charitable giving can improve the well-being and self-esteem of youth. Youth who feel they have something to offer tend to have greater school success and more positive peer relationships. These benefits, in part, have been attributed to the good feeling and sense of purpose that comes from serving others.

Charitable giving consists of providing something with no expectation on the part of the giver of receiving something of like value in return.



Parents can play an important role in promoting giving behavior in their kids. Research shows that role modeling this behavior *and then talking to your child about why charitable giving matters* has the largest impact on their decision to give. Below are some tips for helping your child better understand the importance of charitable giving.

Talk to your kids about giving. Talk to your child about why acts of charity are important – for them and for the world. The adolescent years are a time when the brain is growing and youth are able to think more broadly and contextually. Asking questions such as what would the world look like if everyone helped out a little bit? Or can one person really make a difference? Create open-ended opportunities for thoughtful discussion and practicing thinking about the “bigger picture.”

Giving can have meaning. There are many different organizations or causes, even some created by or for kids, where your child can make an impact. This can offer an opportunity for your child, to explore their identity and think about what types of issues are important to them. When your child chooses to invest their time, money and energy into things that are particularly meaningful for them, they become committed and are more likely to follow through.

Giving can be fun. Donating money is an important way to give, however it is only one of many meaningful ways to contribute to a particular cause. For example, youth can organize a fundraising event, providing the opportunity to pool resources. If your child is interested in an activity such as running or football, they can join a tournament or marathon that requires sponsorship, and use their winnings to give.

Giving doesn't happen alone. Youth don't have to do everything on their own. They can initiate or join group efforts to address a particular issue or cause. This can provide the added benefit of belonging to a positive peer group, create a shared sense of identity and provide inspiration for new creative ways to give.

Did you know?

- 90% of children, ages 8-19 give to charity
- 80% of children have parents who give to charity
- Boys and girls give at equal rates; however, girls are more likely to spend time volunteering
- Talking to children about giving to charity increases the chances that they will give, regardless of parental income level, or children's gender, age, or race

Generosity is learned early on in our lives, though the benefits of giving last throughout one's lifetime. Helping young people understand the importance of sharing with others in their community and the world is an important conversation. A conversation is never too early — or too late to start!

Does your family have a favorite way to give back?