

SAN DIEGO family

FREE
November 2016

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WHERE TO VOLUNTEER
THIS THANKSGIVING

HOW YOU CAN
MAKE A DIFFERENCE
BUYING FAIR TRADE



WHAT POLITICS
CAN TEACH KIDS

28 HOLIDAY
TOYS

AN
ABUNDANCE
OF HARVEST
HAPPENINGS

FRIENDSGIVING, TURKEY TROTS
AND OTHER FALL FESTIVITIES



HOW TO TEACH THE VALUE OF GIVING BACK

Giving to others tops the list of life lessons we've tried to teach our kids since they were little. To drive this point home, we adopted a three-pronged approach to giving: we donated our money, gave away our things and offered our time. Sometimes we did this as a family, while other times, it was a solo effort. The net result? We infused our family with the spirit of giving.

Giving Money

When my boys (now 15 and 18) first started receiving an allowance, my husband and I made them divvy it up into three jars: spending, saving and giving. Giving jar coins would accumulate for months until we found a worthy cause to help. We'd match them dollar for dollar and either donate the money or purchase items and donate them. Our family has given money in a variety of ways, usually tying into something that benefits other kids.

- We bought backpacks, clothes and school supplies in August and donated them to organizations conducting back-to-school campaigns to help needy kids in our community.
- At Christmas, the boys picked a name off the "Angel Tree" at church and we shopped for gifts. One year, we pooled money with several families to help a boy on my son's soccer team whose family was struggling financially. We bought clothes, toys, books and bicycles for the soccer buddy and his three brothers, in addition to food and presents for his parents.



- We sponsored a boy from Zambia for 10 years, helping to provide food, clothing, medical care and other necessities. The boys chipped in from their giving jars when we sent in our monthly sponsorship gift.

Giving Things

When we donate things we love, it's like sharing a part of ourselves with others. Over the years, we've donated hundreds of things that our family no longer needs.

- As our growing boys outgrew their clothing and toys, we donated them to community organizations such as the Salvation Army, San Diego Rescue Mission and Amvets.
- As a homeschooling family, we accumulated a lot of books and magazines, which we donated to local schools and the public library after we finished reading them.
- When my boys outgrew their beloved wooden train set, they donated it (along with the wooden train table my husband built) to Boys Town for the young residents to enjoy.

Giving Time

Sometimes we volunteer as a family. Other times, my husband and I do our own volunteering gigs, partly out of our passion for the cause and partly to model a giving heart in action.

San Diego County organizations need your help! Visit www.SanDiegoFamily.com/things-to-do/donations-volunteers-and-fundraisers/1865 to discover 13 ways your family can volunteer this Thanksgiving.

- As a family, we volunteered for Make-A-Wish, which grants wishes to kids with life-threatening medical conditions and their families.
- Our kids volunteered more than 150 hours by painting murals for the library, distributing food at a food pantry, refereeing soccer games at the YMCA, distributing school supplies at a back-to-school fair, working as camp counselors for the Down's Syndrome Association and providing social media marketing for a nonprofit's fundraiser.
- My husband volunteered as my son's soccer coach for almost 10 years, while I volunteered in various public school and homeschool positions and events.

Our three-pronged approach definitely infused the spirit of giving into our family. The key is to simply do what works for your family. ❖

Lisa Beach is a freelance writer, humorist and recovering homeschool mom who lived to write about it.