

# HOW CAN WE GET THE MOST FROM OUR SERVICE ACTIVITIES?



Reflecting about your family volunteer experience can lead to learning and growth. Thoughtful reflection encourages children to grapple with the range of emotions that arise, learn about important social issues, and apply what they have learned to future experiences. Take time to explore these questions—before bed, during family dinner, in the car, or whenever you find yourself together.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE A SERVICE PROJECT

- Talk about what to expect.
  - “What do you think you will do? What will it be like?”
  - “What needs does this job fill?”
  - “What impact will you have?”
  - “Is there anything that makes you nervous or uneasy?”
- Share what the experience will be like. (e.g., “When we get to the shelter, we’ll unload our groceries. Dad will start chopping vegetables, and you and I will set the table.”)

## ALWAYS SPRINKLE IN BOOKS

Read books together about whatever issues you’ll be facing in your service project. For a list of possibilities, visit our [Read Together page](#), and find a story to suit your project.



## THINGS TO DO WHILE YOU’RE VOLUNTEERING

- Tell your children to notice any details they’d like to discuss later, but remind them to wait until your family is alone again to bring up their questions, observations or concerns. Explain how these comments might hurt feelings.
- Take photographs (if appropriate) to use for a photo album, book or scrapbook to help cement your experience.

## REFLECT AFTER YOUR EXPERIENCE

- Take turns telling about your family’s experience, using these prompts. Family members can express themselves in a variety of ways, whether they draw a picture, create a collage, or write a letter or journal entry.
  - “How did you make a difference?”
  - “Did anything surprise you? If so, what?”
  - “Did anything happen that made you feel uncomfortable?”
  - “What did you learn that you didn’t know before?”
  - “What did you like most? What was most difficult?”
  - “What would you do differently if you had it to do over?”
- Create a scrapbook or photo album of your service experiences.
- Have a family member describe an incident or tell a story that occurred during your experience.
- Younger children love to hear the “story” of their experiences told back to them.
- If your child is older, you can talk about what society should do about the issue you’ve encountered.
- Write a letter together to someone you met while volunteering or to someone (grandparent, aunt, friend) about the experience.
- Share your story on the Doing Good Together website.

## MORE SIMPLE WAYS TO REFLECT TOGETHER:

Start a DIY Kindness Journal

Read Together with our Issue-Based Book Collections

Join our Big-Hearted Families Membership Circle

Print & Use Pithy Placemats

