

November 28, 2017

Charitable Giving

And just like that we are full-fledged into the holiday season. We can feel the children's energy and excitement throughout the school. This may be your favorite time of year filled with traditions, parties, and activities. For some it may also put added stress on the family unit. Our lives may already be quite full with our children's schedules and squeezing in just a little more during these upcoming weeks may seem overwhelming if not impossible. For families who are grieving the loss of a family member, job, home or pregnancy it may be even harder to find the joy.

Be kind. Always. A simple statement but one most certainly hard to live by each and everyday when we are faced with challenges that affect our jobs, our children, our most precious gifts.

This is a time of the year for us to come together as a community to support the diverse needs of our school community, community at large as well as beyond in a more global sense. Some of us have experienced great loss in our lives. Some of us are medically fragile. Some of us are lonely and sad. Are we kind to one another? Always? What about when it affects our own kids? It's hard, isn't it?

Everyone you meet is
fighting a battle
you know nothing about.

Be kind. ❤️ Always.

- Ian MacLaren



Yesterday was #GivingTuesday. As described on its [website](#)- #GivingTuesday is a global day of giving fueled by the power of social media and collaboration.

Celebrated on the Tuesday following Thanksgiving (in the U.S.) and the widely recognized shopping events Black Friday and Cyber Monday, #GivingTuesday kicks off the charitable season, when many focus on their holiday and end-of-year giving.”

How do we introduce the idea of kindness and giving to our children? The gesture needn't be grand. Below is an article by Madison DuPaix that was posted on Balance.com on June 9, 2017 with some great ideas:

Teaching kids about charity can be rewarding for both parents and the children. Learning about giving and helping others gives children a feeling of empowerment in an uncertain world where unexpected and frightening events happen.

A great way to reinforce charitable values is to make giving a family activity. Encourage everyone in your household to participate in volunteer activities, and praise your children when they show generosity and empathy to others.

It is especially important to teach young ones that they are part of a larger community and that we are responsible for everyone around us. By giving the value of charity a central role in the

family dynamic, you can encourage your child to grow up with a healthy sense of compassion and a strong charitable spirit.

What Age Should We Introduce Our Children to the Idea of Charity?

Parents should introduce their children to charitable giving when they are around three or four years old. Very young children often don't realize that other people have feelings, ideas, and emotions of their own. By the time they turn three, children begin to understand and respect the fact that each and every one of us has an inner life of our own. Knowing that other people have feelings, children can begin to develop and hone a sense of empathy; this capacity for empathy is the very basis for charity.

How Can We Set A Good Example As Parents?

Parents should create a family environment where giving is a natural and encouraged occurrence. It is good for children to see their parents donating charitably and, just as important, they should see how enjoyable it is for their parents to be able to give. Include your children in your own volunteer or charity activities. Let them see you dropping money into charity boxes, encourage them to help you pick out canned foods during a food drive, or let them tag along when you participate in a walk for breast cancer. Each time your child sees you giving to charity, it reinforces the good behavior and gives you an opportunity to explain why it is important to give and how rewarding charity can be.

What Are Different Ways To Give?

There are many ways a child can learn the value of giving and plenty of volunteer ideas for kids. Setting up a charity box in the home can show how even a little bit of money can make a difference when given with a good heart. Encourage them to donate old toys, school supplies, and clothing to other needy children. It is also a good idea to teach your little ones that donating time can be just as powerful and good as donating money and things. Take the whole family for an outing serving dinner at a local soup kitchen or make a habit of keeping a basket of fruit or snacks in the car to give to hungry people in need.



How Can We Involve Our Children in Volunteer and Charitable Activities?

It is easier for younger children to understand more direct and concrete examples of charitable giving. They know they love their favorite toys and dolls, so you can explain to them that not everyone is fortunate to have toys to play with. Encouraging them to donate toys they've

outgrown will help them see that they can make a real difference in other people's lives. Likewise you can help them set up a charity box to put part of their [allowance](#) or loose change in or help them donate old clothes to other special girls and boys. Making philanthropic donations a regular activity around the house will reinforce charitable values in your children's lives.

There are so many charities that are already established and underway right here at the Bresnahan School. Perhaps an easy way to start involving your children in charity would be to take part in one of our donations or support a cause with your time.

- **The Red Stocking Program-** Our annual red stocking program is underway. Classes adopt an anonymous local child for the holiday. Be on the lookout for a notice in your child's folder that will indicate if your child's class is participating. If so, consider involving your child in selecting a needed item and explain why your family is one of the "helpers."
- **Send in a tree topper in support of Christmas Tree Santa** led by Theo Roberts and Charlotte Keally, by the end of this week.
- Support the **winter clothing drive** led by Mrs. Ames' class by sending in a warm winter hat, a pair of mittens or a cozy, warm scarf to be donated to The Community Service of Newburyport between tomorrow and Wednesday, December 20th.
- **PTO Cookie Swap-** One of our most loved events is the cookie swap the PTO sponsors for our teachers. Please consider making a special treat with your child for this event.

Charitably Yours,
Kristina Davis, Karina Mascia and Amy Sullivan