

# 2020 Guide to the Holidays: Giving Back

This holiday season, involve your kids in giving back. Whether it's helping a neighbor or helping the environment, our kiddos are more tuned in than ever and this holiday season is a great teachable moment for them.



# Importance of Giving



Children and Teens can join in on giving back during the holidays in many ways. By teaching your children how to give back to others helps to develop empathy towards others. Here are some fun ways children can give back:

- Clean out their toy closet and donate to a local shelter or local low income family center.
- Give your child a predetermined amount of money and have them shop for toys to donate to local toy drives.
- Make Holiday greeting cards to mail or deliver to elderly neighbors, people in the service industry, or front line workers.
- Bake cookies and deliver to neighbors.



# Donating to the Community



One of the best ways to spread Holiday cheer is to give back to others. Reach out to your local homeless shelter to see what items are the most needed during this time. You can also research “adopt a family” programs in your local area where you can buy items from a families wish list for the holiday season.

Some other simple ways to donate are as follows:

- Collecting canned and dry foods for donations to your local food bank.
- Creating simple baskets full of necessities for homeless or low income families (*i.e. toothbrush, hand sanitizers, masks, gloves, and socks*).
- Collect old blankets to donate to local animal shelters.
- Create a neighborhood drive for your street, where people can drop items off on your porch. This will give back and help you connect with your neighbors.

## Give Back to the Planet

During the Holidays we can still do our part to be sustainable. Here are some fun ways you and your family can enjoy Holiday cheer while thinking of the Planet.

- Create DIY wrapping paper with your children. Be creative and use stamps and markers to decorate paper from around the house or use newspaper.
- DIY Christmas tree. Skip out on purchasing a tree this year and decorate a tree or plant in your yard or community.
- Make your own Holiday decorations with items around the house! Snowflakes out of newspaper, sock snowmen, or toilet paper roll garlands.

# Holiday Card Exchange



Spread cheer by making cards for all your friends and family.

Get a group of family and friends to part take in the fun social holiday exchange! As a family, draw and craft holiday cards for each friend and family member. Once you are all done, have your kids decorate a shoebox with crayons, markers, construction paper, and glitter! This will be their holiday card collection box.

Once the cards are done, drive or walk around the neighborhood and drop off all your beautiful creations into your friends and families decorated shoe boxes!! And don't forget to place your decorated shoe box on your porch and wait for your friends and family to fill boxes with their homemade cards!

At the end of the day, you will have many cards and drawings to look at. You can even hang them up around the house as extra holiday decorations!



# Gratitude Tree



Collect some branches and combine them to make a unique tree for hanging special messages or memories. You can put the branches in a tin can and some rocks to stabilize them. Or you can just add the messages to your holiday tree or one in the yard.

Ask your children to add to the gratitude tree with paper cut outs of circles, hearts, or hands.

On the paper cut out, they can write a hope, a wish, a memory, the name of somebody who was impacted by health issues this year, front line workers they want to thank, name of a teacher or helper, name of a family member or parent, name of a pet, or something they are thankful for in their own lives.

Let the Memory Tree be a place for remembering the year, those we miss, and those around us who support us.

