

FAMILY SERVE IDEAS

PRESCHOOL

You can help your **PRESCHOOLER** experience God's love by helping them serve.

CHORE CHART. Create a chore chart and use stickers to mark off each task as it's completed. Be sure to add a few chores that usually belong to someone else. Explain how important it is to show love by doing things for other people without being asked.

FLOWER BOUQUET. The winter months can be dreary, especially if it's cold and snowy out. Encourage your child to add some cheer to someone's day by drawing a picture of flowers, or picking up a small bouquet from the grocery store and bringing it to someone who might need some cheering up.

SING-A-LONG. Teach your preschooler some cheerful songs and take them to an assisted living facility to sing and bring joy to the elderly residents.

TOY DROP. Take your child to a discount store and buy a few inexpensive books or toys. Together, think of a few places that might need them (a pediatrician's office, a daycare center, a church preschool). Call ahead and check to make sure it's okay, and then go and deliver some fun!

GET WELL SOON CARDS. Have your child make a stack of cards and take them to a nearby nursing home or hospital. Have them pray for each person who will receive the cards before dropping them off.

FRIENDSHIP BRACELETS. Help your child create a friendship bracelet for someone. Encourage someone who is going through a hard time or maybe doesn't have many friends.

HOMEMADE COOKIES. Bake cookies and take them to your local fire and/or police station. Include a thank you card with a drawing by your preschooler.

BOOK DONATIONS. Have your child gather several gently-used books and take them to the library to donate them.

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ELEMENTARY

You can help your **ELEMENTARY** student trust God's character by helping them serve.

COMPLIMENT CARDS. On a set of index cards, help your kid write sincere compliments about teachers, friends, or family members. Then encourage them to distribute them at random times.

MAIL DELIVERY. Have your child write a thank you note to your mail carrier and leave it in the mailbox.

SECRET MISSION. Get a manila envelope and label it "Top Secret Mission." Inside, have a list with several random acts of kindness for your child to complete. Give them a check mark for each one they complete.

GIVE, SAVE, SPEND. Give your child some chores to do to earn money. Then teach them how to give first, save next, and spend the rest. Help them visualize this concept by labeling three jars—give, save, and spend. Place money in each jar. Then help them make a plan for what they want to do with their "give" jar.

CAR WASH. Grab some car-washing supplies and escort your kid around the neighborhood, washing cars for free (after you get permission, of course!).

OUTFIT RESCUE. Have your child pick out a few gently-used outfits to take to school and donate to the resource center/counseling office. Often, they use extra outfits when kids have an emergency or accident.

SIDEWALK NOTES. Buy some sidewalk chalk and have your child write inspiring or encouraging phrases on neighbors' driveways. It'll wash off with the next rain, but it will bring a smile to someone's face.

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MIDDLE SCHOOL

You can help your **MIDDLE SCHOOL** student love God, love others, and love life by helping them serve.

WINDOW TREATMENT. Give your kid some cleaning supplies (brooms, mops, cloths) and send them out into the neighborhood, cleaning the porches and windows of as many homes as they can. Let them invite a friend to help!

THE READER. Find a younger kid who your middle schooler can connect with on a regular basis. They can read, play games, do homework, or just hang out. Discuss how important it is to be a good influence on those who are younger.

PET SUPPLIES. Contact a local animal rescue group and ask them what supplies they need—food, pet toys, etc. Then purchase and deliver the items. If possible, spend some time playing with the rescued dogs and cats.

QUARTER CHALLENGE. Gather as many quarters as you can find, and have your middle schooler tape them to video games or vending machines for people to randomly use.

SERVING JAR. Get a mason jar and a bag of small rocks. Each time someone in your family serves, celebrate by adding a rock to the jar. When it's full, celebrate by doing something fun like going to a movie or getting frozen yogurt.

GARBAGE DAY. On garbage day, have your kid pull all the garbage cans back to people's homes. (After they're emptied, of course!)

PARK PICK UP. Grab some gloves and trash bags, and clean up a local park. Have your middle schooler invite all their friends and see who can collect the most.

DOOR HOLDER. Challenge your middle schooler to see how many doors they can open for people in a day.

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HIGH SCHOOL

You can help your **HIGH SCHOOL** student pursue an authentic faith by helping them serve. Some of these activities can be done in a group, so invite some of your high schooler's friends over, serve up snacks, and make a party of it!

BABYSITTING CLUB. Have your teenager volunteer to babysit for a single parent. During the winter or early spring months, sometimes a single mom or dad needs a break! Your teen can be a welcomed relief to the end-of-winter doldrums.

MILITARY APPRECIATION. Does your church or community have a military family with a loved one deployed? Have your teen ask how they can volunteer their time to help. They could offer to do small chores around the house or help shovel snow or other yard work. Just the offer will be a huge blessing.

LISTEN UP. Grab some balloons from a local discount store and deliver them to a local nursing home. Challenge your student to find out more about at least one person, and to listen to a story from each person they visit.

TOP SHELF. Contact a local food pantry and see if they need help organizing or cleaning. For many pantries, this is an ongoing challenge with donated food going in and out.

GROW A PASSION. Is there a community organization that matches a passion your teen has? Maybe it's a YMCA that has kid's programs or a local pet shelter or senior center. Encourage your kid to volunteer on a weekend and watch their passion soar!

FAMILY ROAD TRIP. Is your family planning for summer—vacations, fun activities, or maybe even a mission trip? Enlist your teen to help in the planning and encourage them to think about some ways your family could serve this summer. Consider shelters, church food pantries, or summer outreach projects. Contact some organizations to find out their typical needs in the summer.