

Contribution

It is a powerful lesson when children realize that the world is a better place because they are in it. Children who understand the importance of personal contribution gain a sense of purpose that can motivate them. They will not only take actions and make choices that improve the world, but they will also enhance their own competence, character, and sense of connection. Teens who contribute to their communities will be surrounded by reinforcing thank you's instead of the low expectations and condemnation so many teens endure.

Before we can foster this sense of contribution, here are some things to consider:

- Do I communicate to my child (at appropriate age levels, of course) that many people in the world do not have as much human contact, money, freedom, and security as they need?
- Do I teach the important value of serving others? Do I model generosity with my time and money?
- Do I make clear to my child that I believe he can improve the world?
- Do I create opportunities for each child to contribute in some specific way?
- Do I search my child's circle for other adults who might serve as role models who contribute to their communities and the world? Do I use these adults as examples to encourage my child to be the best he can be?

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