

THE GIVING TREE

Engaging in Acts of Kindness



Image by [Natalie Corot](#) from [Pixabay](#)

December is often associated with gift-giving and one of the greatest gifts we can give our children is an understanding of the importance of kindness. There are many types of kindness activities popping up on the web right now such as an [acts of kindness advent calendar](#) or a [Hanukkah kindness calendar](#).

Another way to help children engage in kindness this month is to make a “Giving Tree.” [PBS](#) provides simple instructions for making such a tree. One way to set up this activity is to write out various acts of kindness on paper leaves and put them on a tree (this can be a tree made of paper, twigs in a vase, or a little tree from a craft store). Then, each day you have your kids pick a leaf off the tree and engage in the act sometime that day. If you would rather encourage random acts of kindness, you can have the kids do spontaneous acts and write them down on the paper leaf after the act has been completed and put the leaves on the tree. If you

don't want to cut out leaves, [Mommy Snippets](#) provides some creative ideas for other ways to hang the acts of kindness on a tree. This year, my daughters bought a little \$5 tree from a craft store and are writing their acts on plastic ornaments from a dollar store, but in years past we have cut out various shapes (leaves, hearts, flowers) and various "trees" (twigs in a vase, twigs taped to our door, and a paper cut out of a tree). I find this activity brings happiness to us all. We hope for the same happiness for your family as you share in the giving of kindness this season.

Associated Book: For those of you who would like to read Shel Silverstein's "The Giving Tree" with this activity, there is an animated version on [YouTube](#). After reading the book, pose questions to your child to connect the book to this activity: "Have you ever done something for someone just to make them happy?" "What are some things people have done for you to make you happy?" "What kinds of things can we do for others to make them happy?" You can direct this question towards family members, teachers, service providers, and even the child.

Grade Levels: PreK through High School

Age Levels:

- Birth-36 months (infant/toddler)
- PreK 3-5 yrs (preschool)
- 5-6 yrs (kindergarten)
- 6-8 yrs (primary)
- 9-11 yrs (elementary)
- 11-14 yrs (middle school)
- 14-18 yrs (high school)

Tags:

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Credit:



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