**33 Service Projects to Do as a Family**

***In honor of MLK weekend, here is a list of service projects you can do as a family. Choose one to do sometime in the coming week. Keep the list handy and see how many you can do this year.***

\*Have your kids pick out a couple of outgrown outfits and then take them to their school's resource center.  Often, they use extra outfits when kids have an emergency or can send home with kids in crisis.  
  
\*Stock up on hats, gloves and socks the next time you see them on sale and drop them off at a local homeless shelter.  
  
\*Make some [homemade dog treats](http://www.millionsofmiles.com/2010/12/weve-gone-to-dogs.html) and take to a local animal shelter.  
  
\*Take a handful of quarters and a roll of tape and stick the quarters on gumball machines all over town.  Or put the quarters inside the coin return on a video game machine.  You will totally make a child's day!  
  
\*Take your outgrown coats to a local shelter.  
  
\*Go share some hugs at a nursing home.  We usually take bananas to pass out (but check with the nurses first!).  So many nursing home residents never get visitors and some kids walking around really changes the energy!  
  
\*Find a need and meet it.  We are all on social media and see need daily.  Did a friend's house burn down? Take supplies.  Someone sick? Take a meal.  
  
\*Bake cookies together and deliver to the fire station or police station.  
  
\*On garbage day in your neighborhood, have the kids pull everyone's garbage cans back to their houses.   
  
\*Purchase a [school supply pack](https://fh.org/give/catalog/10300A) for a kid who would otherwise not be able to go to school and talk about what a privilege it is to go to school!    
  
\*Call up a single mom and offer to babysit her children so she can go shopping.  Fun play date for the kids, plus a much needed break for a mom.  
  
\*Many community organizations have Christmas parties/dinners for the less fortunate.  Call one and ask if you and your children can be on table cleanup duty.  Even the youngest kids can carry plates and napkins to the trash can!  
  
\*Get out the markers, crayons and paper and make homemade cards or just have the kids color pretty pictures.  Drop them off at a rehabilitation center or hospital.  
  
\*Put together a care package for a missionary or member of the military.    
  
\*Deliver a Christmas tree to a family in need or take one to an assisted living or nursing home facility.  
  
\*We all know an area where homeless people tend to always be- maybe outside a certain building or at the end of an exit ramp.  Make a bag of food (protein bars, pop top canned food, peanut butter and crackers, dried fruit, nuts, etc.) and keep it in the car until you find a person who needs it.  
  
\*Take rawhides to the animal shelter.  Days in a shelter can be very long and little doggies could use something to help them pass the day.  Kids also love to play with animals!  
  
\*Find an area in town that is dirty and littered and clean it up!  
  
\*[Sponsor a child](http://www.compassion.com/default.htm) through Compassion International, World Vision or another child sponsorship program. Write him/her a letter.  
  
\*School supplies are often on sale around this time of the year or get put in bargain bins.  Load up on these and send them to school with your kid.  Teachers spend way too much of their own money on classroom supplies and this would free up some extra income for them.  
  
\*Shop together as a family and stock up on nonperishable food items to donate to the local foodbank.  
  
\*[Send a phone card to a soldier](http://www.angelsstore.org/collections/for-your-soldier/products/soldiers-angels-phone-card) so that they can call their family while deployed.  
  
\*Have your kids do something nice for you or for each other.  Clean a brother's room, make a sister's bed, help mom or dad wash the dishes.    
  
\*Drop baby supplies (diapers, wipes, formula) off at a crisis pregnancy center.  Most of these places also take used baby clothes and equipment to help out new moms if you've got baby items lying around your are no longer using.  
  
\*Play games with a purpose!  Send your kids to [www.freerice.com](http://www.freerice.com/) and let them play for a while.  They learn by playing trivia games and correct answers send rice to feed hungry people around the world.  
  
\*Go through the cabinets and send canned goods to a food pantry or backpack program.  
  
\*Take a giant can of ground coffee beans (and some cookies!) to a homeless shelter.  
  
\*Buy a few decks of cards or some games that can be played in bed and take them to a children's hospital.  
  
\*Give the kids a broom and put them to work sweeping the porches of the widows and the elderly in the neighborhood.    
  
\*Take crayons and coloring books to the waiting room at the hospital.  
  
\*Cover pine cones in peanut butter and bird seed and take care of the wildlife in your backyard for the winter.  
  
\*Ask your kids' teachers if any students in the class are in need of books at their house.  Have your kids pick out a few they no longer need and send them to school and let the teacher send them home in another child's backpack.  
  
\*Take chalk and drive around to your friends' houses.  Have your kids write kind words about the friend on their driveway.  It will wash off during the next rain but make their day in the meantime!