Nurturing Tomorrow’s Philanthropists: Engaging the Next Generation in Philanthropy

By Betty Pettine
Director of Philanthropic Consulting
Engaging the Next Generation in Philanthropy

Introduction

In a world where compassion and social responsibility are paramount, engaging children in philanthropy becomes a cornerstone for shaping a brighter future. From the earliest years of elementary school to the transformative high school period, involving the youngest generation in philanthropic endeavors is an investment that pays dividends in character development and societal impact. Philanthropy isn’t a one-size-fits-all approach, and if you are waiting for the best time to speak with your children, nieces or nephews, or your grandchildren, the time is now. Teaching children about philanthropic values can influence children of all ages in many different facets of life.

Top 6 Benefits:

1. **DEVELOPS EMPATHY AND COMPASSION:**

Engaging in philanthropy exposes children to diverse perspectives, challenges, and underserved needs in the community or the world, which fosters a deep understanding of the struggles and joys others experience, as well as problems to be solved. By actively participating in charitable activities, children develop empathy and cultivate a deep sense of compassion that extends beyond themselves.

2. **TEACHES IMPORTANT LIFE SKILLS:**

Philanthropy serves as a dynamic classroom for essential life skills. From collaboration and leadership to problem-solving and communication, engaging in charitable activities equips children with practical skills that are vital for personal and professional success. Philanthropy also provides a platform for learning financial concepts like return-on-investment and how much to save and/or spend vs. devote to charitable causes.

3. **CULTIVATES A SENSE OF PURPOSE:**

Involvement in philanthropy gives children a sense of purpose and meaning beyond their immediate concerns. By contributing to causes they are passionate about, youngsters discover the power of their actions in making a positive difference, instilling a lifelong commitment to purpose-driven living.

4. **ENHANCES CULTURAL AND SOCIAL AWARENESS:**

Philanthropy provides a window into the broader world, exposing children to other environments and global challenges. This firsthand experience nurtures cultural and social awareness, fostering a global perspective and a sense of responsibility toward the well-being of humanity.

4. **STRENGTHENS COMMUNITY TIES:**

At the heart of philanthropy is the strengthening of community bonds. Children actively participate in initiatives that address local needs to foster a sense of connection and responsibility to their community. A shared commitment builds the foundation for young people to understand where they can participate and make a difference within a supportive and engaged society.
6. Instills Family Values and Traditions:

Philanthropy becomes a catalyst for the creation and transmission of family values. When families engage in charitable activities together, they establish enduring traditions centered around the importance of giving back. Shared experiences reinforce familial bonds and contribute to a legacy of compassion and altruism.

Here are a few age-appropriate activities to introduce philanthropy to the younger generations.

**Elementary School-Age**

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<th>Activity</th>
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| Storytelling and Discussion    | 1. Choose age-appropriate books or stories that highlight the importance of kindness, generosity, and helping others. Look for stories with relatable characters and simple, clear messages.  
2. After reading a story together, facilitate a discussion about the themes of the story. Ask questions like “How did the characters help each other?” or “Why is it important to be kind and generous?”  
3. Connect the themes of the story to real-life examples of others’ philanthropy (including your own) and discuss how small acts of kindness can make a big difference. Encourage children to share their own ideas on how they can help others. |
| Charity Crafts or Art Project  | 1. Plan an arts and crafts project that relates to a charitable cause. For example, your child can create greeting cards, bookmarks, or artwork that can be sold or donated to raise funds for a charity of their choice.  
2. Before starting the project, explain the purpose behind it and share information about the chosen charity – invite children to share their own ideas beforehand! Then discuss the impact their creations will have on others.  
3. Allow your child to express their creativity while reinforcing the idea that their art can be a tool for positive change. A hands-on approach helps them understand the tangible results of their efforts. |
| Community Project Exploration  | 1. Start by discussing the concept of helping others and making a positive impact on the community.  
2. Brainstorm ideas for a kid-friendly community project that your child can participate in. This could be something like a food drive, a clothing donation, or a school supplies collection.  
3. Once a project is chosen, involve your child in planning and organizing the logistics. Allow them to take on different roles, such as creating posters, contacting local businesses with whom they identify for support, or organizing a collection event. |
### Middle School-Age

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| Service-Learning Project              | 1. Often, your child’s school requires a service-learning project that combines classroom learning with community service. Offer to assist them in choosing a project that addresses a local or global issue, such as environmental conservation, gender inequality, or racial injustice.  
  2. Ask them to better explain their project by breaking down the project into different phases, including research, planning, and implementation.  
  3. Friends are important to them at this age – offer to assist them and their friends in exploring the root causes of the issue, propose solutions, and ways to actively contribute to making a positive impact. This process helps children to set appropriate project goals and plans.  
  4. Incorporate reflection sessions throughout the project to help your child connect their actions to the broader concept of philanthropy. Discuss the challenges faced, the lessons learned, and the overall impact of their service. |
| Interview Local Philanthropists within Your Network | 1. Arrange for your middle school student to conduct interviews with local philanthropists, community leaders, or volunteers who are actively involved in charitable work.  
  2. In advance, your child can prepare thoughtful questions about the motivations behind others’ philanthropy, the challenges they face, and the impact of their efforts on the community.  
  3. After their interviews, have a conversation with your child – allowing them to share their insights and reflect on their experience. Discuss common themes, inspiring stories, and the many and varied ways individuals can contribute to making a difference. |

### High School-Age/Young Adults

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| Social Impact Research Project        | 1. Ask your child about a social issue or cause they are passionate about, such as environmental sustainability, social justice, and/or food and housing insecurity.  
  2. Discuss how they might participate in the family's philanthropic budget planning for the year or allow them to make a recommendation to the family on how best to deploy the family's resources for the greatest impact on their preferred cause. They can do this by checking with reputable sources, through interviews, and via their own firsthand accounts.  
  3. Schedule time to follow-up and check-in (6-12 months) and give your child the audience and attention needed to inform the family the impact of the gift they facilitated. |
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<td>Community Volunteer and Reflection Program</td>
<td>1. Ask your high school child about how and where they would like to spend their volunteer time to make the greatest impact on the local community.</td>
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<td>2. Encourage the use of reliable sources such as community foundations, “trusted” social media platforms, interviews with like-minded individuals in their network, and first-hand accounts they’ve experienced based on prior volunteer experience. This will help them to determine what type of impact they would like to make on their selected community.</td>
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<td>3. Ask them to share their thoughts and ideas on where and how they will spend their time in the next 6-9 months to achieve their desired philanthropic impact.</td>
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<td>4. Offer to avail your time, “ties” (network) and talent (personal and professional experiences) in support of their ideas with specific activities and measurable outcomes.</td>
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In conclusion, engaging the next generation in philanthropy is a powerful investment in a future where compassion, responsibility, and a commitment to positive change are intrinsic values. By fostering empathy, teaching vital life skills, cultivating a sense of purpose, enhancing awareness, and strengthening community ties, we empower our youth to become active contributors to a better world. As always, if you have any questions, please reach out to your Callan Family Office relationship manager to learn how we can be helpful in taking the next step with the rising generation.

For more information visit us at:
www.callanfo.com