



Community Service: Parents Hands On or Hands Off? - How to Empower your Ripple Kid -

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I don't know about you, but when my kids started to get involved in community service, I found myself taking over, living vicariously through them as "event coordinator extraordinaire." I took over the process "strongly" suggesting better ways to be effective, even drawing the poster board signs myself and using expensive art supplies and tools. What fun I had and what a great project I created!

And what lesson did my kids learn?

When our kids are involved in community service, they are not only taking steps to improve the quality of someone else's life, but using cognitive skills to problem solve and create ways to affect change in the world, a very noble and valuable life skill.

I do believe parental involvement is essential. However, remember this is your child's project. The skills and tools you have acquired along the way should be shared with your child. Mentor them through the process. Until "Community Service Project Development" is a course in school, you will be their best teacher.

You can show them by example but encourage them to be in charge of the process. Guide them without taking the reins and help them to see how they are the effective citizens of their community.