



## — Giving Back to the Community —

September is the perfect month to find a way to give back to your community as a family. Whether your children are returning to in-person school or staying online, every person needs a purpose that is greater than themselves. Even a small child can understand the plight of a needy person or creature.

As a family, sit down and discuss what elicits compassion in each person. If you have different points of focus, consider volunteering for one event per charity. Perhaps you will find that different charities have needs at specific times of the year and you can plan out your upcoming school year accordingly. Don't stress about making this a weekly event but plan according to your schedule.

If your family is concerned about hunger, plan a neighborhood food pantry drive. It is easy to print up flyers and pick up unwanted pantry items from the neighbor's porch. Pair with a local food bank or shelter to see if they have a list of specific needs. You can also volunteer with a food pantry to sort and hand out food, work with Meals on Wheels to help the elderly or homebound, make LovePacs to help hungry school kids be fed over the weekends and holidays, or think global and work with an organization like Rise Against Hunger. With many hands, generosity overflows!

Do you just love furry creatures and other animals? Your family can help gather items for your local city shelter or non-profit animal rescue. SPCA and other animal rescues often have

opportunities for children to help with their animals as long as they have parental supervision. They may be allowed to pet cats and dogs to help with their socialization, walk dogs, read to the animals or color adoption signs.

If you have a child who is compassionate towards other children, your family can help make no-sew blankets, learn to sew, crochet, or knit blankets, hats, scarves, etc. New toys, clothing and even luggage can be purchases for children-based charities as well. Children in need can be homeless, in foster care, in the hospital, grieving a loss of a loved one, or needing reassurance after a car wreck or home fire. The options are endless!

Children who love to write can write to deployed military members, find a senior adult pen-pal at an assisted living home, or write to their local government to ask for change on the behalf of a marginalized group. Writing to others via paper letters or email can hone important skills for future jobs. What a great way to encourage your child to express themselves!

If all of these options are just too much to add to your life, consider a quarterly clean up in your neighborhood, local park, or even at your child's school. Removing debris makes the world a better place and encourages children to be aware of how much litter can make an area look awful and unkempt. Giving back to others creates compassion and gratitude not only in our children but also in each one of us.

## News & Events

### • North Texas Giving Day

Thursday, September 17 with early giving open from September 1-16. Join the Communities Foundation of Texas for an 18-hour giving extravaganza to benefit more than 2,500 local nonprofits and make a difference here at home. For more information visit [www.northtexasgivingday.org/](http://www.northtexasgivingday.org/)

### • Community Wednesdays at Texas Discovery Gardens at Fair Park

September 2 - December 30  
Every Wednesday at Texas Discovery Gardens is pay-what-you-wish admission, which means donations are greatly appreciated on Wednesdays but not necessary. You can visit the 7.5 acres of public gardens, two-story Butterfly House, and Snakes of Texas House for free. For more info visit <https://txdg.org/info>

### • Enjoy a Drive-In Movie Around Austin or Dallas!

Enjoy a night out with the kids while keeping a safe social distance from others at a family-friendly drive-in movie! Click on the links below to find a list of drive-in theatres in the area that are currently open with precautionary safety measures in place.

Austin area

<https://do512family.com/drive-in-movie-theaters-austin/>

Dallas area

[www.dmagazine.com/arts-entertainment/2020/07/where-to-see-a-drive-in-movie-in-dallas/](http://www.dmagazine.com/arts-entertainment/2020/07/where-to-see-a-drive-in-movie-in-dallas/)

## Resources

### • **VIVA Pediatrics Resources**

In an effort to help our families, we constantly strive to provide them with relevant and helpful resources and information. Visit our resources page online at: [www.vivaped.com/resources](http://www.vivaped.com/resources)

For current events visit us on Facebook. [www.facebook.com/VIVAPeds](http://www.facebook.com/VIVAPeds)

### • **Care Starter App**

The Connections App is a complete resource guide for families of kids, teens and adults with special needs. Their goal is to help you find providers, organizations and other resources in your community to help you along your path of care. Download the CareStarter App now! [www.carestarter.co/connectionsapp](http://www.carestarter.co/connectionsapp)



### • **The Parker Lee Project**

The Parker Lee Project is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping families of children with medical needs obtain the necessary supplies & equipment, education, and support they need. While most supplies are covered by insurance, some are not, or not enough supplies are provided. If you have a need for medical supplies or have supplies to donate, please visit their website at [www.theparkerleeproject.org](http://www.theparkerleeproject.org)

### • **Texas Star Kids**

The Texas' Star Kids mandate threatens the lives of our weakest and most vulnerable little citizens. Join us in standing up for those who have no voice. Click this link to sign up: [www.facebook.com/ProtectTXFragileKids](http://www.facebook.com/ProtectTXFragileKids)  
For more info visit: [www.protecttxfragilekids.org](http://www.protecttxfragilekids.org)

### • **Thrive Magazine**

Need Resources for your child with special needs? Thrive Magazine shares resources and stories of other families in the DFW area who are living and thriving with special needs. [www.dfwchild.com/thrive/directory](http://www.dfwchild.com/thrive/directory)

### • **Recognize a VIVA Star**

Viva Pediatrics has an Employee Rewards and Recognition Program to thank and recognize employees that go "above and beyond". Both employees and patient families are welcome to recognize a VIVA employee! Call one of our offices and let us know if a VIVA employee has gone above and beyond!



## Get Healthy with Giggles

### Celebrate Family Health & Fitness Day

Mark your calendars! National Family Health & Fitness Day takes place Sept. 26th. This event is perfect for promoting family involvement in physical activity with various exercises and incorporating a healthy diet. When families strive to be healthy together, the success rate increases. Families support each other and challenge each other to make better healthy choices. When the experience is a positive one, family relationships can also improve and everybody develops new lifelong skills to lead a healthier lifestyle.

This particular day is important to celebrate because children are perceptive and will likely follow the kind of healthy choices that their parents make on a daily basis. To better help the next generation, we have to first take care of ourselves and set good examples for others. It may seem daunting to change your normal routine, but by making small changes in your family's daily lifestyle you will begin to take notice of your family's overall energy and health.

You and your family can celebrate Family Health & Fitness Day together by going on a walk, playing outside with your pets or swimming in a pool. Your family can also reduce the amount of unhealthy snacks in the kitchen and replace them with fruits and vegetables. Cooking together can also be a great opportunity for your family to learn portion sizes and spend some time together making a family meal. Begin by cooking at least one meal a week together and work up to cooking most days out of the week.

- Jordyn Ruiz

## Food for Thought



### Snickerdoodle Cake Mix Cookies

#### Ingredients

- 1 package white cake mix
- 1 tablespoon cinnamon
- 1/3 cup oil
- 2 eggs
- cinnamon sugar

#### Directions

- Combine cake mix, cinnamon, oil, and eggs in a mixing bowl.

- Using an ice cream scoop or your hand, form golf ball-sized balls of cookie dough and transfer to a bowl of cinnamon sugar.

- Cover dough ball in cinnamon sugar and transfer to a parchment paper-lined baking sheet.

- Bake at 350°F for 10-12 minutes.

Makes 1 dozen cookies

*Enjoy!*

What did zero say to eight?



Nice Belt!



Just for Giggles!