



POWERFUL WORDS

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

DEAR DR. ROBYN

Young students: “I give to others!”

Older students/teens/adults: Giving of one’s time, treasures & talents without expecting anything in return.

Dear Dr. Robyn,

Given that we are dealing with the coronavirus, and people in many areas of the world are taking everything they can off shelves and doing what they can to take care of themselves, I was wondering if there are some ways we can be thinking of giving to others. What can we do?

Mara J, New York, New York

Dear Mara,

Thank you for your beautiful question as it shows incredible empathy and generosity. When people are dealing with a health crisis, it can be easy to zero in on our own family rather than outward to others in need. However, a health crisis can be catastrophic for some and simply inconvenient for others.

As I mentioned in my most recent Medium article entitled; “7 Scripts to Talk to Kids about the Coronavirus,” there was a call out that stated; “Many people have heard the directive; ‘look for the helpers.’ And while this is true, many children gain a sense of calm and pride when they become the helpers themselves.” When children contribute to a cause, it makes them feel less anxious and more productive.

(1) **Donate food:** Ask the children to box up some goods to take

over to the food pantry. Articles state that as the coronavirus pandemic grows, food banks are facing large drops in donations (as partner churches & schools who host distributions are closing temporarily).

(2) **Volunteer:** There are also massive drops in volunteers as people are being directed to sequester themselves at home. But as Greater Lansing Food Bank director of operations, Kim Harkness said, “Our families still need help. It doesn’t matter what day of the year, what situation is still going on, we still have families in need and we need to be here for them.”

(3) **Help closer to home:** Do you have elderly or unwell people living on your street or in your community who need help? Many can’t run out to stores, wait on hour-long lines or expose themselves to potentially ill men and women. Your children can

sort the items and bag them up so you can drop them off. Even checking in on elderly friends nearby is a great service.

(4) **Give to the hospital:** As more sick people are admitted, find out from child life if specific items are needed. If not, you can at least give (or send cards) to the doctors and nurses who are working around the clock!

Here’s to your success!

