

## Creative Gift Certificates

December 17, 2009



You don't have to be rich, famous, or even a grown-up to give memorable and much-appreciated gifts to those you care about. This holiday season you and your kids can talk about how gift giving is about more than how much a person spends. You can help your kids understand that there are many ways to give, but that it is important for each of us to find the way that suits us — and the recipient — best.

Some will offer their time, some will offer their talent, and some will share new treasures.

As we come into the home stretch this holiday season, some of the best items on your kid's gift-giving list just might be gifts of themselves.

There are fun and simple ways to help your kids decide what and how to offer of their precious time and talents as part of their gift giving this year. With a little help from you, these personal offerings can be presented and delivered as creative certificates and may just be the most memorable part of the season.



### When To Do

Quiet evening or weekend time

### What To Do

Sit down with your kids and their gift-giving lists. Who do they need to think up a present for? Who would especially enjoy a gift of their time or talent? Start by picking a single person, and repeat these three easy steps for as many recipients as your kids want to gift in this way.

1. Talk about the person. Share what you both know about the person, including chores she or he needs to do regularly as well as hobbies and interests.
2. Ask your kid, "Is there something you could do to help [name], or something [name] would love to do with you?" Help your kids think of good ideas.
3. Assemble paper, markers, stickers, and such. Create fun personalized "gift certificates" that name what the gift will be. Make sure they're lovingly signed and placed in decorated envelopes or wrapped in colorful paper.

### How about these ideas?

1. Giving Mom an hour of peace and quiet
2. Going to bed without being asked
3. Singing six songs, on request
4. Giving Dad a ten-minute backrub
5. Water Aunt [name] plants while she is on vacation next summer
6. Company on a walk around the neighborhood
7. Helping Grandma make cookies for holiday dinner
8. Telling a bedtime story to a younger sibling
9. Making breakfast and cleaning up for Mom
10. Telling three new jokes or riddles for Grandpa

### What You Will Need

- Paper, craft paper
- Pens
- Markers
- Stickers
- Glue
- Scissors
- Tape
- Old magazines and newspapers

### Talk About It

What did your kids think of giving their time or talent to someone instead of buying them a gift? Did they feel as good about it as they do about giving a purchased gift? Was it even more satisfying, or less satisfying? How did it make them feel to make the coupons? What did they think was the most fun?