

A Guide For Teaching Your Children About Orphans

As mothers, we want to teach our children compassion for the less fortunate. How can we help our children understand the plight of others who do not enjoy the luxuries we take for granted like a warm home, plenty of food and a family to care for us?

How about giving your children and family a portion of the “real life” experiences in the daily life of an Orphan?

We encourage you to utilize the following suggestions to broaden your family’s understanding of the life of an orphan:

- Have your family go outside and do chores such as picking up sticks, trash, leaves without shoes on to teach your family what it is like to go about daily chores without the comfort of shoes. Then organize a shoe drive to collect shoes for those without. You can even help deliver the shoes on a mission trip with [Shoes for Orphans Souls](http://www.shoesfororphansouls.org/). (<http://www.shoesfororphansouls.org/>)
- To demonstrate how a warm home and comfortable beds are a luxury, turn off the furnace for a day, maybe even crack the windows. As you prepare for bed instead of tucking your children into their warm comfortable beds, request that they sleep on the floor without a pillow or blanket to see what a night’s sleep is like for many other children in the world. Then determine what you they would want to go without for a while and use those monies to purchase and donate blankets and pillows to a local shelter.
- For dinner, serve everyone one small bowl of rice and/or beans and remind your family that this is the only meal many children receive for the entire day. In another bowl in the center of the table put the cash that you would have spent on a day’s worth of groceries. Donate the money to a local food pantry.
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- Have an entire day where no electricity or running water is used in your home and explain that in many parts of the world there is no electricity and children walk for hours to get water for their family. You could even take a small walk carrying jugs, then fill them with your hose and take the same walk. Spend time in prayer thanking God for the many comforts of home we take for granted and ask Him to provide comfort for the orphans around the world.

If you are looking for a resource that you can use with your family to go deeper, we encourage you to consider *God’s Hope for the Orphan ... and Me!* This interactive Bible study introduces children to God’s heart for the fatherless and how they can make a difference. It also includes the game *Spare It, Share It*. More information and the study kit is available from [Hope for Orphans](http://www.hopefororphans.org/). (<http://www.hopefororphans.org/Display.asp?Page=godsheartfortheorphanandme>)

Listed below are some other ideas from [Hope For Orphans Kids](http://www.hopefororphans.org/Display.asp?Page=8ways1):
(<http://www.hopefororphans.org/Display.asp?Page=8ways1>)

- Tape a photo of a [child waiting for a forever family](http://www.adoptuskids.org/) (<http://www.adoptuskids.org/>) to the bathroom mirror or keep at the table to pray for that child daily. Pray daily for a local foster child, the foster family, birth family and caseworker.
- Tell everyone you know about how much God loves orphans and how He wants His followers to love them, too.
- [Sponsor a child](http://visiontrust.org/) (<http://visiontrust.org/>) in need or call your local Department of Human Services and ask if your child can be a pen-pal or have a play date with a foster child to develop a relationship with them.
- Mow the lawn, do some housecleaning or other chores to help busy foster parents.
- Give some of your allowance to help an adoptive or foster family buy the things they need to adopt or foster a child.
- When school supply, Christmas or birthday shopping have your child pick out extra supplies or gifts to donate to your local DHS office for foster kids.
- Spend a day volunteering in a soup kitchen, sorting clothes for a care closet, or packing health kits for the homeless.

God's word says: "*Religion that [God](#) our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.*" *James 1:27*
(<http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James%201:27&version=NIV>)

Therefore, the plight of the orphan is worth taking the time to teach to your children. If this guide has blessed your family we would enjoy hearing from you. Please share with us from your experiences.

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