

It feels so GOOD to learn to give! Thanks for teaching me and helping my brain

Topic:

Reward areas of the brain are activated when we give to others. Research has demonstrated when giving, the brain releases dopamine which is responsible for the feelings of euphoria. Isn't euphoria a wonderful word?

Additionally, it has been shown that the hormone oxytocin was also released in study participants as a result of giving. This hormone increases levels of trust and cooperation. Isn't it wonderful to realize that the pleasure areas of the brain respond to not only what is good for ourselves but also to what is good for other people?



Tips to Try:

One For You

Give your child the opportunity to have an item and give an item to someone else. For example: Say, "Here is a apple for you. Can you give the other apple to (name of another child)?"

Important Note: Toddlers are not at a stage of development where they can be expected to share. This is because he brain isn't ready to completely understand sharing at very young ages. As children get to the pre-school age giving something to someone when they have the same thing will be the best way to practice.

Doing Nice Things Makes "Cents"

Create a "giving jar" and a supply of pennies (or other coins) on the side. Every time someone in the family does something nice or thoughtful for someone else, a coin can be added to the jar. At the end of the month use the money to donate to a cause your family chooses to support.

Write or Draw for Someone

Set time aside regularly (once a week or once a month) to have your child write a letter or draw a picture to send to someone. This could be sent to a relative or friend, someone that is sick or hospitalized, a deployed military person, a firefighter, a teacher, etc.

Celebration Give Away

At each holiday or birthday, give the child an extra gift to give away. Your child's brain reward center will benefit most when involved in deciding who should receive the gift.

