

# Health Enews

## 10 Ways You Can Help Others This Christmas

“What if Christmas,” he thought, “doesn’t come from a store...what if Christmas, perhaps, means a bit more?” - The Grinch (Dr. Suess). Why has *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* been a popular story since 1957? Because of its theme of love and generosity. Jesus is the ultimate example of love and generosity and if the Grinch can realize that Christmas is more than things, then we certainly can too.

Here are 10 ways you can be someone’s ray of hope and good cheer this Christmas and beyond.

- 1. Visit those who are lonely.** Some of the best gifts aren’t “things.” A visit to someone who lives alone may be just what they need. Take your family caroling to an assisted living facility. Visit a neighbor or family member that lives alone.
- 2. Spontaneous acts of kindness.** Some of the best acts of kindness aren’t planned. You can spontaneously purchase the coffee or lunch of the person behind you in a drive-thru line. Believe me, it will make someone’s day and put a smile on their face. Giving doesn’t need to be devised; every moment that you are out in the world is a chance to help.
- 3. Be clever.** Give anonymously whenever possible, because the reward is making someone feel good...not getting the credit for it. Some things to try include: adopt a friend at school or a neighbor to serve or give gifts to anonymously; shovel a neighbors driveway; pay for a strangers dinner at a restaurant; leave a kind note or a goodie basket at someone’s door.
- 4. Adopt a family.** It’s fun to adopt a family at Christmas time and deliver presents for them to open on Christmas Day, but what if you kept this same family in your thoughts year round? Consider sporadically taking the adopted family a meal or groceries.
- 5. Adopt individuals to help through your local schools.** Principals, teachers, and counselors are aware of students that could use a little assistance. Adopt a student in your local school that you and your family could be Secret Santa to.
- 6. Remember those that regularly serve you.** Your mail person, garbage man, librarian, bus driver....a lot of times we forget the people who are serving us every day. Do something to show them that you recognize and appreciate all their hard work.



7. **Remember our Veterans.** Don't forget about the Veterans and families of Veterans that may be alone for the holidays. A care package would be a great way to say thank-you for their service.
8. **Helping the homeless.** Make it a family tradition to serve at a soup kitchen or fill backpacks with toiletries, clothing and food for the homeless. These acts of kindness will be more meaningful if you get to meet those you are helping.
9. **Give up something in order to give.** Discuss with your adult family members instead of gifting each other, pick a charity (a homeless shelter, food pantry) and buy items to donate to them. Then, go together to donate the items. It will truly get you in the holiday spirit and makes you remember what's important.
10. **Take action.** Don't let excuses thwart you from helping others. When in doubt, if it will help another person and you feel safe doing so, just do it!

This Christmas season, it is important to ponder that ***“Christmas is not about the worth and goodness of humanity, but the mind-blowing mercy of God.” - David Mathis.*** Christmas is about God's mercy. Mercy is the compassion or forgiveness shown toward someone whom it is within one's power to punish or harm. God sending His Son is the most merciful act mankind has ever seen, with the exception of His other great mercy in His very death on the cross. Remembering God's mercy, no matter if we have a lot to celebrate this year or not, will help us get into the Christmas spirit.

