

PARENTING TIPS

Servant for the Day

Children often compete with each other in order to be first or best. This tendency on the part of children comes from selfishness, a major roadblock to sibling harmony. The solution is to learn how to be a servant, but how do you convince a five-year-old or a twelve-year-old that being a servant is a valuable thing?

As parents we have to look for positive ways to frame the maturity issues that we know are best, but seem unreasonable to our children. In this case, you might try having a "Servant for the Day." This child not only sets the table and takes out the trash but also gets some extra "Mommy time," helps with dinner, and sits next to Dad during story time. Throughout the course of the day, Mom has an opportunity to talk about more subtle aspects of servant hood that involve how children talk, listen, and even think.

Take time to praise demonstrations of servant hood. One child may not get the first turn or the biggest piece, but he gets the praise of Mom for being the mature one. That's a far more valuable reward.

Teaching children to be servants will promote harmony in your family. Becoming a servant will help children deal with the continual desire to build themselves up while putting others down. Learning servant hood is a way to honor others in the family and it brings honor back as well.

Who demonstrated servant hood recently in your family? How can you point that out and encourage it today?

For more practical ideas on developing honor in your family consider the book [Say Goodbye to Whining, Complaining, and Bad Attitudes, in You and Your Kids](#) by Dr. Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller, RN, BSN