



Family Sponsorship Ideas

Here are a few ideas to help enhance your sponsorship experience as you and your family cultivate a caring, loving relationship with your sponsored child.

- ***Post your sponsored child's photo on your refrigerator door.***

This acts as a visual reminder that most children living in our world today do not have the easy access to delicious and plentiful food as we do. Talk to your children about this and encourage them to pray for your sponsored child's health and that God will provide for his or her daily needs. Discuss concepts of God's goodness and provision and why we should never take His blessings for granted.

- ***Encourage your children to contribute financially to sponsorship.***

Set up a family savings bank in a prominent place in your house. Encourage all family members to deposit change into the bank for sponsorship payment or for a special gift for your sponsored child.

- ***Write meaningful letters to your sponsored child.***

Encourage each family member to write a paragraph in each letter. Be sure to write at least three times a year. Write your child as often as you like. Answer all questions that your sponsored child asks. Talk about faith lessons that you are learning; encourage your sponsored child by writing about how God is working in your life and how you see Him working in his or her life. Share prayer concerns with your child and be diligent to ask about his or her prayer needs.

- ***Help your child understand what sponsorship provides.***

Teach your children about the needs of children in developing countries to help them gain an understanding of the hardship and challenges children live with around the world. Teach them to pray for the needs of children everywhere.

- ***Teach your child through your letters.***

Your sponsored child and your own children can learn vital lessons together if you use your letters to teach your sponsored child about a variety of subjects. Short lessons on geography, animals, health, nutrition, history or places can open up a whole new world that your child may not be exposed to otherwise. Include coloring pages when possible to help reinforce the lessons you are sharing.

- ***Provide fun and educational inserts in letters.***

Brainstorm with your own children about ideas to make each letter special. For example, include stickers of insects with a short description of the insects' names and where they can be found. Include postcards of famous landmarks in the United States and briefly describe their history. Provide a paper doll and include a different outfit in each letter — this is especially fun if you can find a paper doll that comes with costumes from various cultures. You can then provide facts about that culture in the letter.

- ***Encourage your children to learn about the country where your sponsored child lives and compare and contrast it to life in this country.***

Let your children research your sponsored child's country or culture on the Internet or in an encyclopedia. Then, each time you write a letter to your sponsored child, allow your children to share something they learned in the letter.

- ***Count your blessings at bedtime.***

Before or after bedtime prayers, lead your children in counting their blessings. Take time to help them see all of the ways God's blessings are experienced throughout the day. When this is done in a family where the children learn to think about those less fortunate, the children will soon begin to realize that your sponsored child doesn't experience the same blessings as they do. Use this as a lead-in to pray for your sponsored child's needs. Help your children see the blessings that your sponsored child may experience so they realize that God is caring for and loving your sponsored child, too!

- ***Use sponsorship as an ongoing tool to teach your children about poverty.***

Talk to your children about all of the special things they experience on a regular basis that your sponsored child does not. For example, eating out in restaurants, having refrigerated food, heating food in a microwave, getting clean water from the tap, taking a warm bath, having more than one pair of shoes (or having a pair of shoes at all!), having a variety of store-bought toys, etc. Help them to learn not to be wasteful and to appreciate the conveniences we so often take for granted.