

Teach Your Kids to Give Back to the Community

National Fourth of July Stand Day

SUMMER IS *FINALLY* here! If you are like me, you were so happy to pack up all the snow boots, coats and winter gear. Now it's easy breezy summertime! Flip flops, sprinkler parks and ice cream cones!

As a kid, summer days seemed endless – filled with hours of running through the sprinkler and riding my bike until dusk. Long, hot days filled with special memories like slip-n-slide in the backyard and purple popsicles dripping down my chin.

I still do all these things each summer with my kids. I often get a glimpse into being a kid again and the sense of freedom during the summer months by watching the pure delight on my children's faces.

Last summer I decided to take one of our favorite summer traditions and make it a bit more meaningful. After all, I thought to myself, they are getting older and I wanted to seize the opportunity to teach them something I feel deeply passionate about – helping others.

I have always preached to my kiddos the importance of giving back, but last summer I realized that I really needed to show them how to do it. Talking about it was no longer enough. Rather, I needed to help them connect the dots and show them the difference *they* had the power to make in our own community.

One of my favorite sayings that I love and have on a plaque at home is by Ghandi. He so profoundly stated, “Be the change you want to see in the world.” Well, it was time to stop saying it and actually help my kids put this motto into action.

We started by planning our usual Fourth of July Stand that has become a favorite summer tradition for our family. Typically, my kids bake cookies, brownies, make lemonade, and even sell snow cones with red, white and blue flavoring. In the past, they gear up all week making and organizing their items and set up shop at the end of our street on July 3 in celebration of the Fourth of July weekend. Last year, however, we sat down as a family and decided to make the stand bigger and better and focused on donating 100 percent of the proceeds to a charity in our community.

Much to my surprise, I did not have to twist any of their arms to agree to give their hard earned proceeds away. Instead, they decided to raise money from the Fourth of July Stand to benefit our local Humane Society. Before I could blink, all three of my kids were working together (a rare moment, I must admit) to create flyers, posters and decorations for their charity stand. They recruited neighbor kids, friends, and family members to help with it. They spent days baking, planning and talking about how many animals they wanted to help and how much money they wanted to earn to make a difference.

To be honest, it took on a life of its own and it was a wonderful thing, as a mom, to watch it unfold with my kids. Last year, our little stand raised over \$400 dollars in a two hour period. The kids sold out of everything and couldn't believe that customers were paying \$10 for a cookie. They accepted donations of any amount for all their items. People gave generously as they shared that they were raising money to help the local Humane Society.

With summer now here, my kids have already started to plan our Fourth of July Stand for this year. I have been so moved by their motivation that it has inspired me to not only share the idea with you, but to create a special day for moms and kids to participate in making a difference in the community.



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ONE DAY, ONE STAND, ONE BIG DIFFERENCE!

So with that, I invite you and your kids to participate in this year's National Fourth of July Stand Day. It is easy and a wonderful way to teach your kids to work together to help others and make a difference in your community.

All you have to do is:

Save the Date

July 3! The official date for the National Fourth of July Stand Day!

Choose a Charity

Talk and research together as a family about what charity in your community you want to help. It could be in honor or memory of a loved one who fought a particular disease, a homeless shelter, or a church, to name a few examples. Picking a cause that your kids want to help really brings meaning and life to your stand. You can even contact the charity and take a tour beforehand to show your kids how their efforts will truly make a difference to others.

Make a Plan

Decide what you want to sell. Baked goods, snow cones, popsicles, lemonade, American flags, Fourth of July hats, beads and even candy.

Invite Others

Invite your neighbors, friends and families to help and participate.

Create Your Stand

Decorate a card table with Fourth of July decorations or tape mini flags to a wagon. Whatever it is, have your kids show their American spirit by creating and decorating their stand.

Get the Word Out

Make flyers and posters for your stand to let others know your Fourth of July Stand is helping others in the community.

I hope you take me up on the invitation to participate in this year's first annual National Fourth of July Stand Day. Together, as moms, we can teach our children on the importance of helping others.

In one day, one stand can make one big difference!
For more details on Mommy Magic's National Fourth of July Stand Day visit www.Mommy-Magic.com.