



# LIGHT 'em UP!

100 Ways To Light Up Your Community With Kindness

1. Stage an early morning chalk attack. Pick a street - yours or another! - and write a "good morning" or "have a great day" message on every driveway.
2. Find someone that is homeless and deliver them a warm blanket.
3. Visit an inner city playground and bring a surprise picnic lunch for as many kids as you can. Think coolers of drinks, sandwiches and Christmas cookies for all.
4. Single moms rule. Find one and lighten her load.
5. Stand outside your child's classroom and give each child a single flower as they walk in. Then, as the children enter the classroom, have them hand the flower to their teacher. By the time class begins, he or she will have a vase full of flowers!
6. Take the Candy Cane Challenge! See how many candy canes your family can distribute in your community during the month of December. Each sweet treat must be accompanied by a genuine smile, a thoughtful note or audible kind wish from one child in your family.
7. Take a moment to serve those who serve for a living. Drop off gift cards or coffee for the leaders of your favorite local ministries.
8. Call someone you love just to listen and catch up.
9. Mail an actual handwritten letter. Or two.
10. Host a baking party for moms and kids and encourage everyone to use their goodies to "light up" the season for others once they depart.
11. Give the gift of rest. Watch the kids for your most sleep-deprived friend.
12. While you're shopping for your family at a big retailer (during checkout chat time with the cashier), ask them if they are still shopping for their family or if they are finished. Surprise them big time by adding a fun gift card to the order especially for them.
13. Set up a free gift wrapping stand in the neighborhood. Think specifically of who could use it and pass out invitations.
14. Show up at your local church with a group of kids to sing carols. Or, deliver a special treat to thank the staff. Ask if even they'd let you sneak kind notes all over the pastor's office!
15. Make homemade yard signs or flags and place encouraging notes in friends' or neighbors' yards. Think superlatives like "best yard", "sweet family" or "best Halloween candy".
16. Find a parking attendant in a cold garage and take him or her a hot cup of coffee and a fun puzzle book or magazine.
17. Pick a favorite retailer or restaurant. Have your kids write "why I love [blank]" and deliver the note up to the manager.
18. Buy ten \$5 Bibles at the bookstore and pray to find ten families that need one.
19. Print a happy photo of your children. Write "thank you for how you serve our family" on the back. Take copies all around town to those we never thank but should.
20. Try to find out when your child's FRIEND has a game or performance coming up. Surprise him or her by attending and bringing a poster or other fun ways to cheer them on.





22. Set up a free hot cocoa stand and take donations for your favorite charity.

23. Think of someone you hesitate to thank or celebrate (especially a strained or hard relationship) and do it anyway.

24. Have the kids spend time writing ten reasons why they love EACH grandparent. If you live close enough, sneak over and serve them in some way.

25. Send a text message to 20 people with silly face and a funny message to make them smile.

26. Sneak attack Daddy's office and/or car, armed with special notes or a sweet treat. Make sure the people he works with know that he's the best dad in the world.

27. Walk someone else's dog.

28. Tell one tired mom that she is enough just as she is. That she's great at what she does.

29. Drive through a bank teller just to give THEM a treat through the vacuum system.

30. Think of those without (or living far away from) little ones in their family and invite them to join some of the season's sweet moments with yours.

31. See if the director of a local preschool will let you in early to put a note of thanks or a treat to welcome teachers as they enter door. Perhaps a prayer card or note of encouragement.

32. Hide encouraging and uplifting notes all over a playground with \$1 bills for children to find.

33. Pack a cooler of lunches and look around your city for those who could use it that day. There are so many hungry people within miles of our daily routines!

34. Have your children write notes of thanks for police officers and take by the station with something yummy to eat. Or, bring gift cards for them if your budget allows.

35. Host a Christmas Party for elderly neighbors. (Or take the party to them if they can't travel!) Have them read books with the kids and sing a few Christmas songs. Have the party as little or big as you'd like. Consider inviting other neighbors or young families to join!

36. Visit with elderly neighbors in November and ask how you can help make their Christmas special. What was their favorite tradition? See if you can make it happen in a small way. Could you and your children help decorate their home? Send out their Christmas cards? Wrap gifts?

37. Host a birthday party for Jesus as a playdate for the neighborhood. Ask all of the kids what they can give to Jesus this year (kindness to brother or sister, obeying mommy and daddy, respecting my teachers, loving others, a happy heart, gratitude, etc.). Have them wrap their idea in a box and open with friends.

38. Thank your local firemen (and women!) with a heartfelt note and Christmas treat.

39. Take your smiling, healthy kids and hug some nurses and/or doctors in your community. Call the hospital ahead of time and ask if you can bring a treat for the staff and the children who are there. Make a poster to leave with the treat at the nurse's station.

40. If you are able, be an angel to one struggling family. Sneak a HUGE gift card into their mailbox to answer prayers for Christmas needs. Give what you can.

41. Have your kids help clean up an elderly neighbor's yard.

42. Pay the toll for the car behind you.

43. Pay off someone's layaway at a local store.

44. Leave an encouraging note in a friend's driveway using sidewalk chalk.

45. Hide sweet notes in Daddy's brief case or his car.

46. Kidnap another mom's minivan and have your family take the time to wash, clean out, and organize it. You know she'll smile!

47. Babysit for a friend so she can run errands or finish her holiday shopping.

48. Tape a big sign to the top of your trash can with a little treat for your garbage collector. Anything from candy to gift cards would be a great surprise for them!

49. Tape a note and \$1 to a vending or soda machine. The next person along will be delighted!

50. Tuck money into the toy section of any store with a little note for one happy boy or girl!



51. Have your child write a note to a friend (or friends!) telling them why they are special.
52. Take coffee to someone that works outside in the cold. Or, if you're in a warmer climate, take them some Gatorade!
53. Buy umbrellas from the dollar store and wait for a rainy day. Those who need them will appear!
54. Think of friends you know that own their own businesses. Invite them to LIGHT 'EM UP and donate goods or services that your kids can help deliver to those in need.
55. Buy a bouquet of flowers and have your children give them away one at a time as you are prompted. Think of the grocery store employees behind the scenes, etc.
56. Go thank a librarian and hide some money in the books while you are there.
57. Think of unique ways to send love to teachers of every age (preschool, day care, after school care, etc.). Maybe with a flower, treat or special note from your child.
58. When you make dinner for your family one night, make double. Then share that extra meal with another family that could use the help.
59. Pass out donuts to your neighbors as they leave for work in the morning.
60. When checking out at the grocery store, ask your cashier what his or her favorite candy is. Buy one for them!
61. Find an assisted living home and see how you can spread holiday cheer with your little ones.
62. Think of all the service people that might help maintain or visit your home (delivery person, lawn service, etc.). Have some treats and a handmade card ready just for them.
63. Pick up and put away all of the carts in the parking lot at the store.
64. Sweep a neighbor's porch or driveway.
65. Lighten the load of someone you love. Ask if you can take a "to do" item off their list. Can you go to the grocery store for them? Paint the kitchen? Help organize the garage?
66. Many of us have far more than we need. Clean out your closets and take a bag full of toys and clothes to donate.
67. If you live in a colder climate, take gently worn and outgrown coats to a homeless shelter.
68. Think about an organization or friend that has to raise funds each year to survive. Send them a check with a note that keeps them going.
69. Support or serve those affected by Hurricane Sandy.
70. Stop in at a favorite restaurant and offer to help clean tables or serve them in some other way.
71. Wrap gifts for your most overwhelmed friend.
72. Tape quarters to bubble gum machines!
73. Fill your car with as many balloons as will fit. Take your kids to hand them out one at a time to strangers. Teach them how to say, "we just wanted to make you smile today" and maintain eye contact.
74. Take candy canes with simple notes and thank employees in the mall, especially those working the days just before Christmas.
75. Hang out with your nearest Salvation Army rep (at the mall, the grocery store, etc.). Give his or her arm a break and ring that bell!
76. Sneak in a friend's house and clean or organize a room for them.
77. Leave a note and treat for your mail carrier.
78. Swing by your dentist or doctor's offices with treats for the whole team.
79. Thank the church volunteers who care for your kids each week. Send heartfelt notes and donuts for the team.
80. Go on a scavenger hunt in your home for change and find a charity that would enjoy it.
81. Buy lunch or coffee for the car behind you in the drive-thru.
82. Take a few minutes to hold the door for everyone that walks into a restaurant or office. Teach your kiddos what to say. You'll get a reaction!
83. Bag groceries for another customer at the store, or help them load it into the car.
84. Leave a note in a public restroom thanking the person that cleans it.



85. Take a basket of treats for those that clean your church or your children's school. Let's recognize the people we never see or know that serve us behind the scenes.
86. Bring hot coffee and a magazine to someone waiting for the bus.
87. Make a "see what happens" basket of goodies and notes to keep in your car so that you are ready for unexpected opportunities to LIGHT 'EM UP as you go around town!
88. Find a widow and tell her she is loved. Send her a note of encouragement and find a way to help her tangibly.
89. Think of someone overworked at the holidays and make their day brighter.
90. Bake something yummy and take it to Santa and his elves (at the mall)!
91. Surprise a stressed-out mom with a free babysitting coupon good for the month of December.
92. Wait for a public transportation bus and see if the driver will let you deliver a treat for every passenger for that day.
93. Approach the neighborhood coordinator for your homeowner's association and see how you might get the neighborhood involved in LIGHTING UP your community. Work to get all the kids participating. (Don't have an HOA? You can be the neighborhood coordinator for this project!)
94. Go by the airport with treats, a sign and balloons. Wait at baggage claim for troops to arrive home and celebrate them.
95. Contact your local airport or Veteran's Association and find out how you can help formally welcome troops home if a large group is involved.
96. Find a family who has a loved one (or ones!) serving overseas and thank them in an extraordinary way.
97. Give out coupons for free services you can perform for those you love. (Think free back scratch, hand massage, or porch sweep!)
98. Go by and tell Santa "thanks" or give him a gift card for a massage if you're feeling super generous!
99. Hug someone.
100. Thank God for Christmas, the birth of His Son, and the gift that He offers us. Let this be a reminder to teach your kids how to pray and why your family has been giving all month long.



### *Tips For The Best Influence This Season:*

- Involve your whole family (kids, too!) in selecting which ideas from this list you want to execute together.
- Stay as anonymous as possible so that all of this giving doesn't become about building our own greatness. It's about spreading joy to others!
- Leave some wiggle room in your budget for unexpected opportunities so that you can seize them!
- Share humbly with friends and the #LightEmUp12 community to influence others to spread the joy!


  
*Get out there and*
  
**LIGHT 'em UP!**