



Raising Selfless Children

Lesson Content

West Oregon senior Sara Tucholsky had never hit a home run in four years of Division II softball, until she launched a bomb against Central Washington. But she pulled her ACL when she doubled back to touch 1st base and was unable to continue running. Her teammates were not allowed to help her and a pinch runner would only get credit for a single. Mallory Holtman, First base player for the opposing team, along with their shortstop, offer to carry Sara around the Base paths so she gets credit for her homerun. While this selfless act resulted in a loss for Central Washington, Mallory stated that she didn't even think twice about the decision.



The story of the girls in the softball game was a great example of what selflessness can look like in the sporting world. Selflessness doesn't come easily in our society. It requires us to turn our attention away from our own needs, against the urging of our egos and desire for self-gratification.

As parents, our most powerful tool is to model selflessness to our kids in our everyday actions with family members, co-workers, and community members.

In addition, here are three ways we can teach our children to be more intentional about selflessness.

- **Be on the lookout** for “unmet needs” in other people. Who might need your help? It can be as simple as noticing that your elderly neighbor needs her lawn mowed or a younger sibling needs help with homework.
- **Be creative** in your problem solving. Look at needs through the lens of “how could I provide a solution?” Mallory Holtman’s solution solved a dilemma in a creative way.
- **Be courageous** with your actions. There is often risk involved when you go against the culture or even your own ego. Doing the right thing, or responding in an unexpected way, can be scary and requires courage.

The benefits are many. The person being served obviously benefits from a selfless act. But so does the person serving, as our brains feel the effects of serotonin – the feel-good hormone that is produced when helping others. And the hidden benefit is that anyone who witnesses a selfless act of kindness can also experience serotonin. It's a three-way win!



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Discussion Guide

1

What are some examples of selflessness you and your children have witnessed in sports, school, or community?

2

How do you plan to challenge your children to “be on the lookout” - “be creative” - and “have courage”?