

Ideas With Little Kids

I love the idea of going to the library, picking out books (remember how boys like knowing all the different kinds of trucks/airplanes? and little girls love small animals?) and looking at them together, perusing craft magazines (or boys love car magazines), getting some simple craft materials and making things together (a pumpkin and a few sharpie markers beats cutting pumpkins with little kids) or paint them with acrylic paints. Art teachers at school may even give you some "leftover" materials.

Girls

Simple cooking -- rice krispie bars or no bake cookies or "moon balls" (a super healthy snack: <http://allrecipes.com/Recipe/Easy-and-Fun-Peanut-Butter-Balls/Detail.aspx>), doing your nails and toenails, making cards (stamping -- you can get a kids set cheap at Hobby Lobby -- if you want the program to buy it so you can borrow that's fine, I'll reimburse you), helping them with a Halloween costume idea (go to the web, search simple halloween costumes)

Boys

Boys often need to learn how to build simple things, or better yet -- if you are comfortable, go to Good Will and take apart and put back together a radio or TV or anything electronic -- why not? Fix a piece of furniture, or teach them how to sand and paint something -- or do simple yard work. Maybe even make a simple Christmas gift out of wood or paper.

One "asset" we want to give these kids is how to contribute/serve others. Is there a need they can meet for someone else? Is something broken around the house, or an item that needs sewing? Is there an elderly friend/relative who could use a homemade card? Maybe build a simple bird feeder (take a pine cone, smear it with peanut butter and roll it in bird seed, fashion a hook or post and you're good to go with a gift).

Get both genders outside whenever you can -- shoot hoops, roller blade (again, check out good will), take walks, rake and jump in the leaves, see shapes in the clouds. (Can you tell I miss having young children?) Teach or learn simple card games. Slapjack, concentration, crazy eights, Clue for Kids, etc...