

## **PowerTalk for Families**

### **Family Volunteer Project**

Research indicates that students who participate in service learning (volunteering) are less likely to engage in risky behaviors. Knowing that you've done something worthwhile or helped another person is a great feeling. These emotions are especially important for a child going through the transitional stage of adolescence, when some students struggle to find their own identity. Volunteering gives middle school students the opportunity to participate in an activity that boosts their self-esteem and makes them feel good about themselves and others.

Volunteering as a family unit is rewarding for everyone involved. It allows your child to see you working to help others (great modeling!) and provides a great bonding experience for your family to work as a team. It also provides an opportunity for your family to learn about others who have a life that may look different from yours.

#### **Volunteer Interest Checklist**

We each have different skills and interests. It's important to use those skills and interests when we are looking for places to volunteer.

Use these questions to help your family begin to talk about places you might want to volunteer. Allow each member of the family to add their answers to each of the questions.

1. What have I done in the past that I've enjoyed?
2. What do I NOT want to do as a volunteer?
3. How much time can I commit?
4. What talents or skills can I offer?
5. Do you prefer to work with others or alone?
6. What would I most like to learn by volunteering?

#### **Make a Plan!**

Using your answers from the checklist, talk about ways your family can volunteer together. Use the Volunteer Opportunities sheet or do an internet search to help you find a project that works for your family.

Remember, the benefits of volunteering go far beyond the work you are doing for others. Volunteering is rewarding and beneficial to each individual member of your family and to your family unit as a whole.