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**Family Philanthropy in Action**  
The Thanksgiving Project

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# Building Family Capital

- **FINANCIAL CAPITAL:** How much money you have, where it is and how it is being deployed today.

## Active involvement in philanthropy helps build...

- **INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL:** What individual family members have learned through formal education, leadership opportunities, career choices, and through unique life experiences.
- **HUMAN CAPITAL:** Who your family is as individuals and as a collective family group. What your individual and collective values are. How the family gets along as a group and with others.
- **SOCIAL CAPITAL:** What family members individually and as a group give to the community in time and talent.



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# Philanthropic Impact

Active involvement in philanthropic efforts provides life enhancing opportunities. When children begin participating in their community through philanthropy they learn:

- Responsibility
- Leadership
- Humility
- Passion (fire in the belly)



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# Holiday Philanthropy Project

Often times, it is difficult to start a conversation about philanthropy with our children. When is it a good time to talk to our kids about it? Where do we start? How do we explain it?

We suggest a simple yet powerful holiday project that begins at the dinner table during Thanksgiving and ends during the holiday season in December. At Thanksgiving dinner the parents or grandparents ask each family member what it is they are thankful for. Ideas you may use to help facilitate the conversation is to ask for talents individuals possess, activities or academic areas family members excel in, and other thought provoking questions. During this exercise, listen for personal interests that may come out as the children give their answers. Also identify personal and family values that may be expressed when listing things they are grateful for.

The next step is to propose a new family tradition to begin this year. This new family tradition is one that centers around philanthropy. Each generation or family unit will be given a set sum of money (ex. \$1,000) of which they are responsible for giving away before the end of the year. As a family, with leadership from the older generations, set up guidelines for how the money should be given away. Then, with the help of each family member, start the process of finding charities to give the money to. Use the 5 weeks until the end of the year to search out organizations of interest to the family and narrow down the options based on your findings. Once you have chosen an organization, or multiple entities to give to, deliver the donation as a family rather than just mailing in a check. Keep the family connected with the chosen organization and each other throughout this project.



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# Enabling Success

In order for this project to be successful the following must happen:

- Every family member, regardless of age, is included and solicited for input
- Everyone respects the individuality of all family members
- Parents and Grandparents set aside time to help children research facilities, including site visits when appropriate
- COMPROMISE – this activity is to teach a process, not to necessarily pick “the best” charity according to mom or dad



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## Follow Up

There's not a better time for a family resolution to commit to philanthropy than at New Year's. At the first of the year, come together again as a family. If everyone is spread across the country, organize a family conference call. Report back on how each generation or family unit did with their project. Discuss the successes and challenges of the project. What did you learn? How can you improve next year?

To complete the project, follow up with the charity or charities that you gave to.

- Find out if they used the money the way they said they would.
- If the children liked working with a particular organization, find out how they can be more involved throughout the year.
- Make goals as a family as to how you will serve your community in the upcoming year and at each future family meeting, report back on the progress every family member is making.

Your holiday philanthropy activity will not only instill the value of giving but increase each family member's "capital" and make lasting family memories that can be built upon in the years to come.



## Questions?

To discuss more on how your family can utilize Comstock's Thanksgiving Project to promote philanthropy and wealth responsibility in the next generation, contact Alison Comstock Moss, VP Strategic Development.

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