

17 Ways to Reach Out to Single Parents With God's Love

A little over 40 years ago, a single, young woman was about to give birth. She didn't know how to afford a child without her parents' help. She hadn't talked to her former boyfriend in months. She couldn't reach him, didn't know how to tell him she was having his child.

This young woman attended church some, yet her dialogue with God was stilted. *How could God let this happen to her? What would her life be like now?*

A baby girl was born, and upon holding her child this young lady knew things would be OK. Perhaps this baby was a gift, not a burden as she supposed.

This woman raised her daughter the best she could, and while she wanted to give her child more than she had ... history has a way of repeating itself. When the daughter became a young woman, she found herself in the same situation—living at home, pregnant and scared.

The daughter knew she could raise this child. After all, her mom had done it. *But what would her life be like? How could God let this happen to her?*

If you haven't guessed already, I was the daughter born to a single mom and as a teenager became a single mom myself. At age 17, God gave me a son. My boyfriend was out of the picture, and I faced raising a child alone with little education, no money and, maybe according to the world, little hope for my future. I know what it's like to be a young, simple mom and what made a huge difference in my life. Here are some ways you can reach out to single parent:

1) Free childcare

A Moms' Day out is greatly needed! You should know that these moms, especially teen moms, may have a hard time leaving their children. Outline for them as clear as possible who will be watching their kids, what type of childcare experience they have and what activities will be done. Many young moms have been hurt in the past in numerous ways, and they are very sensitive when it comes to their kids.

2) Guy Events

Many children of single parents don't have positive male role models in their lives. Activities for guys to do with kids—fishing, an obstacle course, Lego building, etc. would be a huge blessing for these moms. They understand this need in their kids and feel bad because of it.

3) Car clinics

Many single moms don't have someone to help with maintenance stuff like checking the oil, checking the tires, checking the windshield wipers, etc. And cleaning out/detailing the car would be a huge blessing, too.

4) Expert advice

Do you have experts who could help them with advice?

- Legal (custody stuff)
- Resume building or job training
- Parenting tips or help
- Cooking simple meals
- Reading the Bible

Pass out a questionnaire ahead of time and find out their needs.

5) Necessity kits

Many moms struggle with money. Kits you can put together.

- First-aid kits
- Cleaning kits
- Spice cabinet basics
- Toiletry kits
- Home “office” kit: calendar, stamps, pens, tape, stapler, etc.
- Kitchen towels and potholders

6) Christian books and resources

Again these are “splurge” items they’re not able to buy for themselves.

7) Craft time!

Single moms often don’t have time to sit down and have fun. Create a craft event where they can sit, make something cool and chat with others.

8) Gift cards

Give them a gift card for dinner out at someplace other than McDonald’s.

9) Gas cards

They often get stuck at home because they don’t have enough money for gas.

10) Christian music

They often don’t know it exists, but find it uplifting.

11) Toys-R-Us or Wal-Mart gift cards

So they can buy something nice for their child’s birthday or a holiday.

12) Home improvement projects

Mowing the yard of a single mom, or putting together a set of bunk beds is a huge help.

13) Offer a mini-vacation

This takes more work, but moms often don't get a chance to get away. Does someone you know work at a hotel chain where you can get a discount on a hotel room? Or does someone have a vacation home or time share nearby?

14) Invite her to your house for dinner

She'll be happy and shocked!

15) Free haircut, manicure or massage

... from a professional! Being pampered is something they usually don't have the time or money for.

16) Kids haircuts

This is a huge help to her too!

17) Birthday cakes

Do you have someone who can bake a birthday cake for her birthday or her child's?

Tricia Goyer has written more than 35 books, including two novels that delight and entertain readers and nonfiction titles that offer encouragement and hope. She has also published more than 500 articles in national publications such as Guideposts, Thriving Family, Proverbs 31, and HomeLife Magazine.