

# Teach your children the joy of giving

Sailing through the festive season without screams of 'mine' ringing in your ears is possible, says Tamara Stubbs, shared centre director at Blossom Downtown and Marina

## **Give to charity or do a festive gifting before Christmas**

Have you ever bought a gift for your child's friend that your child assumes is theirs, then had to dry their tears when the gift is given? Get your children involved in a charity drive where they are actually handing the gift over to another child or person, or buy a bunch of very tiny Dhs5 or Dhs10 gifts, go to the mall and play Santa giving them out to children. This is a fun activity for children, and helps them see happiness everywhere in the spirit of the season.

## **Incorporate giving and receiving into everyday life**

Children need to get used to handing you things and taking things from you. It can be as simple as passing bowls at dinnertime, taking toys off the floor or being asked to hand you your phone from the table. If you are possessive, they will be too. Children learn by example, so it is crucial you embody



IMAGE: GETTY

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the qualities you wish your child to possess. Build blocks with them, have them hand to you and you hand to them. Make sharing a natural occurrence in everyday life.

## **Understand why your child shows signs of possessiveness**

Children do not have the advantage of years of giving and the warm fuzzy feeling it creates. Behaviours such as kindness are learned, and your little one is afraid their belongings will be lost forever and not return. Understand that a child's entire life is their immediate surroundings and out of sight or touch means gone. Taking turns in short one minute allotments gets them to understand belongings return.

## **Allow them to touch things that are precious to you**

It will take time for your child to learn how to take care of other people's belongings and consider other's

feelings. Be patient with them. Teach empathy but also teach that when they give, their belongings are taken care of. Under supervision, let them briefly use your ipad or phone. They learn what you do, not what you say, and will copy your actions. If you are possessive, they will be too. Ensure that you give a short time frame and stick to it!

## **Make sure to have lots of play dates or enrol them in nursery**

In order for children to learn personal, social and emotional skills, they need to be around other children and not just their siblings. All children, like adults, react to situations in different ways, and they need to learn how to deal with them on their own. Guide them, but don't always jump in. Telling them 'sharing is caring' repetitively underpins the ten Blossom Golden Rules strategy used at all our nurseries. Make a huge deal out your children giving – praise, praise and more praise is key.