



Kids Voting Missouri...Family Guide to Election 2018

When you take your kids to vote, democracy becomes a family affair. It promotes family conversation, what you stand for, what you believe in, what your hopes are for our country and culminates in the historic act of going to the voting booth to cast a ballot for elected representatives. Studies suggest that parents exert tremendous influence over future voting patterns of their children.

If parents are registered to vote AND vote regularly, their children are far more likely to vote when they become adults. Chances are if you take your kids to the polls and/or discuss the election at home, your children will remember it. Democracy makes a good first impression! Pass it on!

Here Are Some Suggestions for Making Democracy A Family Experience!

- ★ **Choose an issue** - Find an issue that directly affects your kids - the environment, education, economy, or drugs for example - then follow this issue through the TV, newspaper, magazine, and/or Internet. Keep track of what is said and by whom. Discuss with your children various candidates' views on these issues and possibly your views. Ask your children which of the candidates comes closer to sharing your families' views on particular issues?
- ★ **Take a walk and/or drive around your neighborhood** - Take your family on a stroll or drive through your neighborhood and note any political advertising and campaign signs that you see. How many different campaigns can your kids identify? Which ones are local (running for a city or county office)? Which ones are state candidates (someone running for a state office, such as State Auditor, State Senate, or State Representative)? Which ones are national offices such as someone running for U.S. Senate or U.S. Congress? Which signs promote an issue? Discuss how much money is spent on these signs and where this money comes from. Why do people spend so much money on political advertising? Do you think voters are affected by these yard signs? Explain.
- ★ **Review TV advertising & mail ads** - What messages are the candidates communicating in their TV ads, snail mail ads, or Internet ads? Ask your kids about the advertising--is the message negative, warm and fuzzy, humorous, or scary? Which type of ads do they most remember and why? Save all political advertising mailed to your home and place in a box or bag. How much does it weigh? Discuss with your child (children) whether all of these mailed ads are effective. Explain!
- ★ **Family History** - Have your kids talk to older family members about their voting histories. Some suggested questions are: 1) When was your first election? 2) How did it feel to vote for the very first time? 3) Who were your all-time favorite candidates, and did your candidates win or lose? Why do they think so many Americans choose not to vote, especially when there is no Presidential race? How can we work to get more people to register and to actually vote during a Non-Presidential Election Year?
- ★ **Contact the candidates** - Encourage your child to write a letter or e-mail to a candidate about the upcoming election. To get the candidates' names go to www.Vote411.org to build a ballot for your home address. You can then "Google" the candidates and get their web site information.
- ★ **"If I Were"** - Pretend that your child has decided to run for **Class Senate**. Work with your child to write a campaign promise and explain why other students should vote for him or her. Make sure your child includes a plan as to how he/she will implement the promises. Have your child actually deliver the speech to family members. Afterwards, discuss how he/she felt; would they actually like to run for office someday? What was learned about elections from this activity?
- ★ **If possible, take your children with you to the polls on Election Day—Tuesday, November 6th.**

For election information such as locating your polling place, ballot information, or any election questions:

1. Find your county's (or city's) web site and look under elections; (simply google your county or city's name)
2. Go to the Missouri Secretary of State's Office at: <http://www.sos.mo.gov> and select Elections & Voting from the menu at the top
3. Log-on to the League of Women Voters site---www.vote411.org...enter home address information and go to "Get Personalized Information On Candidates & Issues"