

Family Philanthropy

The Community Foundation for Livingston County is often asked to provide guidance on how to educate and engage the whole family in philanthropy. Here are a few successful techniques we recommend.

Share the Spirit of Giving

Share your enthusiasm and vision of philanthropy with younger family members. Just as most successful charitable campaigns are the result of volunteers and board members sharing their passion with peers, members of a family can be motivated by the words and actions of parents and grandparents.

Provide Opportunities to Become Involved

It is also important to provide an environment where younger family members can take a role in philanthropy. This process helps to engage these family members in the ideals and concerns of the parents.

Children and Grandchildren

Some people find it useful to involve young children and grandchildren in charitable giving decisions, sometimes allocating a portion of their budgeted assets for charitable giving to be suggested by the children and grandchildren.

Formalizing the Family Philanthropy

A family can establish a donor advised fund or a supporting organization at the Community Foundation in order to use it as a vehicle to engage other family members in philanthropy. The family enjoys all the recognition of a private foundation while benefiting from the support of our expert staff, without the initial and ongoing costs, tax constraints, and administrative and regulatory burdens of managing a private foundation.

The Community Foundation can help the family develop a mission statement and grantmaking guidelines. Our staff can also help educate the family on community needs and opportunities that they might not be aware of.

The Community Foundation can also serve as a facilitator to gather all family members together and help pass along the parents' and grandparents' ideals to the younger generation. Lastly, the Community Foundation's staff and record keeping can help preserve the ideals and goals of the original family members and can help pass along those ideals to future generations.