

Have You Filled a Bucket Today?

“A bucket filler is a loving, caring person who says or does nice things that make others feel special”

When you make someone feel special, you are filling a bucket.”

What is the invisible bucket and what does filling the bucket mean?

- The invisible bucket is something that we all carry with us at all times and is constantly emptied or filled, depending on what others say or do to us. When our bucket is full, we feel great. When it's empty, we feel awful.¹
- Each of us also has an invisible dipper. We use that dipper to fill others' buckets, by saying or doing things to increase their positive emotions, which also fills our own bucket. But when we use that dipper to take from others' bucket, by saying or doing things that decrease their positive emotions, we not only diminish the individual but also ourselves.²

Why is it important?

- Choosing to fill a bucket or dip from someone else's is an important choice that can profoundly influence our relationships, health, and happiness.
- When our buckets are full we feel more optimistic and energetic. It is a way to instill happiness in your children and within your family.
- We experience approximately 20,000 individual moments every day, which is 20,000 opportunities to contribute to someone's bucket.³
- The magic ratio: 5 positive interactions for every 1 negative interaction.⁴

How can you utilize this with the families you support?

Studies show that Americans work an average of 35 hours a week, but spend only 38 minutes a day – little more than 4 hours a week – with their children. With families where both parents work or single parent households who, in most instances, must work, the balance of parenting and work is a constant challenge. Work can leave parents with too little time or energy to be the parent they WANT to be.

The tensions experienced within households around balancing the family workload are greater for women, who still tend to undertake the greater share of family related responsibilities. However, there are indications that men are also experiencing important compromises and tensions in balancing work and family responsibilities.

Prioritize the time that you do have with your children and go through some simple activities you can engage in with your children that will not only fill their buckets but also yours.

¹ <http://strengths.gallup.com/114079/Full-Bucket.aspx>

² <http://strengths.gallup.com/114082/Theory-Dipper-Bucket.aspx>

³ <http://strengths.gallup.com/114088/Full-Bucket-Research.aspx>

⁴ See Footnote 3



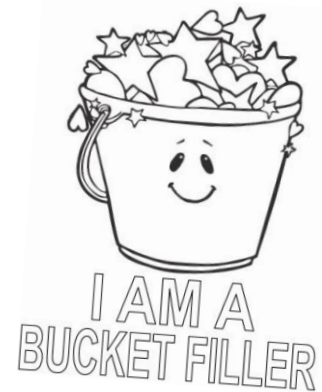
Divide the parents and the children into two separate groups and if possible have a facilitator for each group. If you are unable to have a facilitator for two groups then keep everyone together in a large group and start with the children's activity and ask the parent/s to work with their children as you discuss their potential takeaway activities.

Activity for Children

- In a small group with the children, first read the book "Have You Filled a Bucket Today" by Carol McCloud. Talk about what being a bucket filler is and how we treat people can make them happy or sad.

An example activity that you can do with the children is giving them crayons and the "I am a Bucket Filler" coloring page (Found at <http://www.bucketfillers101.com/free-resources.php>)

- Inform the children that this coloring page can be a gift to their parent/s and a way to fill their parent/s bucket.



Activity for Adults

While the children are busy with their own activity meet with the parents and first read the book "Have You Filled a Bucket Today" by Carol McCloud. Then talk about what it means to fill their child's bucket and the impact it can have upon their children and the family as a whole. With the group of parents, model the activities they can do with their children that will not only fill their child's bucket but also their own.

- Read the book "Have You Filled a Bucket Today" by Carol McCloud.
- At dinner or at the end of each day, ask everyone in the family if they helped fill someone's bucket
- Write a "bucket filling" note and place it in their child's lunchbox or backpack. This note could say "I love you" or just have a smiley face 😊
- Provide the parents with the "Bucket Filling from A-Z" checklist" and challenge them check one off every day. <http://www.bucketfillers101.com/pdfs/A-ZCheck-ListBoxes.pdf>

The key is making sure that every day you are taking a small amount of time, whether it is 2 minutes or 10, to fill a bucket and providing happiness to your children and yourself.

Wrap up Activity

Bring the children and the parents back together in a large group and debrief the activity. Talk over the major discussion points and have the children present whatever it was that they did to their parent/s and allow the parents to fill their child's bucket. You could chose to do this in front of one another - allowing parents to get ideas from each other, or you could allow it to be done among the family.

How to learn more; obtain more resources, and activities

<http://www.bucketfillers101.com/index.php>