

Young volunteers prepare 130 backpacks for children in need

Posted By [Robert Hamilton](#) On September 1, 2011 @ 11:18 am In [South Miami](#)

By Robert Hamilton....



Youngsters pose with some of the backpacks they put together for Angel Share.

You are never too young to learn about giving back. When adults emphasize and encourage this type of generosity, kids learn about the importance of service to others.

Today, many children are glued to their computer or television without much emphasis on service to others. Exposing children, even as young as 2 or 3 years old, to the idea of helping someone less fortunate can help develop a generous spirit and lead to a lifetime of volunteerism.

This summer, a group of young volunteers, ages 3-9, worked hard to collect and prepare almost 130 backpacks full of school supplies that they delivered to students in need at Laura C. Saunders Elementary in Homestead and Jack D. Gordon Elementary in Country Walk.

Three years ago State Rep. Frank Artiles and his wife, Aimee, decided to start the Angel Share charity — an organization Aimee operates with her children and a group of volunteers dedicated to helping local families in need while teaching their own young children about the importance of giving back.

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The organization has raised more than \$12,000 and collected hundreds of items for local families in need. All of the Angel Share activities are fundraising opportunities that the young volunteers can help with so they stay involved and engaged.

"I think that when a child sees his parents not just talk about giving back, but truly act on those beliefs, they are naturally drawn to develop the same type of strong beliefs about helping others in need," said Angel Share volunteer and school principal Suzanne Cohen.

"It was really important for us to get our young girls engaged in volunteerism at an early age," Aimee Artiles said. "We try to let our girls lead the charge, with a little help of

course. We are so blessed. The least we can do is try to give back a little."

And the children have become so enthusiastic about some of the Angel Share projects that they have in turn inspired others. This summer, the AT&T Pioneers, a volunteer network of AT&T employees, enthusiastically joined in the effort collecting boxes of supplies and

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hundreds of dollars from employees to help create more than 50 backpacks.

"We are thankful for the opportunity to help create and distribute the book bags to local families in need," said Miguel Tamayo of AT&T. "These young volunteers only further inspired us to get involved with the effort to help kids get a head start this school year."

For questions about Angel Share or to find out how you can get your child or school involved, send email to Aimee@angelshare.us ^[2].

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