

12 Ways to Grow Kids Who Love the World

What will it take to raise another generation ready to travel the world, pray for the nations and support God's global work?

By Marti Wade · Published on September 2, 2026

Here at Pioneers, we have a dedicated team focused on supporting missionary families and loving and caring for missionary kids (also known as third-culture kids or TCKs). So we asked: What suggestions could they offer to families on the other side—the senders and supporters? Here's what they came up with: a dozen practical ways you can help your kids develop a heart for the world.



Parents, children's ministry leaders and teachers, which of these have you tried?



1 Put a map on the wall.

Get your kids geographically grounded. Don't be afraid to mark up your map, noting where friends live or come from, places someone in your family or class has visited and countries and regions you'd like to explore. When a place name comes up in the news, a book, or a conversation, invite the kids to find it on the map.



2 Learn some lingo.

Learning basic phrases used around the world isn't so hard. Practice everyday words like how to say hello or thank you in a new language. Need a hand? You've heard of Duolingo; [check out Dinolingo](#). This fun language-learning app for kids features games, songs, videos and stories in 50 languages.



3 Enjoy flicks and foods.

Look for global documentaries and family-friendly shows that highlight how kids live around the world. Or pick a new country each week and find a traditional dish or snack you can cook while listening to local music.

4 Read all about it.

Introduce your kids to the nations through stories featuring children from diverse cultures and countries. They aren't hard to find! Check out missionary stories, too: You may be able to get some, such as the [Christian Heroes: Then & Now](#) series from YWAM Publishing, through your local library (also available as audiobooks).

Homeschooling? My Father's World has a fun, year-long interactive curriculum called **Countries and Cultures**. And for kids too young to read, see Sarah Nunally's [God Everywhere series](#) published by David C. Cook. Sarah also collaborated on the [Pray the World Coloring and Activity Book](#), published by Radical.

5 Host international students.

Parents: This may seem like a big ask, but if you can make space for international guests, your kids will never forget it. They may have a friend for life. High schools are always looking for host families who can take in a guest for a semester or two, and some programs can also help arrange for you to host a student for a meal, a holiday or a long weekend.

6 Consider child sponsorship.

Many kids find it easier to relate to other kids, whether that's TCKs who could use a friend when they are in town or kids on the other side of the world. Consider sponsoring a child in another country or taking part in a project like Operation Christmas Child. Pray for those children and learn about where they live.

7 Donate to disaster relief.

We may try to shield our kids from hearing about hard things, but another way to navigate the challenges of living in a world where people suffer is to offer our kids a constructive way to respond. Consider involving kids in giving to global humanitarian causes during crises and in praying for those affected.

8 Model cultural respect.

Here's another one that goes a little deeper. Young or old, many of us tend to fear or misunderstand those who are different from us. By being intentional, we can shift into learning mode. Let's commit to discussing cultural differences with curiosity rather than labeling them "weird." Little ears are listening.

9 Maximize your mission conference.

Does your church hold regular mission conferences? These can be a great place for kids to learn about the nations and global outreach efforts and to meet visiting missionary families (especially their kids). If it's too daunting to plan an event for the whole church, how about a creative mission event just for the kids?

10 Take the kids on a mission trip.

Admittedly, these opportunities can be a bit hard to find (and fund). But they do exist. One member of our team reports that her family participated in a one-week mission trip for all ages for many years. "There are so many families that went on that trip with us whose kids are now in missions full time and have a greater awareness of missions around the world," she says.

11 Host missionaries in your home.

This may be our favorite pick for Christian families, partly because it's becoming less common. "In my family growing up, my parents would invite missionaries to our house for lunch after church," says one of our TCK specialists. "I loved hearing about missionaries' stories and adventures overseas. Nothing hits like having real-life missionaries in your home."

Be sure you don't forget them when they're gone. Putting their picture on the fridge is a great reminder.

12 Support missionaries together.

Even if you don't get to have a missionary for lunch (cue the cannibal jokes), you can involve your kids in sending and supporting these cross-cultural ambassadors. Let your kids know you (and they) are part of the team. Read your missionaries' updates together. Pray for them. Send them letters and care packages. You may even be able to visit them, an experience your kids will never forget.

Conclusion

If you're thinking about ways to raise globally minded kids, you've probably tried some of these strategies and others. Let us know how it went! We're praying for you as you and your kids take your next steps.

About the author: Marti Wade is the editorial director for the Pioneers marketing team. This team seeks to creatively tell the stories of what God is doing around the world to engage more people in the task of reaching the unreached.