**Have Your Kids be a Part of the 2012 Elections**



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**Election 2012**

Election time has rolled around again and in just a few short days, the nation will make their decision as to who our next president will be. A great way to get your kids involved in this election is by [making it educational](http://www.mache.org/legal/minnesota-homeschool-electional-central/making-election-educational) by giving them opportunities to learn all about our country’s government and how officials are elected.

Here are some ideas to help you share the political experience with your kids:

* **Take Your Kids to Vote.**  Taking you kids to the election polls will give them the message that voting is part of being a good citizen and doing so is making their mark in the country’s democracy. While you’re there, take pictures of your family so they can share with their friends that they participated in the election with their parents.
* **Watch the Debates.**  Even though the presidential debates are over, you can still watch them on [YouTube](http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=2012+presidential+debates&oq=2012+presidential+debates&gs_l=youtube.3..0l10.1476.17247.0.17368.31.13.3.15.15.0.145.901.10j3.13.0...0.0...1ac.1.vtFnHr1_sN8). This is a great way for your kids to see what each candidate stands for and for them to have a chance to share with you what they believe is right.
* **Go to a** [**Political Event**](http://www.politico.com/2012-election/calendar/)**.** It may be tough to find a rally this late in the game for either candidate, but by attending political rallies and events, you and your kids can see up close and personal with how the political process plays out.
* **Read Up.** Find a few books at your local library that may help your kids learn about how our country runs and why elections are so important. [“See *How They Run*”](http://books.google.com/books?id=01JNHwAACAAJ&dq=see%20how%20they%20run&source=gbs_book_other_versions) by Susan E. Goodman, is a great guide for kids to get a better understanding of democracy and the Electoral College.
* **Make a Game out of It.** [iCivics](http://www.icivics.org/) is a website that has created 16 scholastic video games where kids can campaign for an issue, manage a campaign or present real cases. The site also allows your kids to learn about the rights they have as citizens and how countries work.
* **Hold Your Own Election.** Holding a [mock family election](http://712educators.about.com/cs/polisciresource/ht/htmockelection.htm) gives your kids a way to choose issues they believe in and tips on how to present your position. A family election is a great way to introduce your kids to the political process.
* **Write a Letter to the President.** Teaching your kids about how to appropriately voice their opinions is an important life lesson.  Encourage them to write a letter to the President. They can submit it electronically by visiting the [Corresponding with the White House](http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/write-or-call#write) website.

**Related links**

* thinkTANK12: [What do Your Kids Know About the 2012 Election?](http://blog.k12.com/online-public-schools/what-do-your-kids-know-about-2012-election)
* [iCivics](http://www.icivics.org/)
* [Kids Voting USA](http://kidsvotingusa.org/)
* K12.com: [Schools and Programs](http://www.k12.com/schools-programs?utm_source=thinktank12&utm_medium=socialmedia)