

## **20 Ways to Help Out Through Community Service and Involvement**

Community service is a rewarding way to spend some of your time. In addition to helping others, you meet new people with shared interests, and they can turn into friends, mentors, professional connections, or all of the above. Volunteering your time to better your community is also an excellent resume builder. It provides opportunities to learn new skills, enhance existing ones, and demonstrate your initiative, generosity, and social consciousness.

All in all, getting involved in your community is a great way to improve the lives of your neighbors, your own mood and marketability, and the environment where you live. Below are 20 tips for how you can participate in meaningful community service. Try to find ways that make use of your personal passions and talents. That's the best way to give the most, get the most, and keep up your efforts.

### **How to Get Involved in Community Service**

1. Find mentoring or tutoring opportunities through area nonprofits, schools, places of worship, and other organizations.
2. Lend a hand at a local homeless shelter, soup kitchen, or food pantry; donate nonperishable food and/or related items (ask what they need most).
3. Organize a letter-writing campaign for local and state politicians about a cause you care about.
4. Coach a youth sports team.
5. Help with community outreach and special events at your church, synagogue, or mosque.
6. Volunteer with a local nonprofit dedicated to a cause you're interested in, such as health, addiction recovery, literacy, the environment, poverty,

etc.

7. Work on the campaign of a local politician you believe in.
8. Arrange visits with elderly residents in assisted living facilities.
9. Donate clothing, shoes, accessories, toys, games, books, etc. to Goodwill, a thrift store, the Salvation Army, or other outlets providing for people in need.
10. Volunteer at an animal shelter; donate pet food, bedding, toys, or other supplies (ask what they need most).
11. Inquire about opportunities to help out at area community centers, senior centers, etc.
12. Talk to your city or municipal government about starting a community garden that grows food to benefit the homeless or poor.
13. Give free music lessons to kids who can't afford them.
14. Run errands and/or help out with housework for elderly or disabled neighbors.
15. Volunteer at a nearby library, museum, or other cultural institution.
16. Organize food, clothing, book, toy, or other drives for local charities or organizations.
17. Ask about reading to or entertaining children or the terminally ill at a hospital.
18. Arrange community beautification projects like litter removal, repainting, or landscaping (be sure to work with the city or property owner).

19. Volunteer with a local Boys and Girls Club, Big Brothers Big Sisters, or similar organization.

20. Work with your police department to start up a neighborhood watch program.