



American  
Spaces

# Volunteerism

Programming Kit

## WHAT IS VOLUNTEERISM?

Volunteerism is **donating time and energy** to **benefit other people** or a community. People volunteer out of a sense of **social responsibility** rather than financial reward.

## VOLUNTEERISM IN THE U.S.

In the U.S., children, teens and adults volunteer in many different ways. They **volunteer with their school, church, or with family and friends** doing a variety of projects ranging from giving water to racers at a community marathon, **coaching or tutoring** youth, feeding the homeless, walking dogs at a local animal shelter to **building homes** after a natural disaster.

Others **volunteer to achieve political change**. They sign people up to vote on a certain political campaign or **advocate for specific legislation**.

## BENEFITS TO VOLUNTEERING?

### Health and Happiness

Volunteering is great for your physical and mental health. It makes people more socially connected and can give someone purpose.

### Skill Development

Gain many skills, including leadership and management, which can be useful in getting jobs and advancing your career.

### Learn about new industries

Volunteering is a great way to learn about different types of work environments.

### Promote good governance

The United Nation believes that citizen volunteers make governments more accountable and can initiate needed policy changes in government.

### Make Friends

Volunteering is a great way to meet new people and make friends who share your interests.

## THINGS TO DISCUSS

### Which local projects or organizations would interest you as a volunteer?

- What are they? What would you be doing? Who would you be helping?

### Some U.S. schools require students to volunteer to graduate. Do you agree with this?

- What do you think about requiring people to volunteer? Does it count as volunteer work?

### How could volunteering benefit your life specifically?

- What types of volunteering would be best for you?
- What volunteer work would be best for your community?





### INTRODUCTION: VOLUNTEERISM (5-10 min)

1. Pass out information sheet.
2. Discuss

# VOLUNTEER



### ADVANCED: VOLUNTEER SERVICE PLANNING

In this activity, participants will plan and do a service project.

1. Identify Local Needs
2. Build a Team
3. Set a Goal
4. Serve Your Community
5. Report and Celebrate!

Consider:

- Working alone or with another organization?
- How to get more people to join?
- Who/what will benefit from the project?

[ACTIVITY LINK](#)

### VOLUNTEER SERVICE IDEAS

- Share your skills by hosting a program at a library, community center or an American Space.
- Clean-up project in the community
- Mural project in the community
- Hold a [Human Library](#) event
- Tutor or read to children in schools, homeless shelters or hospitals
- Teach seniors to use a computer
- Organize a concert for seniors
- Build a community garden

### TOOLKITS and RESEARCH

#### [Toolkits for Specific Projects](#)

Learn how to do specific projects.

#### [10 Tips to become a Volunteer](#)

Make becoming a volunteer easier.

#### [Health Benefits of Volunteering](#)

Learn about how volunteering can improve your health.

### AMERICAN SPACES RESOURCES

- [eLibraryUSA](#)
- [Share America](#)

