What Is Community Service?

Community service is work done by a person or group of people that benefits others. It is often done near the area where you live, so your own community reaps the benefits of your work. **You do not get paid to perform community service**, though sometimes food and small gifts, like a t-shirt, are given to volunteers.

Community service can help any group of people in need: children, senior citizens, people with disabilities, English language learners, and more. It can also help animals, such as those at a shelter, and it can be used to improve places, such as a local park, historic building, or scenic area as well. **Community service is often organized through a local group,** such as a place of worship, school, or non-profit organization. You can also start your own community service projects.

Some students are required to complete community service as part of a class requirement in order to graduate high school or become a member of certain organizations, such as the National Honor Society. Adults can also participate in community service as a way to help others or if they are ordered to do so by a judge.

What Are Examples of Community Service?

There are hundreds of ways to participate in community service, depending on your skills and interests. Some common community service examples include:

Working with schoolchildren: Tutoring children after school, collecting school supplies to donate, planting a school garden.

Working with senior citizens: Visiting residents of a retirement center, delivering meals to senior citizens, helping take the garbage out, etc.

Improving the environment: Holding a recycling contest, planting trees, creating a new trail at a nature center.

Helping low-income people: Passing out food at a soup kitchen, collecting used clothes to be donated, making first aid kits for homeless shelters.

What Are the Benefits of Community Service?

There are many benefits of participating in community service, and some of the most important ones are listed below.

Have the opportunity to help others: This is often the most important benefit of community service. Participating in it gives you the opportunity to know that you are improving someone's life and making your community better, and you get to see the direct impact of your work.

Gain hands-on experience: You can learn a lot of skills while performing community service such as construction, painting, customer service, and medical skills. You can also include your community service work on your resume.

Learn about different careers: Sometimes you can focus your community service in a field you may want to work in down the road. Some examples of this include volunteering at an animal shelter if you are thinking about becoming a veterinarian, working at a hospital if you want to be a doctor, or volunteering in a museum if you like history. The experience gained from community service can help you get an internship or job in the future, and it also gives you the opportunity to see how much you would really enjoy a particular career.

Personal growth: Doing community service has personal benefits as well. It often makes participants more organized, responsible, and compassionate, which are all good qualities to have, as well as qualities that both colleges and employers like to see in applicants.

Gain new friends: A final benefit is that you can meet a lot of great people while doing community service. Community service is often done in groups, so it's easy to make friends with the people you are working with. You may also become friends with the people you are helping, especially if you volunteer at the same place regularly.

Where Can You Find Community Service Projects?

Your school or groups you belong to: This can include clubs, places of worship, community centers or any other organizations you are a member of. To find community service opportunities, check their website, bulletin board, or newsletter. If you are a student, your school may also have a community service club that makes it easier to get involved.

Places where you'd like to volunteer: If you have a specific place where you'd like to perform community service, like a hospital or animal shelter, contact them and ask if they take volunteers.

Your community itself: You can also look for opportunities at your town hall, or similar building. Also, check your town's website or newsletter. Many include a section that lists current volunteer opportunities.

There are numerous benefits to participating in community service, both for yourself and others. **Below are some of the most important benefits of volunteering:**

- Gives you a way to help others
- Helps improve your community
- Can help strengthen your resume and college applications
- Can be a way to meet new friends
- Often results in personal growth
- Gives you a way to gain work experience and learn more about certain jobs

General Ideas

- Become involved at Holy Name of Mary: Altar Server, Junior Lector, Folk group, Usher, at Religious Education office, etc.

- Donate or raise money for your local Red Cross

- Donate or raise money for Holy Name of Mary Outreach

- Organize a community blood drive

- Send cards to soldiers serving overseas

- For your next birthday, ask for charitable donations instead of gifts

- Hold a bake sale for your favorite charity

- Read books or letters to a person who is visually impaired

- Organize a wheelchair basketball team

- Participate in a charity race

- Organize an event or parade for Memorial Day

- Volunteer to help at a charity auction

- Participate in National Youth Service Day in April

- Contact a tree farm about donating Christmas trees to nursing homes, hospitals, or to families who can't afford to buy their own

- Collect unused makeup and perfume to donate to a center for abused women

- Organize a car wash and donate the profits to charity

- Help deliver meals and gifts to patients at a local hospital

Helping Children and Schools

- Tutor children during or after school

- Donate stuffed animals or any other articles to children and infants in hospitals

- Knit or crochet baby blankets to be donated to hospitals or homeless shelters

- Collect baby clothes and supplies to donate to new parents

- Sponsor a bike-a-thon and give away bike safety gear, like helmets and knee pads, as prizes

- Collect used sports equipment to donate to families and after-school programs

- Volunteer at a summer camp for children who have lost a parent

- Coach a youth sports team

- Put on performances for children in hospitals

- Give free music lessons to schoolchildren

- Organize a summer reading program to encourage kids to read

- Organize events to help new students make friends

- Babysit children during a PTA meeting

- Organize a reading hour for children at a local school or library

- Collect and donate used children's books to a school library

- Work with the local health department to set up an immunization day or clinic to immunize children against childhood diseases

Helping Senior Citizens

- Read to residents at a nursing home

- Deliver groceries and meals to elderly neighbors

- Teach computer skills to the elderly

- Mow an elderly neighbor's lawn

- Make birthday cards for the elderly

- Donate and decorate a Christmas tree at a nursing home

- Ask residents of a retirement home to tell you about their lives

- Pick up medicine for an elderly neighbor

- Perform a concert or play at a senior center

- Help elderly neighbors clean their homes and organize their belongings

- Rake leaves, shovel snow, or wash windows for a senior citizen

- Deliver cookies or meals to a homebound senior citizen
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- Walk their dog

Helping Animals and the Environment

- Take care of cats and dogs at an animal shelter

- Clean up a local park

- Raise money to provide a bulletproof vest for a police dog

- Plant a tree for Arbor Day

- Make a food collection for the local animal shelter

- Start a butterfly garden in your community

- Sponsor a recycling contest

- Grow flowers in your backyard then give bouquets to hospital patients or people who are housebound

- Help create a new walking trail at a nature center or park

- Update the signs along a nature trail

- Adopt an acre of rainforest

- Help train service dogs

- Participate in the cleanup of a local river, pond, or lake

- Foster animals that shelters don't have space for

- Organize a spay and neuter your pet program

- Care for a neighbor's pet while they are away

- Train your pet to be a therapy animal and bring it to hospitals or nursing homes

- Build and set up a bird house

- Campaign for more bike lanes in your town

- Volunteer at a nature camp and teach kids about the environment

- Plant native flowers or plants along highways

Helping the Hungry and/or Homeless

- Volunteer at a soup kitchen

- Organize a collection of old eyeglasses and donate to an organization that collects and distributes them to people in need

- Donate non-perishable food to a food bank or HNM Outreach

- Organize a collection of blankets for a homeless shelter

- Offer to babysit or nanny for a family in need

- Make "care kits" with [shampoo](#), [toothbrushes](#), [combs](#), etc. to donate to homeless shelters

- Prepare a home-cooked meal for the residents of a nearby homeless shelter

- Collect grocery coupons to give to a local food bank

- Help repair or paint a local homeless shelter

- Donate art supplies to kids in a homeless shelter

- Help organize and sort donations at a homeless shelter

- Become a Big Buddy for children at a homeless shelter

- Bake a batch of cookies or loaf of bread and deliver it to a soup kitchen

- Build flower boxes for Habitat for Humanity houses

- Organize a winter clothes drive to collect coats, hats, scarves, and gloves to be donated

- Organize a collection to make first aid kits for homeless shelters

Reducing Crime and Promoting Safety

- Volunteer at a police station or firehouse

- Paint over graffiti in your neighborhood

Promoting Community Enhancement

- Paint park benches

- Donate used books to your local library

- Become a tour guide at your local museum

- Repaint community fences

- Plant flowers in bare public areas

- Organize a campaign to raise money to buy and install new playground equipment for a park

- Participate in or help organize a community parade

- Clean up vacant lot

- Produce a neighborhood newspaper

- Create a newcomers group in your neighborhood and in your school to help welcome new families

- Volunteer to clean up trash at a community event

- Adopt a local highway or road and clean up trash along it

- Help fix or raise funds to repair a run-down playground

- Clean up after a natural disaster

Next Steps

Now that you know what your options are for community service, you can take the following steps to start getting involved:

#1: Look over your interests: Which activities seem most appealing to you? Were they mostly in one particular category, like children or the environment? If so, that's a good starting place for choosing specific organizations to contact.

#2: Figure out how much time you can devote to community service: Are you available for two hours every week? Are you not free on a regular basis but can volunteer for an entire weekend now and then?

Think about transportation as well and how you'll be able to get to different locations. Knowing this information will help you choose which community service projects to pursue, and it's helpful information for volunteer coordinators to know.

#3: Do some research to see what projects you can do in your community: Check at your school, place of worship, or town hall for more information on volunteering. You can also contact the place where you'd like to perform your community service, such as a particular animal shelter or nursing home, and ask if they take volunteers.

#4: Start volunteering! This list ranges from small projects that you can complete on your own in a few hours, to much larger projects that will take more time and people. If you find a project you can start on your own, do it!

If you want to do a project where you'll need more resources or people, check around your community to see if a similar program already exists that you can join. If not, don't be afraid to start your own! Many organizations welcome new volunteers and community service projects.

Source: https://blog.prepscholar.com/129-examples-of-community-service-projects