

~Service Project Ideas and Suggestions~

Families/Children:

- Collect travel-sized toiletries from hotels
- Coloring books: collect several unused pages from coloring books, staple together; or make a few pictures on the computer or by hand; for crayons, ask local restaurants for donations
- Donate used jigsaw puzzles
- Clothing drives, especially blankets
- Book drives
- Read books onto tape, then package the books with their tapes and donate to homes with small children
- Read books onto tape, then donate the tapes to the blind
- Put together packets for the beginning of school, put in bookbags if possible
- Collect school supplies for elementary schools and families
- Read to younger children/tutor school-aged children
- Help provide low-income mothers with basic baby items necessary for the first months of their infants' lives. Use grant money, donations or funds your group has raised to put together layettes. The layettes could include one infant gown, one receiving blanket, one combination garment and one crib sheet. After you put together the packages, a local community services agency could distribute them to low-income mothers
- Conduct a fun, food-related science experiment with a group of younger kids
- Make toys, games or crafts for a Child Care Center or pediatric unit of a hospital
- Work with a local hospital to set up a toy room for the children's ward or the emergency room. Help choose the space, decorate it & collect toys for the area.
- Have a stuffed animal drive for a local organization. One good use for stuffed animals is for Policemen to keep in the trunks of their cars. When called into a situation that involves a child, the stuffed animal can be very soothing, & also lessen the child's fear of the police officer
- Organize an Easter egg hunt for children in a disadvantaged community and ask area businesses for donations of prizes & gifts
- Emergency Phone Number Sheets: make up-to-date Emergency Phone number response sheets for your area to deliver to families. Include fire, police, ambulance, poison control centers, or any other numbers which you feel might be important in your area

Food:

- Hold food drive throughout the whole year
- Make food for parents staying at the Ronald McDonald House
- Volunteer in a soup kitchen or food pantry

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- Meals-on-Wheels

Community Involvement:

- Make “thank you” cards and donate refreshments for volunteers at non-profit relays, Habitat for Humanity sites, etc
- Coordinate a community drive to collect and repair used bicycles. Donate the refurbished bikes to a community agency that will give the bikes to kids. Partner with local police, public safety departments and businesses to make sure that each bike comes with a new bike helmet. (It isn't safe to recycle bike helmets!)
- Start your community walking, running or wheeling by sponsoring a Kiwanis, family and pet-friendly 5K run or walk.
- Paint hearts, flowers, diamonds, zigzags, suns, moons, stars, comets, ladybugs, snakes or other fun and simple shapes on kids' faces at a festival or fund-raiser
- Make a panel for the AIDS Quilt and give awareness presentations
- Work with your local government & police agency to create a crime watch program in your neighborhood
- Organize a volunteer fair in your community. Invite area volunteer organizations to set up booths to tell people more about their goals & to recruit volunteers. Make a directory of the organizations for your local Chamber of Commerce to give to those moving to your area.

Elderly/Disabled:

- Make holiday ornaments for local nursing homes
- Make, adapt or repair clothing for shut-ins or residents of nursing homes.
- Cook dinner for a Senior Citizen outreach at a local church
- Play bingo or other games with nursing home residents
- Organize a Seniors Prom - work with a local senior citizens community group or home to coordinate dancing lessons for young people. Ask the local seniors to teach the popular dances of their youth to a group of young people. Then have the young people in your group coordinate a community dance for the seniors.
- Decorate the Senior Center with snowflakes for winter, leaves for fall, flowers for spring
- Help the residents of a nursing home or other group home set up and maintain container gardens of vegetables and flowers
- Teach seniors how to surf the Internet
- Special Olympics - help at Special Olympics events such as the local bowl-a-thon or the winter and summer games
- Set up a buddy system for children with special needs in the community

Environment/Community Beautification:

- Park cleanup
- Adopt a Highway

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- School/neighborhood playground cleanup - spiff-up and fix-up a community playground. Celebrate your efforts with a picnic at the park and invite neighborhood kids and families to attend. Ask a local hardware or builders supply store to donate supplies.
- Organize a community clean up day
- Organize a recycling program
- Clean graffiti in neighborhoods or at schools
- Contact the local American Legion and volunteer to place flags in cemeteries for Memorial Day
- Mow lawns, rake leaves, shovel snow for the elderly
- Check out the bicycle trails in your area. Are they well-marked and well-groomed? If not, coordinate the effort to pick up the rubbish, update the signs and create posters about the “new and improved” local trails. Ask local businesses and community service agencies for permission to display the posters on their premises.
- Repaint hopscotch and other playground lines at elementary school

Animals:

- Humane Society
 - Gather supplies to donate:
 - Blankets, dish towels, washcloths, bath towels and beach towels to put in the cages
 - Small dog toys and cat toys
 - Make dog biscuits
 - Dog or cat food
 - Donate your time:
 - Groom and exercise the animals
 - Fold and place stamps on mailings for the local Humane Society
 - Enter animals from a shelter in a pet parade in the spring, hoping to find homes for them
 - Take animals from a shelter or pets to nursing homes
- Make bird feeders
- Adopt an endangered animal or a wild animal or bird at the zoo
- Organize pet care training for younger children
- Provide educational materials on the importance of spaying and neutering pets
- Consider organizing a visiting pet program in your community. Members can arrange to visit nursing homes, senior citizen centers, group homes for the disabled or special education schools with their animal

~Service Project Ideas for Meetings~

Making “fun kits” for children in hospitals and shelters:

- Busy Bags: stickers, crayons and coloring book pages, markers, small toys (e.g. Kids Meal toys), puppets, books, puzzles and puzzle books, deck of cards, home-made joke book, home-made journal, pencils, paper, stamps, stickers, lotion, envelopes, bubbles, small books, special note from the giver. Make up labels for the bags that say "We hope you feel better, etc"
- Craft Kits: easy, non-messy projects, like beads & yarn
- Sibling Packs: small toy and things for the kids to do while visiting hospitalized children
- Holiday specific kits
- Make ABC Books - get a photo album and put an upper and lower case letter on each page, along with pictures to represent the letters

Making “fun kits” for adults in nursing homes, VA hospitals, shut-ins:

- Adult type word search, paper, pens, pencils, writing paper, crossword puzzles, comics
- Holiday specific kits

Personal care kits for the homeless:

- Toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, sample bottles of mouthwash, brush/comb, soap, shampoo, deodorant, shave cream & razor, wash cloth, small mirror, skin creams, shower caps

Service Ideas for Service-Learning Projects

Direct (members perform a service activity first hand):

- Tutor younger students in a subject you excel in
- Coach physically disabled students in a team sport
- Assist second-language speakers in enrolling their children in school
- Tutor non-English speaking students in English
- Participate in a local Habitat for Humanity home construction project
- Befriend a student struggling with mental illness
- Spend time with the elderly at a nursing home by visiting and listening to their stories
- Clean-up a local river, stream or lake
- Sing and play games with children suffering from HIV/AIDS
- Help to prepare and serve food in a soup kitchen or homeless shelter
- Plant a community garden with community members

Indirect (perform a service without first hand contact with the recipients):

- Organize a Read-a-Thon in your school or neighborhood
- Offer your clerical skills to a local Special Olympics office
- Create fliers to announce that there are volunteers to assist non-native English speaking parents enroll their children in school
- Research and fundraise for ESL books and supplies for ESL students' use
- Organize a donated materials drive to assist a local Habitat for Humanity or housing project
- Organize a Mental Illness Awareness Week at your school – invite outreach coordinators, and medical professionals to present and role-play particular topics
- Organize an Intergenerational activity day in a local nursing home for fellow students
- Increase local environmental awareness and support by writing a newspaper article about the local river, stream or lake clean up
- Create and perform a puppet show for children suffering from HIV/AIDS
- Contact local restaurants and bakeries and arrange for them to donate their leftover and day-old bread to the local homeless shelter
- Ask local nurseries to sponsor the community garden project by donating a number of plants, seeds, or potting soil to the venture
- Assist a Peace Corps Volunteer to fund a project through the Peace Corps Partnership Program
(www.peacecorps.gov/wws/students/service/links/partnerships.html)

Helpful Websites for Service-Learning Projects

Affordable Housing

Housing Assistance Council
<http://www.ruralhome.org/>

Elderly

Association for the Protection of the Elderly
<http://www.aepe.org/>
Alzheimer's Association
<http://www.alz.org>
Arthritis Foundation
<http://www.arthritis.org>

Environment

Center for International Environmental Law
<http://www.ciel.org>
Environmental Defense Fund
<http://www.edf.org>
Natural Resources Defense Council
<http://www.nrdc.org/reference/environGroups.asp>
World Wildlife Fund
<http://www.wwf.org>

Hunger and Homelessness

Feeding Minds Fighting Hunger
<http://www.feedingminds.org/>
National Coalition for the Homeless
<http://www.nationalhomeless.org>
National Center for Homeless Education
<http://www.serve.org/nche>
National Student Campaign Against

Hunger and Homelessness

<http://www.pirg.org/nscahh/>
National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty
<http://www.nlchp.org/>
Habitat for Humanity International
<http://www.habitat.org>
National Low-Income Housing Coalition
<http://www.nlihc.org/>

People Affected by HIV/AIDS

National AIDS Treatment Advocacy Project
<http://www.natap.org>
Project Inform
<http://www.projinf.org>
AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition
<http://www.avac.org>

People Living with Disabilities

Administration on Developmental Disabilities
<http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/add>
Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities
<http://www.c-c-d.org/>
Learning Disabilities Association
http://www.ldaamerica.org/public_html/index.shtml
National Alliance for the Mentally Ill
<http://www.nami.org>

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Local Volunteer Centers

Organization Name	Location	Phone Number & Email Address
United Way of Summit County Volunteer Center	Akron	330-762-8991 pbeals@uwsummit.org
Center for Community Service	Athens	740-593-4028 graybill@ohiou.edu
Wood County United Way	Bowling Green	419-352-2390 woodcounty@uwgtol.org
United Way of Greater Stark County	Canton	330-588-2090, ext. 301 kdouce@uwgsc.org
United Way Volunteer Resource Center	Cincinnati	513-762-7159 nancy.starner@uwgc.org
Volunteer Center - Business Volunteers Unlimited	Cleveland	216-736-7711 dobrrin@busvol.org
FIRSTLINK	Columbus	614-341-2277 marileecz@aol.com , beck@firstlink.org
Center for Nonprofit Resources	Dayton	937-225-3057 info@cnrohio.org
Volunteer Connection	Defiance	419-782-3212 vc@defnet.com
Connections - Delaware County Volunteer Center	Delaware	740-363-5000 connections@midohio.net
United Way of Hancock County - Volunteer Center	Findlay	419-423-1775 mduoye@uw Hancock.org , jigoren@uw Hancock.org
Warren County United Way Volunteer Center	Lebanon	513-932-3987 ext. 24 ilangworthy@wcuwl.org
Volunteer Action Center of Lorain County	Lorain	440-240-1990 kgoerg@centurytel.net volunteeraction@centurytel.net
United Way Volunteer Center of Medina County	Medina	330-725-2000 cdawson@unitedwaymedina.org
Volunteer Resource Center of Middletown Area	Middletown	513-423-8764 mike.sanders@uwgc.org
Volunteer Center of Huron County	Norwalk	419-663-1179 volunteer@accnorwalk.com
United Way of Portage County	Ravenna	330-297-4636 gloria@uwportage.org
Volunteer Center of Erie County	Sandusky	419-627-0074 execdir@thevolunteercenter.com
Volunteer Service Bureau of Clark County	Springfield	937-323-1400 trinkoski@uwccc.org
United Way's Volunteer Center	Toledo	419-244-3063 jhrovati@uwgtol.org
United Way of Greater Toledo, Ottawa County	Port Clinton	419-734-6645 cgalvin@uwgtol.org
Volunteer Center of Youngstown/Mahoning Valley	Youngstown	330-782-5877 m drummond@volunteerservicesagency.org