

Create Your Own Volunteer Project

Do you want to do something to help our community? Does your schedule or other commitments prevent you from volunteering with an agency? Included in this list are ideas on how to create a project on your own to help meet community needs.

☆ **Write Letters or Postcards**

Find out some background information about your issue. Write up a letter or postcard that says what you found out and what needs to be done to solve the problem. Identify people who have power over the issue (people who make decisions about it) and send them signed letters. Try to get as many people as you can to send a letter or postcard.

☆ **Create and Donate**

Together with friends or family, or on your own, create items an agency might need and donate them. Some possible items that you can make are winter hats and blankets for people in need, art kits for youth at a low-income day-care, recipe books that contain affordable and healthy meal choices, backpacks with school supplies in them, holiday decorations for assisted living facilities.

☆ **Build Awareness of the Issue**

Make posters, bookmarks, fliers, or pamphlets with information about the issue and what people can do to help. Display them, or pass them out to friends, neighbors and community members. By educating people about community problems, and giving them some suggestions on how they can be part of the solution, you can get a lot more time and energy spent solving the problem.

☆ **Ask Agencies for a “Wish List”**

Call a local agency that addresses the community problem you would like to help with and ask them what their biggest needs are. Ask them what you can do to help them fulfill those needs. Be creative—brainstorm with the agency ways you can help them out.

☆ **Organize a Drive**

Food drives are the most common, but you can organize a drive to collect just about any basic item an agency would need. Choose one (or several) neighborhoods to do your drive in. Pass out fliers a few days before you want to collect the items to let people know what you are collecting and why. Some examples of drives are: winter clothing drive, school supplies drive, hygiene items drive, book drive, toy drive, art supplies drive, first aid supplies drive.

☆ **Raise Money**

Organize a fundraiser and donate the money to an organization that is working to solve the community problem you want to help. Some examples of fundraisers are: car wash, bake sale, bead jewelry sale, admission to an event (like a dinner, dance, or talent show)

*For help with any of these project ideas, please contact **United Way 2-1-1 by dialing 2-1-1 (or 407-7066)**. United Way 2-1-1 is an information and referral service, so they will have ideas on who to call, phone numbers of organizations and local government, as well as help for you as you plan and carry out your project.*

