

Community Service “Best Fit” Guide

Need help finding a community service site? Consider the following options:

- ⇒ Public Libraries
- ⇒ Food Pantries
- ⇒ Assisted Living and Nursing Home Facilities
- ⇒ Schools
- ⇒ Local Businesses in your Community
- ⇒ After-school and Summer Youth Programs
- ⇒ Humane Society
- ⇒ Churches
- ⇒ Hospitals
- ⇒ Organizations in your County Government Center
- ⇒ Day Care Facilities
- ⇒ Lion’s Clubs
- ⇒ City Government/ Area Community Clubs
- ⇒ Local Associations and Celebrations Committees

When looking for a site to perform community service it is important to find a place that will fit you best. Look for places where you might be best able to contribute your skills and talents and assist you on making progress towards your own personal or professional goals.

Assess your Interests:

The time you put in to get trained for an unwanted volunteer position not only costs you, but the organization as well. You have to start the process over again of finding a site to volunteer, and the organization has to go out and find, place, and train someone else.

A bad fit can actually cause harm. For example, if you enter into a mentoring commitment and end it early, a young person’s self-esteem may be impaired.

What activities or roles would you like to be involved in?

- **Hands-on:** involve minimal training to get started (cleaning up parks, planting trees)
- **Direct service:** volunteering and having direct contact with those you are serving (delivering or serving food)
- **Online:** completing projects you can do as long as you have internet access (translating materials, developing websites, blogging)
- **Skilled:** tasks that utilize particular skills or experience (using graphic design to redesign materials, knowledge of auto-mechanics)

Time Commitment:

- **Impromptu:** a project that is created and implemented on the spot
- **One-Time:** projects or events that take place only on a certain date (community festivals)
- **Episodic:** serving occasionally on ongoing projects (cleaning up hiking trails, serving meals at a homeless shelter)
- **Ongoing:** Commitment to a project for an agreed upon time (mentoring a young person)

Other Considerations:

- Access to transportation
- Your range of abilities and skills
- Age
- Location and available opportunities

Questions to Ask:

- What is the work environment like?
- What challenges might a volunteer face?
- What benefits does the organization see for a potential volunteer in this position?
- How will the efforts of the volunteer help the organization serve their population, reach it’s goals, and further it’s mission?



**BUFFALO/PEPIN COUNTY
TEEN COURT**

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<http://www.idealists.org/info/Volunteer/Ideal>, 2014