



University of California
 Cooperative Extension
Tulare County
 Agriculture and Natural Resources



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YOUTH CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE—VOLUNTEER NOW

School is out and you are just not ready to look for summer employment yet. Think about making a difference in your community by volunteering your time to a local charity or community organization.

One of the hardest parts of volunteering can be finding a volunteering opportunity that you will enjoy. Here are some tips in choosing an opportunity that will be fulfilling.

Look for a volunteer opportunity that you enjoy. Think about what kinds of things you like to do and what things you do well. If you enjoy reading or books, volunteering at the library may be rewarding. Literacy volunteers act as tutors who help children and adults learn to read.

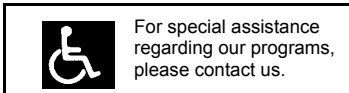
Figure out how much time you have and when you are available. Take a few minutes and write out your schedule. This is one of the questions an organization will ask you.

Keep in mind transportation. How are you going to get to your volunteer opportunity? Can you walk there? Drive? Take a bus?

Be sure to explore your options. Ask your parents, teachers and friends of volunteer opportunities they are aware of.

Call some organizations and ask them about volunteer opportunities in their organization. If you reach a voice mail system, speak slowly and clearly, and include all the information they will need to call you back.

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Check things out before making a commitment. You are not obligated to volunteer at an organization just because you called them. It is helpful to see the place before you decide to make a commitment.

After you visit an organization, decide whether you want to volunteer there. You may have to try a few places before you find a good match. Don't get discouraged.

You can get a lot of volunteering. You can learn about yourself, learn about others and meet a lot of interesting people by volunteering. You will be helping others as you help yourself.

Source: The Volunteer Center of Contra Costa, <http://www.helpnow.org/youth.html>, June 17, 2002

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