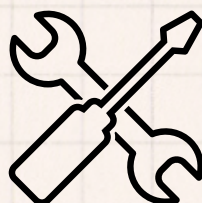




# YOUTH INTO VOLUNTEERING Toolkit

THIS TOOLKIT IS A RESOURCE FOR THOSE WHO ENGAGE WITH YOUNG  
PEOPLE IN THE NORTH TO EMPOWER AND EDUCATE YOUNG PEOPLE  
TO BE ACTIVE VOLUNTEERS IN THEIR COMMUNITIES

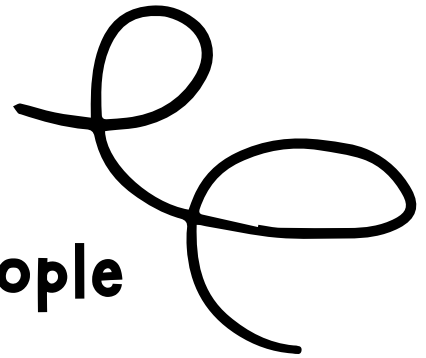




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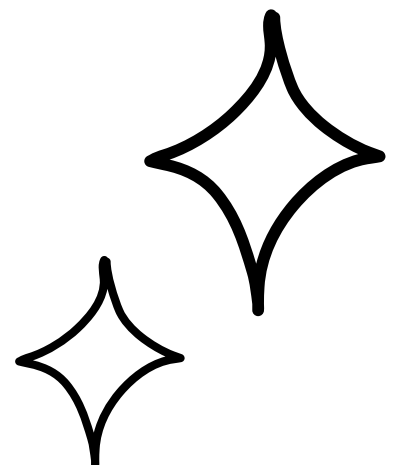
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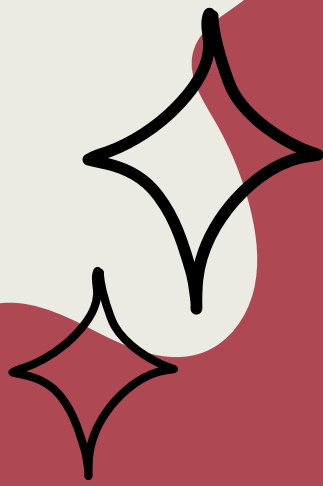
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”You are never  
too young to  
change the  
world”



# **BENEFITS FOR VOLUNTEERING AS A YOUNG PERSON**

## **1. GAIN VALUABLE WORK EXPERIENCE & BUILD NEW SKILLS**

**Volunteering is an excellent opportunity to build a young person's skill set from an early age and gain experience in a particular field of work.**

## **2. EXPLORE CAREER INTERESTS**

**Volunteering is an excellent way for young people to explore potential career paths, providing them with an opportunity to test-drive careers and broaden their horizons.**

## **3. DEVELOP SENSE OF COMMUNITY**

**By volunteering, young people help address issues and solve problems in their communities, contributing to the well-being of the people around them. This helps create a sense of belonging and purpose, which in turn cultivates civic engagement and social responsibility.**

## **4. FOSTER PERSONAL GROWTH & RESILIENCE**

**Young people can develop important life skills through volunteering, such as leadership, problem-solving, communication, and teamwork. They can then apply those skills in other areas of life and have a growth mindset and confidence in other settings.**

## **5. IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING**

**Volunteering has been found to help improve mental health, self-esteem, and sense of purpose. By helping others, young people can gain a sense of achievement and feel good about themselves, contributing actively to their own mental well-being.**

## **6. NETWORK AND MEET NEW PEOPLE**

**Volunteering provides young people with an opportunity to meet new people with different backgrounds, cultures, and life experiences. This helps to build their network of connections that can be valuable in advancing their education and career goals. It's not always about what you know but who you know**

# TYPES OF VOLUNTEERING

**Hands on volunteering** : These volunteer opportunities involve working directly with people, animals or materials. Examples include volunteering at a hospital, cafe or animal shelter, serving meals at a soup kitchen, building furniture at a men's shed or serving customers at an op shop.

**Advocacy and Awareness Volunteering**: These volunteer opportunities focus on raising awareness and advocating for a particular cause. They involve educating others about a specific issue and using social media, attending rallies and events, and lobbying elected politicians. This could also mean joining a local youth advisory group

**Community Development Volunteering**: These volunteer experiences focus on improving communities by engaging with residents and organisations to evaluate and strengthen social, economic, and environmental factors. Examples include neighbourhood cleanup activities or fundraising for local community groups & causes.

**Virtual Volunteering**: These opportunities allow volunteers to help online from anywhere around the world. This includes opportunities such as the community visitors scheme (video calls with residents in aged care facilities), graphic designing, or creating digital media (e.g., YouTube videos, social media campaigns) and more.



# HOW TO FIND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

## NORTHERN VOLUNTEERING

[www.nvsa.org.au](http://www.nvsa.org.au)

(08) 8250 1582

## VOLUNTEERING SA & NT

[www.volunteeringsa-nt.org.au](http://www.volunteeringsa-nt.org.au)

(08) 8221 7177

## GO VOLUNTEER

[www.volunteeringaustralia.org/get-involved/govolunteer](http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/get-involved/govolunteer)

## SEEK VOLUNTEER

[www.volunteer.com.au](http://www.volunteer.com.au)

## REACH OUT

Reach out to a local community group or organisation and ask them





# TIPS FOR CHOOSING A VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY



## IDENTIFY INTERESTS

Think about what activities and issues the young person is passionate about. What causes do they care about? What skills do they want to develop? By identifying their interests upfront, you can narrow down volunteer opportunities that are meaningful to them.

## RESEARCH DIFFERENT ORGANISATIONS

Look for organisations that align with their interests and goals. Research the mission, values, and impact. Consider the programs and services they offer and their reputation in the community. Reach out to the organisations and ask questions.

## CONSIDER THE YOUNG PERSONS AVAILABILITY & TRANSPORTATION

Determine how much time they are able and willing to commit to volunteering. Look for opportunities that match their schedule, transportation and availability.

## ASSESS THEIR SKILLS & TALENTS

Consider the young person's current skills and talents and how they can be used to make a meaningful contribution to an organisation. Do they have skills in communication, making coffees, or design that are in demand? Look for volunteer opportunities that use their strengths but also help them develop new ones.

## EVALUATE THE TRAINING & SUPPORT

Ask about training and support offered by the organisation. Look for opportunities that provide the necessary training and assistance to ensure the young person feels confident and prepared to volunteer.

## WHAT SETTING DO THEY WANT TO VOLUNTEER IN?

Determine whether they prefer individual or group volunteering. Decide if they prefer to volunteer in a hands-on capacity, or if they prefer a virtual or digital environment. By understanding their preferences and needs, you're more likely to find volunteer opportunities that they find enjoyable and rewarding.





# PREPARING A YOUNG PERSON TO VOLUNTEER

*Preparation is one of the keys to a successful volunteering experience for a young person. See the tips below on how a young person can be prepared.*



## EXPECTATIONS

Set clear expectations: Before the start of the volunteering experience, sit down with the young person and go over the details of what they can expect in their role. This includes what their responsibilities will be, what tasks they will be expected to perform, and how much time commitment is required.

## TRAINING

Provide training or orientation: Make sure the young person receives proper training or orientation before they begin volunteering. This may include explaining the details of the organisation's mission, policies, and procedures, as well as specific training related to their role.

## COMMUNICATION

Encourage communication with the organisation: Encourage the young person to communicate with the organisation if they have any questions or concerns. This fosters a positive working relationship and helps ensure that both the young person and the organisation are on the same page.

## SAFETY

Discuss any safety precautions that the young person should take during their volunteering experience. Ensure that they have the appropriate protective gear and that they understand how to use equipment safely, if applicable.

## PROFESSIONAL

Emphasise professionalism: Teach the young person the importance of professionalism in volunteering. This includes arriving on time and dressing appropriately, as well as being respectful to other volunteers, staff members, and clients.

## REFLECT

Encourage the young person to reflect on their volunteering experience after it is finished. This can help them identify what they enjoyed most about the experience and what skills they developed, and can inspire them to volunteer again in the future



# Youth with additional needs tips

For young people with additional needs, the process of volunteering can be challenging. (Additional needs could mean a learning difficulty, physical disability, anxiety and in general needing extra support)

As people who work with young people, it is important to ensure that the volunteer opportunities you connect them with have support available to enable youth with additional needs to have a successful experience of volunteering. Below are some things to consider.

## Accessibility

Volunteer opportunities need to be accessible to youth with additional needs as much as possible. Appropriate accommodations should be provided, such as equipment, transport, and support staff. Volunteers with mobility issues should have access to ramps, lifts, and/or accessible routes into and around the facility to reach the volunteering site.

## Communication

It is important to establish clear and open communication with young people and their families/ carers. This includes listening to their concerns, understanding their needs, and establishing a support plan that addresses these needs. Meetings and consultations will help the volunteer organisation and volunteers and their families in understanding their role in the volunteer context.

## Skills Development

Identify and provide specific training to volunteers to enable them to complete their duties or assist with a task, this will not only increase their confidence but can also be empowering. This may include communication skills, conflict resolution, customer service, and leadership training. In addition, if a volunteer has a specific interest, look for opportunities within the organisation that match them.

## Flexibility

Volunteering can be an intense experience, and for young people with additional needs, this experience may require additional flexibility. Organisations should be ready to adapt the volunteering role as the needs of the volunteer change. If for example, one week, the volunteer needs extra time or support, the organization should be ready to find a solution to meet these needs and balance other priorities.

## Celebrating Successes

Small achievements can be monumental, so it's important to celebrate the successes and appreciate the hard work of volunteering. This can be reflected through public acknowledgment, awards, and certificates or an informal chat. Don't forget to recognize the volunteer's contribution. Small successes can boost volunteer's confidence and spur them to achieve even more.

# Additional Resources

This **IAVE handbook** is a resource to inform and educate youth volunteers, organizations that engage youth volunteers, and corporations the added value and skills youth obtain from volunteering. It serves to highlight the importance of youth volunteering as a way to learn skills, increase a young persons' network of contacts, and encourage youth to gain real-life perspectives.

<https://www.iave.org/handbook-youth-volunteering-pathway-employment/>

**Justice connect** guide provides an overview of the key legal obligations organisations owe volunteers and provides practical examples, template documents and tips to assist in their understanding. The guide is available for download through the link

<https://www.nfplaw.org.au/free-resources/managing-people/managing-volunteers#youth>

This information is for volunteer-involving organisations (host organisations) who want to set up a student volunteer program with **Department for Education** schools, preschools or children's centres (schools).

<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/working-us/volunteers/organisations-hosting-student-volunteers/student-volunteers-information-host-organisations>

The **Volunteering Resource Hub**, an initiative of Volunteering Australia, brings together useful, evidence-based and current best practice resources, tools, research and information to support effective volunteer management.

<https://volunteeringhub.org.au/>

The **Volunteering Strategy for South Australia** aims to improve the experience of our volunteers, enhance outcomes for volunteering involving organisations and supports our state reach a high volunteer participation rate.

The strategy is a partnership across the following four partners: Department of Human Services, Volunteering SA-NT, Business SA and the Local Government Association of South Australia.

<https://www.youthactionplan.sa.gov.au/connect-and-grow/volunteering-strategy-for-south-australia/>

**Volunteerability** support volunteers and organisations to generate volunteering roles for people with disability. They support with organisational practices, awareness training and growing opportunities for all volunteers.

<https://volunteerability.com.au/>

**We cannot always  
build the future for  
our youth but we  
can build our youth  
for the future.**

**Franklin Roosevelt**

