

National Volunteer month in the United States takes place during April, though volunteering can be celebrated all year!

One of the greatest aspects of volunteerism is that there are so many different ways to do it and so many benefits. Those wishing to volunteer benefit by learning new skills, keeping active, improving social skills, making new friends, making you feel good and useful, and teaches you what really matters. It doesn't matter if you can only volunteer for one day or one hour, every minute can make a difference and is greatly appreciated. You don't need to be super talented or hold great skills; all you need is a little time and the desire to help. Every act of volunteerism deserves to be applauded.

Volunteers come in all shapes and sizes, ages, and backgrounds. The common thread is that they want to make a difference, whether it helps one person or a whole community. And at the end of the day, the world is a just a little better.

Don't forget to take a moment and thank a volunteer.

Here are just a few ideas of ways to volunteer:

- Local library – *help with shelving books, read stories to children, help run a craft project, fundraising*
- Nursing home – *offer to read to the residents, spend some time with a resident that does not have any family local*
- Clean up your neighborhood – *walk up and down your street picking up the trash*
- Neighborhood park – *pick up the trash on the lawns, make piles of the fallen sticks and tree limbs, rake the leaves into a pile*
- Food bank – *help package up boxes, sort canned goods*
- Church – *help with coffee hour, help clean, offer to make repairs, landscaping*
- Coaching – *offer your time to coach a neighborhood kids team, help organize teams*
- Community events – *clean-up, set-up, handing out flyers, picking up trash*
- Local youth serving agencies – *help with an event planned, share a talent, fundraising*
- Don't have any extra time – *donations are always welcome, monetary or materials*

Monthly Messages are brought to you by the Tompkins County Youth Services Department, a proud partner of The Community Coalition for Healthy Youth.

If you have further questions or comments about this message or would like information on how to become involved with the Community Coalition for Healthy Youth, please email ahendrix@tompkins-co.org

Thank you in advance for forwarding this monthly message to all of your networks. More detailed versions of this message and all previous messages can be found at <http://www.healthyouth.org/monthly-messages.php>.

