



tips for youth workers

NOVEMBER 2018

KIDS SERVING OTHERS

Young people need the opportunity to feel valued as members of the Body of Christ. One way to do this is through service projects. It's important to keep in mind that like adults kids don't want to be involved in "busy work"-**they want to make a difference**. Young people will get more involved if they **know who they are serving**, so have photos available, give background information, **personalize the project**. It's important that the project involves everyone, not just a few people. Plan and assign tasks so that everyone has a role to play. **Involve the parents**. If parents see what their kids are doing they'll be able to encourage them in their efforts. When the project is completed, **reward the young people with a party or celebration**, put their names in the church bulletin or on a bulletin board with photos. And finally, help the children to **develop a sense of cheerful Christian compassion towards others**, not service done out of guilt.

PROJECTS YOUR YOUNG PEOPLE CAN PARTICIPATE IN INCLUDE:

- Collect and/or sort items for a food pantry or thrift store.
- Perform songs or skits at a nursing home or retirement centre.
- Help church members who are shut-ins. Bake and deliver cookies or healthy snacks, go Christmas caroling, make and deliver birthday cards or meals.
- Sign up as a "team" to cover a kettle shift and be sure to sing for those passing by.
- Support "Gifts of Hope" through The Salvation Army World Missions department. Contact The Salvation Army Sponsorship Coordinator, Major Donna Barthau (donna_barthau@can.salvationarmy.org) at territorial headquarters for more information.
- Make school packs for low-income children. Fill backpacks, shoeboxes or paper lunch sacks with schools supplies, a toy and toiletry items.
- Make and deliver holiday food baskets for needy families.
- Each child buys, wraps and delivers a toy to a needy child his or her own age and gender (be sure to include the batteries!), or donate the toys unwrapped to Toy Mountain.
- Participate in the worship service as greeters, ushers, handing out bulletins.
- Older children can organize a party for younger children or their unchurched friends.
- Older children, with adult supervision, can provide child care during church events.
- If a church campground is unused during the winter, schedule workdays before the summer camps begin to help maintain the facility.
- Help in the church office. Children can stuff bulletins or envelopes for a mass mailing. Computer whizzes can do data entry.
- Write notes to be sent to elderly or infirm members of the church.
- Make get-well cards to be used by pastoral care staff when making hospital or home visits.
- Clean an area of the church building or grounds.

For more tips on involving young people in service projects check out *Children's Ministry Smart Pages: Grades 1-6* (ISBN 0830730966), *The Big Book of Service Projects* (ISBN 083726330), *101 Simple Service Projects Kids Can Do* (ISBN074711542). These are older books that may still be available through amazon.ca.