



**Inspiring Youth  
to Volunteerism**

**Areas to Volunteer  
as a Youth**

**The Importance of  
Volunteerism**

**Benefits of Youth  
Volunteerism**

# **YOUTHS AND VOLUNTEERISM**



## HEALTH CALL!!!

To  where our welcome is a health call

## WHO WE ARE

We are BUZZ, a publication of Society for Family Health (SFH). SFH is a leading public health NGO in Nigeria, working in partnership with the government, local and international donors and partners in the delivery of health programmes aimed at malaria prevention and control, delivery of safe water systems, prevention and treatment of HIV& AIDS, improvement of maternal, neonatal and child health services and access, expansion of family planning access, provision of tuberculosis prevention & treatment services, etc.

BUZZ is our youth-focused newsletter that brings you updates on all our youth programmes and interventions, it is also aimed at informing donors and youth-led organisations of the opportunities to partner with SFH. This newsletter will be providing general tips for living a healthy, youthful, and productive lifestyle.

In this tenth edition of BUZZ, we aim to provide information on Addressing **YOUTHS AND VOLUNTEERISM**.



## What Is Volunteerism?



According to the Collins English dictionary, it is the principle of donating time and energy for the benefit of other people in the community as a social responsibility rather than for financial reward. Volunteerism is the act of contributing free labor to conduct community service or support a nonprofit organization. It is also, the act of donating time and energy towards a greater cause. Volunteers help change the lives of those in their community as a social responsibility rather than receiving a financial reward. It is the idea of devoting time and effort to a worthy cause, than earning monetary compensation.

Volunteers transform the lives of individuals in their community out of a sense of social obligation because it enables people to give of themselves to others.

Volunteering is significant, as it can benefit the community when people take the initiative to support charitable initiatives and assist those in need by strengthening ties and developing long-lasting

1. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/social-sciences/volunteerism>
2. <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/volunteerism>

relationships. Additionally, charitable organizations can make use of these teams of enthusiastic volunteers to further their efforts to improve and secure the globe.

**For the youth,** "There is mounting evidence that volunteering, participating in service projects, and other forms of community involvement are more than feel-good activities. They can contribute to better outcomes for youth and communities." It follows that there is a need for young adults, teenagers and children to be encouraged in altruistic behavior such as volunteering to increase their chances of turning out right in future. Doing things simply because you are happy to do so, knowing it will make others happy, helps to develop subconsciously a sense of responsibility for making a positive impact.

## The Importance of Volunteerism



Volunteering is one of the best ways to make a positive impact in the world. It's something that you can do at your own time, and it's something that you can do for a reason. Volunteering is about choosing to help others, and the more time you spend giving your time and energy to others, the more you'll be helping yourself. Volunteering is significant because it provides crucial assistance to deserving causes, those in need, and the larger community.

In fact, a lot of organizations and charities depend on the kindness of volunteers because they frequently only receive partial funding from the government or local sponsors and cannot afford to pay the wages of all of their employees. There are various businesses that rely nearly entirely on groups of volunteers to sustain them and carry out their tasks.

For the youth, the importance of Volunteering cannot be overemphasized, as a popular saying puts it 'youths are known for their strength and valor' This strength when channelled to volunteerism, will go a long way in nation building.

In Nigeria, the National Youth Service Corp is a program which touts the line of volunteerism, it is stated that the scheme was created "with a view to the proper encouragement and development of common ties among the youths of Nigeria and the promotion of national unity".

## Some of the Benefits of Youth Volunteerism include:

### Develop transferable skills

The acquisition of transferable skills is one of the most significant advantages of adolescent volunteering. When volunteering, you will be able to put your abilities to better use when you return to your community or organization after your experience as a volunteer.

The abilities developed via volunteering, such as teamwork and problem-solving, are essential for success in school as well as at work and in life. Youth can acquire citizenship that lasts until adulthood or can build their resumes with real-world experience by volunteering, whether they choose to raise money by selling items to their neighbors of which the proceeds are channelled to a social cause or by going out for a community outreach. Employers and colleges seek out applicants who are active in their communities and who are good team players.

### Increases the likelihood of finding employment

Volunteering is a great approach for students in schools to get ready for the workforce and increases the likelihood of finding employment for those in the university. Additionally, employers are 85% more likely to overlook resume problems when volunteering is exhibited and 82% more likely to hire a candidate with volunteer experience.

### Builds self-confidence and self-esteem

Doing good for others and the community helps to create a natural sense of accomplishment. Working as a volunteer can also give you a sense of pride and identity, helping to boost your self-confidence further by taking you out of your natural comfort zone and environment. Indeed, volunteering helps you to feel better about yourself, which you can then take back to your 'regular' routine, hopefully creating a more positive view of your own life and future goals. If you're shy or afraid of new experiences, cultures and travel, volunteering overseas could be an important and insightful way to help you build self-confidence in this area too.



### Volunteering connects you with other people

If you're feeling lonely, isolated, or simply want to widen your social circle, volunteering in your local community is an important and often fun way to meet new people. In fact, one of the best ways to make new friends and strengthen existing relationships is to commit to a shared activity together, volunteering lets you do just that. If you've recently moved to a new city or country, volunteering is an important and easy way to meet new people and it also strengthens your ties to that local community and broadens your support network. Furthermore, it connects you to people who have common interests and passions and who could go on to become great friends.

### Physical and Mental Health

The Benefits of Volunteering being crucial to mental health are apparent, more surprisingly physical health. Indeed, a growing body of evidence suggests that people who give their time to others might benefit from lower blood pressure and a longer lifespan. A 1999 study showed that 'high volunteers' (helping out at two or more organizations) had a 63 per cent lower mortality rate than non-volunteers. More recent research (2013) from Carnegie Mellon University found that adults over 50 who volunteered regularly were less likely to develop high blood pressure (hypertension) compare to non-volunteers.

The benefits of Volunteering being key to mental health are evident as it can help counteract the effects of stress, depression and anxiety. Indeed, the social contact aspect of helping others can have a profound effect on your overall psychological well-being. Volunteering keeps you in regular contact with others and helps you develop a solid support system, which in turn combats feelings of loneliness and depression. Volunteer work focused on helping animals, has been shown to improve moods and relieve stress.



## What Discourages Youths from Volunteering



### Lack of time and other responsibilities

The youth of today are getting busy, between school, sports, after-school activities, and other events, it is usually difficult for them to find time to do anything else. Among youth and across all age groups, lack of time is stated as the number one reason for not volunteering.

### Practical concerns

Sometimes, even if youth have the time and are willing to volunteer, they face simple practical barriers such as lack of information, transportation, or expenses. Working in collaboration with the youths can help get past these logistic and practical barriers.

### Lack of interest or non-enjoyable activity

Some of the reasons for the loss of interest include; activities that are too difficult, too easy, not rewarding, or simply not a good match for their talents and interests. When the task involved in volunteering is too-difficult, it can be frustrating for the youth. When the task is too-easy, the youth volunteer can become easily bored. It becomes important that the task involved in volunteer work is neither too difficult nor too easy so as to maintain the right disposition of the youth to volunteering.

### No one asked

Finally, another top reason why youth don't volunteer is that they simply weren't asked. Sometimes, all it takes for youth to start thinking about volunteering is for them to be approached and given information about opportunities.

## Inspiring Youth to Volunteerism



What young people have in greater supply than adults is Time, this time if applied to volunteerism will benefit both the youth and the organisation in which they are volunteering. The challenge in youth volunteering is motivating them towards contributing their time and energy to it. **The following can be considered to lower the barriers youths face when it comes to volunteering:**

### Explain their role

Young people naturally want to lend a hand, something their parents, presumably, encouraged in them from an early age. When discussing with any youthful potential, emphasize how they can participate and contribute. They will be motivated to participate once they realize their involvement will have an influence and result in action. The best approach to show how young people can assist is through video. An effective tactic is to use videos of other young volunteers from your organization discussing their experiences while working there.

### Go to the youths

Use your own social media channels to get this visual content out to this target audience. You may even want to use specific social media channels that young people frequent. Channels like Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter

and YouTube will yield great success being that majority of the youths are active on these channels. Another strategy is the offline strategy which involves going to schools and universities to talk about your organization. Have other young volunteers go with you to share their experiences in person. Other places to consider meeting and connecting with young people are youth groups and leadership organizations (like groups in churches, mosques and social clubs).

### Make use of young influencers

Young people listen to other young people, so put these influencers to work on their social media channels talking about their experiences with volunteering and what it meant to them. This is a great technique to get young people to participate because peer acceptance is so significant. They'll want to brag to others about their voluntary work and worthwhile endeavors.

### Give rewards and positive feed backs

Feeling unappreciated is the best way to kill motivation, especially when you are doing something that is actually making a difference. When you tell people you appreciate what they do, they tend to do more of it. Recognize their efforts and they will work harder. Many young people want to go to college, earn extra credit, do internships, and start their professions. Another tactic is to provide incentives that support these objectives, such as helping with college applications, providing a scholarship, setting up an internship program, or granting references for resumes in exchange for volunteer work.

### Enjoy their energy

There is no doubt that people love working with youths, because of their energy, passion, creativity and enthusiasms. Keep in mind, however, that they may work and see things differently than you when you bring them in for projects. They often do not work as long, have shorter attention spans, and are focused on technology. That means you may need to consider different types of roles for them, including overseeing texting and social media messaging where they know how to engage others that prefer these communication channels.

### Provide fun learning activities

Some youths believe volunteering to be monotonous, tiring, and requiring excessive amounts of energy. One of the best motivators is fun. By combining activities like, music and games with learning exercises, you may make your volunteer experience more enjoyable.

## Areas to Volunteer as a Youth



The following are a few volunteer opportunities that young people may want to think about participating in, these are:

### Your community

Several opportunities exist in the community we live in for youth to volunteer. It can be as simple as helping to keep the community clean, helping the older adults, mentoring the younger ones and teaching them how to be responsible citizens. You can just look around and find where your community needs your help.

### Non-governmental / Non-profit organizations

Volunteering with an NGO can help you build capacity and support long-term goals in the underserved communities of developing

countries. It also can enhance your resume as you gain hard and soft skills. The Nigerian red cross is an example of an NGO, youth can volunteer, youth can organize outreaches, blood drives and even get trained in First aid treatments in case of emergencies. Society for family health, also welcome volunteers for various projects.

### Feeding Programs

Lagos food bank and feed the kids Nigeria, are initiatives that give out food to the needy and people that really need them, and it's an example of where youths can volunteer and help out.

### Libraries

Libraries enjoy having volunteers assist with cleaning, organizing, or checking books out. Often, they are areas where youths can always volunteer for them.

### Charity programs

Charity programs focus on providing support to the less privileged, care centers, orphanage homes, etc., charity programs often need helping hands when going out for visitations.

### Your desired area of interest

You can literally volunteer in anything you are interested in; it can be a career interest or even a hobby as long as they are ready to accept you as a volunteer.

## Brain Teasers



- **A man stands on one side of a river, his dog on the other. The man calls his dog, who immediately crosses the river without getting wet and without using a bridge or a boat. How did the dog do it?**
- **What is unusual about the following words: revive, banana, grammar, voodoo, assess, potato, dresser, uneven?**

1. <https://www.verywellfamily.com/local-volunteer-opportunities-for-teens-26114292>. <https://www.sagicor.com/en-JM/Blogs/the-importance-of-volunteerism>  
2. <https://www.dosomething.org/us/articles/volunteer-opportunities-for-teens>





## SFH Youth-Focused Newsletter

### STAY IN TOUCH

Buzz would love to hear your thoughts, questions and contributions, send us an email at [buzz@sfnigeria.org](mailto:buzz@sfnigeria.org)

**Your comment or question might just be included in our next publication.**

For partnership and sponsorship as well as information on our interventions, products and services, contact:

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### #SFHYouth

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