

Module 8: A Drive Through the Community
Topic 3 Content: How to Volunteer

Finding Your Passion



What causes interest you? When you find something you feel passionate about, you will become more dedicated to your work as a volunteer, and you will be inclined to volunteer more frequently.

Module 8: A Drive Through the Community
Topic 3 Content: How to Volunteer

Participating in Gift Drives, Homeless Shelters, Food Banks, Soup Kitchens

Gift Drives, Homeless Shelters, Food Banks, and Soup Kitchens



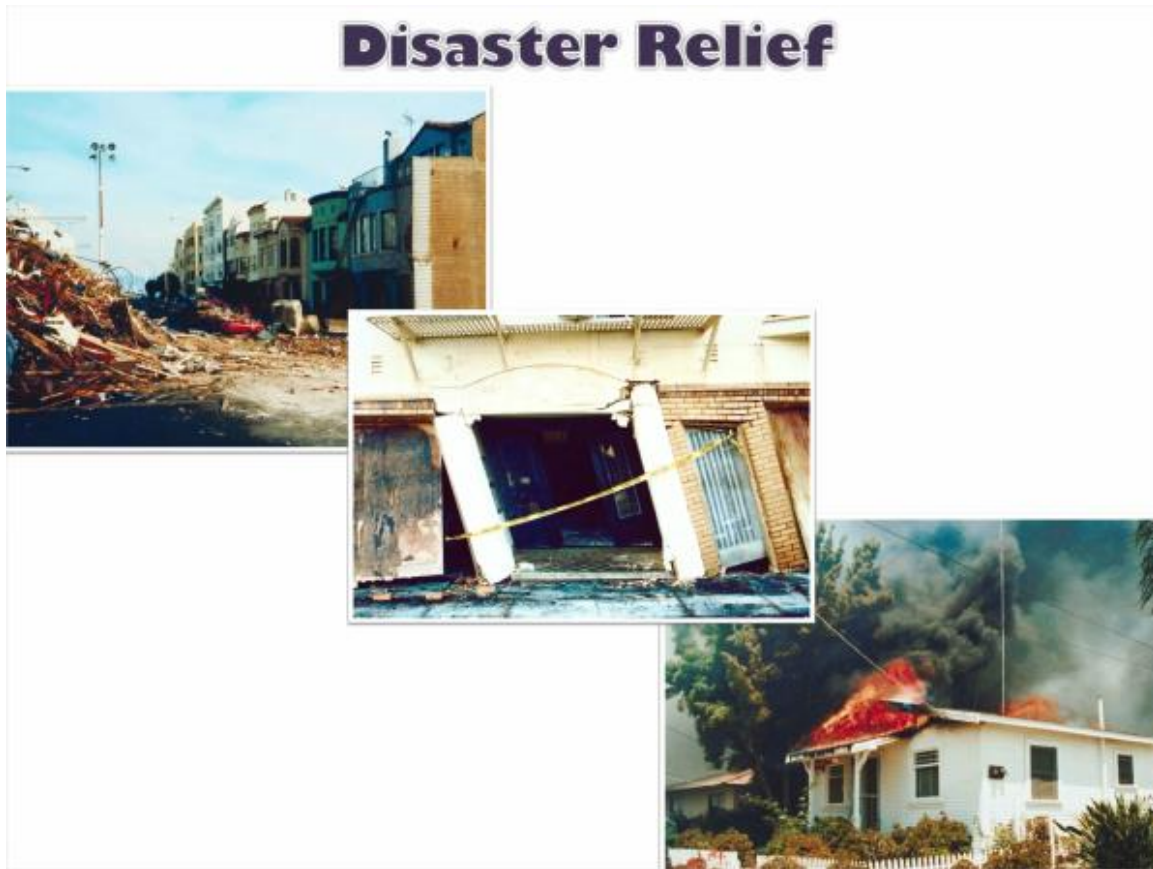
During the holiday months, you can find numerous volunteer opportunities. For example, you can organize a gift drive to collect, wrap, and distribute gifts to less-fortunate families. Furthermore, local religious institutions can often get you involved in similar seasonal activities.

Someone who is experiencing homelessness does not have a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. Many homeless shelters and food banks are in constant need of volunteers, particularly during the holiday season. You can also organize a drive to collect food for the less fortunate. Food banks are places where food is collected, before being distributed to people who are struggling financially and have difficulty affording food for themselves or their families. Similarly, you can assist at a soup kitchen by making and serving food for the less fortunate.

Module 8: A Drive Through the Community

Topic 3 Content: How to Volunteer

Disaster Relief



During times of crisis, communities desperately need volunteers. Floods, earthquakes, tidal waves, tsunamis, and fires are some of the natural disasters that leave communities overwhelmed with grief and stress. Simply donating your time to gather needed food, staples, and supplies can be a tremendous help.

Module 8: A Drive Through the Community
Topic 3 Content: How to Volunteer

Directly Helping Individuals



There are various ways you can directly help people in your community. One way is to work through an organization who has this particular mission.

Module 8: A Drive Through the Community

Topic 3 Content: How to Volunteer

Mentoring



Many organizations offer mentorship programs that connect youth to individuals who can serve as a role model. This is an effective way for youth to receive encouragement and advice. Becoming a mentor is a big responsibility, but ultimately it can have a lasting impact on the child you mentor, and even on yourself.

Module 8: A Drive Through the Community
Topic 3 Content: How to Volunteer

Becoming a Camp Counselor



Summer camps often let you attend at no charge if you volunteer your summer by helping organize the programs and by mentoring the campers. It is a great way to make friends, engage in fun activities, and provide encouragement to children attending the camp. There are different kinds of summer camps, so it is best to find one that matches your interests.

Module 8: A Drive Through the Community
Topic 3 Content: How to Volunteer

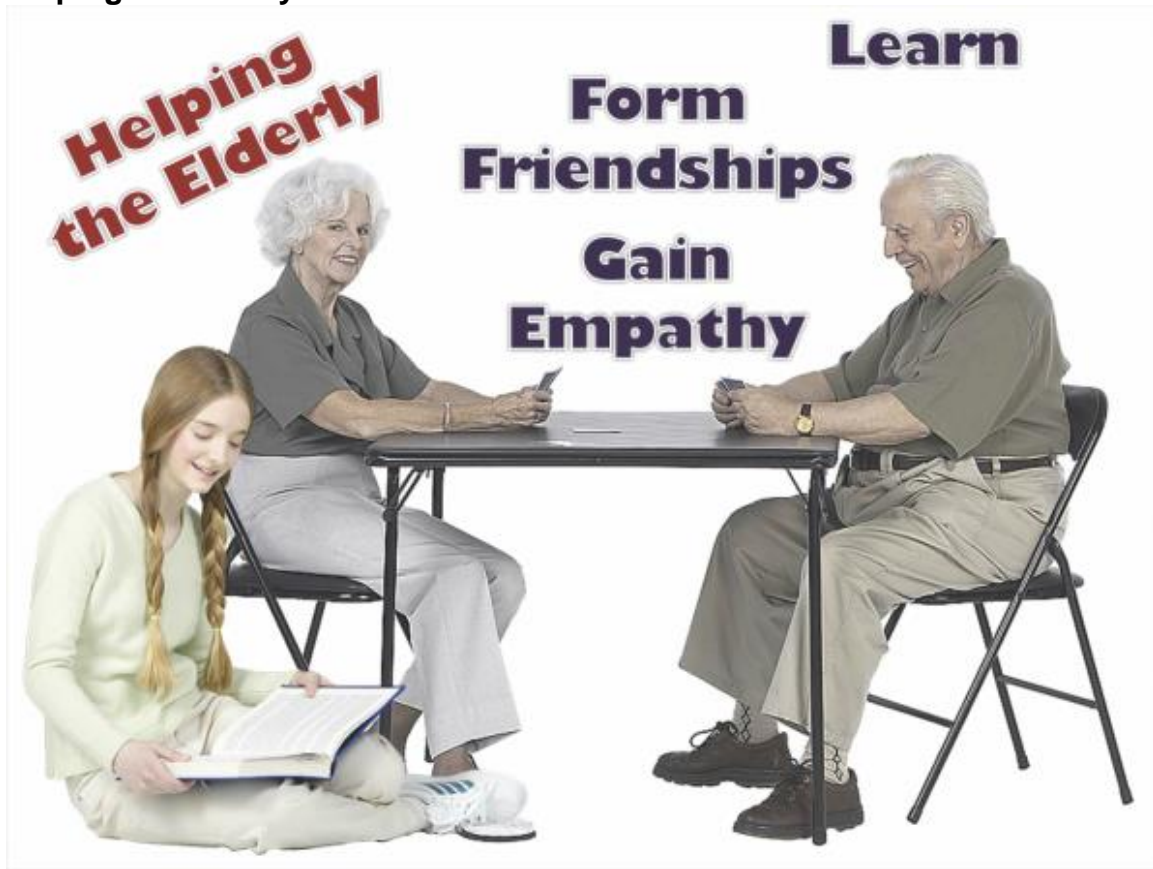
Coaching



Traditional coaching is a great opportunity to be physically active, while forming relationships with local youth and promoting a sport you enjoy. You can coach children in your community for a season, or help out at a sports camp.

Module 8: A Drive Through the Community
Topic 3 Content: How to Volunteer

Helping the Elderly



You can also directly help individuals in your community by visiting nursing homes or other residences that house elderly and retired citizens. You do not have to have any special skills; you can play games with the residents, read books, or simply talk to them. Spending time with the elderly can allow you to learn interesting things about their lives and the experiences they had when they were your age. You may form lasting friendships with the people you meet at your local nursing home, and gain a sense of empathy for others who may be different than you.

Module 8: A Drive Through the Community

Topic 3 Content: How to Volunteer

Helping Those with Disabilities

**Helping Those
With Disabilities**

**Many
organizations
exist that offer a
range of services**



Individuals with intellectual disabilities have limitations in mental functioning, communication, self-care, and social skills. Many organizations exist that support people with intellectual disabilities, and offer a range of services. For example, some offer programs that include a variety of sports and physical activities. Often programs of this kind need volunteers to help make the events successful.

Module 8: A Drive Through the Community

Topic 3 Content: How to Volunteer

Helping Those with Illnesses



Many organizations exist for the sole purpose of helping people who suffer from serious illnesses. These organizations raise money for research, medications, or other services for people with diseases. Some organizations focus on a particular illness, such as heart disease, cancer, HIV, or diabetes. If you know someone suffering from one of these illnesses, you may want to consider donating your time to support the cause.

Similarly, hospitals often have programs for children who must reside in the facility. If you have a special talent, such as singing, dancing, or crafting, you may want to consider asking these hospitals to see how you can help.

Module 8: A Drive Through the Community
Topic 3 Content: How to Volunteer

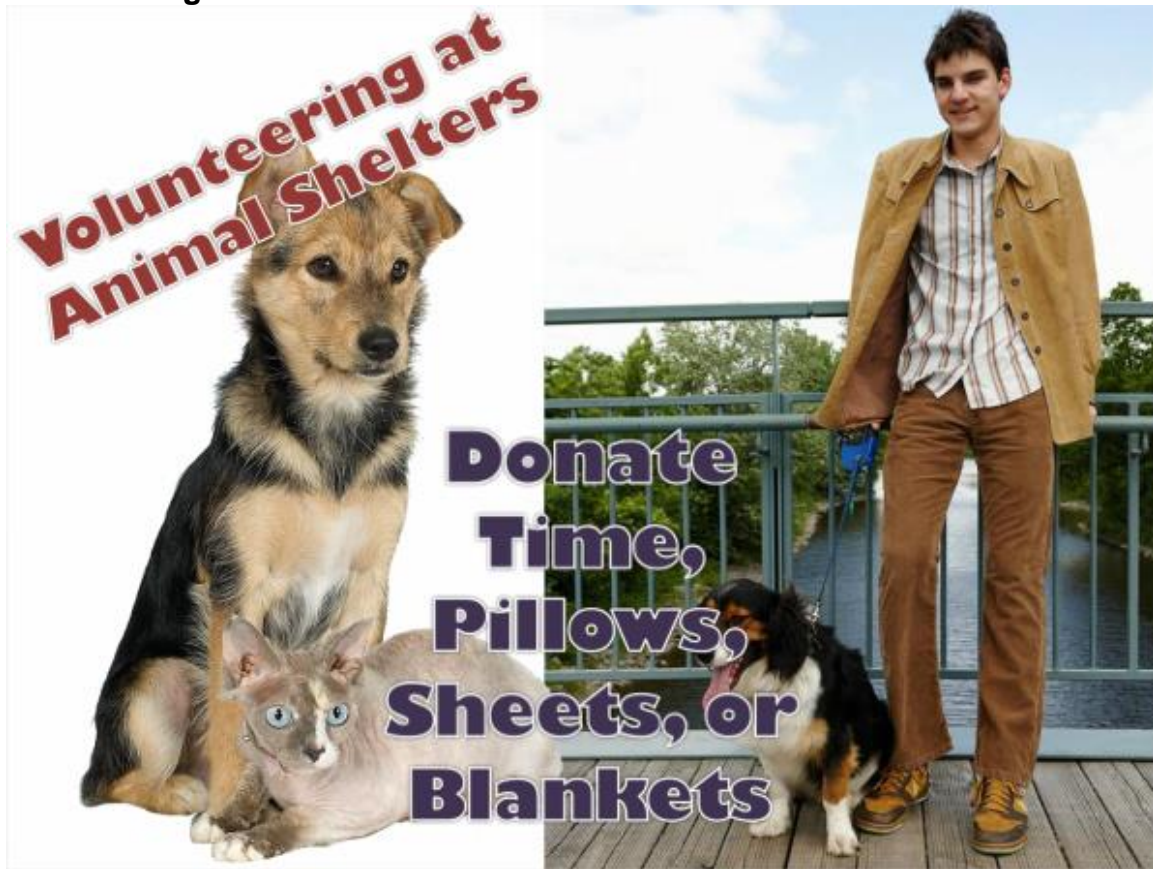
Giving Away Items



There are numerous organizations and thrift stores that are in need of donated goods. You can take clothing, toys, and some household items to thrift stores that will sell your donated goods; often the money goes to a charitable cause.

Module 8: A Drive Through the Community Topic 3 Content: How to Volunteer

Volunteering at Animal Shelters



Animals need love, attention, and exercise. You can walk dogs at your local animal shelter, or clean cages. Walking dogs can be beneficial to your health as well, providing you with a fun workout. Many animal shelters are short on funds, and operate by using donations. By volunteering, you can help keep shelters open and help animals who would not survive without them. In addition to giving your time, animal shelters are in constant need of donated goods like old pillows, sheets, and blankets.

Module 8: A Drive Through the Community
Topic 3 Content: How to Volunteer

Helping the Environment



If environmental conservation is your passion, you can join a group that holds park clean ups; works on preserving rivers, lakes, and oceans; or plants new vegetation after fires. Your environment consists of the circumstances, objects, and conditions that surround you. Environmental conservation is an effort to preserve and maintain our natural spaces. Things that contribute to environmental problems include litter, air pollution, water pollution, or energy wastefulness. All of these problems also negatively affect your health.

Module 8: A Drive Through the Community
Topic 3 Content: How to Volunteer

Beautifying Your Community



Think about some areas in your city, town, or neighborhood that could be restored or made to look better. To beautify is to make things more impressive and pleasing to look at. Simply put, it means to make something more beautiful. When people have enjoyable places to spend their time, their mental and even their physical health can be enhanced.