



Grades K-5

What is and is not age appropriate service for K-5 grade students?

Sometimes it is just as important to know what not to do as what to do. Below are some projects for comparison.

Is Age Appropriate...

Participating in an environmentally conscious project, like a beach clean up

Making placemats for a soup kitchen or homeless shelter

Read-a-thon projects, where students read to younger kids

Initiating a liter patrol at school during lunch or recess

Collecting used books for a shelter for homeless children

Performing plays and skits depicting community problems and their solutions

Visiting senior citizens who live in a nearby home

Is Not Age Appropriate...

Testing water samples from a local lake or river and documenting the findings for the community

Volunteering in a soup kitchen or homeless shelter

Organizing a phonics fair to help improve reading skills

Starting a recycling program for the entire school

Writing letters to corporations asking for donations for a shelter for homeless children

Holding a youth summit to dialogue about problems in the community and possible solutions

Collecting and writing personal or community oral histories by interviewing senior citizens



Grades K-5

Age Appropriate Volunteer Ideas

As young people grow from childhood through adolescence to adulthood, there are appropriate service opportunities for them at every age.

Kindergarten and First Grade Students

- ★ Make holiday greetings cards and artwork for senior citizens who live in a nearby nursing home
- ★ Participate in Arbor Day events: Develop a basic understanding of the need for such a day and what community is all about
- ★ Participate in the up-keep of a road or park
- ★ Collect stuffed animals to donate to children in a homeless shelter
- ★ Make bird houses for a nursing home or shelter

Second Graders

- ★ Visit the nursing home as a group; making presentations that could include singing, story telling by seniors or students, games and activities
- ★ Begin a "stay in school" campaign; start by making posters explaining why school is good for you
- ★ Adopt a zoo animal
- ★ Hold a food drive for the homeless
- ★ Organize a liter patrol during lunch and recess

Third and Fourth Graders

- ★ Students adopt an elder; write letters, share projects, visit, and assist with utility bills through fundraisers
- ★ Sponsor aluminum can drive to raise money to plant trees in a park
- ★ Adopt a _____ Project: students could adopt a portion of a river, stream, highway, beach or park trail.
- ★ Fundraise for zoo and raise awareness of endangered animals
- ★ Collect clothes, toys and shoes for children in third-world countries
- ★ Start a community garden

Fifth Graders

- ★ Assist the kindergartners and first graders in making their cards for seniors, explaining whom the cards are going to and helping to personalize them.
- ★ Plant gardens with low-income families
- ★ Read-a-thon projects, where students read to younger children or get sponsored to read books; use the money raised to buy books for a library or underprivileged kids.
- ★ Hold a health fair to raise awareness about diet, disease, and exercise.
- ★ Research the problem of air pollution, and start a carpool campaign
- ★ Lead workshops on bike safety



Grades 6-8

What is and is not age appropriate service for 6-8 grade students?

Is Age Appropriate...

Youth Action Councils, where they design service activities for other young people in their community

Helping food banks with inventory

Participating in a community clean up

Volunteering at a soup kitchen, nursing home, or day care center

Starting a conflict resolution program

Tutoring elementary students after school

Planting a garden at a homeless shelter

Is not age appropriate...

Self directed and self guided Youth Action Councils without adult supervision

Delivering meals to homebound residents with out adult supervision

Building a playground in an underprivileged neighborhood

Making placemats for soup kitchens, nursing homes, or day care centers

Starting a peer counseling program

Tutoring youth in juvenile justice centers

Renovating a homeless shelter



Grades 6-8

Age Appropriate Volunteer Ideas

- Hold a multi-cultural fair, disability-awareness, career or life-planning fair
- Plan an intergenerational cultural exchange
- Gather oral histories
- Get training for peer tutoring and conflict resolution
- Develop water quality projects
- Plan and execute environmental protection awareness campaigns
- Volunteer at a soup kitchen or nursing home
- Help with literacy campaigns
- Serve on boards for non-profits that affect youth issues
- Research handicap issues
- Do a community needs assessment survey
- Plant and maintain a community garden
- Sponsor a school wide drive for canned food, small toiletries and clothing
- Sorting and packing food at a food bank
- Plan and sponsor a “dog walk” to raise money for local pet shelters
- Make or donate bird houses for parks and walking trails
- Tutor younger students after school



Grades 9-12

Age Appropriate Volunteer Ideas Grades 9-12

Is Age Appropriate...

Cleaning a polluted lake or river

Researching general information on political platforms and distributing it to peers

Making a panel for the AIDS Quilt and give awareness presentations

Helping design a playground in an underprivileged neighborhood

Holding a forum about racism to find possible community solutions

Working as aids in group homes for adults with disabilities

Setting up a peer counseling program

Is Not Age Appropriate...

Making posters about pollution

Developing a political candidate's talking points for a debate

Facilitating an AIDS support group

Building a playground in an underprivileged neighborhood without adult supervision

Organizing and facilitating a weekend diversity retreat

Making holiday decorations to be used in group home for adults with disabilities

Providing therapy for drug or alcohol addicted peers