

VOLUNTEERING TOGETHER

The holiday season is often filled with celebrations with your family, friends and neighbors. One way to celebrate the season is to give a gift of your time through volunteering. This can be a great way to share special time with loved ones and feel the joy of this time of year.

Why Volunteer?

Volunteering is a great way to give something to your community and make a difference in people's lives. It also can feel great to you. You'll get a chance to connect with your friends and family if you go as a group, or maybe get to know some new people. You'll also get the chance to work on some fun projects and maybe learn new skills.

Volunteering As A Family

Volunteering as a family can be a great way to take time out of a busy schedule and spend quality time together. You might love it so much that it becomes a family tradition! It can also be a great time to talk about how important the spirit of giving is with your children and pass on those lessons through generations.

How to Volunteer

- 1) Before you volunteer, think about what interests you the most or what your passions are – these can be great things to use when you volunteer. If you love animals, maybe you want to walk dogs at the shelter. If you love to cook, maybe the homeless shelter needs help preparing a meal.
- 2) Think about when you can volunteer, and how much time you want to give. There are lots of ways you can fit volunteering into your schedule – pick the time of day and level of commitment that's right for you. Also think about any special talents and skills you might have (like carpentry or sewing). If you're taking kids along, then think about what skills they have as well, and what might keep them interested and engaged in the project. Would bringing a friend help make the experience fun? Would they enjoy it if it was in a place they were familiar with and enjoyed?
- 3) Look for a volunteer opportunity! There are lots of ways to find places that might need help. The organizations you are already connected with might need help with their ongoing work or they might have special projects at this time of year. Places in your neighborhood like a park or school might use volunteers. Your friends might have interesting volunteer projects – and maybe they could use an extra hand. Another way to find a volunteer opportunity is to check websites like www.volunteermaine.org or www.volunteermatch.org. With these websites, you can search for organizations that need volunteers in your area or that are working on projects that might interest you. Volunteers are always needed at Maine Kids-Kin, contact Anna Libby at 941-2347 or alibby@mainekids-kin.org

Remember to have fun and enjoy your volunteer experience!

Above information is adapted from www.nationalservice.gov

*Copies of our tip sheets may be found on our web site at www.mainekids-kin.org
For permission to reproduce Maine Kids-Kin materials contact us at info@mainekids-kin.org*