

## International Volunteer Day is December 5th! Ideas for Youth Engagement

Mandated by the United Nations General Assembly, International Volunteer Day is held each year on December 5<sup>th</sup>. “It is viewed as a unique chance for volunteers and organizations to celebrate their efforts, share their values, and promote their work among their communities”

([un.org/en/events/volunteerday/](http://un.org/en/events/volunteerday/)). International Volunteer Day is an opportunity to celebrate the contributions of volunteers and to inspire year-round volunteer involvement.

Through the holiday madness at this time each year, it can be difficult to believe there is any time left in our schedules. But, what better time *is* there to pause, reflect in gratitude, and give back to your community through volunteering?

Volunteering is beneficial not only to those being served, but to the volunteer themselves, no matter their age. In fact, a 2012 study from the University of British Columbia found that toddlers under the age of two are happier when giving treats to others than receiving treats themselves. “What’s most exciting about these findings is that children are happiest when giving their own treats away,” said Aknin, lead author of the study. “Forfeiting their own valuable resources for the benefit of others makes them happier than giving away just any treat.” It is true that giving, including your time, feels good!

Furthermore, when we make service work a part of our lives, we demonstrate our core values in action, which in turn teaches younger generations that helping others is a natural response, and that the community can be made a better place through their own efforts. So, with that, take some time this month to give back, and get the youth in your life involved too!

There are many ways to connect with volunteer opportunities, the following are just a few resources that offer numerous ideas for family and youth looking to give back:

- [YMCA Volunteer Ideas for Teens](#)
- [Roots of Action Community Service Ideas for All Youth](#)
- [50 Community Service Volunteer Ideas for Teens](#)
- Volunteer Opportunities in Tompkins County: [2-1-1](#)

We wish you a safe and enjoyable holiday season filled with friends, family, and giving back to our wonderful community!

Visit <https://www.psympost.org/2012/06/giving-makes-young-children-happy-12360> for more information on the cited research study.

**Monthly Messages are brought to you by the Tompkins County Youth Services Department, a proud partner of The Community Coalition for Healthy Youth.**

If you have further questions or comments about this message or would like information on how to become involved with the Community Coalition for Healthy Youth, please email

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