



Making Good Things Happen in Challenging Times

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“The best way to not feel hopeless is to get up and do something. Don’t wait for good things to happen to you. If you go out and make some good things happen, you will fill the world with hope, you will fill yourself with hope.”— Barack Obama

It is very easy to feel a sense of hopelessness during the current times in which we are living. I encourage you to take a moment and survey your community for volunteer opportunities. Use this time to explore ways you can be of assistance to others, even if it is only through an encouraging word.

With the opening of schools for the 2020-21 school year, there are many ways to support children and families in need of help. Here are just a few ideas of how to make some good things happen:

- If you sew, donate masks/face coverings for students.
- Donate school boxes that contain school supplies for individual students.
- Donate needed cleaning/sanitizing supplies.
- Donate snack/food items for weekend backpack bags.
- Donate clothing to the school closet.
- Financial donations to school are always appropriate.
- Contact a school principal to see if there are specific needs they may have.
- Volunteer your time to a school mentoring program.

Additionally, many organizations have created virtual guides for virtual volunteering and service-learning ideas. A few to check out are:

- [Youth Service America](https://ysa.org/covid/) has a resource page on “How Youth Can Help Communities Respond To & Recover From the Coronavirus Pandemic” at <https://ysa.org/covid/>.
- Hasbro, Youth Service America, Design for Change USA, and World's Largest Lesson are calling on youth to use their compassion and creativity to do acts of good from home. [Learn more about the Do Good from Home Challenge here.](#)
- [Learning to Give](#) has made available guides that feature service projects you can do from home. [These Simple Safe Service projects give families ideas for generous actions that encourage the voices of youth and promote the common good, even when we are apart.](#)
- [Points of Light](#) has a list of “At home service project ideas for kids and teens,” [available here.](#)
- [Oasis Center](#) has created service-learning project guides like [“The Birthday Box”](#).



Many agencies and programs need volunteers so they can meet the needs of the community. Check your local volunteer center or nonprofit agencies for opportunities and safety guidelines.

Don't feel hopeless; get up and do something. Don't wait to be asked; step up and reach out when you see there is a need. I assure you that when you make good things happen, you will fill your community, the world, and yourself with hope.

[Volunteer Tennessee](#) is a 25-member bipartisan board appointed by the Governor to encourage volunteerism and community service. Volunteer Tennessee pursues its mission through administration of AmeriCorps grants, training and collaborations and coalitions with public and private organizations interested in volunteerism and service. Connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).