

Huggable Hero Tips for Volunteering

Build-A-Bear Workshop® and the Build-A-Bear Workshop Foundation are proud to support kids in their efforts to make a difference in their communities. These Huggable Heroes® volunteer tips are just what you and your friends need to get started making the world a better place!

How you can help make a difference!

There are many ways you can lend a helping hand, so pick a project area that interests you most. Check out what other Huggable Heroes have done and get ideas for starting your own project.

Huggable Ideas to Help Animals

Mimi, a 2009 Huggable Hero, created the website freekibble.com to help collect donations to feed homeless dogs and cats in animal shelters. You can help animals too by visiting Mimi's website, and answering daily trivia questions. A donation is made for each question answered correctly.

More Ideas:

- Volunteer to walk animals at a local animal shelter.
- Help find homes for homeless pets.
- Collect and donate supplies to a local animal shelter.
- Help raise awareness and donations for endangered animals.

Huggable Ideas to Help the Sick

Austin, a 2007 Huggable Hero, and Caroline, a 2005 Huggable Hero, raised funds to support research for Juvenile Diabetes. Patrick Pedraja, a 2009 Huggable Hero, created "Driving For Donors" which aims to increase the number of people on the national marrow list.

More Ideas:

- Contact your local hospital and see if you can make cards to cheer up patients.
- Raise money by participating in a walk-a-thon, and give the money to an organization that helps sick people.
- Collect magazines and books to donate to waiting and patient rooms at hospitals.

Huggable Ideas to Help Kids

Heather, a 2006 Huggable Hero, writes and distributes books in her community about the situations faced by foster children.

More Ideas:

- Collect toys, clothes, and school supplies for less fortunate kids.
- Volunteer to play games with kids at a local pre-school.

Huggable Ideas to Help the Hungry or Homeless

Katie, a 2009 Huggable Hero, started “Launch Katie’s Dream,” an organization that has inspired her entire community to grow vegetable gardens and donate the harvest to nearby shelters so that no family goes hungry.

More Ideas:

- Call a local shelter to see if you can make snacks to donate.
- Collect cans, bottles, shampoo, soap, or toiletries to donate to shelters.
- Giveaway clean and gently used clothes that you no longer wear.

Huggable Ideas to Help People with Disabilities

Rocco, a 2008 Huggable Hero, raises funds and awareness for blindness. He has spoken to the New Jersey State legislature, convincing them to allocate funds to Braille education and services for blind children, and he is also an Ambassador for the Little Rock Foundation that provides resources to visually-impaired children and their parents, educators and therapists.

More Ideas:

- Volunteer to help at a Special Olympics event.
- Speak out and help raise awareness for a specific disability that impacts you.
- Raise money for organizations that help disabled people.

Huggable Ideas to Support Education

Shannon, a 2004 Huggable Hero, volunteered over 2,000 hours of her time leading adult and youth literacy and education programs.

More Ideas:

- Donate unused books to a local school or library.
- Help tutor kids after school.
- Collect and donate supplies to area schools.

Huggable Ideas to Help Seniors

Max, a 2009 Huggable Hero, founded PuzzlesToRemember, which collects and distributes puzzles to help Alzheimer’s and dementia patients.

More Ideas:

- Gather a group of friends to sing or perform short skits at a local nursing home.
- Read books to residents at a local nursing home.
- Help an elderly neighbor with yard work.

Huggable Ideas to Help the Environment

- Conserve electricity around your house by turning off lights in unused rooms.
- Start a recycling program at your school or in your community.
- Find new uses for items around your house.
- Adopt a piece of Earth with a group of friends, and help keep it clean.
- Start a community garden, or plant a tree.

Volunteering Resources

Read

"77 Creative Ways Kids Can Serve" by Sondra Clark, a 2007 Huggable Hero. This book gives kids ideas and information to find a volunteer project suited to their interests and abilities.

Call

Ask your parent to help you call your local Volunteer Center. This center will help you find volunteer projects in your area. To find a Volunteer Center near you, visit <http://www.1-800-volunteer.org> or call 1-800-VOLUNTEER. Tell them your age and ask if there are ways that you can help with a specific cause, for example animals or kids.

Online

Zoom into Action (hyperlink: <http://pbskids.org/zoom/activities/action/index.html>) by PBS kids has volunteer ideas and projects for a variety of interests.

Do Something (hyperlink: <http://www.dosomething.org/>) is a great resource tool for teens interested in volunteering.