

Portable Volunteering

The What, The Why, The Who & The How



The New Wave of Volunteerism!

- Learn how to create and execute portable volunteer projects.
- Get tips and hints to make your projects great!
- Learn how everyone benefits from portable volunteering!



Boston cares presents:

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Boston Cares organizes team-oriented volunteer opportunities in the Greater Boston area. The organization serves more than 120 non-profit organizations, matching volunteers and companies with more than 200 projects each month. Boston Cares is a member of the Points of Light Institute & HandsOn Network, a national alliance of 250 volunteer service organizations.

www.bostoncares.org

Direct vs. Indirect Service

What is Direct Service?

Volunteering in which the volunteer interacts with a client, guest, or person receiving something.

There are two different approaches to volunteering. Both are fun, meaningful and beneficial to those you serve!

Examples: Serving a meal, tutoring, mentoring, visiting with elderly, doing a craft project with youth.

Benefits: Direct interaction with the adults, children or animals receiving your help.

Challenges: Age limitations for volunteers, scheduling groups is difficult, agencies are often booked with volunteers far in advance.



What is Indirect Service?

Volunteering behind the scenes or in a way that doesn't require interaction with those receiving the service.

Examples: Admin-sorting clothing donations, making portable items to be donated.

Benefits: More flexibility with volunteers' schedules, group sizes, ages.

Challenges: Sometimes more research is required to determine agencies' needs.



Administrative assistance for an agency, park clean-ups, nations, making portable items to be donated.

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How to Create a Portable Project

Follow these simple steps to make a BIG impact!

1. **GET STARTED.** Decide that you will do a portable project.
2. **DECIDE WHO TO HELP!** What are your interests? Who in your community can you serve? Examples: the homeless, children in need, animals, schools, elderly adults.
3. **OUTREACH TO AGENCIES.** Once you know who you want to help, call agencies and ask what they need. Be ready to suggest! Think outside the box: a soup kitchen may say it doesn't need anything except food, but would probably love hand-decorated placemats!
4. **MAKE A COMMITMENT.** Decide which agency you will be donating your created items to and don't back out once you've already committed!
5. **DETERMINE THE AGENCY NEEDS.** Find out how many items they need. The agency may not be sure.
6. **ASSESS YOUR SUPPLIES.** Determine exactly what supplies are needed, what you already have, what you can get donated, what you have to buy. Is there already a budget in place – do you have the money to complete the project?
7. **FIGURE OUT FINANCES.** Is there fundraising involved? Determine how volunteers will be asking for money. Voice to donors exactly what you're doing, why it's important, and who will benefit.
8. **MAKE THE ITEM!** When? Where? How many people? Over what period of time? How much space is needed? Where do finished products get stored? How many does each person need to make to meet the goal? What's the quality control?
9. **DELIVER YOUR FINISHED PRODUCT!** How? Who will deliver? What vehicle will you use? Is the agency willing to do a pick-up? Will the whole group go or just one or two people?





Great Examples!

For an agency serving the homeless...

- Placemats or table runner for meal service
- Holiday cards for clients: Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day, etc.
- Decorated aprons for kitchen staff



For an agency serving animals...

- Toys: bells on string, fabric balls with stuffing, etc.
- Animal beds



For a school...

- Indoor recess packets
- Flash cards for vocabulary and math
- Felt books for learning numbers and letters
- Decorated pots with planted flowers for classrooms



For an agency serving the elderly...

- Holiday cards: Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day, etc.
- Card games
- Fleece blankets
- Decorated picture frames

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What if I call an agency and they say they don't need anything?

There's a difference between what agencies "need" and what they could "use". Get creative and think outside the box! Also make suggestions—get the ball rolling by

Portable Volunteering FAQs

What if some of the items my group makes aren't of good quality?

Don't pass those items along to the agency. If you wouldn't want those items, an agency doesn't either! Even though you're doing a great service to an agency, you still want to produce items that are of the highest

What if my group doesn't have a lot of money to fund the supplies for the project?

Use the internet to look up places you can buy supplies in bulk through distributors. It's cheaper to purchase through the distributor than it is at a bulk chain such as Costco, Sam's Club, etc. Also, approach local retailers to

What if we don't have enough space to accommodate all the volunteers and supplies?

Reach out to community organizations that can help you with donated space: local YMCAs, Boys & Girls Clubs, school gymnasiums, church basements, etc. Explain the benefits of this partnership: the kids at the local Boys &

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