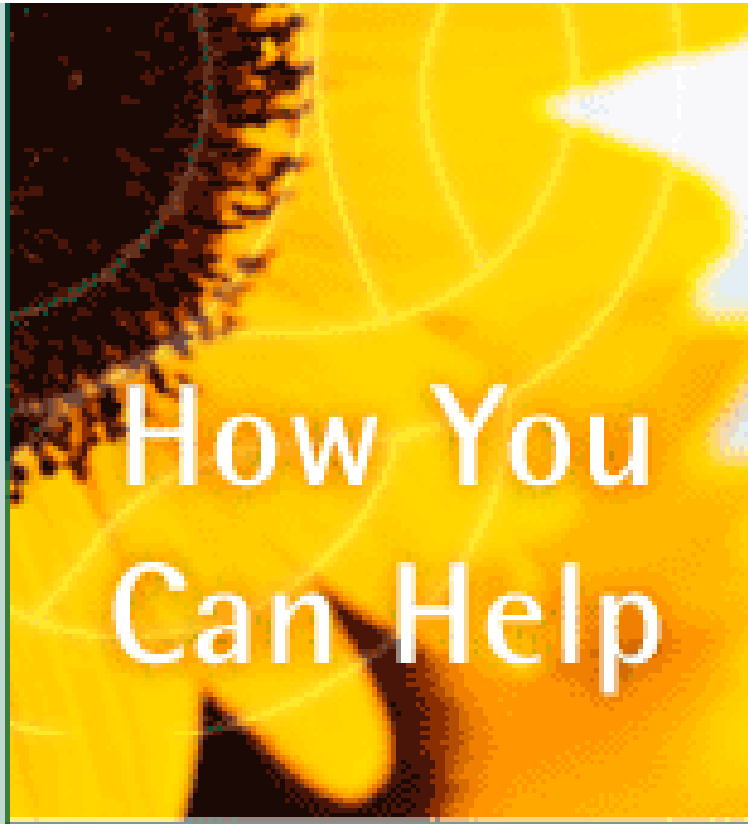




# Student Volunteering Best Practice Cases

Innovative Ideas for Students and Teachers

## INTRODUCTION: HOW TO BECOME A STUDENT VOLUNTEER



### **Be the solution!**

There are easy and fun ways out there for you to get involved and change the world.

This publication can be a small guide for you and your teachers; it shows how children all over the world take initiative to make the world a better place.

The following cases can help you and your teachers to find a starting point for your own projects. If you don't have an idea yet for your own initiative, you could get involved in one of the organisations founded by other student volunteers, for example *Schüler helfen Leben* or *The Cello Cries On*.

It might also be a good idea to develop a project together with your classmates and then look for support from *iEARN*. You can find a link to their website on the last page of this publication.

On the last page you can find a small selection of websites about interesting volunteer organisations and even a link to a page where you can search for volunteer opportunities sorted by country and sometimes even by zip code.

### **TEACHERS !!:**

For youth, volunteering brings a new sense of confidence, self-gratification and a good way to interact. It also enables young people to develop new communication, career building and social skills that will be useful in other facets of their lives



In 1992, when students in Neumünster, a city in north Germany, learned about the war in former Yugoslavia, they decided to help in any way they could. Helped by their teachers and parents, the students sent packages of supplies to the strife-torn Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia.

The desire of these students to help further improve the situation of the youth in the Balkans, led to the birth of the *Schüler helfen Leben* club in 1995.

Through their own efforts, the students established a contact office in Sarajevo, thus, strengthening their relationship with the region.

In 1998, the club initiated the annual 'Sozialer Tag' or social day. On this day, students work for local businesses and donate their earnings to the *Schüler helfen Leben* initiative.

The first Sozialer Tag itself generated over 820,000 Euros, which were then invested in a youth centre in Sarajevo.

Subsequently, Sozialer Tag was launched in most regions of Germany, resulting in the first nation-wide social day being held on 22 June 2006.

Today, *Schüler helfen Leben*, an official foundation since 2002, supports various projects in 4 countries in the Balkans, which include:

A youth centre and a summer school for Romani in Bosnia;

A farm for vocational training in an underdeveloped area of Romania;

A youth centre and a summer camp for Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo;

A network of social workers in areas with a high percentage of illiterate children, in Macedonia.

### Objectives:

- Give support to children and youth during the reconstruction of the Balkans
- Facilitate the understanding between ethnic groups

### What you can do:

- Introduce the project and participate in 'Sozialer Tag' at your school

<http://www.schueler-helfen-leben.de/>



In 1998, a teacher in a school in Bielefeld received a present from a manager of the local supermarket - bags filled with shoe brushes and shoe polish. Using this material, the students of the school learnt how to shine shoes. In the years that followed, they polished shoes in malls, at Bielefeld university, at street fairs, in museums, at school parties and often in the VIP-lounge of Arminia Bielefeld, a local football team that plays in the German soccer league, to collect funds for humanitarian causes.

In 2004, the *Shining Shoes Schüler GmbH* company was officially established, with the students themselves handling the marketing, bookkeeping and human resources department. The younger students work as shoeblacks in their spare time.

The funds collected are donated to varied causes such as the conservation of the rainforest or emancipation of

victims of child labor.

In January 2005, the *Shining Shoes Schüler GmbH* collected and sent funds to support rehabilitation work in Mullaittivu, a province in northeast Sri Lanka, which was devastated by the tsunami.

In 2005 6,000 Euros were given to Welthungerhilfe and 500 Euros went to Arbeitsgemeinschaft Regenwald und Artenschutz.

With the growing success and increasing media interest in their initiative, the students are able to get local and international businesses to sponsor their activities.

### Objectives:

- Triggered by knowledge about needs of others, student are enabled to help
- Students are responsible for meaningful usage of the earned money, they determine the projects the money is donated to
- Students learn to communicate their initiative to adults, they have something to teach them
- Students learn to interact with media

### What you could do:

- Organize a shoe shine kit (you could contact the shining shoes Schülerfirma for recommendations) and learn together with your friends how to shine shoes
- Ask local businessowners for their support



In 1997, a friend sent Jason Crowe an article that would transform him into a 10-year-old peace activist. It was the story of Vedran Smailovic, principle cellist of the Sarajevo Opera Orchestra, who witnessed the massacre of 22 neighbours in a bread line during the Siege of Sarajevo in 1992. Vedran's response was to play his cello amid sniper fire for 22 consecutive days in the crater left by the mortar shell. This bravery of the "Cellist of Sarajevo" inspired Crowe's biggest dream: a tribute to the spirit of the Bosnian people in the form of the Children's International Peace & Harmony Statue, to be shipped to Bosnia as a gift from peace-loving people around the world.

In 1996, Crowe had started *The Informer*, a "kids-for-kids" newspaper in memory of his grandmother. He began to use this newspaper to disseminate information about his peace activism and his plan to donate the

statue. He also started networking with students and professors around the world, who were studying the war in the Balkans. He wrote two books, focusing on the courage of Bosnian children during the war, donating the proceeds from the sale of the books to humanitarian aid in Bosnia and the statue project. In 1998 he founded *The Cello Cries On, Inc.*, a not-for-profit corporation to unite young people to work across dividing lines, that was accepted into the United Nations WE THE PEOPLES initiative. Next to organising fundraising events, Jason has generated a lot of support from prominent figures like Bill Clinton and endorsements by celebrities like Joan Baez, Tommy Sands, Pete Seeger, Yo-Yo Ma and Bono. Youth can become Statue Partners by donating or buying T-Shirts, sweatshirts or mugs from Jason's website. Jason also encourages own fundraising projects in communities, which proceeds are then donated for the statue.

### Objectives:

- Generate enough money to finance the Children's Peace and Harmony Statue
- Unite youth all over the world in the aim to sponsor peace

### What you can do:

- Go to the website [www.cafepress.com/cellocries](http://www.cafepress.com/cellocries) and donate money/buy merchandise
- Organise your own fundraising and donate the money to the Statue project



Every year at least one student of Pontagrossense school in Brazil got pregnant. Teachers, parents and older students got concerned when they noticed that many young girls had their first intercourse without being informed about STDs and possible pregnancies. Together they developed a project which would later be called *Menarca*. The idea was to give useful information in an easy way to girls aged from 12 to 15. There would be no adults ahead of the project, but girls aged from 13 to 16, talking in their own language. The project is based on lectures about two subjects. First, the human body. At this time, they talk to other girls and help them answer their doubts. "This is when they get confident with each other. From then on, it gets easier", says Canabarro.

On the second day they get into more complex issues: STDs, cancer, periods and contraceptives. In order to let the girls speak freely, the teachers do not participate in the discussion and leave the room after a short introduction. When *Menarca* started, they got in touch with other schools and offered these lectures. Today, there is a waiting list. The project got bigger and established partnership with the Ponta Grossa (Paraná State) branch of Unimed, a medical company, which offers not only transport for volunteer girls but also psychological orientation, so as to train them to deal with difficult situations. From September 2002 to December 2005, they talked to 2,950 girls.

### Objectives:

- To educate young girls about their sexual development and risks involved with intercourse
- To enable responsible girls to become leaders in the school community and act as role models

### What you could do:

- Become aware of possible lack of sex education in your community
- Be aware of your friends and schoolmates, maybe they need somebody they can talk to about sex and takes away their doubts
- Talk with friends, parents and teachers about developing a similar program for your school



Outraged by the ongoing pollution of the Yamuna, one of India's most important rivers, 19 year old Vimlendu Jha decided in 2000 to take action and organise a public campaign to clean it up. He launched the *Swechha - We for Yamuna* campaign, which was later transformed into *Swechha - We for Change Foundation*.

The Yamuna River is a major river of northern India, the largest tributary of the Ganga and the 'lifeline of Delhi', that caters to almost all water needs of this city. However, neglected, unattended and misused as garbage dump by the population and for sewage by companies, the river poses a health threat to the population, who uses the water for cooking and ritual washings.

*We for Yamuna* was initiated as a campaign for youth from the leading colleges of Delhi. Within months it

was able to mobilize more than 500 volunteers who became one of the strongest voices in the conservation of the river. Since 2000 *Swechha* has implemented many interesting programmes, which include:

Bridge the Gap, a course on environment education for students;

Green Tuition, a programme to train teachers on issues and approaches to environmental education;

Waves of Hope, a campaign started to support suffering survivors of the Tsunami in 2004;

We for Quake I and II, donations and relief work after the quake in Chamoli in 1999 and in Gujarat in 2004.

### Objectives:

- Create a healthier social environment and connect ourselves and others with the environment
- Provide youth with support, guidance and a platform and make them realize their potential of being socially and environmentally responsible individuals

### What you could do:

- Go through your neighbourhood and be attentive to the nature. Do you find any signs of pollution or littering?
- Organise a clean-up campaign in your neighbourhood and around your school. Find sponsors who pay by pound of litter collected. Donate this money

<http://www.swfc.org>



Elizabeth Americo, 17, of Guilford, Connecticut, a junior at Guilford High School, is the founder and president of a school club that raises awareness and funds to assist needy people both in her community and in Third World countries. Inspired by her older brother's volunteer work with Haitians, Elizabeth wanted to share with fellow students her empathy for the poor and her belief in the power to bring about change through activism. "I am deeply passionate about activism for social justice," she said. "Recognizing a common humanity shared by the people of this world, I feel that we all must struggle to erase the boundaries of indifference between rich and poor." So as soon as she entered high school, Elizabeth formed a club called "Students for Health and Social Justice," dedicated to learning about poverty and community health issues, and taking action on them.

Now with 21 members, the club meets regularly to discuss needs around the world, and to brainstorm ideas for fund-raising and awareness activities. The group has sponsored an annual dance benefit and other fund-raisers for health-care programs in Haiti, tsunami victims, UNICEF, and other causes. Elizabeth and her fellow club members also organized a four-school food drive to help stock a local dining facility for the hungry. "Health is not a privilege for the few, but a right for all," Elizabeth said. "The fact that a majority of the world does not enjoy the benefits of this human right simply means that our job is not yet done."

### Objectives:

- Exchange ideas about pressing needs in the world and generate possible solutions
- Raise awareness and funds for needy people in the US and abroad

### What you can do:

- Get a group of friends and schoolmates together who are interested in political and development issues
- Generate fund-raising ideas for your community and support a project that is close to the group's heart
- A food drive during Thanksgiving or Christmas is often a good way to support families in need in the community.



Nickole Evans grew up in a low income area of Kennewick, a town in southeastern Washington. It is a place where immigrants and refugees often arrive when relocating to the United States. Since early childhood Nickole has played with children from Mexico, Nigeria, Ukraine, Bosnia and Kosovo. On February 1998, Nickole and a friend were beaten by a Bosnian gang. However, in spite of being hurt, she chose peace over retaliation. She reconciled with the youths and their families and doubled her efforts to support Bosnian youth traumatized by war.

When Nickole was 14 she created a website to help young people share their feelings about violence, both in school and elsewhere. Evans averages 200 volunteer hours a year and now uses her website to not only promote volunteerism, but also as a platform to cover

other issues that concern young people, from race and religion to overpopulation. She uses her website to empower children and young women to participate in their communities and engage in dialogue with adults. Nickole educated herself about computer technology and now tutors others on how to use the Web to advocate peace and nonviolence. For all her commitment and efforts Nickole has been honored at the United Nations at the International Day of Tolerance with the Peace & Tolerance Award in the category of Technology.

### Objectives:

- Use modern computer technology to spread a message of peace and nonviolence
- Tutor youth to use the computer to get access to information
- Promote volunteerism and service to others

### What you can do:

- Go to Nickole's website [www.y2kyouth.com](http://www.y2kyouth.com) and learn about volunteer and leadership opportunities
- If you are skilled in computer technology volunteer your free time to teach computer skills to people in your community
- Design a website like Nickole's that is directed at possible volunteer opportunities in your community and that can be a forum for discussion about issues that interests you and your peers.



**Kids Kount!**

Alexandra Azzolino was 14 years old when she founded *Kids Kount!*. She had always liked reading and wanted to do something for children with serious illnesses. With her foundation she discovered a way to connect both.

Alexandra chose this name thinking that all kids are important - especially kids with illnesses. The concept of this charity is based on the help of children making a difference - a good example of how kids can count.

*Kids Kount!* was founded with the sole purpose of raising funds to help children with serious illnesses. The mission is to organize and conduct fundraising events driven by children and to donate these funds to organisations directly involved in the research, prevention or treatment of serious childhood diseases, such as diabetes, cancer, and AIDS.

The foremost way of fundraising by *Kids Kount!* is through Read-a-thons. Children are encouraged to read as many books as possible over their summer vacation. The charity provides a 'books read' worksheet on its website, where children can keep track of the books they have read. At the same time the children are instructed to call up sponsors like parents, family and friends. These sponsors are asked to pay a certain amount of money for each book that is read. At the end of summer the books are added up and the sponsors pay accordingly.

Other innovative ways of fundraising are Hit-a-thons and Bowl-a-thons, where money from sponsors is donated according to the distance a baseball is hit or the total pin count of three strings at the bowling lane.

### Objective:

Let your favorite pastime be the basis for a volunteering idea.

### What you could do:

- Think about hobbies you and your friends have, what you are really good in (playing an instrument, sports, taking care of animals)
- Use this hobby to organize an event, where family and friends can be sponsors (a fun run, paid by kilometer)

<http://www.kids-kount.org>



*Bear Hugs* is a nonprofit, charitable organization devoted to helping misfortunate children in Massachusetts. The creators of *Bear Hugs* are students from a Marketing/Entrepreneurship class, whose goal is to successfully design and effectively implement a charity.

The basis for creating *Bear Hugs* was the result of a survey of the severely disadvantaged. The survey stated that a child's most cherished possession was in nearly every case their favorite teddy bear or another stuffed animal.

*Bear Hugs* collects any gently worn or new teddy bears at drop off locations. They are then sorted and fitted with a special *Bear Hugs* tag. These tags contain a special message telling the receiving kid where the bear comes from, giving some information about the community and the people involved in *Bear Hugs*.

The bears will then reach children in the United States and abroad who are living in family shelters, homeless shelters, battered women houses, or orphanages. These teddy bears bring comfort and happiness to children, who regularly undergo daily hardships.

### Objective:

To be aware of misfortunate children in the community and develop ways to help them.

### What you could do:

- Find out about misfortunate children in your community (in your school, in orphanages, in Asylbewerberheimen...)
- Collect new or gently worn stuffed animals in your school and community.
- Donate the stuffed animals to children in need.

<http://www.bearhugsforchildren.org/>



*iEARN* started in 1988 and is the world's largest non-profit global network that enables teachers and young people to use the internet and other new technologies to collaborate on projects that both enhance learning and make a difference in the world.

All projects in *iEARN* are initiated and designed by teachers and students, and provide powerful examples of how new and emerging technologies can contribute to changing the world.

It is *iEARN's* mission to improve the quality of life on the planet. As part of this mission its projects involve a final 'product' or exhibition of the learning experience as a result of the collaboration. These have included websites, magazines, letter-writing campaigns, reports to government officials, arts exhibits, workshops, performances, charity fundraising and

many more innovative ways of displaying the engagement and commitment of teachers and students.

### Example of a project:

Elementary students at Miami Country Day School raise money from the organic gardens they plant, then partner with the Miami Shores Rotary Club to send solar ovens to places like Afghanistan and Haiti. These Villager Sun Ovens can bake up to 1,200 loafs of bread a day, cook food and purify water.

### Objectives:

The projects enable students to develop

- language, literacy, research and critical thinking skills
- experience with new technologies
- cultural awareness
- the habit of getting involved in community issues

### What you could do:

- Go to the website [www.earn.org](http://www.earn.org) to meet other teachers and students and chat about their experiences
- Learn about innovative projects by looking through the projects database
- Get involved by either participating in a current project or by creating your own project.

[www.earn.org](http://www.earn.org)

## COLLECTION OF VOLUNTEER LINKS FOR CHILDREN, PARENTS AND TEACHERS

### General interesting sites:

<http://www.millenniumcampaign.org>  
<http://un.org>  
<http://www.networkforgood.org/>

### Volunteering and leadership sites:

<http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org/>  
<http://www.servenet.org/>  
<http://www.idealists.org/>  
<http://www.thevolunteerfamily.org>  
<http://www.youthactionnet.org/>  
<http://www.globalkids.org/>  
<http://sustainus.org/mambo/>  
<http://www.learn.org/index.html>  
<http://www.stlf.net/>  
<http://www.ssc.org/>  
<http://youth.fdncenter.org/>  
<http://www.thesca.org/index.php>  
<http://www.youthnoise.com>  
<http://www.networkforgood.youthnoise.com/#>  
<http://www.justgive.org>  
<http://www.pointsoflight.org/>  
[http://www.anticruelty.org/volunteer\\_options\\_young.html](http://www.anticruelty.org/volunteer_options_young.html)  
<http://www.changemakers.net/journal/300603/>

### Searching for volunteer opportunities by country:

<http://www.idealists.org/kt/volunteercenter.html>

### Awards and grants for volunteers:

<http://www.prudential.com/productsAndServices/O,1474,intPageID%253D1430%2526InPrinterFriendly%253D0,00.html>  
[http://youth.fdncenter.org/youth\\_getinvolved.html#awards](http://youth.fdncenter.org/youth_getinvolved.html#awards)

### Volunteer sites all over the world:

<http://www.youthreachindia.org/index.asp> (India)  
<http://goodnewsindia.com/index.php> (India)  
<http://www.agenda21schulen.nrw.de/> (Germany)  
<http://www.projektems.de/> (Germany)  
<http://www.worldcic.org> (Sweden)  
<http://www.vso.org.uk> (United Kingdom)

### Sites from student volunteers:

<http://www.freethechildren.com/index.php>  
<http://www.uniteforsight.org/>  
<http://home.comcast.net/~teens-lendahand/wsb/html/view.cgi-home.html-.html>  
<http://www.mjft.org/en/index1.php>  
<http://www.y2kyouth.org/youths.html>  
<http://www.mercadoglobal.org>  
<http://www.choresforcharity.com/pages/2/index.htm>

### Sites for parents and teachers:

<http://www.fiu.edu/~time4chg/Library/ideas.html>  
<http://www.giraffe.org/ed.html>  
<http://www.learningtogive.org>  
<http://www.pointsoflight.org/resources/volunteerresource/>  
<http://www.pbs.org/opb/thenewheroes/teachers/>