



BE THE HERO IN SOMEONE'S STORY

GET INVOLVED, GIVE BACK AND DO SOMETHING GOOD FOR YOUR COMMUNITY

Making a positive impact on your community can be easier than you think. Even a simple act of neighbourly kindness can have long lasting effects that often make more of an impact than you think.

The reasons to build connection with those around us are endless. By reaching out, we can reduce isolation and loneliness, and create a sense of belonging for those who most need it. There are lots of small things you can do to make a big difference to someone, and it doesn't need to be hard.

10 EASY WAYS TO HELP YOUR NEIGHBOURS AND GIVE BACK TO YOUR COMMUNITY

- 1. Be a Snow Angel!** Keeping sidewalks free of ice and snow can be very challenging for older adults and people with limited mobility. As a Snow Angel, you can be a good neighbour by clearing snow for those who need help. All you have to do is watch for people in your neighbourhood who could use help with snow removal. It's also a great opportunity for students to complete volunteer hours and exercise outdoors! To recognize and thank a Snow Angel in your life, nominate them with us. [Click here for more information.](#)



2. Look around your neighbourhood!

Like with being someone's Snow Angel, volunteering doesn't need to be formal (with an organization). What other needs do you see when you look around your neighbourhood? Maybe there's an older adult, a new family, or someone on your street who could use a helping hand. Why not drop off some cookies to say hello or help take out their garbage. Finding ways to "be a good neighbour" is a great way to introduce your children to the idea of thinking of others and sharing their time as a volunteer.



3. Call a local retirement home and set up a visit

Many older adults who live in retirement or nursing homes don't always have family and friends who can visit on a regular basis. This is a great way to share stories, make a difference in someone's day, introduce your kids to volunteering, and maybe even learn a little something.



4. Have a toy, book, clothes or household item clean out

Have your children sort through their toys and books, go through your clothes, kitchen and winter wear. Some organizations that accept used items: [Thrift on Kent](#), [Worth a Second Look](#), [Goodwill](#), etc.



5. Be a Neighbourhood Connector

Be a leader and take some initiative to bring some of your neighbours together, get to know one another and fight the winter blahs! Have a skating party, snow sculpture contest, board game night or potluck. Check out the [Festival of Neighbourhoods Activity Guide](#) for lots of great tips and resources on how to organize your own neighbourhood gathering. You won't regret it!

6. Organize a neighbourhood food drive

Now that you've connected with your neighbours and made some great new friends, why not get together and hold a Neighbourhood Food Drive? Visit the [Food Bank site](#) for information on how to donate and to register a food drive.



Step 1. Choose your organization. e.g. [Waterloo Region Food Bank](#), ([Click here for a list of the region's Food Banks](#)) Call the organization you have chosen to support or go online to find out if you need to register a drive and to check their current wish list.

Step 2. Connect with neighbours to let them know about the Food Drive: reach out to your local [Neighbourhood Association](#), or [community centre](#), use social media, leave cards or notes with details in their mailbox, and/or put posters up around the area. [The Food Bank of Waterloo Region](#) has ready-made posters, blank posters, fact sheets, and donation tracking sheets on their website for download. What to include in poster/ social media posts – items on wish list, date and time you will be picking items up OR location of where to drop items off and deadline date for dropping off items

(you might consider creating a food drive event and piggyback with another local event that's already happening, like a sports game, music festival, neighbourhood gathering, etc.)

Step 3. Thank anyone who helped out, including volunteers and organizations. You may want to include details on how much food was donated. Be sure to express the crucial role they played in the success of the program. [Click here to find out more about organizing your own Food Drive](#)

7. Share a Skill

We are all good at something. Why not make a difference by sharing your skills and talents with someone else. Teach someone to skate at an outdoor rink, become a treasurer for a volunteer run [Neighbourhood Association](#), or share your artistic talent at a [Community Centre](#).

8. Donate Items to an Organization

Many agencies and community organizations keep yearly or seasonal wish lists of products and items that help their clients in their daily lives or just help the agency to run more smoothly.

- [One ROOF wish list, \(Reaching our Outdoor Friends\), shelter for youth](#)
- [Lutherwood's Safe Haven Shelter](#)
- [Family and Children Services](#)
- [House of Friendship](#)
- [Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region wish list/Anselmas House](#)
- [Monica Place for Pregnant and Parenting Youth](#)
- [Mary's Place, an emergency shelter for women and families](#)
- [Argus Residence for Young People](#)
- [Community Support Connections](#)
- [The Kitchener Waterloo Humane Society](#)

9. Help a Refugee or New Canadian get settled in your area

Donate a Starter Kit to a refugee family in our community

Donate clothing and other goods

Organizations will be seeking donations of clothing, household supplies, food, furniture, toys and more. Always contact [organizations](#) to find out what they need first.

Help with education

- Join a local Conversation Café, or Circle to help newcomers improve English.
- Help with translation if you speak Arabic.
- Have your older kids offer homework help or tutoring to refugee children.

Make welcome to Canada cards. Get younger kids involved by having them make welcome to Canada cards and letters.

10. Volunteer for an Organization

- Volunteer at the City of Kitchener - click here to see the [Chart of Current Volunteer Opportunities](#).
- Help out at one of more than [30 outdoor winter rinks](#) at schools and parks throughout Kitchener, made possible with help from more than 350 dedicated volunteers.

If you are interested, please [apply online](#) or, call 519-741-2200 ext 7389 for more information.

- The [Volunteer Action Centre of KW's](#) website is an easy to navigate, one stop shop for almost all volunteer opportunities in our region.



“My life is my message” – Mahatma Gandhi

9. Volunteer for an Organization

- Volunteer at the City of Kitchener - click here for the updated [Volunteer Opportunities Chart](#)
- Help out at a [local outdoor community winter rink](#)

Rinks in need of Volunteers:

- Bridgeport Community Centre – 20 Tyson Dr.
- Chandler Mowat Community Centre – 222 Chandler Dr.
- Country Clair Park – Country Clair & Pebble Creek
- George Lippert Park – Weber St. & Louisa St.
- Ludolph Park – Seabrook Dr. & Apple Hill Cres.
- Vanier Park – Vanier Dr. & Shelley Dr.

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10. Help a refugee or new Canadian get settled in your area

Check out - [How to Help Syrian Refugees in KW](#)

Donate a Starter Kit to a refugee family in our community

Take part in, or organize a welcoming event

Many settlement organizations will be looking for people to help organize [welcoming events](#) and dinners to introduce refugees to the neighbourhood and make them feel welcome.

Help them get oriented

Get in touch with your local [Immigrant settlement organization](#) to see how you can help someone with the basics of getting oriented in their new community, including showing them around, introducing them to neighbours, local schools, and services like grocery stores, doctors, etc. You could also offer to help with filling out paperwork, driving them to appointments, etc. *(As with anything, always be conscientious of and consider any possible risk involved.)*

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