

Volunteering with Children & Youth



What is the connection to crime prevention?

Volunteering with children and youth improves community well-being and creates positive outcomes for both the adults and youth involved in the experience.

Studies show children and youth who have a positive adult role model are less likely than other young people to become involved in crime.

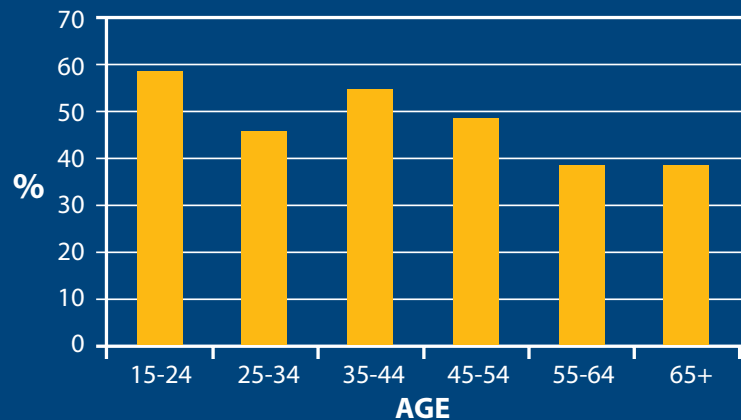
Currently there are over 127,500 children under the age of 19 living in Waterloo Region. By volunteering with a child for an hour each week or a few mornings a month, coaching a team or becoming a foster parent, you can make a difference.

Having a positive adult role model opens the door to opportunity, connects youth to the community and increases their social capital, which is 'a person's sense of connection, belonging and trust to their community.' Communities with high levels of social capital have lower crime rates.

(Komosa-Hawkins, 2012)

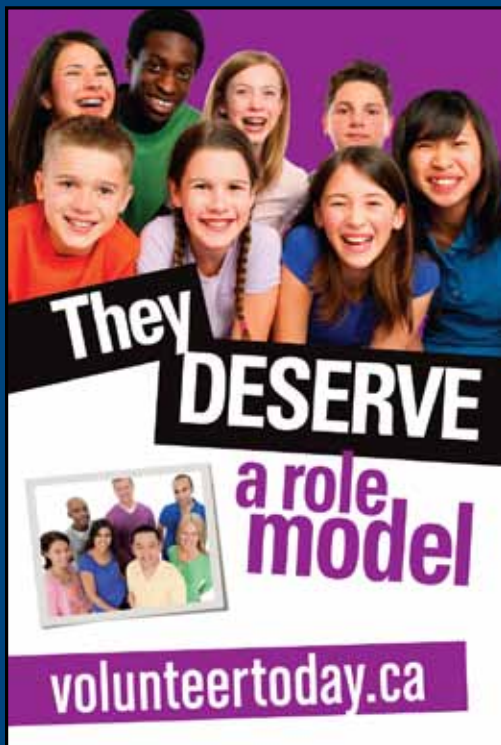
Trends

Volunteer Rate in Ontario (2010)



- Adult volunteerism is declining in Ontario (Statistics Canada, 2007). Adults ages 55-64 (39%) and seniors over 65 (38.6%) have the lowest rates of volunteerism, whereas youth 15-24 (58.1%) volunteer the most, followed by adults 35-44 (55.3%).
- Canadians volunteer for an average of 156 hours per year or three hours per week.
- The majority of adult volunteers in Canada are working parents with children.
- Females (49.1%) volunteer more than males (46.4%).
- Single, unmarried people (52.1%) and married or common law (47.2%) volunteer more than those separated/divorced (44.2%) or widowed (34.7%).
- Those with University degrees (57.6%) volunteered the most.

(Statistics Canada, 2010)



Benefits

Youth who have a positive adult role model:

- Are more connected to their community;
- Are less likely to drop out of school;
- Are more resilient;
- Have better mental health;
- Have better relationships with their parents and families;
- Are less likely to engage in aggressive behaviour and bullying;
- Are less likely to use drugs and alcohol;
- Have greater social competence;
- Have better overall health once they become adults;
- Are more likely to help others and volunteer themselves

Adults who volunteer with youth experience:

- Increased self-confidence
- Enhanced skill development
- Increased tolerance and better understanding of youth
- Increased ability to deal with stress, reduced risk of depression

“Volunteering is a great way to meet new people, make new friends, and increase relationship skills.”

The more satisfaction you have as a volunteer, the better your contribution and the more likely you'll continue to volunteer. Be sure to:

- Ask questions
- Know what is expected of you
- Be realistic about your time commitment
- Find the right fit
- Enjoy yourself

Where to Begin

Look for volunteer opportunities at:

- Libraries
- Community Centers
- Schools and after-school programs
- Neighbourhood Associations
- Youth organizations and sports teams
- Community theaters, museums
- Non-Profit Organizations (food bank, shelters)
- Arts organizations
- Places of worship

Local Support

Volunteer Today campaign
www.volunteertoday.ca

Volunteer Action Centre
 519-742-8610
www.volunteerkw.ca

United Way of Cambridge and North Dumfries
 519-621-1030
www.uwcambridge.on.ca/volunteer-centre.php



519-883-2304
www.preventingcrime.ca