

# Why Volunteer?

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*"Volunteers make the world a more loving place."- Jon Weizenbaum, DADS Commissioner*

**You can make a difference.** You can be brightening a nursing home resident's day, teaching an art class at a state supported living center (SSLC) or advocating for those who cannot speak for themselves. No matter what type of volunteer activity you choose, you are enriching the lives of others.

*"Volunteering is a wonderful way to use your individual talents and life experiences to try to make a difference in small ways for other people."-Martha, volunteer ombudsman*

**You meet new people!** You will find that clients, staff and other volunteers will inspire you.

*"They have given me more than I can ever give them."-Judy, SSLC volunteer*

**Everyone is welcome.** Whether you are comfortable speaking in front of people, prefer to work one-on-one or like to be behind the scenes, you will find volunteer opportunities that suit your preferences.

*"There is something for each and every one of us to do; each and every one of us has unique talents that can be brought to bear on what the world needs."- Dan, SSLC volunteer*

**Volunteering is good for you!** According to the Corporation for National and Community Service:

- People who volunteer live longer.
- Volunteering leads to greater life satisfaction and lower rates of depression.

*"Volunteer activities can strengthen the social ties that protect individuals from isolation during difficult times, while the experience of helping others leads to a sense of greater self-worth and trust."<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Grimm, Jr., Kimberly Spring, and Nathan Dietz, *"The Health Benefits of Volunteering"*



# How do I get started?

There are lots of ways to volunteer. Here are websites to help you start:

<p><b>Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS)</b></p> <p>If you are interested in volunteering with older Texans or Texans with intellectual and developmental disabilities, DADS has many choices. For more information, contact the DADS Volunteer and Community Engagement office.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.volunteeratdads.org">www.volunteeratdads.org</a></p> <p>1-800-889-8595</p>
<p><b>Volunteer Centers in Texas</b></p> <p>This website lists many of the volunteer centers in Texas. Most of the larger cities in Texas have a volunteer center. Small-town volunteer opportunities are often listed on the town's website.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.onestarfoundation.org/onestar-networks/texas-association-of-volunteer-centers">www.onestarfoundation.org/onestar-networks/texas-association-of-volunteer-centers</a></p>
<p><b>Opportunities at nonprofits</b></p> <p>The Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts website has a search tool that can be used to search for nonprofits all over Texas.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.cpa.state.tx.us/taxinfo/exempt/exempt_search.html">www.cpa.state.tx.us/taxinfo/exempt/exempt_search.html</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.tano.org">www.tano.org</a></p>
<p><b>Senior Centers in Texas</b></p> <p>If your town does not have a volunteer center, the local senior center is a great place to look for opportunities. This link has a list of the senior centers in Texas.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.caretexas.net/list11_Texas_senior_centers.htm">www.caretexas.net/list11_Texas_senior_centers.htm</a></p>
<p><b>Volunteering sites- federal government</b></p> <p>These websites have information about the federal programs AmeriCorps and Senior Corps.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.serve.gov">www.serve.gov</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.nationalservice.gov">www.nationalservice.gov</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.volunteer.gov">www.volunteer.gov</a></p>
<p><b>Volunteer position searches</b></p> <p>These are search tools to help you find volunteer opportunities in your community. You are able to search by city and state and type of volunteer work.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.volunteermatch.org">www.volunteermatch.org</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.allforgood.org">www.allforgood.org</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.idealists.org">www.idealists.org</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.handsonnetwork.org">www.handsonnetwork.org</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.dosomething.org">www.dosomething.org</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.giveitbacktoseniors.org">www.giveitbacktoseniors.org</a></p>



*Volunteer*

You'll be amazed.