100 Ideas for Working With Our Youth

The goal of NRTA’s *With Our Youth!* program is to provide five key resources for youth:

- An ongoing relationship with a caring adult
- A healthy start in life
- Safe places to learn and grow
- A marketable skill through effective education
- An opportunity to give back through community service

**An ongoing relationship with a caring adult**

1. Become an afterschool phone pal with a latchkey child.
2. Read to child regularly.
3. Become an art pal with a young person.
4. Volunteer at a homework hotline site.
5. Tutor students who have been ill and need to catch up.
6. Set up homework help site on your website.
7. Mentor youth in existing programs in your community.
8. Volunteer with a youth theater group.
9. Take a young child to a museum or historical site regularly.
10. Volunteer as a teacher’s aide in a classroom.
11. Volunteer in a student education program in a planetarium.
12. Adopt a preschool class for musical activities.
13. Teach a young person to play chess.
14. Teach a child to make simple toys.
15. Volunteer with Social Services agency to help troubled youth, or those dealing with traumatic events.
16. Rebuild an old car with a teenager.
17. Volunteer to teach a young person about the environment.
18. Help a child make a scrapbook for notable events of his time.
19. Form a youth council to help plan mentoring activities in their schools.
20. Become a pen pal with a young person.

**A healthy start in life**

1. Volunteer in a program to educate pregnant teens about their health and the health of their babies.
2. Volunteer to educate young parents about nutrition.
3. Volunteer in a soup kitchen program that serves needy or homeless youth.
4. Write a guide to healthy living and work with youth to write their own health paths.
5. Work to establish free immunization for pre-schoolers and elementary school children.
6. Provide emotional support for grieving youth.
7. Start a program with young people for children in homeless shelters to help them establish good health habits.
8. Volunteer at local foodbanks to provide food for needy youth.
9. Create health-related word games to play with youth.
10. Make posters with youth about healthy lifestyles.
11. Volunteer with programs that encourage youth to exercise.
12. Read books with youth that are related to health.
13. Write articles for community newsletters about how people can help youth live healthy lives.
14. Volunteer in classrooms to help teachers provide information about exercise and health.
15. Write health skits with youth for younger children.
16. Create afterschool walking programs with youth to interesting sites in the community.
17. Volunteer with local hospital to nurture fragile babies.
18. Provide healthy snacks for your local daycare program.
19. If you are a gardener, volunteer your garden as a place to teach youth about health.
20. Share with youth how you have kept your health.

**Safe places to learn and grow**

1. Form a youth safety council for your community co-led by youth and adults.
2. Work with a youth group to make safety posters.
3. Sponsor a safety essay contest in cooperation with local businesses.
4. Volunteer in local anti-drug programs for youth.
5. Volunteer in a community recreation center for youth.
6. Work to provide safe and clean homeless shelters for families and youth.
7. Volunteer in a shelter for abused mothers and children.
8. Work to establish safe afterschool places for latchkey children.
9. Volunteer to be a hall monitor in a local school.
10. Volunteer with firefighters and policemen in programs for youth.
11. Help start a program to monitor the streets around school neighborhoods, before and after school and at lunch time.
12. Start an afterschool video discussion group in your community.
13. Work with youth to write articles for local news media about keeping youth safe in your community.
14. Start supervised walks to and from school for elementary school youth.
15. Advocate for policies and funding that provide safe environments for youth in your community.
16. Support counseling services for youth in your community.
17. Make safety coloring books for elementary schools.
18. Mentor young parents on safety for their children.
19. Volunteer to be a safety guard for school crossings in your neighborhood.
20. Volunteer in a program for abused children.

**A marketable skill through effective education**

1. Work with youth to identify careers they would like to learn about at a youth career exploration event.
2. Mentor youth to become teachers.
3. Support a youth who has musical talent but few opportunities to express it.
4. Work with local businesses to set up career days and/or business internships for youth.
5. Teach youth basic financial skills such as balancing a checkbook, personal budgeting, etc.
6. Develop materials to mentor youth about practical on-the-job behavior.
7. Volunteer to help teach youth to write newsletters.
8. Coach youth on how to write resumes, fill out job applications and interview.
9. Work with local businesses to mentor young employees.
10. Develop a workshop for youth on work ethics, attitudes and what to expect on the job.
11. Identify with local businesses areas of weakness in new employees and work with service organizations to provide training for youth in these areas.
12. Support youth arts programs that prepare youth for entertainment careers.
13. Work with the extension service office and local businesses to teach youth about rural occupations.
14. Sponsor, or co-sponsor, computer clubs for youth without access to computers.
15. Work with a local animal care center to start a youth training program.
16. Work with a local community college to start job success workshops for youth.
17. Start a math club for youth.
18. Teach youth skills you have developed through a hobby.
19. Work with local schools and businesses to start a job mentoring program for youth.
20. Volunteer with a local literacy program for youth.
Youth giving back through community service

1. Bring a group of youth together to plan community service projects with you.
2. Encourage youth to record books for the visually impaired.
3. Help youth develop computer centers to teach adults how to use computers.
4. Involve youth in helping an older person live independently.
5. Assist youth to perform regularly in nursing homes and children’s hospitals.
6. Work with environmental groups to start youth programs.
7. Work with youth in community clean-up projects.
8. Write a funding proposal for a joint retiree and youth community service program and help youth advocate for it.
9. Work with your library to start a youth reading to pre-schoolers program.
10. Work with teachers to set up a youth tutoring program for primary grade students.
11. Help youth set up a car repair clinic for the needy.
12. Help a library establish a program for youth to deliver and return library books for the homebound.
13. Work with a local troubled youth hotline to train young people to answer phones.
14. Help youth set up an animal adoption hotline.
15. Work with a local youth group to adopt a highway.
16. Write a youth advocacy guide and lobby with young people on an issue of importance to the community.
17. Work with youth to raise funds for disaster relief.
18. Volunteer to help youth serve in local soup kitchens.
19. Start a youth nutrition training program so they can teach younger children about healthy eating habits.
20. Work with a pharmacist to start a youth volunteer program to teach others about drug interactions and drug safety.

Contact information

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