**HIGH SCHOOL VOLUNTEER HOURS: Q & A**

What are Volunteer Hours?

* NEW! For the 2020-2021 school year, Ontario students **must** complete only 20 hours of community service as a requirement for the Ontario Secondary School Diploma. (Traditionally this was 40 hours).
* This is a volunteer activity and **not** for pay or credit.

What counts toward the NEW 20 Hour Volunteer Requirements?

* ***Virtual Volunteering***- visit <http://www.volunteertoronto.ca/> for many great opportunities
* ***Formal Volunteering*** includes giving your time to a good cause on behalf of a non-profit organization such as fundraising, outreach to raise awareness, set-up/tear down events or help manage donations.
* ***Informal Volunteering*** includes giving your time directly to help a group of people or individual like shovelling snow for a neighbour, help seniors carry groceries, babysit unpaid or donate food to a local food bank.
* The following do not count towards the 40 Volunteer requirements: working for free in a family business, school co-op placement and any job where you are paid for your work.

Why Volunteer?

* Jumpstart your resume and college/university applications
* Gain recognition
* Improve your communication skills
* Feel good about yourself
* Improve your community
* Make new friends

When Can I Volunteer?

* Start looking for volunteer opportunities in Grade 9 or 10 to ensure you have your hours by Grade 12
* You can volunteer all year round or you can find positions that ask for anything from 1 year commitment, to a 3 month commitment and some special events will only need you for a day.

How Do I Find a Volunteer Position?

* Reflect on the following questions: What are you good at? What do you want to learn or gain from volunteering? What causes do you care about? How much time do you have?
* Refer to the website below, Volunteer Toronto, for more suggestions on volunteer opportunities
* <http://www.volunteertoronto.ca/>