



Community Involvement Hours (Gr. 8 – 9)

FACT SHEET

Since September 1, 1999, one of the requirements for all students in Ontario is to complete 40 hours of community involvement in order to receive an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). The purpose of this requirement is to encourage students to develop an understanding of the various roles they can play in serving their community and to help them develop a greater sense of belonging within the community.

What is Community Involvement?

- 40 hours of community involvement activities
- a requirement for an Ontario Secondary School Diploma
- a volunteer activity – not for pay or credit
- a constructive contribution to the community

Why has the Ministry of Education mandated it?

- reinforces civic responsibility
- strengthens the community
- enhances one's self-confidence and self-image
- offers networking for future employment
- provides an experience for students to include in their portfolios

When must students complete it?

- any time during the secondary school program, beginning in the summer before they enter grade 9, and prior to graduation.
- outside class hours, for example:
 - during lunch breaks
 - in the evening
 - on weekends
 - during school breaks
 - during the summer months

How to Get Started

When you begin to plan, think about activities in your community, school or with an individual. Some ideas are listed below, but use your imagination. The list is endless.

- Check with your neighbours
- Inquire whether there are appropriate initiatives at summer schools/camps etc.
- Contact your local volunteer centre for current activities
- For further suggestions about volunteer opportunities visit:
www.volunteertoronto.on.ca , www.solacaritas.com , 40hours.ca

What Else You Need to Know

- Parents must verify that the activity selected is in a safe nurturing environment from the TDSB approved list of activities. **Only eligible activities will be accepted by schools.**
- **Parents* are responsible for ensuring that the activity is from the approved list, and monitoring the completion of hours and the safety of their children.**
- A signed verification letter, indicating the contact information of the placement, the activity performed, and hours completed, must be brought to the secondary school guidance department no earlier than the first week of October.





The following list of community involvement approved activities for the Toronto District School Board provides suggestions of activities from which students may choose. Other activities of a similar nature may be approved at the school level.

HELP YOUR NEIGHBOURS

- provide service to seniors or to others who have difficulty leaving their homes – raking, shoveling (no snow blowers), shopping (students should not drive vehicles for this purpose), visiting, reading, meal preparation
- assist a neighbour with child care – take child to park, watch child while parent prepares dinner
- tutor younger students – read, take to library, help with homework

HELP YOUR COMMUNITY

- volunteer at a seniors' home/centre – visit, read, play cards or board games, take seniors for walks, make crafts
- help organize local community events – food drives/banks
- take part in environmental initiatives – cleaning and recycling operations, park cleanup, planting trees and flower beds (students should not use power tools – lawn mowers, hedge trimmers, wood chippers, etc.)
- get involved in charitable activities – walk-a-thons, daffodil sales, canvassing for organizations
- assist with sports teams – community leagues, parks and recreation programs
- volunteer in *leadership* role with community groups – youth groups
- volunteer in hospitals, libraries or any organization recommended by the Volunteer Centre of Toronto
- volunteer with social service or animal welfare agencies – Red Cross, United Way, Humane Society
- get involved in the democratic political process – scrutineering, canvassing, campaigning
- offer service through religious communities/places of worship
- assist with literacy initiatives – at local libraries, day care centers, community centers

WORKPLACE SAFETY AND INSURANCE

* The Toronto District School Board's liability insurance will protect the students and the community sponsors for liability lawsuits that may arise from the students' activities in this program. The board's insurance does not cover the sponsors for lawsuits that arise from their negligence or for student injuries in the workplace. It is recommended that students involved in the program purchase Student Accident Insurance. The TDSB assumes no liability beyond 40 hours.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND SUGGESTIONS PLEASE VISIT US AT

<http://www.tdsb.on.ca/programs/guidance> ---> Community Involvement