

# A Snapshot: Teen Volunteering

How to find the right volunteer opportunity for you

# In this presentation, you will discover...

- What is a nonprofit?
- How does Sonoma County measure up?
- How will volunteering serve you?
- What does volunteering look like?
- What kinds of opportunities are out there?
- How do you find the right opportunity?
- What's expected of you as the volunteer?
- How to evaluate your experience?

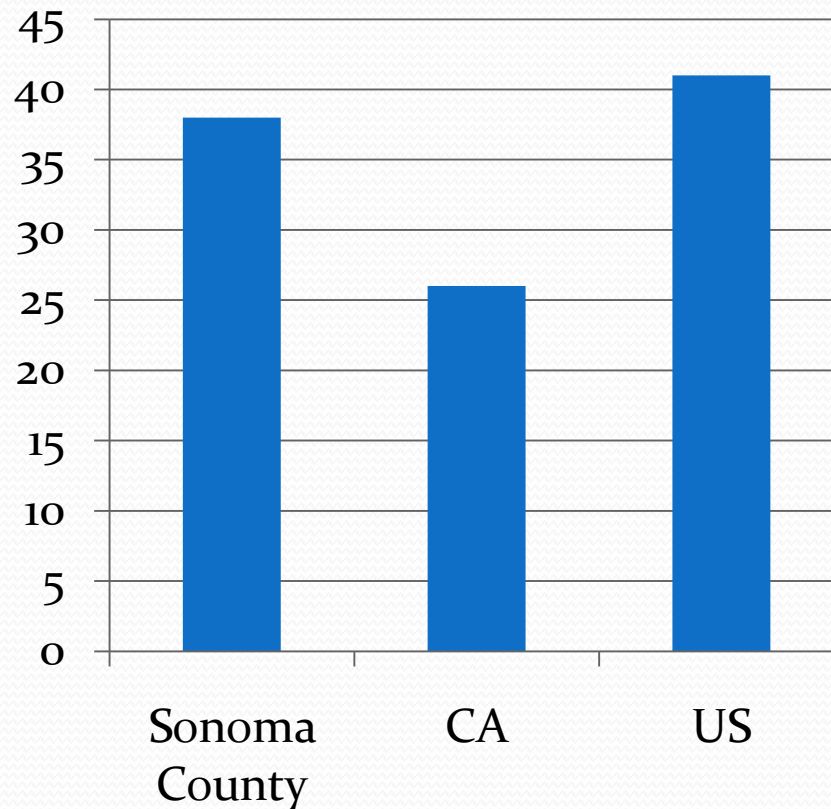
## What is a Nonprofit?

A nonprofit is an organization that serves the community by providing much needed services for people, animals or the environment.



## How Does Sonoma County Measure Up?

The Santa Rosa area has the highest amount of volunteering in California with 38% of its residents volunteering. There are over 800 nonprofits in Sonoma County which provides a variety of volunteer opportunities.



Percentage of Volunteerism by Area

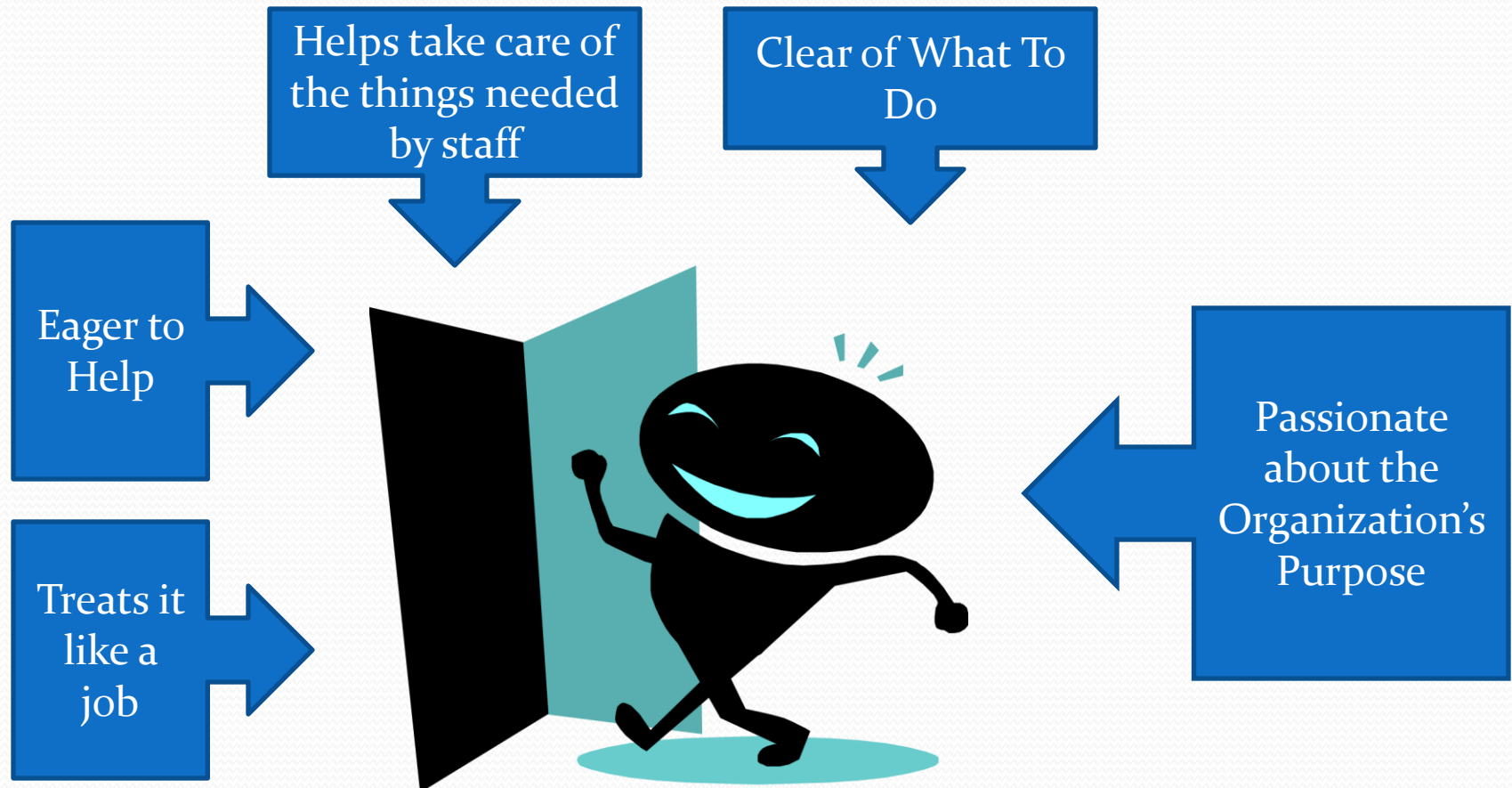
# How will Volunteering Serve You?

- **Gain Experience:** working in the field or a position that has transferable skills will help you become more experienced when you are looking for that job.
- **Resume Building:** add volunteering to your resume. Businesses, either for or not for profit, want to see you that you've been busy, so show them how you took the initiative to volunteer at a local nonprofit and be specific of what you did. Being the leader or creating a new and helpful tool will prove to the potential employer that you are an asset to their organization.
- **Gain New Skills:** work experience is invaluable; there are some things you can't learn in school. So by volunteering, you are in a new environment, observing people in their jobs and hopefully you are given tasks that challenge you. If not, ask!
- **Try It On:** try something you are interested in. This way, if you don't like it, you'll know before you take classes or apply for the job and then realize it's not what you want to do as a career.
- **Meet People:** not only do you get to gain experience, but you meet people who can be a potential reference when your job hunting if you made the right impression, or they may recommend a place to apply. Let them know you are looking and ask for them to be on your list of references, after you've shown them what you can do!

# Other Benefits to Volunteering

- **Potential Job:** This may lead to a job. Nonprofits make up a large percentage of organizations in Sonoma County, and therefore many jobs are found there. Prove what you can do, and they may find funding to keep you.
- **Job Hunting 101-**See every step as a practice for when you job hunt. From the initial conversation on the phone when you introduce yourself, to the showing up on the scheduled time to volunteer, this is like a job and a good time to practice how you present yourself and are seen. Take it all as a learning opportunity.
- **Thinking of College?:** College applications ask for community service. But since it's getting more competitive, not only do you show your volunteer time, but you need to stand out by taking a leadership role or again, creating something new that addresses a need in the community.
- **Feel Great About Making A Difference!:** Lastly, but more importantly, volunteering leads you to find the joy of serving others and helping to improve our local community. Make a difference, meet people, gain new skills, and add a whole new experience awaits you-Volunteer!

# What Does Volunteering Look Like?



# What Kinds of Opportunities Are There?

**WORKING WITH KIDS:** (Typical hours: M-F 7 AM-7 PM)

Assist staff with program activities and hang out with kids that will look up to you.

**THEATER:** (Typical hours: M-F 9-6:00; Weekends)

Help with the set up and break down of theater equipment. Help with general clean up, reorganization of space, or any other construction work needed onsite.

**OFFICE SUPPORT:** (Typical hours: M-F 9-6:00)

Support staff by responding to calls and making phone calls to lists of contacts. Will be trained and given script on how to communicate their message. Help with general office work, filing paperwork, making copies, working on mailers etc.

**OUTDOORS:** (Typical hours: Weekends)

Help clean up our local creeks on Saturdays or afternoons. Remove Invasive Plants: support our local natural habitats by removing those plants that are not native to Sonoma County. Learn about trail maintenance while helping to clear paths and create better access for the park guests. Work at a community garden, help to maintain and care for plants.

**WORKING WITH ANIMALS:** (Typical hours: M-F 10-6:00, Weekends)

Assist staff in caring for the animals in shelters, petting, cleaning and maintenance of kennels. Work on the grounds to fix shelters, clear paths, and general cleaning.

# More Opportunities You Can Consider...

## THRIFT STORES: (Typical hours: M-Sat. 10-4:00)

Help go through and organize donated clothing and house items that will be put on display. Assist staff in sales and helping customers with purchases.

## FRIENDLY VISITOR/ENTERTAINER: (Typical hours: Everyday, 10-5:00)

Visit convalescent homes/hospitals or other assisted living centers to be that friendly face to the residents. Read a story, play games, do an activity and bring sunshine to their day. Many welcome animals, so you can bring your friendly pet!! If you play a musical instrument or sing, they would love to have you visit and be the entertainment of the hour.

## LIBRARY HELP: (Typical hours: M-F 9-5:00)

Help to sort and put away books that are being returned to the library. Clean books and keep the library organized.

## KITCHEN HELP: (Typical hours: All week long, shifts vary)

Help to prepare and shelve food that will be going out to families and individuals in need. Help to prepare and serve meals to individuals. Staff will train and supervise.

## COMPUTER INSTRUCTOR/MEDIA: (Typical hours: M-F 9-6:00 or work at home) (*experience required*)

Teach seniors or children how to use a computer. Create websites, blogs, newsletters, flyers etc. Help to set up and maintain social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter, blogs.

## SPECIAL EVENTS: (Typical hours: one day events, may need help leading up to event)

Help with set up, break down and running event. Be a runner, food/beverage server, monitor, hostess, or assist staff in any way.

# How Do You Find the Right Opportunity?

- Search Online at [www.volunteernow.org](http://www.volunteernow.org)
- Review opportunities on [www.volunteermatch.org](http://www.volunteermatch.org)
- Stop by a local agency in your community
- Call the Volunteer Center at 573-3399 x125

# Next Steps in Researching Opportunities

- Make a list of agencies you are considering
- Include the agency name, contact person, phone number, email and job description
- When contacting, have paper and pencil to take notes
- Call to see if opportunity exists and be open to other opportunities that you can consider
- Ask for specifics: when the job starts, what it entails, and who will supervise you.