

# We want to help at nursing home

Dear Jo:

Our junior high youth group at church is planning to do volunteer work at a nursing home.

We are looking for resources that will help us know how to respond to the residents and perhaps give us suggestions for activities. Can you help?

Mrs. C.D.,  
Farmington

Dear Mrs. D:

The best resources are available through your community United Way Volunteer Action Center. Just call and tell them what you are looking for. They have plenty of information available on volunteering for all ages including books, articles, speakers and films.

Other resources can be found at your local library and at specialty libraries such as those associated with gerontological educational centers.


You should also contact the director of volunteers at the nursing home where you and the students plan to volunteer. She can give you many suggestions as to what type of volunteer work is most helpful to the residents and most satisfying to the students.

The students themselves may have some creative ideas on volunteer activities. So don't forget to tap those resources too.

One intergenerational activity that I have found to be successful (even therapeutic) and fun for the students and residents as well is reminiscence therapy. The young volunteers (after some training) share some information on their daily life activities and encourage the older residents to recall what it was like earlier in their lives when they were the same age. This can be done as part of their general conversation or in a formal group setting.

You are wise to be prepared before you enter into the volunteer program with the students. With good

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gerontology  
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preparation, they will be ready for a very special and rewarding experience.

Dear Jo:

As I grow older I seem to have fewer and fewer colds. Is this a benefit that goes along with being older?

Dear Mr. N:

Yes. Having fewer colds when you are older is apparently due to an increased immunity to a large number of cold viruses. Thus, by age 65, most people have only one cold a year or

Mr. J.N.,  
East Coast elder

fewer.

Dear Jo:

I am decreasing the amount of sodium in my diet. I no longer use salt when I cook or at the table. What else can I do?

Mrs. E.A.  
Over 60 and Healthy

Dear Mrs. A:

You can read the labels on all processed foods. The ingredients are listed in order of quantity. So if sodium or salt is listed early on, you can be pretty sure that their content is high. Sodium is present in other additives such as monosodium glutamate and disodium inosinate, so beware.

## Volunteers are needed

The Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Association, 17251 W. 12 Mile, Southfield, needs volunteer assistants in many areas including: family support group leaders, volunteer family counselors, volunteer coordinators, and individuals for a speakers bureau. Each position requires a different degree of skill and education, but all require previous experience with Alzheimers. If you can help or need more information, contact Michell Ventour - at 557-8277, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., weekdays.

The American Cancer Society, 23500 Southfield Road, Southfield, needs volunteers to help with clerical duties. Specific responsibilities are telephone coverage, transportation and general clerical work. Four

hours of your time per week are needed. Contact Juanita Reynolds, 557-5353 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. weekdays for more information.

The Interfaith Center for Racial Justice, 28640 Campbell, Warren, is in need of assistants to help with clerical and office duties. The volunteer should have a high school diploma, be 18 or older, and have some office skills. The time commitment is four to five hours per week. Call Michael Jablonski at 751-4292 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays.

For information on other opportunities or if your organization needs volunteers, call The Center for Volunteerism, United Community Services of Metropolitan Detroit, at 226-9429 weekdays.



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