

Parents Edu



THE PARENTS' ROLE IN
THE OUT-OF-SCHOOL
EDUCATION



PaREntSEdU

The Parents' Role in the out-of-school Education of their children



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Volunteering

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activities

8. VOLUNTEERING ACTIVITIES

a) Volunteering clubs in schools

Volunteering clubs in schools – clubs for students involved in volunteer work. Students attending those clubs can, for example, together visit the hospitals, animal shelters, retirement's homes etc. They sometimes organize cyclic events or charity actions.

Benefits:

- “Age-appropriate volunteering is the perfect way to explore children’s talents and feel – often for the first time – that they are a part of something larger than themselves,
- Recent studies show that children and teens who volunteer are more likely to do better in school, avoid engaging in risky behaviour, and even graduate from college”.

Tips:

- The same as in a case in any other volunteering activity – volunteering shall not be compulsory, it must involve an element of choice,
 - There is a possibility that volunteering clubs already exist in your child school. If so, you can encourage your kid to get involved,
 - You can, as a parent, support pupils and teachers in organizing volunteering clubs. Those steps about how to start a volunteering club in school can be very helpful at the beginning, both for parents, teachers and pupils:
1. **Make sure that you really want to start the club. Find people who want to get involved** and develop with them a focused, specific mission – you need the strong support and willingness to work as a team. For example, rather than being a general volunteering club, without any plan, try to focus on one topic: for example charity actions or volunteering with seniors.

2. **Get the support.** Find an advisor for your club. Pick someone who will help you promote and organize events for your club and is well known in your community. If your school has a process established for starting a club, talk to the teachers in charge of that to fill out any necessary paperwork.
3. **Find a venue.** Think of the best place to meet (usually it is a classroom, but it can be also someone's house, a park or a library, or any place close to you). Make sure that everyone has safe transportation that allows attending the meetings.
4. **Decide when to meet.** Think how often your club should meet – it can be, for example, once/twice in a week, once in a month or even once in few months, depends what your mission is. Also remember to pick a convenient time and day when most club members will be free.
5. **Advertise your club at school.** Everyone in a school should know about your club – it will help you to find members and more support for your work. Think of as many ways as possible, to attract more attention – you can use a school newspaper, a school radio, website, or any other media. You can also make bright, colorful, informative posters, that all people will be able to notice. In your message, include the most important information – when and where your club will meet and what your club does. You can also ask your principal if you can make a small presentation on assembly.
6. **Plan volunteering events.** Work with a few other members of the club to plan and organize your events, and advertise them to your whole school to get even more people involved. Take into consideration that everyone should be able to participate in those events.

Analysis of legal forms of out-of-school education in partner countries

Poland

In some schools there are volunteering clubs, pupils can take part in some charity actions, they sometimes together visit hospitals, retirement homes etc.

Portugal

The student associations are volunteer and sometimes gather volunteering from the parents and teachers.

Spain

Volunteering in Spain is permitted up to 16 years (with parents' permission)

b) Volunteering out of schools (eg. in NGOs, in animal shelters)

Most of a student ordinary day is represented by spare time. Why to waste this time looking at TV or playing video games when there are so many other activities funnier which may help students to improve their abilities and develop their skills? Keeping students engaged into activities is proved to be the best way to make them accumulate information. There are plenty of places where students can volunteer, for example NGOs, religious communities, cultural institutions or municipal help. There is no need for volunteering to be related to school in order to develop student skills.

Benefits:

- Students develop new skills, gain experience or even qualifications, achieve personal goals or discover hidden talents,
- Integrating a student into a community and making him go outside his comfort zone makes him gain confidence,
- The student feels that he is part of community by making connections with the people he helps and cultivate friendships with other volunteers,

- Social interaction is improved and so, the mental and physical health do. It is proved that socializing helps brain functions and eliminate the risk of student to suffer from depression,
- Self-esteem and the feelings of self-worth are improved. The students can realize that they really count in a society and they can see the difference that their help can make,
- Volunteering helps students not to waste their times but having fun with other people, regardless of why they do it,
- Volunteering side by side with the parents can help the family communication and can create better relationships between them.

If you are a parent interested in organizing a volunteering activity for children or enrolling your children in such kind of activities you should know:

- Most volunteer positions require filling out an application and in some cases, providing a resume and references as well as undergoing an interview and training program,
- Volunteering shall not be compulsory, it must involve an element of choice;
- Not only the personal development is expected but also working for goods and services that can help the society,
- There is no expectation of compensation, other than reimbursement of reasonable expenses and subsistence allowance necessary for the accomplishment of the tasks.

There are many approaches for regulating volunteerism varying for every country:

- Some country does not recognize the volunteers in their legal frameworks (for example Turkey, Albania, etc),
- Some country has not national law regulating the distinct legal status of volunteer (for example Scandinavian countries or United Kingdom),

- Some country has the regulation included in other laws affecting volunteerism:
 - Poland has the law of public benefit status: the volunteers shall provide services to support non-governmental organizations, public administration authorities and organizational units reporting to public administration authorities in their activities;
 - France has two forms of volunteering engagement: Bénévolat and Volontariat. In "Bénévolat" the people are free to conduct additional activities and in "Volontariat" the people have the status of volunteer and their engagement is exclusive;
- Some country has separate and comprehensive law on volunteering: the most frequent in Europe (including Macedonia, Romania and Spain). In many cases the tax conditions applying to volunteers are not specified in this law but they are regulated in relevant tax laws.

Analysis of legal forms of out-of-school education in partner countries

Poland

Students, if they are interested, they are able to easily find NGOs in which they can volunteer.

France

Big cities have one or several "houses of associations" to find volunteering with all the possible actions. With parent's permission kids up to 16 can start volunteering.

Feel useful and to make something for others is the mandate of these volunteers who get involved in fields of activity: sport, culture, leisure activities, the humanitarian worker, the health, and social action, the defence of the rights or education.

Portugal

The majority of the civil society clubs, associations, NGO's and Charities promote the volunteering.

Spain

Volunteering in Spain is permitted up to 16 years (with parents' permission).

Macedonia

There are NGO's which are providing volunteering work out of schools.

Romania

According to Romanian law, volunteering is the participation of the individual volunteer in activities of public interest for the benefit of other persons or of society, organized by private or public law bodies, without remuneration, individually or in groups.

c) Charity actions

Charity actions – it's a voluntary giving of help to those in need, as a humanitarian act. Charity actions can be organized by non-profit organizations, by religious communities or even by individuals. Sometimes pupils can organize such action in school or get involved in actions which are organized by others. Why get children (and yourself) involved in charity actions?

Benefits:

- It can help them understand their role within the community and the ways in which small acts can have a greater effect,
- It can also help them think about others. Which can be a good thing; especially if you find them becoming too focused on their own needs and wants.

Tips:

- Remember that volunteering shall not be compulsory; it must involve an element of choice,
- Act as a good role model. Let children see you drop money into charity boxes, ask them to help you pick out canned foods during a food drive or bring them

along when you participate in fundraising events. It gives you an opportunity to discuss why it's important to give and how rewarding it can be,

- Suggest some causes to your child and let them choose one that matters to them. They're more likely to want to support a cause that they know about and identify with,
- Remember also about the value of time. With limited financial means, it can be hard for children to donate money. Use this as a chance to teach them that they have a much more valuable resource than cash - they have time, which can be just as powerful,
- When your children give, tell them that you're proud of them. Show them pictures and thank you notes from the places they have helped, so they can see the impact and feel appreciated for their contributions.

When talking to your children about sharing and charity, perhaps the following conversation starters might prove useful:

- Talk about why sharing is important,
- Ask them how sharing with other people makes them feel,
- Ask them how do they feel when people share with them,
- Ask them how they would feel if they couldn't have something they needed.

Once you've talked to them about the importance of sharing and charity, you can start putting some ideas into practice. Here are just some examples of how to start:

- If your children see a natural disaster on TV, talk about how these people could have no home or possessions, and explain how small donations of items or money could make a big difference to their lives,
- You could also set a time each month or two to go through the things you do not use anymore and take them to a charity together,

- Some parents also like their children to dedicate a percentage of their allowance to sharing (you could sit down with them and work out how much they will spend, save and share each week),
- If you donate to a charity, involve your child in choosing the charity. **Include giving in family rituals and traditions.** For example, donating toys to a children's charity at Christmas time can be a good idea,
- Make charity a family event. Research your local charities to see if they are looking for volunteers. This can be very rewarding and also a great day out for the entire family,
- Check if there are any charity actions in your children school – that can be a good opportunity for your child to get involved. There are also situations when it's pupil's initiative to organize a charity action – children sometimes, for example, want to help their friend or a kid from their neighbourhood, who has health problems.

Analysis of legal forms of out-of-school education in partner countries

Poland

Charity action can be as well students initiative or cyclical actions organized for example in a Christmas time.

Spain

Volunteering in Spain is permitted from 16 years-old (with parents' permission).

Macedonia

Red Cross, Humanitarian associations, volunteering in different actions when there is a Natural Disasters.

Romania

- Donations,
- Redirecting 2% from the personal income tax,
- Directing 20% of the profit income from companies in the limit of 0.5% from their total fiscal value.



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