



Community Outreach Ideas

Now that your students are participating in the *ClassroomsCare* program, get them thinking about other ways to show your classroom cares! Learning how to contribute to the community is an essential part of every child's education. It's never too early to get active and give back! Check out this list of ways that you and your class – or school – can reach out to the community. Of course, every neighbourhood is different and has individual needs; you and your students can brainstorm your own projects, as well.

Try these community outreach ideas with your class:

- **Visit your neighbours.** If there's a senior center or retirement community in your neighborhood, plan a visit. Consider doing something special for the residents, such as making bouquets of tissue-paper flowers to bring as gifts. You might even put on a performance, such as a skit or a sing-along.
- **Clean it up!** Is there a playground or other area in your neighbourhood that could use some sprucing up? Get out those rubber gloves and get to work! Kids can pick up litter (be sure to use safety precautions), rake leaves, and so on.
- **Give the gift of warmth.** If you live in a temperate climate, holding a coat drive can be a great winter activity. Ask families and neighbors to drop off gently used coats sized for both children and adults. You can donate the coats to a homeless shelter or other community organization.
- **Cheer someone up.** The hospital is never a fun place to be – especially for kids. Invite students to bring some cheer into the lives of sick children by creating funny greeting cards. You can also donate toys, or do a sewing project and create your own simple stuffed animals.
- **Can it!** Help the hungry in your area by having a canned goods drive. Send home letters to families asking them to donate canned foods. You can also post flyers around the neighbourhood. Then deliver the goods to a community shelter.
- **Plant something beautiful.** Nature can make any place look better! Choose a spot near your school or in another area of your neighbourhood to plant some seeds. You can grow flowers, veggies, or even plant a tree.

- **Help your four-legged friends.** Collect toys, food, and biscuits – or make your own – to brighten up the lives of any homeless dogs and cats in your area. Bring your donations to a local animal shelter.
- **Get cooking!** Is there a soup kitchen in your neighbourhood, or a service that delivers meals to those who are housebound? You can contribute by doing a cooking project at school. For example, call the organization and ask if they could use a batch of brownies or cookies to give out for dessert.
- **Teach new friends.** Depending on the children’s age and skill level, they might be interested in helping out younger or struggling students. Kids can tutor in math, reading, or writing – or they might volunteer to lead an activity at a community after-school or daycare program.
- **Get the message out.** What do your students care most about? The environment? Endangered wildlife? Saving a local landmark? Whatever the cause, encourage kids to take action! They can create flyers and posters, and ask local merchants to display them. They can write letters, join online organizations, and even start their own petitions.
- **Decorate!** Creating a mural can be a wonderful collaborative class activity, and can brighten up any space. Get a large sheet of craft paper and work together to create a cheerful scene. Then donate your mural to decorate the children’s wing of a hospital, the dining hall of a senior center, or any place that could use a little cheer!
- **Get moving.** For a healthier alternative to a bake sale, why not have a “fun run” for your favorite cause? Choose a charity and have kids ask family and friends to sponsor them. Then pick a convenient neighbourhood “course” (such as a local jogging track or a path through the park) and lead kids on a walk or run. Collect the contributions, donate them to your charity, and then celebrate the kids’ accomplishment!