

# VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

## BOARD OF CHRISTIAN OUTREACH of The United Church of Rowayton, Inc. 2021

The mission of the Board of Christian Outreach, often referred to as BOCO, is to improve the lives of those in need in the greater Norwalk area with love and compassion. It accomplishes this primarily by benevolently disbursing funds to agencies and individuals, offering mission and service programs, holding drives and collections, and by providing educational opportunities and information for our Family of Faith. It extends its impact worldwide by participating in programs approved by this Board.

Community service – volunteering to help others – is an occasion to do the work of God and deepen our faith. It shifts our focus outward, and we start to ask, “What are the needs of our community and what can I do to help?” It opens our hearts and it brings joy, both to those we serve and to ourselves. Using our time, talents, and skills to help others helps us discover our purpose. It recharges us emotionally and spiritually.

Whether we can give once a year or once a month, BOCO invites us to volunteer. It prepared *Volunteer Opportunities* to answer the questions, “Where can I volunteer?” and “What community service opportunities are appropriate for my children?”

Isaiah 58:10 declares, *“If you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then your light will rise in the darkness and your gloom will be as the noonday.”*

American Red Cross Mid-Fairfield Chapter  
596 Westport Avenue  
Norwalk CT 06851  
203-750-1107

*Program Description:*

Helps Connecticut residents prevent, prepare for, and respond to emergencies with services provided by a small paid staff and large corps of volunteers.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Work at community blood drives in the greater Norwalk area. Volunteers assist donor aides, serve refreshments, and observe donors for reactions after they donate blood.

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Americares Free Clinics of Norwalk  
98 S. Main St.  
Norwalk CT 06854  
203-899-2493

*Program Description:*

Provides free primary care to low income, uninsured, and underinsured residents.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

For qualified professionals.

Receives BOCO support.

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Appleby School Based Health Clinics  
One Park Street  
Norwalk CT 06851  
203-849-1111

*Program Description:*

Provides comprehensive, in-school physical and mental health services to students lacking access to health care.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Receptionist, office worker, mentor for child or teen for conversation and support.

Receives BOCO support

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Birthright of Greater Norwalk  
71 East Avenue, Suite E  
Norwalk CT 06851  
203-853-4872

*Program Description:*

Provides love, support, and understanding to women with unplanned pregnancies.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Help with office duties, publicity, and community outreach efforts. Accepts volunteers of any age, race, gender, or religion who accepts the Birthright philosophy.

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Carver Foundation of Norwalk  
7 Academy Street  
Norwalk CT 06850  
203-838-4305

*Program Description:*

Helps children reach post-secondary education. Has education and recreation, college scholarship, wellness, after-school programs.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Needs homework helpers, mentors, career counselors, summer camp and event volunteers.

Receives BOCO support.

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Center for Hope  
590 Post Road  
Darien CT 06820  
203-655-3452

*Program Description:*

Helps adults and children with life-threatening illness or grieving a death. Includes Den for Grieving Children.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Adult volunteers to teach adults to read, write, speak English. Office work. Maintenance and repair work. Nurse and home-health aides. Patient/family care help.

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Child Guidance Center of Mid-Fairfield County  
100 East Avenue  
Norwalk CT 06851  
203-299-1315

*Program Description:*

Comprehensive mental health services for children and families. Special programs include Intensive Outpatient, Juvenile Justice, Prospects (summer camp) and Choices for Success (acquiring life skills).

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Child yoga instructor, social media coordinator, painting, office work, teach skills for Career Day. Accepts donations of clothes, bean bag chairs, computers (no more than 3 years old).

Receives BOCO support

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Domestic Violence Crisis Center  
16 River Street  
Norwalk CT 06850  
203-588-9100

*Program Description:*

Helps free individuals from emotional, physical, and sexual abuse. Provides crisis intervention, temporary shelter, therapy, court advocacy, and community education.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

After training, work in a specific department and on project-based activities. Teens gr. 9-12 volunteer with PeaceWorks.

Receives BOCO support.

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Earthplace, The Nature Discovery Center  
10 Woodside Lane  
Westport CT 06880  
203-227-7253

*Program Description:*

Provides hands-on, nature-based learning experiences and environment education.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

For adults and older teens. Trail and grounds maintenance, sales help in the volunteer-run gift shop, publicity, collecting and testing water samples through Harbor Watch, caring for animals, and assist at public events.

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ElderHouse Adult Day Care  
7 Lewis Street  
Norwalk CT 06851  
203-847-1998

*Program Description:*

Provides Seniors with a safe, nurturing environment. Offers counseling, medical care, recreation activities, and caregiver respite and support.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Visit clients, organize group activities, painting, gardening. Suitable for adults and for families with children.

Receives BOCO support.

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Family and Children's Agency  
9 Mott Avenue  
Norwalk CT 06851  
203-855-8765

*Program Description:*

Provides adoption, foster care, family support, and counseling services; after-school programs; youth mentoring; and summer camp placement.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Teens can tutor middle school students at Norwalk Community College, Big Friend program, tax assistance, office support, sponsor an activity or field trip, facilitate a workshop or be a speaker.

Receives BOCO support.

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FISH of Norwalk  
1 Park Street  
Norwalk CT 06851  
203-229-9727

*Program Description:*

An all volunteer organization providing rides to medical and dental appointments. Rides are free and for Norwalk residents only.

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Food Bank of Lower Fairfield County  
461 Glenbrook Road  
Stamford CT 06906  
203-358-8898

*Program Description:*

Delivers over 600,000 lb. food annually to soup kitchens, food pantries, shelters, and other agencies.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Sort food. Driver assistants.

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Food Rescue Us (formerly Community Plates)  
1127 High Ridge Road, Suite 338  
Stamford CT 06905  
800-280-3298

*Program Description:*

Takes food from markets and restaurants and distributes it via volunteer drivers to soup kitchens and food pantries.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Register online to pick up and deliver food.  
Register online to pick up and deliver food.

Receives BOCO support.

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Friends of the Norwalk Public Library  
1 Belden Avenue  
Norwalk CT 06850

For information, contact Jeff Conrad  
203-354-2933

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Habitat for Humanity  
1542 Barnum Avenue  
Bridgeport CT 06610  
203-333-2642

*Program Description:*

Home construction.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Under 11-year olds do craft projects. Has a Youth United program for teens and young adults.  
Needs office volunteers.

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Hill Top Homes  
212 Rowayton Avenue  
Rowayton CT 06853

*Program Description:*

A 24-unit Senior affordable housing community.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Services are provided through a volunteer group that is best contacted through the church office.

Receives BOCO support.

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Homefront  
88 Hamilton Avenue  
Stamford CT 06902  
800-887-4673

*Program Description:*

Community-based volunteer home repair program.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Experienced home repair.

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Human Services Council  
One Park Street  
Norwalk CT 06851  
203-849-1111

*Program Description:*

Helps plan and coordinate human service programs. Has programs for neglected and abused children and their families, drug and alcohol abuse prevention and treatment.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Receptionist, office worker, mentor for children and teens.

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JAM – Junior Art and Music  
140 Water Street  
Norwalk CT 06854  
203-956-0880

*Program Description:*

Offers hands-on painting, puppetry, story-telling, creative movement, and music.

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Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation  
200 Connecticut Avenue 5H, Norwalk CT 06854  
203-854-0658

*Program Description:*

Fundraising, research information, and education on juvenile diabetes.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Office support, event planning, work at an event.

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Keep Norwalk Beautiful  
City of Norwalk  
125 East Avenue  
Norwalk CT 06851  
203-854-7810 x46782

*Program Description:*

Help the city pick up litter at its annual, city-wide clean up.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Gloves, bags, and litter grabbers will be provided. All litter bags will be picked up by the City of Norwalk.

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Literacy Volunteers of Southwestern Fairfield County, Inc.  
40 Arch Street  
Greenwich CT 06830  
203-869-4848

*Program Description:*

Promotes and advocates literacy. Trained volunteers tutor adults and out-of-school youths in basic reading and writing skills.

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Lockwood Matthews Mansion  
Malta House  
5 Prowitt Street  
Norwalk CT 06855  
203-857-0088

*Program Description:*

Provides support services and independent living skills to pregnant and parenting mothers.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Work with infants, mentor.

Receives BOCO support.

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Malta House  
5 Prowitt Street  
Norwalk CT 06854  
203-956-0880

*Program Description:*

Provides a home environment, support services, and independent living skills to pregnant and parenting mothers.

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Maritime Aquarium  
10 North Water Street  
Norwalk CT 06854  
203 852-0700

*Program Description:*

Museum of marine organisms and maritime technology and history.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Exhibit interpreter, office worker, sleepover and event help, join the dive team (must be 15 years and older).

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Mid-Fairfield AIDS Project  
618 West Avenue  
Norwalk CT 06850  
203-855-9535

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Needs office workers

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Norwalk Grassroots Tennis & Education  
11 Ingalls Avenue  
Norwalk CT 06854  
203-939-1770

*Program Description:*

Provides low-income children with academic support, leadership training, and life skills, using tennis as a vehicle.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Classroom help, tennis court assistance. 15-year and above.

Receives BOCO support.

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Norwalk Historical Society  
PO Box 1640  
Norwalk CT 06852  
203-846-0525

*Program Description:*

Focuses on the research, preservation, and promotion of interest in the history of Norwalk, using educational exhibits, programs, and lectures to highlight Norwalk's history and diversity. Manages the Norwalk Historical Society Museum and Mill Hill Historic Park.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

2-4 hours/week researching grant sources, cleaning collections, providing office help, and historical bakers for special events.

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Norwalk Hospital  
Maple Street  
Norwalk CT 06856  
203-852-2023

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Teens: 16 and older; probably a long waiting list. Requires training, double TB test, background check, and serious time commitment. Adults also volunteer.

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Norwalk Housing Authority  
24 ½ Monroe Street  
Norwalk CT 06854  
203-835-6536

*Program Description:*

Provides safe and affordable housing and supportive services to persons with limited incomes. Offers college scholarships.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Mentoring, tutoring, homework help.

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Norwalk Meals on Wheels  
11 Allen Road  
Norwalk CT 06851  
203-847-3115

*Program Description:*

Provides two meals/day to residents unable to meet their nutritional needs.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Drivers, receptionist, help with mailings

Receives BOCO support.

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Norwalk Mentor Program  
One ParK Street  
Norwalk CT 06851  
203-849-1111 Ext. 3014

*Program Description:*

A school-based, one-on-one mentoring program.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Spend an hour a week with a Norwalk student. You might help with homework, have a conversation, or play games. For information, contact Nancy Pratt at <https://hcsct.org/norwalk-mentor-program/>

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Norwalk Senior Center  
11 Allen Road  
Norwalk CT 06851  
203-847-3115

*Program Description:*

Provides programs and services for Seniors. Has two Centers that offer educational and leisure programs.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Office work, ESL instructor, kitchen work, computer instructor.

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Norwalk Symphony Orchestra  
125 East Avenue  
Norwalk CT 06851203-956-6771203-956-6771

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Accepts all ages interesting in working in office support, concert ushers, preparing food and drinks for the musicians during rehearsal breaks, and stage management during rehearsals and concerts. Volunteers receive free admission to all NSO concerts.

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Open Door Shelter  
4 Merritt Street  
Norwalk CT 06854  
203-866-1057

*Program Description:*

Addresses the needs of the homeless and working poor. Provides a safe, temporary shelter; nutrition; employment services; recovery counseling.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Preparing and serving meals. Offered once a month. Sign up in lobby of this church's Meeting House lobby.

Receives BOCO support.

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PAWS  
504 Main Street  
Norwalk CT 06851  
203-750-9572 x103

*Program Description:*

Rescues dogs and cats.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Teens 18-years and older clean, feed, and provide care for animals, younger teens can do other work.

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Person to Person  
98 S. Main Street  
Norwalk CT 06854  
203-939-1650

*Program Description:*

Provides emergency assistance for basic needs and support for individuals and families as they move toward stability.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Stock food pantry.

Receives BOCO support.

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The Rowan Center  
1111 Summer Street, Suite 202  
Stamford CT 06905  
203-487-0671

*Program Description:*

Counseling and support services for victims of sexual violence. Education programs to eliminate sexual violence.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Serve on 24-hour hotline, event volunteering, serve in support groups after receiving training.

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STAR  
182 Wolfpit Avenue  
Norwalk CT 06851  
203-846-9581

*Program Description:*

Serves individuals of all ages with developmental disabilities. Offers family support. Has residential program.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Coordinate special activities or outing, office work. For adults.

Receives BOCO support.

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Stepping Stones Museum for Children  
Matthews Park  
Norwalk CT 06850  
203-899-0530

*Program Description:*

Children's hands-on science and activity museum for young children.

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Volunteer programs for adults 18 years and older and programs for students grades 7-12.

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Volunteer Services for the Blind  
17 Charmers Pond  
Darien CT 06880-4913  
203-655-7400

*Volunteer Opportunities:*

Volunteer driver, friendly visitor, and shoppers for the legally blind

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# Community Service Learning Activities

Community service learning takes community service to a deeper level. It is a strategy that integrates service with learning. Children are encouraged to reflect on their service experience. They are encouraged to identify the needs of the recipients of the service and to think about how they were helped – what was the impact of this service. Children should also be encouraged to think about how they felt during the experience. Community service learning is a process that helps children move to an understanding of how they can influence the world around them in positive, loving ways.

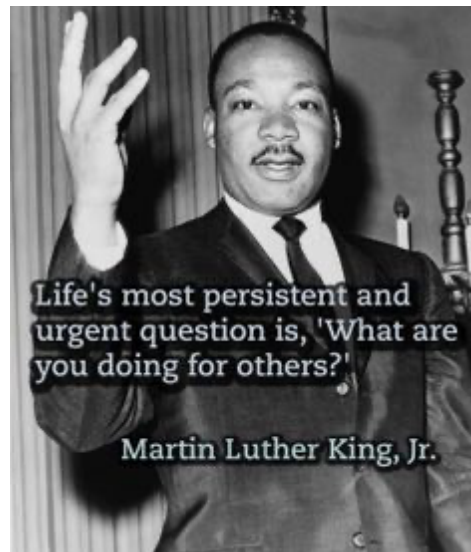


Why is community service learning important for a child?

It develops:

- an increased sense of social responsibility and an appetite for “doing unto others.”
- a global sense of society while exposing children to diversity and multiculturalism.
- interpersonal and communication skills.

The Board of Christian Outreach offers this list of suggested activities and possible discussion questions.



1 Peter 4:10, “As each has received a gift, use it to serve another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace.”

## Opportunities for young children

- Start a One-Project – donate One hour, Once a month, for One year, to help One person. The project can be done at home with the entire family or with friends. Question for discussion: Who gets more pleasure: the donor or the recipient?
- Ask children to help buy White Dove presents and select wrapping paper. Question for discussion: By buying this present, a child will have a happier Christmas. The parents probably do not have a lot of money. Instead of buying a present, what might the parents now be able to do with the money that we saved for them?
- Invite children to select, package, and deliver to the Meeting House lobby materials to donate to church collections, e.g. the choose the type of food for food drives. Question for discussion: Why did you decide upon this particular item? Why is helping others, even those we've never met, important?
- Choose toys no longer played with but in good condition. Select the agency to which to donate them. The child makes the delivery. Question for discussion: How is this like Toy Story?
- Select old clothes in good condition and deliver to Goodwill or a coat drive. Question for discussion: What does it mean to pass the gift of love along?
- The next time you go grocery shopping, make a point of asking a child to select a non-perishable item that was not on your list and donate it to Person to Person. Question for discussion: what does it mean to live a tithing life?
- Bring new or lightly used toys and new stuffed animals to a children's hospital (Check the hospital's requirements; stuffed animals must be new).
- Write an anonymous get-well letter and deliver it to a children's hospital (sign with first name, only). If the child is too young to write, create a drawing. This is a great activity before holidays (Halloween, Thanksgiving, etc.). Question for discussion: How would you feel if you were sick and someone you didn't know wrote you a letter?
- During the holiday season, answer a letter to Santa from a needy child. Visit your local participating post office to get a letter from an underprivileged kid, buy a gift, and mail your package. Question for discussion: what do you think the child's reaction will be?
- Donate children's books, novels, and other reading materials to shelters, libraries, and agencies.
- Decorate placemats for Meals on Wheels.

## Opportunities for middle schoolers

- Good at sewing or knitting? Start a knitting group with friends and donate homemade blankets to people in need. They can be given to John Livingston or to an agency.
- Use social media. Spread the word about a worthy-cause through posts on your own account, or volunteer to set-up a social media account for a local non-profit. Challenge others to reach out to those in need.

- Volunteer to give music lessons to people in your community. We know one middle school girl who was a piano player. She gathered a friend who was a dancer and two friends who sang. They put on a show once a month at a local nursing home.
- Offer your help taking registrations, handing out water bottles, cleaning up after, or other administrative tasks for an event. It might not feel as glamorous, but this volunteer work is actually really helpful to non-profits!
- Participate in a clean up of a beach, riverbed or local park. Run your own, private cleanup event: invite your friends or start a Father and Daughter Beach Clean-up event. Walk a block and collect roadside trash (wear plastic gloves).
- Visit a nursing or retirement home and spend time doing fun activities with the elderly who lack immediate family. Go with friends. Bring games, e.g. tossing bean bags into a bucket (talk with the agency to learn what is needed). **Question for discussion: What must it be like to be elderly?**
- Offer to rake leaves, shovel the walk, or do housework for an elderly neighbor.
- Teach computer skills to the elderly.
- Become a volunteer tutor. If you excel in a particular subject, share that knowledge with other kids who are struggling.
- Make holiday decorations for an agency – pumpkins, Thanksgiving turkeys, winter snow flakes....
- Collect sleep-away camp items for kids participating in BOCO-supported Norwalk summer camper program.
- Decorate placemats for Meals on Wheels.
- If you have a tag sale, sell lemonade and donate the proceeds. Be sure to write, "Proceeds will be donated to XYZ" on the sign.
- Donate gently used games to the Open Door Shelter.
- Think clean air: don't drive to the supermarket for just one item. Keep a list and go only when the list is long enough.
- Volunteer at the UCR tag sale.
- Make no-sew toys for dogs at PAWS.
- Organize a Christmas crafts fair and sell decorations. Donate the proceeds to a designated agency.
- Plant flowers (crocuses are ideal and need no special care) at a nursing home.
- Collect gently used and outgrown sports equipment and donate them to a local agency.
- Read to residents at a nursing home.
- Organize a toiletries drive for a homeless shelter.

### **Opportunities for high school students**

- In addition to volunteering for the agencies listed above, many of the middle school activities are appropriate for high school students.
- Donate outgrown prom dresses to Person to Person.
- Be a homework helper or tutor at a local after-school program.
- Mow the lawn of an elderly neighbor.
- Volunteer in a local soup kitchen.
- Volunteer at the church tag sale.

- Give music lessons to children in after-school programs.
- Organize a games fair and donate the proceeds to a designated charity.
- Collect DVDs and donate them to a local nursing home.
- Adopt a Senior at a local nursing home. Ask about how they grew up.
- PAWS – must be over 18 years to work with animals.
- Norwalk and Stamford Historical Societies. Jobs include computer input, assisting in the research library, and exhibit docents.
- Stamford Museum and Nature Center – farm animal care, clerical and computer work, help with special events.
- Volunteer at a local Boys and Girls Club.
- Bartlett Arboretum & Gardens – everything from weeding to trail maintenance, helping with events.
- SoundWaters – for students 15 years and older. Assist educators or participate in your own research.
- Check out <https://www.volunteermatch.org> and specify Norwalk, CT. Lists volunteer opportunities.
- Development Department Volunteer of Keep America Beautiful. 1010 Washington Blvd., Stamford CT 06901.
- Social Justice Training for Teens at Domus, 83 Lockwood Ave., Stamford CT 06902.
- Play bridge with Seniors at assisted living complexes and nursing homes. Brighton Gardens specifically requested this. (59 Roxbury Road, Stamford CT 06902.
- Participate in the After-School Program at Norwalk Community College. Work with middle and high school students. Sponsored by the Family and Children's Agency of Norwalk.
- Work with medical data at AmeriCares Free Clinics.
- Be a telephone support volunteer at Caring Hospice Services, 456 Glenbrook Road, Stamford CT 06906.
- Provide clerical help to Norwalk Hospice with VITAS Healthcare of CT, 488 Main Ave., Norwalk CT 06851.

## **How is this going to help me get into a private school or college?**

Students often mistakenly think that volunteering for activities through a church does not help their application to private schools or colleges. Nothing could be further from the truth... for the right student.

Admissions departments look for ways in which students make an impact on their communities. One student may be an athlete, another may be a member of the student disciplinary committee, and a third may be involved in community service. For the student who is called to help others, community service can be a very important part of an application portfolio.

While admissions officers certainly will not think poorly of any form of volunteerism, they work hard to discern a candidate's level and depth of commitment. They pay attention to length of service, unusual service endeavors, activities that require uncommon initiative, and

demonstrated leadership. Service is often a leading decision-making factor after GPA and high-stakes test (ISEE, SSAT, ACT, SAT) scores.

BOCO suggests that students keep track of their hours spent in community service. They are also urged to record some of their reflections on their experiences. They can be useful in interviews and application essays.