

Young people (aged 16 to 24 years old) are a growing volunteer base. According to the ABS statistics (2000) the biggest growth area in volunteering was youth. There was an increase in participating 18-24 year olds from 16.6% to 26.8% between 1995 and 2000<sup>1</sup>. [www.govolunteer.com.au](http://www.govolunteer.com.au), Australia's first national not-for-profit volunteer-matching website, attracts approximately 14,000 young people (under the age of 24) every month.

### **What Young People Can Gain from Volunteering:**

- Skill acquisition – job skills, communication skills, etc
- Personal & professional development and training
- Confidence
- Experience – especially to be able to add to your CV
- A written/verbal reference
- Having fun
- Meeting new people
- Experiencing new challenges
- Satisfaction from doing something to make a difference
- The ability to explore different sorts of career or job opportunities in a voluntary capacity.

### **What Young People Can Offer:**

- Energy
- Enthusiasm
- A fresh perspective and new ideas as to how organisations do things
- Skills and abilities, in particular 'new' skills - especially in IT
- A 'youth' point of view.

### **Examples of Youth-friendly Projects:**

- Dog-walking – may only need to commit to an hour a week
- Planting trees – see instant results
- Novelty fun fundraising activities – eg National Board shorts Day
- Painting fishes on drains to remind people that what we put down the drain goes into our rivers
- Office skills, get real life experience!

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<sup>1</sup> The ABS Statistics do not collect information about people under 18 years of age.

- Computer tutors to teach older people about computers and the Internet
- Retail Experience volunteering in an Op Shop
- Marketing volunteers to assist in brochure distribution
- Lifesaving on the beaches
- Sailing or ten-pin bowling with people with disabilities.

### **An Outline of What to do to find a Volunteer Position:**

- Have a look at [www.govolunteer.com.au](http://www.govolunteer.com.au) and apply on-line for any position that you are interested in.
- Alternatively go to your local Volunteer Resource Centre (all their contact details are viewable on [www.govolunteer.com.au](http://www.govolunteer.com.au) under “About Us” and “VA’s Network”).
- If you are not keen on volunteering on your own then perhaps look for a group activity and take along a friend!