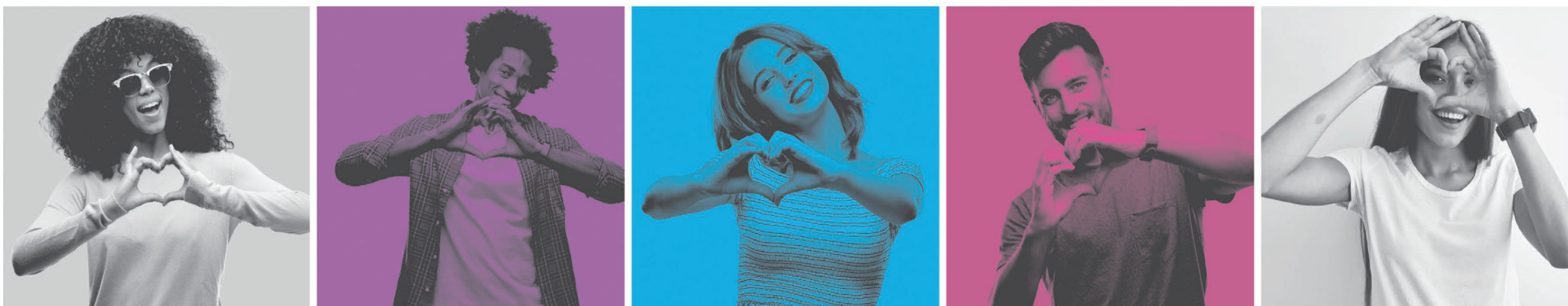




# National Volunteer Week 2021

April 18-24, 2021

*"The Value of One, the Power of Many"* is the theme of 2021 National Volunteer Week. It's a celebration of all those who have stepped up to help others and also recognition of those who have stepped back from volunteering to protect themselves and others. This annual special section honours the value of volunteers. Join this community-wide thank you and let volunteers know their efforts are appreciated.



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## The value and power of volunteers celebrated

The National Volunteer Week theme for 2021, "The value of one, the power of many" reflects on the abundant acts of kindness by millions of individuals and the positive results when we work together towards a common purpose.

According to Volunteer Canada, during the past year, people have been supporting family, friends, neighbours, and strangers, people standing up to systemic racism, and people sharing insights on how to create a more just and equitable society.

The organizers of National Volunteer Week, April 18 to 24, recognize the value

of the caring and compassion that each one has shown another, and the power of people, organizations, and sectors working together.

"The power of people working together can bring about monumental changes. We have seen people work together on legislative changes related to impaired driving, same sex marriage, and assisted dying," states the organizing body.

The theme is a nod to Volunteer Canada's past, a reflection of its present, and a wink to the future. "The value of one, the power of many" was the theme for National Volunteer Week in 2001, The International Year of Volunteers. It reflects the individual and collective efforts, being seen during the pandemic, and it sets the tone for re-imagining the next 20 years as the value of one act and the



power of many enables us to thrive together, according to Volunteer Canada's promotion of the week.

As part of the celebration of volunteers, organizers are inviting submissions related to the theme. Here are some examples....

*"The value of one person calling another to check in.*

*The power of many people working to prevent social isolation."*

*"The value of one person volunteering at a food bank.*

*The power of many people volunteering on a Food Security Advisory Committee."*

*"The value of one person standing up to transphobia.*

*The power of many people calling for the protection of gender diversity."*

Send your theme-related couplet to [info@volunteer.ca](mailto:info@volunteer.ca).

# Volunteering faces challenges during pandemic

As the pandemic continues to alter our lives, the work of volunteers involved in charities, non-profits and community organizations also continues.

While some volunteers have taken a step back at this time due to concerns regarding their own health and the health of others, many remain on the front lines. They are providing essential services that assist the homeless; women and children fleeing violence; isolated seniors; mental health services for children; ongoing and emergency food and other provisions within communities.

Canadians are also supporting those around them, without the involvement of organizations or groups. A tradition in Canada, informal volunteering has been highlighted due to the challenges of COVID-19. There are many examples of how individuals are taking action including picking-up and dropping-off groceries and other supplies, providing meals, sewing non-medical masks, sharing information and offering emotional support through social media.

"This large unpaid, informal workforce of caring Canadians is an asset to the volunteer sector and the country, as individuals reach out to help and support friends, neighbours and those most at risk of health complications related to the coronavirus," states the Statistics Canada report.

The following statistics are based on data collected prior to the pandemic, they provide information about the challenges and opportunities facing volunteerism. The information is from data from the General Social Survey on Giving, Volunteering and Participating (GSS3-GVP), which was conducted in 2018.

- In 2018, almost 12.7 million people volunteered

for charities, non-profits and community organizations - accounting for 41 per cent of Canadians aged 15 and older. They devoted approximately 17 billion hours to their formal volunteer activities, a volume of work equivalent to more than 863,000 full-time year-round jobs.

- In 2018, 40 per cent of Canadians age 73 to 100 (males) and 31 per cent of baby boomers (age 53 to 72) were more likely to be "top volunteers" than Gen (age 15 to 22) who volunteer at a rate of 18 per cent at this level. Top volunteers spend 132 hours or more on volunteer activities.

A Statistics Canada study titled "Volunteering in Canada: Challenges and Opportunities During the COVID-19 pandemic" states "One challenge facing volunteer organizations during the pandemic is that Canada's most dedicated volunteers are also among those most vulnerable to COVID-19.... Another challenge during the pandemic is that many of the activities people volunteer for are no longer occurring. Hospitals, for example, have suspended most volunteer programs to protect the health of those involved. Religious, sports and recreation, as well as arts and cultural gatherings and events have also been cancelled, with some activity moving online."

According to the study, "Formal volunteers, that is, those who volunteered on behalf of organizations, dedicated the most hours on average to hospitals (111 hours) in 2018, followed closely by religious organizations (110 hours) and sports and recreation associations (105 hours)."

- In 2018, Gen contributed an average of 82 unpaid hours to charitable organizations and had the highest volunteer rate (52 per cent), highlighting an important connection to the work of charities, non-profits and community groups.

"Although Gen were less likely than other generations to be top volunteers, they were significantly engaged in formal volunteer activities going into the pandemic. As schools have transitioned to online learning and extra-curricular activities have been cancelled, some Gen may be in a position to increase their community contributions through formal volunteering, a potential opportunity for charities in need of volunteers," the study suggests.



We celebrate all of the volunteers who daily make our community a better place to live.



We have offices across our service area. Contact any of our offices toll free at 1-855-667-2726. [www.fcsllg.ca](http://www.fcsllg.ca)



# Thank you = Volunteers!

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The Power of Many.



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