



Thank you to all the members of the community who volunteer to make life better for others.



**Still celebrating the value of one and the power of many.**

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## 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 the 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 (GSS GVP), which was conducted in 2018.

- In 2018, almost 127 million people volunteered

for charities, non-profits and community organizations – accounting for 44 per cent of Canadians aged 15 and older. They devoted approximately 1.7 billion hours to these 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 75 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. Leisure, 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 volunteerism (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 for 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 iGen 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.



"And as for you, brothers and sisters, never tire of doing what is good."  
Thessalonians 3:13



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