



Pandemic Safe Ways to Support Youth Villages, Winter 2021

When the pandemic hit, Youth Villages' school and group activities were some of the first things to be cancelled for the foreseeable future. That meant all 30 group home youth and their staff were sheltered at the group homes until further notice. The youth adapted to the situation by utilizing the yards, video games, and internet time; they even started their own workout and running clubs. Yet with continued fully-virtual school and low/no-contact volunteer activities through summer 2021, our youth need your support more than ever in helping them on their journeys toward greater mental well-being and long-term success. Below are some ways you can help.

Simple, Zero-Contact Volunteerism

- **YV Foster Care Yard Sign** The easiest volunteerism ever! Please [let us know](#) if you or anyone you know can place a YV Foster Care sign in their front yard. That's it, just a sign, we'll even deliver it and place it in the yard.
- **Amazon Wish List** During this time we are providing the youth with more books, games and in-house entertainment than ever, and we are asking for your help to fulfill their [Amazon Wish List](#). Items on the list include games, arts & crafts, books, house and school supplies, hygiene items, and more. All of the items directly impact the youth, and help build their confidence and mental well-being. Please share this Wish List with your friends, co-workers, congregations, on social media, etc. to help us send care packages to the homes. Mailing address is included on the Amazon page.
- **AmazonSmile Donations** are a simple way for you to support Youth Villages every time you shop, at no cost to you. It's available at [smile.amazon.com](#) on your web browser and can be activated in the Amazon Shopping app for iOS and Android phones. When you shop at AmazonSmile, you'll find the same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added benefit that they will donate 0.5% of your eligible purchases to YV. Just search for Youth Villages Inc (Memphis, TN) on the Amazon Charities page.
- **Spring Cleaning?** Take your donations to our partners at [ThriftSmart](#) and help YV earn gift cards for youth in our LifeSet program. Simply label each bag, box, or large item with "Donated on Behalf of Youth Villages" and we'll get credit for every pound donated in our name.

One Time Volunteerism

- **Provide a Meal or Meal Prep** Youth Villages provides three meals a day and snacks to our youth, but the teens are always more excited when a home or restaurant cooked meal is delivered. Can you provide a meal, or even prep ingredients and instructions for the youth to cook? You can also provide a game or Red Box gift card and they will make a night of it. This can be one-time or ongoing. [Contact us](#) for info.
- **Front Porch and Yard Décor** All three group homes are in suburban south Nashville, and nothing makes a house homier than seasonal décor on the front porch and yard. Use your artistic touches to create seasonal fun with as many or as little decorations as you like. This can be one-time or ongoing. For inspiration, [ask our staff](#) to see pictures of the Wallace house last Christmas.



Youth VILLAGES®

The force for families

- **Group Home Yard and Garden Maintenance** After a very long fall and winter, we are looking for a few hard-working groups of volunteers to help with yard work and general outdoor house clean-up. Projects will range from pruning shrubs, to removing/replacing mulch, to helping repair vegetable gardens, and more.
 - At this time we can accommodate small groups of up to 12 people. We will provide tools, safety gear, project supplies, snacks, and water; but you are always welcome to bring your own. Also, we request that you bring your own mask for group huddles or teamwork projects. Disposable masks and hand sanitizer will be available.
 - Preferably, we would like to do these projects in March and April. We can begin as early as 7 a.m. and will end projects by noon, with the ideal project length being 3 hours. Day of the week is flexible.
- **Host a Supply or Hygiene Drive** We're always in need of volunteers to spread the word and collect gently used or new luggage or books, and conduct drives for personal hygiene items (shampoo, body wash, deodorant, feminine needs, brushes/combs...) for our youth or families in emergency situations.

Ongoing and Monthly Volunteerism (because we love a good LTR!)

- **Become a Birthday Hero!** We are in need of individuals or groups to become Birthday Heroes for any of the three group homes (boys age 14-16, boys age 16-17, and girls age 14-17). Celebrations can happen once a month or every other month. The commitment is just to provide a meal or dessert and a simple birthday "celebration" for the house. Currently, this can happen in our backyard or by drop-off only.
- **Socially Distanced Activity Days** As the weather warms up, we have great opportunities to set-up group home field day activities! Create water fun day, art & crafts stations, exercise stations, art or poetry reflection, easy food preparation or dessert baking, or any mix of activities you choose or create. Volunteers would gather and bring supplies, and set-up stations with instructions so staff can assist the youth along the way. Ideally, completing all stations would take 60-120 minutes. Location is flexible.
- **Virtual Activities**
 - Host a virtual game night with bingo, Pictionary, Heads-Up, etc. Any family-friendly games you like, our youth will love. If you'd like to send over prizes or snacks ahead of time, we'll be sure to have them ready to go.
 - Do you have an artistic or crafty talent to share? The youth love Zoom cooking/music (especially hand drumming)/painting instruction, and activities like crochet and knitting are always popular.
 - Throw obscure Holiday Parties. Who doesn't love to celebrate Donut Day or Penguin Awareness Day?

Please feel free to suggest your own ideas! When we work together, we all win!

**For more information or to sign your team up,
Contact Julie Abbott, julie.abbott@youthvillages.org**