Help For The Hungry/Homeless

• Collect money for a homeless shelter by having the crowd at a basketball game toss money into an open blanket as students hold it going around the gym
• Help cook and/or serve a meal at a homeless shelter
• Gather clothing from your neighbors and donate it to a local shelter
• Make “I Care” kits with combs, toothbrushes, shampoo, etc. for homeless people
• Help with repairs at a local homeless shelter
• Make a care package with mittens, socks, t-shirts, long underwear, etc. for a child at a homeless shelter
• Collect grocery coupons to give a local food bank
• If your community doesn’t have a food bank, work with local officials to start one
• Pack and hand out food at a food shelf
• Organize a neighborhood group to plant, tend and harvest a vegetable garden
• Donate the produce to a food shelf
• Collect canned goods, toys, household items for those in need
• Collect coats and blankets for distribution

Senior Citizens

• Organize a clean brigade and volunteer at the homes of elderly citizens
• Adopt a “grandfriend”
• Visit a nursing home
• Rake leaves, shovel snow, clean gutters, or wash windows for a senior citizen
• Pickup medicine, or groceries for an elderly person
• Write your “grandfriend” a letter, or write letters for an elderly person
• Go for a walk with a senior citizen in your community
• Hold an afternoon dance for your local nursing home
• Teach them your dances and ask them to teach you theirs
• Deliver meals to homebound individuals
• Offer to pick up groceries with/or a senior citizen
• Help senior citizens in your neighborhood obtain and install locks or smoke alarms
• Teach a senior friend how to use a computer or the Internet
• Get a group together to sing or present a play at a nursing home
• Assist with Senior Olympics or start one if there is not one in your town
• Make cards and decorations to celebrate holidays in Senior Centers, extended care facilities, hospitals or nursing homes

School Activities

• Adopt a future 4-H’er

Community/Neighborhood Enhancement

• Organize a yard work crew to clean areas in older cemeteries, parks, and church grounds
• Help neighbors paint and repair their homes
• Clean up a vacant lot
• Organize a community beautification project
• Organize a campaign to raise money to purchase and install new playground equipment in an area park
• Host a breakfast with Santa program to provide breakfast, presents, and holiday activities for low-income families
• Campaign for additional lighting along poorly lighted streets
• Paint a mural or clean up a local park
• Plant flowers in public areas that could use some color
• Work as a library helper shelving books and reading to kids
• Volunteer at a local hospital
• Volunteer as a mentor/recreation leader in a housing development, after school program, or day camp
• Volunteer to assist with the library summer reading
program.
• Assist with a health fair

For Those with Special Needs
• Collect suitcases, clothes, toys, etc. for kids in foster care
• Volunteer to help a Special Olympics event
• Set up a buddy system for kids with special needs at your school
• Raise money for Braille or large print books for the visually impaired
• Volunteer at an agency that works with emotionally disturbed children
• Read books or the newspaper on tape for visually impaired people
• Bring toys to children in the cancer ward of a hospital
• Form a team for Relay for Life
• Collect cards for the “Born Again” cards program of St. Jude’s Hospital

Politics and Government
• Write letters or cards to servicemen and women
• Contact your local League of Women Voters or voter registration office, or Kids Voting Georgia
• Ask what you can do to help people register to vote
• Identity a local issue you are concerned about and contact someone in local government with your ideas on what to do about it
• Organize a public issues forum for your neighborhood
• Volunteer at a poling booth the day of an election
• Offer to pass out election materials

The Environment
• Donate newspapers to a paper drive or organize your own paper drive
• Plant a garden or tree where the whole neighborhood can enjoy it
• Set up a recycling system for your home and participate in your neighborhood curbside recycling pick-up
• Organize a carpooling campaign in your neighborhood to cut down on air pollution
• Adopt an acre of rainforest
• Clean up trash along a river, in a park, along the beach, on a nature trail or along the road
• Create a habitat for wildlife
• Create a Campaign to encourage biking and walking
• Test the health of the water in your local lakes, rivers, or streams
• Plan and build a nature trail

Pets/Animals
• Work with a local veterinarian and coordinate an animal health or rabies clinic
• Take animals to a Senior Center, children’s camp or center for disabled kids or adults
• Volunteer at the local animal shelter
• Work with adopt-a-greyhound program
• Work with dog training programs for the disabled
• Start a “Critter Sitter” service in your neighborhood to feed and care for their pets while owners are away

The Arts
• Charge “late fees” of $.25 for cast members who arrive late for rehearsal, need to leave early, etc. Collect fees and donate to a local charity
• Hold an art fair to involve community youth in art, music, and theater
• Create a mentoring program for older youth to team-up with younger youth on arts projects in communities
• Collect musical cassettes, compact discs, and videos to donate to a day care center or after school program that serves disadvantaged children
• Sing at after-school programs and day care centers
• Collect money for charity by placing collection cans on the desks of teachers in your school. Students can make a contribution to the teacher they would most like to see sing a solo at the next school assembly or concert. The teacher with the most money is his/her collection can will need to sing that solo.
• Volunteer to be the special entertainment for a charitable cause in your community or for a charity’s special event
• Hold a benefit concert and donate the admission proceeds from the concert to charity.
• Perform regularly at a nursing home, shelter, or day care center. Have sing-a-longs and teach them new songs. Stay to talk or help with activities.

SOURCES / CREDITS:
Youth Service America materials and web site
America Sings materials and web site
Character Counts materials and web site
Jr./Sr. Project Development - Jenny Jordan, Extension 4-H Specialist
Make A Difference Day materials and web site
Nickelodeon’s Big Help Day materials and web site

“4-H Quick Tips” Leaflet Fifteen - November, 2001
Written by Cheryl R. Varnadoe, Extension 4-H Specialist

“4-H Quick Tips” is a University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service 4-H Publication
The University of Georgia and Ft. Valley State College, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and counties of the state cooperating. The Cooperative Extension Service offers educational programs, assistance and materials to all people without regard to race, color, or national origin, age, sex, or disability. An equal opportunity/affirmative action organization committed to a diverse work force.