

Volunteer opportunity at Friends for Life 246 W. 19th at 2:30p today (Feb 28). Bring shovels and rakes if you have them. You'll be helping create an outdoor space for dogs. Call me if you have questions and if you want me to meet you up there to sign your form.

### **Volunteer opportunities Ages 18 and under (website Action tab)**

Artists and Crafters

All ages welcome. Use your talents to make and sell your wares and support your favorite cause.

Teen Volunteers (inventors and Planners)

Join other teens to plan our projects and events. Work with ENVI (Environments Need Vast Improvement) Current projects include a vegetarian cookbook, festival, and a long list of ideas that improve the quality of life for animals, people and the planet!

Meet with us on the first Saturday of each month from 1p-3p at Friends for Life Adoption and Compassion in Action Center 246 W. 19th Street, Houston, TX 77008.

Other organizations we collaborate with. Contact for volunteer opportunities:

<http://www.lastorganicoutpost.com/>

<http://www.nokill1.org>

<http://www.healingspeciesspecies.org/>

<http://www.bgclubs-houston.org/>

Other organizations with lists or groups of volunteer opportunities:

<http://www.volunteerhouston.org>

<http://www.americorps.org/about/ac/index.asp>

<http://www.peacejam.org/>

[http://www.leagueworldwide.org/index.php?option=com\\_events&view=whatstheleague&section=1&Itemid=110](http://www.leagueworldwide.org/index.php?option=com_events&view=whatstheleague&section=1&Itemid=110)

<http://blossominternational.org/about.htm>

<http://www.dosomething.org/>

<http://www.ysa.org/>

ENVI'S Earth Day Event

(Environments Need Vast Improvement)

This event is being organized by our original teen members, Kalyn and Angel

They need the best vegetarian recipes.

Nutritional advice for young vegetarians.

Sponsorships for their cookbook

Help us contact local chefs and sponsors for our cookbook.

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Artist of all ages and skill levels

Sketch and color artwork for our AdoptaPlatoon care packages or to provide imagery to support our teen's marketing efforts for their projects. We'll be sending them once per month. Come color at our market booths, our Heights Shop partners, or make some artwork at your house and mail it to us.

P.O. Box 70410

Houston, TX 77270

## Things you can do at home

- Make snack bags. Put water bottles, crackers, and a wet nap in a paper bag. Decorate the bags with fun art – a 4 year old suggested we add the artwork. Distribute them to those in need. Makes for a fun craft project with great rewards.
- Share the love AND the allowance. Make separate piggy banks for allowance money. Ask your kids what seems like a fair percentage to donate. Let them choose what organization and a goal amount. If appropriate, let them experience the reward of presenting it to the organization when the goal is met.
- Allocate bins for donated clothes and toys. Again, keep the kids part of the decision-making and presentation process.
- Review Friends for Life project ideas for teachers, some of these projects would be fun to do as a family. For instance you can promote pets awaiting a permanent home visit [www.adoptfriends4life.org](http://www.adoptfriends4life.org) (click on kidzone) with your kids. Use recycled materials in craft projects.
- Plant trees, tend to a community garden, adopt a section of street, highway, or promenade as a family.
- Adopt a grandparent. Contact a local age restricted assisted or independent living center.
- Coordinate a donation drive as part of your social group gatherings. Monthly suggestions appear on the home page of [www.itscool2care.org](http://www.itscool2care.org)
- Recycle as a family. Enlist little smashers and sorters, explain how the materials will be recycled and identify materials in your home that have a percentage of recycled content.
- Hold a family brainstorming meeting. Ask your kids for some other ideas. At the launch of this website, eighty-five percent of the ideas on itscool2care.org originated in brainstorming sessions with kids 15 and under! Please email us your ideas to be shared with other families.
- Each month write a thank you card from the family. Choose the recipient as a family, make sure everyone makes their mark on the card. Make your thank you cards from recycled materials!
- If you or someone you know wants to support a teacher's project, have your children help decide which project to contribute to at [www.donorschoose.org](http://www.donorschoose.org)

## **Animal Related Project Ideas**

- Make homemade toys for your pet(s) or your friend's pet(s)
- Make a book of pet stories- survey your friends and family for stories about their pets.
- Make an animal diary. Pretend you are an animal, describe what you look like and what happens during your day.
- Make a poster with pictures and descriptions of how humans and pets are alike.
- Write a report on how animals help us. Which jobs seem most fun for the animals? Which ones don't seem fair to the animals? How could those jobs be done by someone or something else?
- Make a t-shirt design that spreads the message to Adopt, not buy pets.
- Draw pictures of the Friends 4 Life animals that are looking for families. Email to [itscool2care@yahoo.com](mailto:itscool2care@yahoo.com)
- Make a picture book illustrating one of the Friends 4 Life animal's stories. Email to [itscool2care@yahoo.com](mailto:itscool2care@yahoo.com)
- Draw a design for a t-shirt that promotes one of the Friends 4 Life animal stories. Email to [itscool2care@yahoo.com](mailto:itscool2care@yahoo.com)
- Make some puppets and put on a show for the class to tell some of the Friends 4 Life animal's stories, be sure and write the ending you want them to have- going home with a loving family.
- Make 10 thank you cards for families that Adopt Friends 4 Life animals. Email [itscool2care@yahoo.com](mailto:itscool2care@yahoo.com) and we will coordinate getting them to the wonderful adopters!
- Make homemade dog biscuits.
- Keep a journal of how your pet responds when you do different activities with him/her. Keep track of the time you spend with them each day for a week. How do you feel when you spend more time playing with him/her. How can you tell that the pet is happier when you spend more time with him/her?
- Keep track of all the dogs and cats you see walking around with no owners. Make a graph. Chart the number of dogs and cats for each day for a week. Multiply the total number of dogs by 16 and the number of cats by 15. Draw how many more stray dogs and cats could be born in one year if these stay on the streets and have babies.
- Make a list of animal names for Friends 4 Life animals that will be looking for homes. Try to make them as fun and as unusual as possible, that helps future families to pay attention to each animal's unique story. Email to [itscool2care@yahoo.com](mailto:itscool2care@yahoo.com)
- Make art, clothing, or jewelry to sell at a kids care art fair and share your profit with Friends 4 Life. Email to [itscool2care@yahoo.com](mailto:itscool2care@yahoo.com) or visit [Kids Care Art Fair info](#)

**List of Sample Journal Topics**

- Pretend that you are an animal- what would be your favorite activity and why.
- Choose an animal/species what makes us most like that kind of animal?
- What have you done to make an animal happy, how did it make you feel?
- What could you do to make an animal healthier and happier?

**Books that focus on humane education and compassion**

- The Great Kapok Tree, Lynn Cherry
- Charlotte's Web, E.B. White
- Oh the Places You'll Go, Dr. Seuss
- Horton Hears a Who, Dr. Seuss
- The Rainbow Fish, Marcus Pfister
- Tails are Not for Pulling, Elizabeth Verdick
- Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you See? Eric Carle
- The Velveteen Rabbit, Margery Williams
- Click Clack Moo, Cows that Type, Doreen Cronin
- What do you do with a Tail Like This? Seve Jenkins and Robin Page
- Gone Wild, An Endangered Animal Alphabet, David McLimans
- So What's it Like to be a Cat? Karla Kuskin
- Sitting Ducks, Michael Bedard

Lists provided by other organizations websites:

<http://www.volunteerhouston.us/kids/ongoing.htm>

^^ A link to a list of ongoing volunteer opportunities in the Houston area that either have no minimum age or a young one (I am assuming that since you all are in high school an age restriction of 14 and older is not a problem). This would be a great place to start to look for volunteer opportunities near you. Some tasks listed can even be completed at home.

<http://www.houstonlibrary.org/volunteer/opportunities.html>

^^ One of the organizations listed in the first link is the Houston Public Library, which is always looking for volunteers to help them keep their branches clean and organized and also to assist with their programs for young kids. The above link goes to the volunteer information page on their website. If you are a neat freak or love kids, this would be a great opportunity for you.

MAKE GREETING CARDS at home for a program that sponsors volunteer visits to institutional shut-ins on a number of holidays throughout the year. No special skills are required. This can be a fun assignment for individuals or for parents and their children. Involvement can be on a one-time, occasional, or ongoing basis. [Click here](#) for additional information about making the cards (and a list of locations where they can be dropped off) Minimum age= None. Call: Walter Black, 713-964-0229.

SHARE YOUR HOBBY with a small group of adults with mental retardation at a group home in northwest Houston. Whether your interest is sewing, cooking, scrapbooking, or a similar leisure pursuit, demonstrating your craft and chatting with the residents about it can help broaden their personal interests and nurture their socialization skills. Visits can be scheduled for evening or weekends, on a one-time or occasional basis. The minimum age for volunteers is 12. The nonprofit organization wanting the volunteers is Reach Unlimited, and the contact person is Kris Young, at 281-213-8132.

FIGHT HUNGER by becoming a volunteer at the Houston Food Bank, located a couple of miles north of downtown Houston. This warehouse-style facility works with social service agencies to serve the poor throughout greater Houston. Available volunteer assignments include sorting and sacking food to be distributed to needy families, labeling food donations, or assisting with office work. Minimum age varies according to the assignment, but some jobs can be done by volunteers as young as 8. The Food Bank is open for business on weekdays and Saturdays. James Ainsworth at 713-547-.8609 or e-mail [jainsworth@houstonfoodbank.org](mailto:jainsworth@houstonfoodbank.org)

WATCH YOURSELF GROW by becoming a volunteer gardener at Hermann Park. Receiving hands-on training from a professional horticulturist, you'll become proficient at planting, pruning, weeding, and other tasks needed to help maintain any of three major garden areas within the park. Weekday and weekend shifts are available. The minimum age for volunteers is 12 if accompanied by an adult, 15 otherwise. Contact: Matthew Marcinek at Friends of Hermann Park, 713-524-5876, Ext. 332.

TAKE COMPUTERS APART to salvage reusable parts for an organization that rebuilds computers and channels them to persons with disabilities. No special skills are required-- staff will teach you all you need to know to take apart obsolete computers to remove parts that can be used in assembling rebuilt machines. The work is normally done on weekdays at the agency's office near Hillcroft and Bissonnet, but Saturday sessions can be scheduled for volunteer groups. This could be a great summer opportunity for persons 12 and older to learn more about the inner workings of computers. Contact: Barbara Rosen at 713-839-7177, or e-mail: [techs1234@yahoo.com](mailto:techs1234@yahoo.com).

BOOK A PLACE for yourself as a volunteer with the City of Houston's Public Library system. If you live in or near the Houston city limits, there's probably a branch library near you. The minimum age for volunteers is 13. Some typical duties include sorting and shelving books, helping mend damaged books and magazines, light computer entry, and maybe helping out with activities involving young kids. The Volunteer Coordinator for the entire library system is Marlana Mitchell. She can be reached at 832-393-1481.

BE A TUTOR for Project CALL (CALL= "Communities Assisting Literacy and Learning"), a literacy program based in Missouri City. Working with individuals or small groups of youngsters or adults, you'll enrich their futures by helping them develop their ability to read. The minimum age for volunteers is typically 15, but younger persons can also serve as tutors if they have a good background in phonics. Tutorial sessions can be scheduled anytime between 3:30 p.m. and 8 p.m. on weekday evenings during the school year and almost any weekdays during the summertime, . The program is based in Missouri City but draws students from southwest Houston and surrounding locales. Training will be provided. Call: Barbara Pariani at 281-261-2600.

SCOPE OUT BARGAINS as a volunteer at any of three thrift shops operated by a Galveston area women's center. The shops are located in League City at Pecan Park Plaza Shopping Center, in Texas City at Mainland Crossing Mall, and in Galveston at 1708 23rd Street. All three shops are open Mondays through Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Volunteers staff these shops, sorting merchandise, setting up displays, and helping customers make selections. Minimum age= 10. Contact: Yanne Smith-Belcher at the Women's Resource & Crisis Center, 409-763-1441.

A STITCH IN TIME: Make blankets for infants and small children. An all-volunteer organization called Project Linus is looking for persons willing to create blankets for kids in distressed situations, particularly pediatric cancer patients. The blankets may be sewn, woven, crocheted, knitted, or quilted, and size doesn't matter. You can do the work at home and on your own schedule. Minimum age = none. Contact: Sally Burns at (281)492-2679

ANOTHER STITCH, ANOTHER TIME: Sew pillow ponies for children whose families have lost their homes and belongings due to flood, fire, or other disaster. These little stuffed animals are the delight of kids who too often have no other toys to play with. The ponies are made of scrap cloth and require only basic sewing skills to assemble. The American Red Cross can provide you with the pattern. Minimum age= none. Call: 713-313-1647.

HORSING AROUND: Habitat for Horses, a nonprofit equine sanctuary located in Galveston County, needs volunteers to help with their mission to provide a humane sanctuary for abused and retired horses, encourage interaction between people and horses for the benefit of both, and to educate the public about animal abuse as well as horsemanship. They welcome children (minimum age 9 yrs old with a parent), teens and adults to care for the horses. There are approximately 85 horses needing grooming, feeding, picking hooves and providing LOVE. They also need volunteers who can work with children and special needs adults who often come to the sanctuary. They will accept teens needing to get in community service hours. Contact Pam Finch at 409/935-0277, or visit the website at [www.habitatforhorses.org](http://www.habitatforhorses.org).

STILL MORE HORSING AROUND: Ride On is an all-volunteer program that provides therapeutic horseback riding opportunities for disabled youngsters. It is recruiting additional volunteer "side walkers" to accompany these kids while they enjoy the special thrill of a horseback stroll in a protected environment. It uses physical therapists and complies with standards by the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association. The riding is done at Cafe Loco Farm in Richmond, Texas on Wednesdays, Fridays, and occasional Saturdays between 9:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Minimum age for volunteers: 14. Contact: Hannah May Brown, 713-342-7273.

EVEN MORE HORSING AROUND: Dreamcatcher Stables is another therapeutic horseback riding program, much like the two mentioned above, but it conducts the riding at its 92-acre ranch area at 6215 Greens Road in Humble (just off I-59). During the summer this upbeat assignment is available on weekdays and weekends. The minimum age for volunteers is 14; younger persons will be considered if accompanied by an adult volunteer. Contact Ms. Sanna Rolling at 281-397-4694, or e-mail: [dreamcatcherstables@att.net](mailto:dreamcatcherstables@att.net).

GET YOUR FACTS RIGHT as a volunteer researcher for Volunteer Houston. We often are planning new projects that require us to scout and scour the Web for information. Are you computer savvy enough to help us out? For instance, if we asked you to, say, find out the names and addresses of all the nonprofit agencies with offices Fort Bend County, or the Web sites of all organizations in greater Houston that operate animal shelters, would you be able to track down the info and relay it to us by e-mail? If so, you might be just the sort of volunteer we're looking for! Contact Walter Black at 713-964-0229, or e-mail [walterb@volunteerhouston.org](mailto:walterb@volunteerhouston.org).