

The mission of Lions Opportunities for Youth is:

To provide the young people of the world with opportunities for achievement, learning, contribution and service, individually and collectively, through sponsorship of activities identified as best practices in the field of youth development.



Encouraging, guiding, and mentoring youth are investments in the future.

Opportunities for Lions to light the path for youth range from implementing joint Lions/youth service projects to rewarding service-minded youth. Lions are community leaders who are experienced in organizing service projects. By working with schools and youth groups, Lions can share their time and talents with youth.

This activity guide provides a variety of youth service project suggestions. With guidance from Lions, these projects can be planned and implemented by youth.

Youth project suggestions

AID FOR THE ELDERLY

- Visit the elderly in their homes or in nursing facilities.
- Perform simple home repairs and household chores for the elderly.
- Complete errands for the elderly or transport them to medical appointments, banking facilities, religious services, etc.
- Organize a formal dinner and dance for the elderly in a community center or retirement facility.

CHILDREN

- Collect clothing, toys, or school supplies for needy children.
- Read stories to young children or tutor for school-age students.
- Visit the pediatrics ward of a local hospital.

ENVIRONMENT

- Plant trees.
- Clean-up a roadway, park, shoreline, or playground.
- Organize a recycling campaign.
- Paint a colorful mural over graffiti.

HELP THE HOMELESS/HUNGRY

- Collect food, clothing, and personal hygiene items for donation to a local shelter.
- Participate in a Habitat for Humanity house-building project.
- Create food baskets for needy families.

LITERACY

- Help a child – or an adult – learn to read and write.
- Organize a used book sale. Donate the proceeds to a local literacy project.
- Read books for the visually impaired. Or, record “talking books” on audiotapes.

PUBLIC HEALTH

- Assist with a vision, hearing, or diabetes detection screening.
- Collect used eyeglasses and hearing aids for recycling.
- Create awareness of AIDS, teen suicide, and substance abuse.
- Help raise funds for health issues such as juvenile diabetes.

SAFETY AND SPECIAL RECREATION

- Organize a seminar on topics such as: water safety, fire prevention, traffic awareness, vehicle seat belt use, bicycle safety, etc.
- Participate in the Lions Global Opening Eyes vision screening program in cooperation with Special Olympics.

Encourage participation in Global Youth Service Day

Work with youth to organize a youth forum, community improvement project, or celebration event for Global Youth Service Day.

This annual event, celebrated on the third Saturday in April, recognizes the year-round contributions of young people serving their communities.

Lions Clubs International is a member of the Global Youth Service Day International Coordinating Committee.

For a tool kit with information about organizing a project or to register a project, log onto www.gysd.net.

Support school and community youth programs

Support on-going youth initiatives such as school-based community service projects, tutoring programs, and scholarships. Provide new ideas, manpower, or funds to help revitalize community-based youth programs such as Scout troops and sports teams.

Awards

FOR OUTSTANDING YOUTH

Lions can reward the volunteer and leadership efforts of youth with two newly created youth awards.

Lions Young Leaders in Service Awards

These club-level awards honor young people ages 12-18 who have completed 50 or 100 hours of community service.

Lions clubs provide the award criteria to schools, Leo clubs, and community youth organizations. Then, eligible applicants record their hours of volunteer service. Clubs present Silver Seal Certificates to young people who have performed 50 hours of service and Gold Seal Certificates to those who have performed 100 hours of service.

Award information is available from the Youth Programs Department or the Association's Web site.

Young Ambassadors of the 21st Century Award

This award provides districts and multiple districts with a means of recognizing young people ages 15-19 who excel in community service, leadership, public speaking, and academics.

Award guidelines are available from the Youth Programs Department or the Association's Web site.

Present these youth awards during a special ceremony. Invite both community leaders and the media to attend the awards presentation.

SUPPORT LIONS YOUTH PROGRAMS

- Sponsor a Leo club.
- Either sponsor or host a Lions international youth exchangee.
- Contribute to a Lions international youth camp or sponsor a camp participant.
- Introduce the Lions-Quest program to a local school.
- Sponsor the Lions Peace Poster Contest.

Information about Lions programs is available through club, district and multiple district *Lions Opportunities for Youth Committees*, the Youth Programs Department at International Headquarters, or the Association's Web site.

**YOUTH PROGRAMS DEPARTMENT
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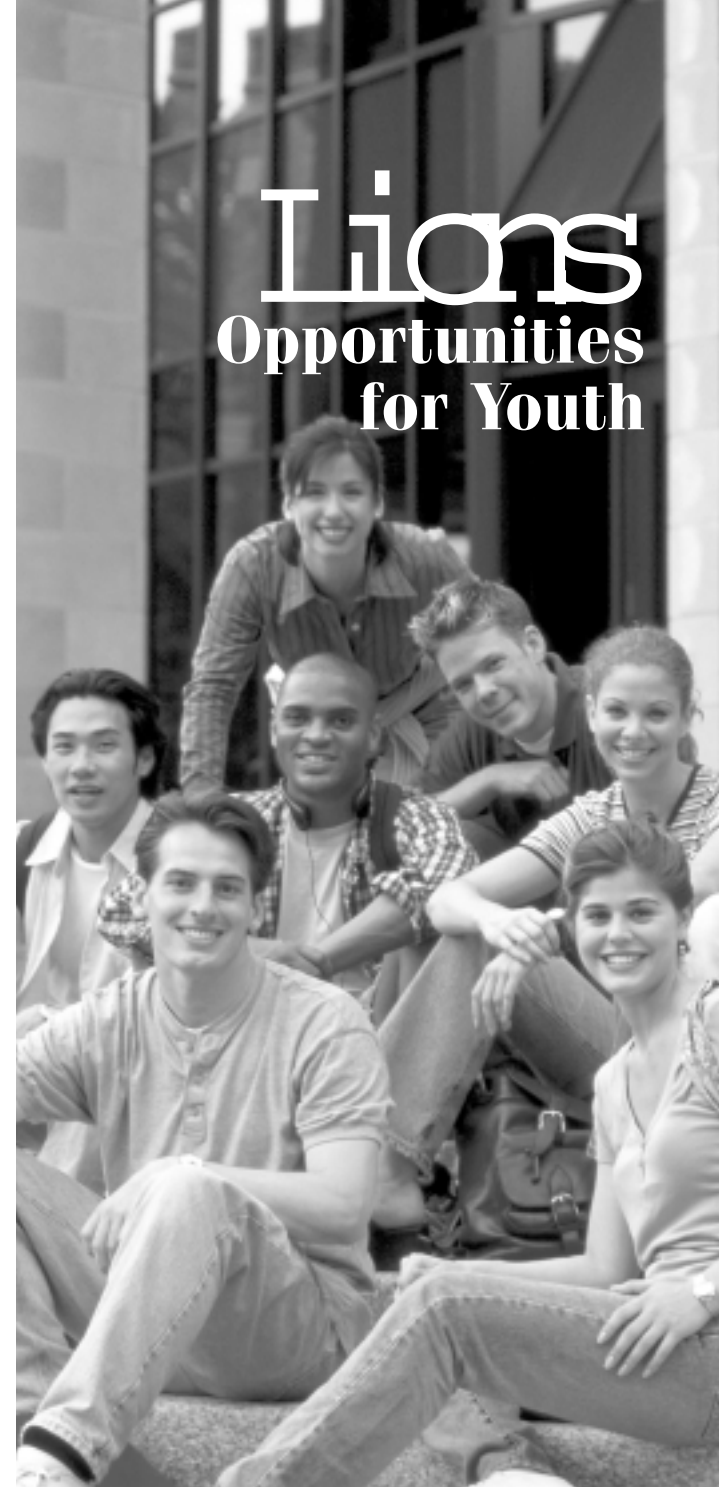
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